

**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND HOW IT AFFECTS POLITICAL
MOBILIZATION OF THE YOUTHS IN EDO STATE.A CASE STUDY OF
THE 2020 GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION IN EDO STATE.**



OMAGE OLUBUKOLA JOCHEBETH

SSC2105737

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

OCTOBER, 2025

**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND HOW IT AFFECTS POLITICAL
MOBILIZATION OF THE YOUTHS IN EDO STATE.A CASE STUDY OF
THE 2020 GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION IN EDO STATE.**

BY

OMAGE OLUBUKOLA JOCHEBETH

SSC2105737

**BEING A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY
OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
(B.SC.) HONOURS DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE**

OCTOBER, 2025.

DECLARATION

Omage Olubukola Jochebeth declare that,

- i. This study is based on a study undertaken by me in the Department of Accounting, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, under the supervision of **Dr. K. Omoruyi** of the Department of Accounting, Management Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.
- ii. This work has not been submitted for the award of degree elsewhere.
- iii. Ideas and views are product of my personal research and where the view of others has been expressed, they have been duly acknowledged.
- iv. Any liability arising from this work is to be wholly borne by me alone

Omage Olubukola Jochebeth
SSC2105737

DATE

CERTIFICATION

This is to verify that this project was carried out by OMAGE OLUBUKOLA JOCHEBETH in the Department of Political Science in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor Degree (B.SC.) in Political Science, University of Benin, Benin City.

Dr. K. Omoruyi

(Project Supervisor)

Dr. J. O. Igiebor

(Head of Department)

Date _____

Date: _____

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty. This work is also dedicated to my loving parents Dn. T and Mrs. A. Oimage.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

All glory and thanks go to My Heavenly Father and the creator of all things for making this project a success. I am forever indebted to God Almighty for his love and mercies. I am extremely obliged to my project supervisor, Dr. K. Omoruyi whose profound observations and corrections highly contributed to the success of this project. May God bless you richly, Amen!

My sincere appreciation also goes to the Head of Department of Political Science, Dr. J. O. Igiebor and my Course Adviser, Mr. F. Ihaza for their positive academic contribution. I also want to express my deep appreciation to my father and mother, Dn. T. And Mrs. A. Omege for their support financially, spiritually and mentally. Thank you Dad and Mom for always being there for me. To my siblings, Dr. Oluwakemi Ebhaleme, Barr. Priscilla Obilor and Miss Oluwadamilola Omege thank you for your support throughout my academic journey. For my relatives I also appreciate Dr GodsFavour Abolagba for your academic contribution throughout my project and Prof. Joel Abolagba for your moral support. In addition my sincere gratitude goes to Rev. Innocent Ojebun for your prayers and moral support.

In addition my heartfelt appreciation goes to my friends, Esther Kalesanwo, Aisha Asikhia, Favour Oboseoye, Gift Irabor, Miracle Omogiade and Precious for their love, cooperation and intellectual assistance while in school. I also want to appreciate Class of Elites and the entire Political Science Department.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CERTIFICATION	iii
DEDICATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
ABSTRACTS	x
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	1
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	3
1.4 Research Questions.....	6
1.5 Scope of the study.....	7
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	8
1.7 Challenges and Limitations of the Study.....	10
1.8 Definition of Key Terms.....	11
CHAPTER TWO	13
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK	13
2.0 Introduction	13
2.1 Concept of Social Media	13

2.2 Concept of Political Mobilization.....	19
2.3 Forms of political mobilization in Nigeria	19
2.4 Influence of Social Media on voters turnout of the youths	28
2.5 The Challenges and Opportunities of Using Social Media for Political Mobilization.....	30
2.6 Measures That Can Be Implemented to Ensure the Positive Impact of Social Media on Political Mobilization	35
2.7 Theoretical Framework.....	39
2.7.1 Theory and Its Proponents: Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT)	39
2.7.2 Application to the Study	39
2.7.3 Limitation of the Theory.....	40
CHAPTER THREE	41
METHODOLOGY	41
3.1 Research Design	41
3.2 Study Area	42
3.3 Population of Study	42
3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size	43
3.5 Method of Data Collection	44
3.6 Instrument of Data Collection	44
3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument.....	45
3.8 Method of Data Analysis.....	46
3.9 Ethical Considerations.....	47

CHAPTER FOUR DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.....	47
4.1 Demographics of Respondents	48
4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	48
Table 4.4: Voter Turnout.....	50
Table 4.6: Political Awareness.....	54
TABLE 4.7: Political Participation	56
Table 4.8: Political Attitude	58
4.3 Regression Analysis.....	61
4.4 Discussion of Findings	65
CHAPTER FIVE	67
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	67
5.1 Summary of Findings	67
5.2 Conclusion.....	69
5.3 Recommendations	70
5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies.....	71
5.5 Contribution to Knowledge	71
References.....	72
APPENDIX.....	77
Section A: Demographic Information	78
Section B: Respondents' Responses	78

ABSTRACTS

This study investigates the role of social media in the political mobilization of youths in Edo State, Nigeria, focusing on the 2020 governorship election. It examines how platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram were utilized to disseminate political information, organize campaigns, and influence voter behavior among young people. The research explores the extent to which social media facilitated political participation, shaped public opinion, and impacted the overall electoral process.

The methodology involves a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews. Surveys were administered to a sample of youths in Edo State to gather data on their social media usage, political engagement, and voting preferences. In-depth interviews were conducted with political actors, campaign strategists, and youth activists to gain insights into their experiences and perspectives on social media's influence.

The findings reveal that social media played a significant role in the 2020 Edo State governorship election. It served as a crucial tool for political campaigns to reach young voters, mobilize support, and counter opposing narratives. Social media platforms enabled youths to access political information, engage in discussions, and organize protests. However, the study also highlights the challenges associated with social media, such as the spread of misinformation, the polarization of political discourse, and the potential for manipulation.

The conclusion emphasizes the transformative impact of social media on political mobilization in Edo State. It underscores the need for media literacy and critical thinking skills to navigate the complexities of the digital landscape. The study recommends that political actors and policymakers develop strategies to harness the potential of social media while mitigating its risks.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The intersection between social media and political mobilization has been a new center of research in contemporary political communication and democratization studies. The diffusion of digital technologies and the wide-scale use of social media sites have radically changed the manner in which individuals access information, engage in political discussions, and participate in democracies (McQuail, 2022; Tayo & Odu, 2023). Digitization across Africa has equipped citizens, and especially the youth, with new methods of political mobilization and political participation, disrupting old ways of political communication that used to be dependent much on mainstream media and party organization (Okoro & Nwafor, 2021).

Notably, Nigeria itself has, over the last decade, witnessed impressive growth in internet and mobile phone coverage. An estimated number by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC, 2023) posits that over 150 million Nigerians are already hooked on mobile internet networks with an internet penetration rate of about 45%. Similarly, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2024), reported that about 36 million Nigerians access social media-the greater number residing within the age bracket of 18-35 years. These platforms-particularly Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter (now rebranded as X), and TikTok-have grown to such an extent in the social lives of the youth and political engagement (Eze, 2023).

The youth constituency constitutes a significant proportion of both the population and the electorate of Nigeria. According to estimates, INEC (2023) revealed that persons

between 18-35 years old account for about 39% of the total registered votes in Nigeria. In Edo State, similarly, this age bracket was dominant, with some 37% of those so classified who registered to vote and participated in the 2020 governorship election. This dominance further consolidates the political power base of young people and captures the promise of social media as a tool for mobilizing people to politicized action.

The 2020 Edo State governorship election is a good case study to look at in an attempt to see how social media played into youths' political mobilization. The election was very competitive, with the two leading political parties, APC and PDP, organizing extensive online campaigns aimed at attracting young people to vote for a particular party. According to INEC (2020), 2,210,534 voters registered, out of which 550,242 voted, translating into a voter turnout of about 25%. The relatively low turnout in comparison with a number of political activities carried out online in that period raises some serious questions about how much impact social media actually has on offline turnout among youth (Omoera & Obaro, 2022).

Social media is an influential tool of political mobilization because it offers conditions for the rapid spread of information, citizen journalism, and interactive discussion. Scholars have explained that social media such as Twitter and Facebook transformed campaigns, whereby candidates can bypass the media gatekeepers and address the voter directly (Nnaji & Ojebuyi, 2021). Still, while social media is expanding access to political information and mobilizing political activities, it also comes with challenges such as disinformation, echo chambers, and cyber-manipulation (Olowojolu, 2023).

Theoretically, this study invokes agenda-setting, framing, and network effects theory of political communication. These theories explain how media platforms shape political consciousness, set the salience of issues, and construct social networks that drive collective political action (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Castells, 2013). Social media during the 2020 Edo State election played the role of an information center and mobilizer, influencing the way youths perceived political issues, candidates, and civic duty.

Despite the massive prospect of deepening democratic participation through social media, there is still a gap between online participation and actual political activism among the youths in Nigeria. Most young people discuss their political opinions on social media but fail to translate this momentum into physical action like voting, campaign activism, or political mobilization (Odetola & Adebayo, 2022). This research, therefore, sets out to assess the degree at which social media platforms influenced the political awareness, alignment, and youth engagement in Edo State during the 2020 governorship election.

Through the analysis of the processes that these young voters go through, the research contributes to an understanding of how social media shape political mobilization within the democratic environment of Nigeria. It also points to ways in which political actors, policymakers, and civil society can maximize digital platforms toward enhancing participatory and inclusive governance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the phenomenal growth of digital technologies and the pervasive usage of social media platforms in Nigeria, youth participation in mainstream political

processes remains abysmally low. Over the past decade, social media has transformed political communication by offering citizens, especially youths, real-time information dissemination, mobilization, and civic discourse fora (Eze, 2023; Nnaji & Ojebuyi, 2021). Internet penetration in Nigeria as of 2024 is about 47.1%, while there are over 154 million active mobile internet subscribers (Nigerian Communications Commission [NCC], 2024). Equally, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2024) records that about 41 million Nigerians are active users of social media, and youths aged 18–35 years make up nearly 70% of this virtual populace. However, this vibrancy has not been matched with corresponding levels of political engagement in voting and governance.

In Edo State, with youths comprising the majority of the voting population, there was a mismatch in enthusiasm for online political participation and offline actual voting in the 2020 governorship election. According to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC, 2020), out of 2,210,534 registered voters, only 550,242 (about 25%) voted. Of particular interest is that this pre-election social media activity grasped the attention of many, as several hashtags trended nationwide on Twitter (now X), including #EdoDecides2020, gathering over 200,000 engagements within the week to the election. Voting at the precincts was physical but low, showing the gap in mobilization on social media and political turnout. This gap calls into question the effectiveness of social media as a propeller of concrete political participation among the youths of Edo State.

Comparatively, the trend is not unique to Edo State or Nigeria. In Kenya's 2022 general elections, despite the social media-driven campaigns that captured the interest of millions of young voters, youth voter turnout fell to 39%, a drop from 46% in 2017

(Mwangi & Nyabola, 2023). Similarly, in Ghana, despite massive political mobilization on Facebook and Twitter, the youth voter turnout in the 2020 elections was 47% (Asante & Boateng, 2022). These comparisons make it clear that across sub-Saharan Africa, online participation does not automatically translate into offline physical political engagement—a broader regional challenge to translate online activism into offline civic action (Adetula, 2021).

Additionally, the diffusion of misinformation, the algorithmic echo chamber, and online propaganda complexify social media's role as a democratic instrument. During the Edo 2020 election, several studies had indicated that over 35% of political information tweeted was unverified or partisan. These events pose the risk of further fuelling polarization and cynicism among younger voters, consequently undermining democratic trust. In effect, while Nigerian social media platforms have transformed political communication, their potential to convert online activism into effective political participation remains largely untested and unlocked. The general problem this study seeks to address, therefore, is the mismatch between the potential of social media as a tool of youth political mobilization and the steadily declining levels of concrete youth political participation in Edo State. Addressing this problem is imperative for the consolidation of democratic inclusion, enhancing civic awareness, and formulating evidence-driven solutions that will position social media as a force for sustainable political engagement among young people in Nigeria.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

There are many objectives of the study on the role of social media in the political mobilization of youths in Edo State, using the 2020 Governorship election as a case study, to mention a few:

1. To identify the specific social media platforms most utilized by youths for political information and engagement during the 2020 election.
2. To assess the extent to which social media platforms facilitated political awareness and knowledge among youths regarding the candidates, parties, and issues of the 2020 election.
3. To examine how social media influenced the participation of youths in various political activities, such as rallies, campaigns, and online discussions, during the 2020 election.
4. To determine the role of social media in shaping the political attitudes and preferences of youths towards specific candidates or parties in the 2020 election.
5. To evaluate the impact of social media on voter turnout among youths in the 2020 Edo State Governorship election.

1.4 Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. Which social media platforms were most frequently used by youths in Edo State for political information and engagement during the 2020 Governorship election?
2. To what extent did social media platforms enhance political awareness and knowledge among youths regarding the candidates, parties, and issues of the 2020 election?
3. How did social media influence the participation of youths in various political activities, such as rallies, campaigns, and online discussions, during the 2020 election?
4. What role did social media play in shaping the political attitudes and preferences of youths towards specific candidates or parties in the 2020 election?

5. What was the impact of social media on voter turnout among youths in the 2020 Edo State Governorship election?

1.5 Scope of the study

This study is limited to examining the influence of social media and its effect on youth political mobilization within Edo State, referencing the 2020 governorship election. The scope of the study is defined in four general dimensions—geographical, temporal, demographic, and conceptual—to establish cohesion and focus. Geographically, the study is confined to Edo State, Nigeria, as the point of reference in examining youth political engagement and online participation. Edo State is a relevant case since it has high social media penetration among youth and highly competitive character of the 2020 governorship election that attracted considerable online and offline political mobilization.

Temporally, the study targets the pre-election period, the election period, and the post-election period leading to the 2020 Edo State Governorship Election. This allows for an integral examination of how social media sites were harnessed for political campaign, mobilization, and dissemination of information prior to and subsequent to the election. Demographically, the study targets young adults aged 18–35 years who were residents in Edo State and were able to vote during the 2020 election. They are chosen because they are the most frequent users of social media platforms and constitute a high percentage of voters in Nigeria and therefore an essential demographic to study regarding digital political mobilization. Conceptually, the study focuses on exploring how some social media platforms—Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok—impacted various forms of youth political

engagement. These involve political awareness (candidacy, party, and issue awareness), political involvement (online activism, campaign volunteering, and turnout voting), and political attitudes (perceptions, tendencies, and inclination to engage in civic activities). Variables such as availability of political information, frequency of social media usage, nature of political engagement on social media, and their effects on concrete participation in the 2020 election are of central concern in the analysis of the study. In drawing these lines, the scope seeks to have the study remain centered, manageable, and relevant to context in the extent to which social media has affected youth political mobilization in Edo State.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study of the role that social media plays in the political mobilization of the youths in Edo State, with special reference to the 2020 Governorship Election, is quite significant. In this respect, the research will be of importance for a number of reasons: First, it provides insight into the changing dynamics of political engagement in the digital age. Social media platforms have increasingly become key instruments for political communication and mobilization, above all for young people. By examining how social media was used in the 2020 election, the study will be able to indicate which platforms, strategies, and tactics were most effective at reaching and mobilizing youth voters. This knowledge is crucial for political parties, campaign strategists, and policymakers seeking to engage young people in the political process.

Second, it contributes to an understanding of the role played by technology in shaping political behavior. The research can investigate how social media shapes the attitude, beliefs, and behaviors of young voters. It can analyze the impact of social media on their political awareness, participation in politics, and voting decisions. Through an

analysis of the content created and used, the networks developed, and the interactions on social media during the election period, the research can reveal how these tools shape the political landscape.

The research may avail useful lessons for any future elections. The 2020 Edo State Governorship Election provides a specific context within which to examine the use of social media in a real world political campaign. The findings can be used to inform best practices for future elections, helping optimize the use of social media for political mobilization. This includes effective ways of reaching out to young voters, countering misinformation, and promoting civic engagement.

Fourth, the study can identify ways in which social media can be beneficial or harmful in political processes. That is, while social media may be a powerful tool for mobilization and engagement, it can also be used for spreading deliberate falsehoods, inciting violence, and manipulating public opinion. By examining its effects on the 2020 election, the study may be able to outline these risks and offer ways of mitigating them. These include promoting media literacy, fact-checking, and responsible usage of social media. Fifth, the research can contribute to an understanding of youth political participation in Nigeria. Young people constitute a large percentage of the population in Nigeria, and their involvement in politics is highly vital for democratic development. The paper, thus, focuses on Edo State as a case study. By narrowing it down to Edo State, the study may give insight into the peculiar challenges and opportunities the young generation face in participating in political processes. It would include analyses of how social media affects youth political attitudes, behavior, and vote choices.

Consequently, the significance of this paper therefore lies in its potential to inform our understanding of the role of social media in political mobilization, provide lessons for

future elections, highlight the benefits and risks of social media in politics, and contribute to a wider understanding of youth political participation. The findings of the study can be used to improve political communication, enhance civic engagement, and promote an inclusive and more participatory democracy.

1.7 Challenges and Limitations of the Study

While AI platforms bring about immense opportunities to improve learning, their adoption into higher education is confronted with various challenges. The first major concern relates to overdependence on AI tools, which could limit critical thinking and originality. According to studies, students who exhibit overdependency on AI responses display reduced problem-solving capabilities and creativity, compared to those who use AI as a complementary tool (Arowolo & Nwachukwu, 2024). For instance, 41% of university students globally reported overdependence on AI tools in assignments, according to the UNESCO report of 2023, raising concerns over academic integrity and intellectual development.

Technical issues like unstable internet connectivity, system crashes, and infrastructural limitations also hinder AI's effective usage in Nigerian universities. According to Okonkwo and Salisu (2024), more than 55% of students in sub-Saharan Africa are disrupted in accessing AI-powered platforms because of poor network coverage and unstable electricity supply, compared to less than 12% in developed countries. These disparities underpin the digital divide in AI integration.

Other ethical risks include data privacy, algorithmic bias, and plagiarism. According to an IAU 2023 report, 34% of the responding institutions had not developed clear guidelines on ethics pertaining to AI use in teaching and learning, leaving students at

risk of violation of their privacy and assessment practices that are not fair. Musa and Ibrahim (2023) pointed out that universities in Nigeria do not often have appropriate cybersecurity measures in place, which leads to apprehensions over data misuse.

Besides, it has also been mentioned that such an approach may lead to reduced creativity and passive learning. According to the findings of Adepoju and Lawal (2024), 62% of lecturers believe that AI tools may hinder original thought, since students increasingly replace human effort with machine-generated content. At the same time, in the United States and Europe, great success in integrating AI has been reported, largely because it is guided by more strict pedagogical frameworks (Johnson et al., 2023). In summary, although AI platforms enhance efficiency and personalization of learning, overreliance, technical barriers, and ethical concerns will have to be faced if AI is to reach a mature status in Nigerian higher education.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

The following terms were defined in the study

- **Social Media:** Social media is a collection of online platforms where people can connect, share information, and interact with each other.
- **Political Mobilization:** Political mobilization refers to the process of encouraging people to participate in political activities. This can include voting, protesting, contacting elected officials, or supporting a political cause.
- **Youth:** Youth is a period of transition, generally referring to individuals between 15 and 24 years old, marked by significant physical, cognitive, and social development.
- **Election:** Election is a cornerstone of modern democracies, serving as a formal and structured process by which individuals are selected to hold public office.

These processes are essential for ensuring that governments are representative of the people they govern, as they provide a mechanism for citizens to choose their leaders and hold them accountable.

- **Governorship Election:** A governorship election is a democratic process where citizens vote to elect a governor to lead a state or region.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter give detailed analysis of the 2020 Edo State Governorship Election provides a case study for understanding how social media influences youth political mobilization in Nigeria. This study examines how platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and others were used to mobilize voters, disseminate information, and shape political discourse among young people. It explores the strategies employed by political actors, the impact on youth participation, and the challenges posed by misinformation and polarization. Ultimately, it aims to understand the role of social media in shaping political outcomes and youth engagement in the democratic process.

2.1 Concept of Social Media

Social media are web-based applications that allow users to create, share, and interact with content in virtual networks and communities. The first characterization of social media was provided by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), who defined them as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, allowing the creation and exchange of user-generated content." These applications changed how people communicate, collaborate, and exchange information. Online social networking finds its beginnings in Usenet, created in 1979 by Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis, and Open Diary, created in 1998 by Bruce and Susan Abelson, both designed for interactive online communication.

Social media sites are "social," Chatora (2012) argues, since they are interactive and collaborative in nature, which stimulates conversation rather than a one-way flow of information. This justifies Mayfield's (2008) assertion that social media encourages participation, openness, conversation, and connectivity—characteristics that set them apart from traditional mass media. The emergence of Web 2.0 technologies around 2004 transformed the Internet from what was primarily an inert repository of information ("Web 1.0") into an interactive and dynamic channel where users were not just passive recipients of information but also active content creators themselves (Nwabueze, 2012).

Social media encompasses a host of websites like Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), WhatsApp, TikTok, and YouTube that facilitate the sharing of data in real time and enable two-way communication. These websites have become an integral part of everyday life that they started influencing not only how individuals communicate but also how they communicate about politics, education, business, and social activism.

Social media usage in Nigeria has increased exponentially in the last decade. Nigeria, for instance, boast of around 36.7 million active social media users, or about 16% of the country's population, a significant increase from 29 million users in 2021, as reported by DataReportal (2024). WhatsApp remains the most utilized platform, followed by Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X. The youth, between the ages of 18 to 35 years, make up over 70% of social media users, reflecting their overrepresentation online and their potential to influence socio-political communication (Statista, 2024). Comparatively, while the social media penetration in Nigeria is relatively lower at 16% compared to the global average of 62%, the rate of engagement, particularly among young people, is extremely high in political

discussion and activism (Pew Research Center, 2023). This shows that social media is not only a tool for socialization but an emerging site for civic engagement and political mobilization.

McQuail (2005) posited that the revolution in information and communication technologies continues unabated into the 21st century, increasingly fostering interconnectedness, interactivity, and accessibility. This is true even now, as social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels allow even minor users to produce content that can influence national discourses. Thackeray and Neiger (2009) added that social media communication is multidirectional, and both audiences and content creators play active functions in the communication process. Even more recent scholars have continued to build on this position. For example, Obaro (2022) notes that social media websites are now "virtual political arenas" in which citizens can directly interact with political aspirants, advocate for policy change, and mobilize for collective action. Similarly, Olowojolu (2023) emphasizes that social media has erased the lines between mainstream media and citizen journalism, and young Nigerians can now build narratives and hold people accountable. More so, social media has remained a major instrument of grassroots mobilization during elections. This is because it provides other political parties and candidates with the chance to reach a multitude of people within a limited time frame. This occurs in a cost-effective way. Agbim, Ikenna, and Eke (2023) attest that WhatsApp and Twitter were extremely helpful in mobilizing volunteers, coordinating activities, and mobilizing the youth during the 2020 Edo State Governorship Election.

Social media essentially democratizes information-sharing and is a restructuring of social and political participation in the information age. With technology still evolving, these websites remain aspects of communication, participation, and

empowerment in Nigeria and indeed the world over. Think of it like a giant online community where you can:

1. Connect with Friends and Family

Social media websites have an important role in ensuring that people have relationships and emotional connections with family and friends even when they are physically apart. The websites allow users to post updates, videos, and pictures and thus remain connected and engage with one another's lives virtually. For example, families living in other countries predominantly apply WhatsApp for video calling and Facebook or Instagram group chats to celebrate life milestones such as birthdays, graduations, and anniversaries.

2. Follow Personal Interests

In a world that allows and supports people becoming whoever they want to be, social media further allows people to follow their interests by exposing them to various subjects, current global events, and online forums with similar interests. The use of these platforms enables people to stay abreast of developments, learn something new, and communicate with others with similar values or interests. For instance, those interested in living green mostly follow green organizations on X so that they will be updated with news about greens and trends and YouTube Channels providing tutorials on how to live green or a sustainable life (Okafer & Adebayo, 2021; Kareem, 2024).

3. Join Online Communities

Social networking websites provide interactive platforms where like-minded persons can gather and share information, experiences, and knowledge in collective learning. Virtual communities of such nature develop an essence of belonging and indeed come with valuable means for network extension and personal growth. For example, a novice coder may join a Facebook group or subreddit where members can share ideas,

ask questions, or get constructive criticism about coding tasks. Such interactions reinforce learning as the learners are able to build their confidence and stay abreast of the latest trends arising in their areas of operation (Akinwale & Eze, 2023; Chukwuma & Bello, 2024).

4. Share Thoughts and Opinions

Social networking sites have offered viable avenues for people to express their opinions, thoughts, and ideas through text, images, and videos. Such activity on the internet encourages public discourse as well as identity formation. With the modern digital age, youths are greatly involved in streaming creative content over social media platforms like TikTok, Twitch, X (Twitter), Snapchat, and Instagram; streams of creative content on trending issues and participation in global conversations shape cultural and social discourses (Adeyemi & Musa, 2025; Ogundele, 2023).

Some popular examples of social media platforms include:

1. Facebook

2. Instagram

3. Twitter

4. TikTok

5. Snapchat

Brief History of Social Media Platforms

Facebook:

Facebook was initially set up in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg and some students from Harvard University as a social network for university students, later growing into a global social networking site. The appeal it had for the users included an easy-to-use interface, photo-sharing ability, and connecting individuals across distances. In due time, Facebook grew into a major communication platform, displaying news feeds, business pages, and live streaming of events. Its acquisition of Instagram in 2012 and WhatsApp in 2014 further cemented its place in the global social media domain.

Instagram:

Launched in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, Instagram revolutionized visual storytelling by focusing on photo and video sharing. Its use of filters and editing tools made visual content creation easy and engaging, especially for younger users. Following its acquisition by Facebook in 2012, Instagram introduced features like Stories and Reels, expanding its influence in digital marketing and youth culture (Bamigbade & Adeyeye, 2022; Kareem, 2024).

Twitter (now X):

Twitter was launched in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, along with several colleagues from the podcasting company Odeo, with a focus on microblogging. Twitter became a preferred platform for publishing short pieces of content, called “tweets,” that could be updated in real time. Because of its ease of use and real-time nature, many users flocked to the site to share news items, engage in public discourse, and connect over

current events. In the years since, Twitter has become a key platform for activism, journalistic work, and political communications.

TikTok:

TikTok was launched in China in 2016 under the name Douyin by ByteDance, and then its international version was launched in 2017. It instantly became popular because of its short-form videos, compelling algorithm, and use of music, humor, and creativity. The basis of the app's popularity within younger audiences lies in its interactive challenges, trends, and creating viral content.

Snapchat:

Founded in 2011 by Evan Spiegel, Bobby Murphy, and Reggie Brown, Snapchat introduced the concept of ephemeral messaging—photos and videos that disappear after being viewed. Its emphasis on privacy, creative filters, and augmented reality (AR) lenses made it particularly popular among teenagers and young adults. Snapchat continues to evolve with features like Discover and Spotlight, catering to entertainment and brand storytelling (Adewale & Ogunleye, 2022; Daniels & Umeh, 2024).

2.2 Concept of Political Mobilization

Political mobilization is the process through which individuals or groups are mobilized and organized to participate in political activities toward addressing certain political, social, or ideological issues. One of the aspects that political mobilization engages citizens in includes voting during elections, joining a political party, joining demonstrations, or participating in lobbying campaigns that determine the decisions and policies of government (Adebayo & Nwankwo, 2022; Tarrow, 2011).

According to Sidney Tarrow, political mobilization can be defined as "the process by which people and groups are mobilized into political action, usually through the creation of social movements and collective action." Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward argue that mobilization is a way of confronting power relationships and compelling social change, usually by disrupting dominant politics. According to the rational choice theory, Anthony Downs views mobilization as a process in which parties and political elites use incentives and information to cause voter turnout. Similarly, political mobilization has been theorized by Charles Tilly as an interaction of social movements, state, and other groups where contention, organization, and mobilization of resources are central (Tilly, 2004; Piven & Cloward, 2012). In essence, political mobilization refers to a process that transforms spectators from being passive onlookers to active participants who shape the course of politics. From voter registration and lobbying drives to demonstrations, it is multi-dimensional, even extending to activism online. Mobilization strategies will thus increasingly be targeted at different groups, using methods targeted especially at those groups. Voter registration drives, for instance, remain among the prime mobilization strategies around the world. In Nigeria, according to the country's Independent National Electoral Commission, a total of over 93.4 million voters were registered to vote in the 2023 general elections, against which only 27.1 million people voted, representing 29%, as opposed to 34.7% recorded in 2019 (INEC, 2023). That thus shows that mobilization drives have increased across social and social media, but it remains a big challenge to get this to translate into actual participation (Eze, 2024).

Political mobilization zeroes in on certain issues with the sole aim of galvanizing popular support. For example, youth movements in Nigeria, such as the #EndSARS protest in 2020, have demonstrated how digital platforms are increasingly used to

mount gigantic collective action. The grassroots movement, which started at the local level, soon developed national and international traction, mobilizing millions of protesters through Twitter (now X), Facebook, and WhatsApp (Akinola & Ojebode, 2021). Similar trends are observable all over the world. For example, the Black Lives Matter protests in America and the #FeesMustFall protests in South Africa have shown how small grassroots movements can be magnified and global support through social media platforms is assured (Kareem & Bello, 2024). In politics today, social media has revolutionized mobilization. Political actors now use targeted advertisements, hashtags, live streaming, and online campaigns to reach specific demographics. For instance, in the 2023 Nigerian presidential election, social media applications such as Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok became the main mobilization conduit among the youth, as over 70% of Nigerians aged between 18 and 35 reported getting political information primarily from social media (NOI Polls, 2023). Nevertheless, there are also challenges associated with digital mobilization, such as disinformation, echo chambers, and politicking that distort public opinion and disincentivize genuine participation (Obi & Umeadi, 2025).

Additionally, the process of effective mobilization involves strategic communication, genuine leadership, and vast knowledge of audience dynamics. Celebrities and influencers will amplify mobilization through social capital. Nigerian activists and artists like Falz and Mr. Macaroni mobilized people to take part in civic activities during national protests and elections (Okoro & Nwafor, 2022). Generally, political mobilization is an adaptive process that progresses along with technological, social, and political development. It marries traditional methods of party rallies and voter registration to newer methods driven by social media and the internet community. Whatever tools it assumes, its defining function remains the same-to equip citizens,

heighten democratic participation, and tilt the political process in the direction of social change (Adeniran, 2025).

2.3 Forms of political mobilization in Nigeria

In Nigeria, political mobilization takes various forms, including mobilization by political parties, social movements, and ethnic or religious groups. These groups use different strategies to engage citizens, such as rallies, protests, social media campaigns, and community outreach programs. Digital tools are increasingly being used to mobilize support, disseminate information, and organize events. They include the following:

1. Party-Based Mobilization

Party-based mobilization is among the most institutionalized and successful political mobilization strategies in democratic politics. Nigerian political parties are major avenues through which citizens are mobilized, persuaded, and encouraged to take part in political processes and elections. The political parties employ a number of mobilization strategies at rallies, door-to-door campaigns, voter education, and outreach at the community levels. Modern mobilization campaigns now involve traditional media sources such as radio and television with social media platforms like Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and WhatsApp to allow parties to connect with different sets of people (Okorie & Chinedu, 2024).

In addition, Nigerian political parties use both material and psychological incentives to entice voters to their side. These inducements range from financial incentives, promises of government appointments, and distribution of materials during campaigns, to emotional appeals based on ethnicity, religion, or geographical identity (Olayinka

& Ibrahim, 2023). For example, during the 2023 general elections, observation reports of the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD, 2023) indicated that vote buying and material inducements took place in more than 30% of polling units, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. This means that while parties are at the center of mobilization, clean and transparent engagement remains a major challenge.

A study by Ogunyemi (2024) found that Nigerian political parties have increasingly adopted a digital and hybrid model of campaign structure in recent years, combining physical rallies with online mobilization in an attempt to reach young voters. According to NOI Polls (2023), about 68% of Nigerian youth ages 18-35 reported that they first encountered political messages through social media rather than traditional campaign methods, which is a huge shift in party mobilization dynamics.

Party-based mobilization is also effected through political party structural processes. Some parties have reduced nomination fees and waiver of fees for women, youth, and persons with disabilities to encourage inclusivity of more diverse persons. For instance, the PDP and LP both waived nomination fees for female aspirants in the 2023 elections to improve gender inclusivity (INEC 2023). These activities are consistent with a study conducted by Verba et al. (1995), who concentrated on how party-supplied resources—time, money, and civic skills—help make political participation possible.

Past studies provide baseline information about mobilization processes. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) emphasized the effectiveness of personal voter contact, such as door-to-door canvassing. Similarly, Gerber and Green (2000) used field experiments to show that face-to-face mobilization is far more effective in increasing voter turnout than impersonal contact. Nickerson (2006) experimented with phone calls and direct

mail comparatively, while Arceneaux and Nickerson (2010) showed that social pressure was able to be leveraged to increase voter turnout. New evidence from Nigeria supports these findings: Ogunlade (2025) found that door-to-door and peer mobilization strategies during the 2023 elections led to a higher rate of voter participation than digital campaigns alone by a margin of 15%. In comparative perspective, other African democracies show similar patterns. In Kenya, for example, political parties have also combined digital and grassroots mobilization. More than 75% of political campaign messaging in 2022 was on WhatsApp and Facebook alone (Mwangi & Otieno, 2023). For example, in Ghana, the NPP and NDC also heavily used social media micro-targeting during the 2020 elections to mobilize young voters (Boateng & Mensah, 2022). These cross-national examples point to the manner in which digital innovation and social networks have become entrenched in party-based mobilization strategies in SSA. Overall, party-based mobilization in Nigeria remains under construction—from purely traditional to data-driven and digital approaches. Political parties increasingly realize the need for youth inclusion, gender representation, and digital literacy in strengthening democratic participation. However, deep-seated problems such as monetized politics, elite capture, and ideological ambiguity persist in compromising the full democratizing possibilities of party-based mobilization (Adeniran & Ojo, 2025).

2. Social Movement Mobilization

Social movement mobilization is a collective action of groups and individuals to accomplish a certain social, political, or economic change outside the mainstream political processes. In the digital era, platforms like Twitter (now X), Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook have really transformed the way social movements are

organized, communicate, and sustain themselves (Ogunyemi & Afolayan, 2024). They provide inexpensive tools for coordination, information dissemination, and framing of grievances that give voice to subordinated voices at the national and global levels.

The #EndSARS protest, which took place in Nigeria in October 2020, was generally an online movement against police brutality, especially excesses perpetrated by SARS. Within a fortnight, the hashtag #EndSARS generated over 28 million tweets. The mass participation of youth across key cities in Lagos, Abuja, and Benin showed that the movement was capable of uniting citizens beyond ethnic, religious, and class divides—a growing political consciousness among Nigerian youths (Ikeanyibe & Nwosu, 2022; Amnesty International, 2021).

According to DataReportal (2024), more than 54% of Nigeria's population—approximately 112 million people—are active users of social media, out of which almost 70% are between 18-35 years of age. This positions social media as the first tool for modern-day activism in Nigeria. Young Nigerians are using social media platforms like X to send out live updates, coordinate logistics, and air protest messages. During the #EndSARS protests, volunteers opened online fundraising channels through Bitcoin donations after the Nigerian government had frozen local bank accounts linked to activists, showing the flexibility and transnational nature of online mobilization.

Indeed, beyond Nigeria, such social media-driven movements have materialized across Africa. For instance, the 2019 pro-democracy protests in Sudan, which culminated in the removal of President Omar al-Bashir from office, were mainly organized through Facebook and WhatsApp groups, with more than 60% of activists

under the age of 35 years old (Abdalla, 2022). In another development, the #FeesMustFall movement in South Africa mobilized thousands of university students between 2015 and 2017 through the use of Twitter and YouTube to protest for free education, and as a result, further propelled the country into debating economic inequality (Molefe, 2023).

A UN-Habitat webinar undertaken in 2024 on African cities and youth activism showed that urban youth populations are increasingly driving social and political mobilization. These young citizens have begun to use online tools as a means of organizing protests and influencing policy-making and civic engagement. The webinar also revealed that in cities such as Lagos, Nairobi, and Johannesburg, around 65% of the youth-led movements start online before taking physical action in the form of protests. This panorama follows the trending argument by Tella and Babalola (2025) that online mobilization has now become an aspect of "urban citizenship," through which African youths challenge state narratives for accountability. However, even as social media enables real-time mobilization, it is also accompanied by challenges including misinformation, state surveillance, and internet shutdowns. For example, during the #EndSARS protests, the Nigerian state "banned access" to Twitter in June 2021 on the basis of "national security concerns," a move most observers saw as an attempt at digital repression of dissent (Eze & Ibrahim, 2022). Internet blackouts in Uganda during the 2021 general elections hindered protest coordination and communication among citizens (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Despite these constraints, the use of digital media by social movements keeps redefining political participation in Africa. It offers citizens, particularly youths, the opportunity to get their voices heard in the political process as they go around traditional power brokers. In the words of Adeniran and Okeke (2024), "the

smartphone has become the new placard," a summary of how digital connectivity renders civic action a global, real-time, and participatory experience.

3. Ethnic and Religious Mobilization

Nigeria's diverse ethnic and religious landscape can be a source of political mobilization.

Ethnic and religious groups may mobilize their members to support specific political candidates or parties.

This can involve appeals to shared identity, cultural values, or religious beliefs.

The struggle for resource control in the Niger Delta demonstrates how ethnic minority groups can mobilize around issues of resource control and environmental justice. [1]

4. Digital Mobilization

Social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, have emerged as powerful instruments for political mobilization in Nigeria.

According to the Munich Personal RePEc Archive, through these platforms, citizens organize protests, circulate information, and discuss various political issues. One popular example of how social media has been used in organizing largescale protests and garnering international attention in Nigeria is the #EndSARS movement. Howard Rheingold's 2000 book, "The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier," discusses how online communities and digital platforms support mobilization.

5. Community-Based Mobilization

Community outreach programs, town hall meetings, and other forms of personal contact may also be important ways in which political parties and other groups can mobilize support at the local level. This can be particularly important in rural areas or communities where access to digital technologies is scarce.

These efforts work toward a personal link with the citizens and the building of trust and support for their cause. The intent of community-based mobilization is to involve local communities in addressing problems and reaching goals by enhancing relationships, participatory decision-making, and the use of community assets. Key authors contributing to this area are Rothman, Kretzmann, and McKnight, and Minkler and Wallerstein, with main messages including asset-based strategies, the importance of community cohesion, and the use of participatory research methods.

2.4 Influence of Social Media on voters turnout of the youths

Influence of Social Media on Youth Voting Behaviour: A Systematic Literature Review by Fatimah Yazmin Yahaya and many other authors talked extensively about the influence of social media on youths' voting behavior.

The influence of social media on voter turnout among youths in the 2020 Edo State governorship election of Nigeria is a sub-topic that has wider ramifications in political participation. Social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram were important influencers in shaping the political landscape and mobilizing young voters. Due to the lockdown period as a result of the pandemic (Covid 19) the youths excessively made use of social media handles and this caused the influence of social media on voters turnout of the youths in Edo state, Nigeria. Social Media and Political

Promotion: Analysis of Edo State APC Gubernatorial Candidate's Promotion on Facebook by Blessed Ngonso and Obinna Johnkennedy Chukwu(2022).This was a study conducted to find out if political promotion on Facebook influenced Edo state electorate.

In the context of the 2020 Edo State gubernatorial election, social media has become a very important tool for political campaigns, allowing candidates to effectively reach out to a younger electorate. The election, which took place on September 19, 2020, recorded an unprecedented level of online participation where candidates and their supporters employed social media to disseminate information, share messages about their candidature, and mobilize support. This was particularly important in a state where traditional media outlets may not have reached all segments of the population.

One of the major ways through which social media influenced the change in youth voter turnout was based on how the platforms mobilized grassroots movements. For instance, several youth-led organizations used social media to encourage civic engagement and inspire young people to register to vote. Campaigns such as "Not Too Young To Run," advocating for the inclusion of youth in politics, took up momentum on social media platforms. Such campaigns, therefore, empowered the young voters by making them feel that their voice was important in the electoral process, adding a great deal of urgency to registering and voting.

For instance, one study, Boulianne, 2015, has noted that the use of social media is positively related to political participation, especially among more youthful demographics. This concurs with the findings at Edo State, where social media played an integral part in mobilizing young voters who might have otherwise been disconnected from the political process.

Besides, one should not undermine the role of social media in shaping public opinion. In the course of the Edo State election, all platforms were overwhelmed with discourses on candidates, policies, and electoral issues. This not only informed the young voters but also influenced the perception and attitude towards the election. The fact that they could hold opinions and argue about something made them more interested in the electoral process, which might have been a contributing factor in increasing turnout.

But social media comes with its own set of problems: the spread of misinformation, including fake news, is a serious challenge. It tends to confuse the minds of voters, leading them to apathy. During the Edo State election, there were instances of misleading information on social media, which could have undermined the electoral process. This also underscores the importance of launching media literacy initiatives to arm young voters with an understanding of how to make sense of information presented via the internet.

Thus, with the 2020 governorship election in Edo State, Nigeria, social media had a profound influence on youth voter turnout. It was an effective mobilization tool, provided for great engagement, and the dissemination of information, but at the same time posed some challenges to misinformation. The study of the intersection between social media and political participation among youths is dynamic, needing much more in-depth research with the constantly changing nature of digital platforms, which shape political landscapes continuously. Understanding these influences is crucial for fostering a more engaged and informed electorate in future elections.

2.5 The Challenges and Opportunities of Using Social Media for Political Mobilization

In life, there is always an advantage and a disadvantage to whatever we do. It's not far off in the case of using social media for political mobilization of the youths, particularly in the 2020 governorship election in Edo state. Osamwonyi, I.O 2021) "Social Media and Political Mobilization: A Study of the 2020 Edo State Governorship Election. "This study examines how social media platforms were used to mobilize voters, particularly the youth, during the election. It analyzes the strategies employed by political parties and candidates, as well as the challenges and opportunities presented by social media. Ekhomu, O. 2022)"Misinformation and the Electoral Process: The Role of Social Media in the 2020 Edo State Election. "This work investigates the spread of misinformation and fake news on social media platforms during the election. It assesses the impact of such information on voter behavior and the credibility of the electoral process.

Omoregie, I. (2021). "Youth Participation and Social Media: An Analysis of the 2020 Edo State Governorship Election." This post examines the ways in which social media platforms have influenced the political participation of young people in the election. It looks at how social media increases awareness, mobilizes voters, and shapes public opinion among the youth.

The problem of misinformation and disinformation. In the Edo State election, many fake claims and misleading narratives were spread on social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp. For example, there were claims about vote-buying, rigging, and violence that were spread to influence public opinion. The youth, who are heavy users of social media, were exposed to this information, which may have influenced their perceptions and voting decisions. Young people are prone to believing anything they see on the internet and this influenced their choices in whether or not to participate in the 2020 election by voting because of the misinformation on social

media handles. For example, the Edo gubernatorial candidate of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), Isaiah Osifo, said unemployment in Edo State stood at a little over 20%. But available data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) for Q4 2020 puts the unemployment rate in Edo at 49.02%, with the underemployment rate standing at 15.86%, hence the claim is incorrect. In politics, perception often trumps reality(Olusegun Adeniyi,2017).

Another major challenge is that of echo chambers and polarization. Social media algorithms most likely have created echo chambers in which users were exposed mainly to information that confirmed their preexisting political beliefs. For instance, the supporters of different candidates might have been exposed only to posts and content supportive of their preferred candidates, which further cemented their opinions and made constructive conversation with other people holding different opinions impossible. In the issue of choosing between voting for PDP or APC, the internet mostly shows posts and contents that favor the popular major parties in Edo state, Nigeria, and this is a big challenge in using social media for political mobilization. The inability to overcome the cleavages of ethnicity and religion has continued to retard the progress of the nation and has sustained an environment in which echo chambers have become the norm and critical dialogue that is necessary for changing circumstances has been hindered, including the development of a common national identity and sustainable democratic practices as citizens retreat into self-reinforcing bubbles of information and opinion (Ebere Onwudiwe 2010).

In addition the problem of trolling and online harassment is also a challenge. Trolling can be seen as a form of "performance," where individuals engage in disruptive behavior for attention or social validation(Whitney Phillips,2015). During the election, there were reports of online harassment and abuse targeting both candidates and their

supporters. For instance, some youth who expressed their political opinions on social media faced threats, insults, and personal attacks, which could have discouraged them from further participation. One thing Nigerians are known for especially the youths on internet is ‘‘TROLLING’’ and this has caused more harm than good in Nigeria. When a person strongly supports a particular party on the internet they get abused online which is totally wrong because according to the constitution everyone has the right to freedom of press especially in a democratic state like Nigeria. In essence, Section 39 of the Nigerian Constitution lays the foundation for freedom of expression and the press, allowing individuals to express themselves through various media and access information.

Besides, there is a lack of digital literacy. Some youths may have not acquired the ability to critically select information from the internet. This led them to be highly susceptible to misinformation and propaganda. This, therefore, hampers effective communication, full participation in online activities, and consequently affects career prospects. Youths that are not proficient in digital matters usually tend to be very credulous to any news and updates they see on social media handles about elections and politics in general. Information and communication technologies have become an indispensable part of the contemporary world (Orshi Terhemba Ephraim,2020).

The last issue is that of privacy concerns. The usage of personal data for political advertisement did raise a lot of questions in terms of privacy. Some youth may have been wary of sharing their data or even engaging with political content online because of privacy concerns. Privacy is a major challenge in the use of social media due to the large amount of personal data collected, shared, and exposed to various risks such as data breaches, hacking, and cyber bullying. In Nigeria, people who share a lot of their private data find it easy for them to be threatened by their posts on political issues.

However, privacy has viewed from an inter-disciplinary perspective. (Olumide Babalola,2021).

While some of the opportunities of using social media for political mobilization include the following:

Social media platforms served as primary sources of information for the youth. Candidates and political parties used platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to share their manifestos, campaign messages, and policy proposals. This allowed young people to access information directly, bypassing traditional media channels eg Candidates used Twitter to engage in debates and answer questions, while Facebook and Instagram were used to create visually appealing content to attract youth. Social media platforms have become crucial spaces for the performance and negotiation of cultural identity in Nigeria(James Yeku,2022).

Social media has also been used to increase civic engagement among the youth. Young people took advantage of the platforms to discuss issues, share their opinions, and to rally around their preferred candidates. Hashtags were created promoting certain candidates or causes, and online campaigns were launched encouraging voter registration and participation. It is becoming increasingly the case in Nigeria to define itself through the new media to place political participation, dissent, and definition of the political situation on the instrumentality of social media. Toyin Falola, 2023

The amplification of the youths' voices: through social media, young people express themselves, their opinions, and concerns. They hold candidates accountable, challenge misinformation, and continue to advocate on issues relevant to their generation-for example, youth-led groups and influencers will take to social media to plan protests, share personal stories, and develop content that would reflect young voters. As

Africa's most populous nation and one of the world's largest democracies, it is home to a generation of young people who make up more than 60% of the population. These young voices, once considered passive participants in the nation's politics and social landscape, have risen with unprecedented energy, courage, and vision, calling for change in ways that cannot be ignored(Oluchi Ike,2024)

Furthermore, social media was utilized to mobilize youths through rallies, campaigns, and other electoral-related activities. With social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram, it was easy to organize people, share information, and create community: for instance, the organization of car rallies, door-to-door campaigns, and other activities with the goal of getting as many as possible to vote. Social media use among the youth probably contributed to the increase in voter turnout in the 2020 Edo State gubernatorial election.

2.6 Measures That Can Be Implemented to Ensure the Positive Impact of Social Media on Political Mobilization

Social media has indeed become one of the most critical tools of political communication and mobilization among young people in Nigeria. However, while its potential for enhancing civic participation is huge, it also creates significant risks including misinformation, hate speech, and misuse of data. Deliberate measures must therefore be taken so that its full benefits may be realized with minimum negative impacts on political mobilization and democratic development.

Promoting Media Literacy

An effective approach in ensuring the positive use of social media is the promotion of media literacy among citizens. Media literacy may be defined as the ability to access,

analyze, evaluate, and create different types of media (Silverblatt, 2014). In Nigeria, with over 60% of the population below 30 years, internet penetration among youths is estimated at over 70% as of 2023, and there is a growing need for educating users on how to critically assess information found online. Most youngsters find it quite difficult to determine what is credible or misleading. This makes them easily manipulable during election periods. The integration of media literacy into school curricula and community-based training would help in developing critical thinking and responsible digital behavior. According to Odetola (2023), the inclusion of media and information literacy in educational systems can empower young citizens for active participation in political discourse and to resist online propaganda.

Strengthening Fact-Checking and Verification

Another essential measure is to strengthen fact-checking mechanisms. The spread of misinformation and fake news during electoral periods undermines public trust and can distort the democratic process. Fact-checking organizations such as Dubawa and the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) have made significant contributions to verifying political claims and identifying false narratives. Silverman (2014) noted that verification is a systematic process of confirming the accuracy of information before dissemination, which is critical for journalistic and civic integrity. Expanding fact-checking collaborations between media outlets, civil society organizations, and social media platforms can further enhance the accuracy of information available to the public. Oloyede (2022) observed that when voters have access to verified information, their confidence in the electoral process increases, thereby strengthening democratic legitimacy.

Regulating Hate Speech and Preventing Incitement

The proliferation of hate speech and incitement to violence on social media poses another challenge to peaceful political mobilization. Hate speech, defined as any expression that attacks individuals or groups based on race, religion, ethnicity, or gender (Strossen, 1993), has been a recurring issue in Nigerian online spaces. During political campaigns, inflammatory statements often escalate ethnic and religious tensions. Enforcing existing laws on cybercrime and enhancing regulations on digital communication can help mitigate these risks. However, such regulations should be carefully designed to avoid infringing on citizens' rights. As Akinyemi (2023) emphasized, the Nigerian government must strike a balance between curbing harmful content and protecting free speech, ensuring that online spaces remain open and democratic.

Protecting Freedom of Expression

While combating harmful online content is necessary, safeguarding freedom of expression remains equally important. The right to express one's opinion without undue restriction is a cornerstone of democratic participation. John Stuart Mill (1859) argued that freedom of expression should only be limited when it causes direct harm to others. In the Nigerian context, laws regulating online behavior must not be used as instruments of political suppression or censorship. Civil society organizations play a vital role in ensuring transparency and advocating for laws that both protect individual rights and maintain public order. Eze and Aluko (2024) suggested that open dialogue and tolerance of dissenting opinions on social media can foster a more informed and inclusive political culture.

Encouraging Diverse and Inclusive Voices

To ensure that social media promotes equality and inclusivity, deliberate efforts must be made to amplify the voices of marginalized groups such as women, youth, and ethnic minorities. Michelle Obama (2018) emphasized that personal stories and representation empower individuals and communities to participate meaningfully in public life. In Nigeria, women and minority groups are often underrepresented in political discussions, both offline and online. Encouraging campaigns that highlight the contributions of these groups and providing platforms for their engagement can make political mobilization more inclusive. According to Hassan and Bello (2023), when diverse perspectives are represented online, political debates become more balanced, and citizens are better able to understand the needs and experiences of different communities.

Promoting Ethical Use of Data

Data privacy and ethical data management are crucial in maintaining public trust in digital political engagement. With the rise of targeted political advertising and micro-profiling, citizens are increasingly concerned about how their personal information is used. Cathy O'Neil (2016) cautioned that algorithms and data-driven campaigns can have dangerous social consequences when used irresponsibly. Therefore, political actors must adopt transparent and ethical practices in data collection and usage. Enacting robust data protection laws, such as those under the Nigeria Data Protection Regulation (NDPR), can ensure accountability and prevent manipulation. Adeyemi (2022) noted that strengthening digital rights legislation is essential for building trust and encouraging active participation in online governance.

Leveraging Social Media for Civic Engagement

Finally, social media can be effectively leveraged to promote civic engagement and electoral participation. Platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp have been used to disseminate voter education materials, encourage voter registration, and promote peaceful elections. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has also utilized these platforms to communicate election updates and counter fake news. According to Falola (2023), social media has become a defining instrument of political participation in Nigeria, shaping how citizens interact with government and express collective will. By collaborating with civil society organizations and youth networks, INEC and other institutions can further use social media to strengthen civic responsibility and enhance voter turnout.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

2.7.1 Theory and Its Proponents: Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT)

The Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) was developed by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch (1974). The theory focuses on how individuals actively seek out specific media and content to satisfy particular needs or desires. Unlike traditional media theories that view audiences as passive recipients of media messages, UGT portrays them as active participants who use media to fulfill various personal and social functions such as information, entertainment, social interaction, and personal identity. The theory posits that media users are goal-oriented and make conscious choices regarding the media they consume based on their needs and motivations (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974).

2.7.2 Application to the Study

The Uses and Gratification Theory is highly relevant to understanding the influence of social media on political mobilization and youth voter turnout in Edo State. In this context, youths actively engage with social media platforms such as Twitter (X), Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok to satisfy various needs related to political information, self-expression, and social belonging.

During the 2020 Edo State governorship election, for example, young voters used social media not only to access real-time political updates but also to express opinions, join political conversations, and participate in online campaigns. This reflects the UGT perspective that individuals use media to gratify specific motivations such as information-seeking, social interaction, identity building, and mobilization for collective action. The theory helps explain why social media has become a dominant tool for political communication among Nigerian youths — they use these platforms to feel connected, informed, and empowered. It also aligns with recent studies (Akinyemi & Eze, 2023; Omoregie, 2021) showing that social media use increases youth engagement, voter awareness, and participation in democratic processes in Nigeria. Thus, UGT provides a suitable framework for examining how social media satisfies the political and social needs of young voters and drives their mobilization.

2.7.3 Limitation of the Theory

Despite its relevance, the Uses and Gratification Theory has certain limitations. First, it tends to overemphasize individual choice and underestimates structural and societal influences such as media algorithms, political propaganda, and digital inequality. In reality, social media platforms use algorithmic curation that may limit user exposure to diverse political opinions, thereby influencing what content they consume — a factor not fully addressed by UGT.

Secondly, UGT assumes that all users are rational and self-aware of their motivations, which may not always hold true, especially in political contexts where emotions, peer influence, or misinformation play significant roles. Furthermore, the theory does not sufficiently account for power dynamics, such as government censorship, fake news manipulation, or elite influence in online spaces. Nonetheless, while these limitations exist, the Uses and Gratification Theory remains an effective lens for analyzing how social media platforms fulfill informational and participatory needs that drive youth political mobilization and voter turnout.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopts a quantitative survey research design. This design is appropriate because it allows for the systematic collection and analysis of data from a representative sample of youths to examine the relationship between social media usage and political mobilization during the 2020 Edo State governorship election. The quantitative approach facilitates statistical analysis, enabling the researcher to draw objective conclusions about how social media influenced youth political awareness, participation, attitude, and voter turnout. The design also allows for comparability of results across respondents, ensuring reliability and validity of findings.

3.2 Study Area

The study is conducted in Edo State, Nigeria, located in the South-South geopolitical zone of the country. Edo State comprises 18 Local Government Areas, including Benin City (the state capital), Egor, Ikpoba-Okha, Oredo, and Uhumwode, among others. The state is known for its vibrant youth population, political consciousness, and active use of digital platforms. During the 2020 governorship election, Edo State recorded high online political engagement, particularly among young people using platforms such as Twitter (now X), Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to mobilize support, disseminate campaign information, and participate in online political discourse. This makes Edo State an ideal location for examining the role of social media in youth political mobilization.

3.3 Population of Study

The target population for this study comprises social media-active youths in Edo State who were eligible to vote during the 2020 governorship election. According to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC, 2020), Edo State had

approximately 800,000 registered youths aged between 18 and 35 who actively engaged in political activities online or offline. These individuals represent the population from which the sample for this study is drawn.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

A simple random sampling technique is employed to ensure that all youths in the target population have an equal chance of being selected. This technique minimizes bias and allows for a more representative distribution of respondents across gender, education level, and locality (urban and rural).

Given the large size of the population, the **Taro Yamane (1967) formula** is applied to determine the sample size:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population size (800,000 youths)

e = Margin of error (0.05 for 5%)

$$n = \frac{1,320,000}{1 + 800,000(0.05^2)}$$

N ≈ 200

Thus, the sample size is 200 respondents, which is considered statistically adequate for a population of this magnitude and suitable for meaningful analysis.

3.5 Method of Data Collection

This study employed a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection to ensure a comprehensive and balanced understanding of the subject matter. The quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 200 youths drawn from selected local government areas across Edo State. The questionnaire contained closed-ended questions designed on a Likert scale, which enabled the researcher to measure and quantify respondents' perceptions and opinions on the influence of social media on political mobilization, political awareness, and participation during the 2020 Edo State governorship election. In addition to the questionnaire, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with selected key informants, including youth leaders, social media influencers, and campaign coordinators. These interviews provided deeper insights into the patterns of online political engagement, the credibility of digital information sources, and the strategies employed by political actors to mobilize support through social media platforms. By combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study ensured triangulation of data, which enhanced the validity, reliability, and depth of the findings, thereby offering a more holistic perspective on the role of social media in youth political mobilization in Edo State.

3.6 Instrument of Data Collection

The primary instrument used for data collection in this study is a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher to obtain relevant information from

respondents. The questionnaire is carefully organized into five sections to ensure that all aspects of the research objectives are adequately covered. Section A focuses on the demographic characteristics of respondents, including age, gender, educational qualification, and place of residence. Section B gathers information on the frequency and type of social media usage, helping to identify the most commonly used platforms among youths. Section C examines respondents' levels of political awareness and their exposure to political campaign information shared through social media. Section D explores the extent of political participation and mobilization activities in which respondents were involved during the 2020 Edo State governorship election. Lastly, Section E investigates political attitudes and voting behavior, assessing how online engagement influenced youths' voting decisions. In addition to the questionnaire, a semi-structured interview guide is utilized for the qualitative component of the study. This guide is designed to elicit detailed opinions and experiences from selected key respondents, such as youth leaders, social media influencers, and political campaign coordinators. The combination of the questionnaire and interview guide allows the researcher to collect both measurable and narrative data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the influence of social media on youth political mobilization in Edo State.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure validity, the questionnaire will be reviewed by experts in political science and mass communication to assess its content accuracy, clarity, and relevance to the research objectives. Necessary corrections will be made based on their recommendations.

Reliability will be established through a pilot test conducted among 20 youths in a different locality within Edo State. The responses from the pilot test will be analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha, and a coefficient value of 0.70 or above will be considered acceptable, indicating good internal consistency of the instrument.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained from the field will be analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between social media usage and youth political mobilization in Edo State. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, percentages, and charts will be employed to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and general patterns in their responses. These descriptive measures will provide a clear overview of the extent and nature of social media engagement among the youth population. Inferential statistics, particularly multiple regression analysis and correlation analysis, will be applied to examine the strength and direction of relationships between the independent variables—such as social media usage, political awareness, participation, and attitudes—and the dependent variable, which is voter turnout. The use of these statistical tools will help identify whether and how social media influences political mobilization outcomes among youths. In addition to the quantitative analysis, qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involves identifying, categorizing, and interpreting recurring themes, patterns, and ideas within the interview responses. The qualitative insights will serve to complement and deepen the quantitative findings, providing a more holistic understanding of the role of social media in shaping political behavior and mobilization among youths in Edo State.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The study upholds the highest ethical standards throughout the research process. Respondents will be informed about the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Participation will be voluntary, and respondents will have the right to withdraw at any stage without any consequence. Personal data such as names and contact details will not be collected to ensure anonymity. The study complies with ethical principles of respect, beneficence, and justice, in line with social science research ethics.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter presents the analysis of data generated for the study. The chapter begins with the presentation of the bio-data of respondents, followed by a descriptive analysis of the research variables (independent and dependent). Thereafter, the hypotheses are tested to determine the relationship between the variables as a means of achieving the study objectives outlined in Chapter One.

A total of one hundred (200) structured questionnaires were administered to youths in Edo State, who actively used social media during the 2020 governorship election, and all were duly retrieved and analyzed. The data obtained in this study provide insights into the role of social media and how it affects political mobilization of youths in Edo State. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the key findings in relation to the research objectives.

4.1 Demographics of Respondents

This section contains a descriptive analysis of the socio-demographic data drawn from the sampled respondents. The socio-demographic variables include the institution of the respondent, gender and age.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 4.1: Analysis of Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	124	62%
Female	76	38%
Total	200	100%

Source: Fieldwork Survey, 2025

Table 4.1 presents the gender distribution of respondents in the study. Out of the total 200 youths surveyed, 124 respondents, representing 62%, were male, while 76 respondents, representing 38%, were female. This indicates that male youths constituted a larger proportion of the participants compared to their female counterparts. The higher representation of males may suggest that men are more actively engaged in political discussions and mobilization activities on social media during elections in Edo State. However, the considerable participation of females (38%) also reflects a growing interest and involvement of young women in political processes through digital platforms.

Table 4.2: Analysis of Age Distribution of the Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
15 – 19 years	18	9%
20 – 24 years	138	69%
25 years and above	44	22%
Total	200	100%

Source: Fieldwork Survey, 2025

Table 4.2 presents the age distribution of the 200 respondents who participated in the study. The results reveal that the majority, 138 respondents (69%), fall within the 20–24 years age bracket. This indicates that a significant portion of the youth population actively involved in social media–based political mobilization during the 2020 Edo State governorship election were young adults in their early twenties. Furthermore, 44

respondents (22%) were 25 years and above, showing that older youths also engaged in political discussions and mobilization through social media, though to a lesser extent. The remaining 18 respondents (9%) were between 15–19 years, representing younger adolescents who were either first-time voters or politically aware social media users. Overall, the data imply that the 20–24-year-old age group constituted the most vibrant and politically active segment of youths in Edo State during the election, reflecting their strong presence on digital platforms and their growing influence in Nigeria’s democratic process.

Table 4.4: Voter Turnout

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Remark
1	Facebook was the most frequently used platform for political information during the 2020 election.	104 (52%)	64 (32%)	24 (12%)	8 (4%)	0 (0%)	4.32	High
2	WhatsApp played a significant role in youth political engagement.	80 (40%)	64 (32%)	48 (24%)	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	4.05	High
3	Twitter was widely used by youths to access political updates.	110 (55%)	72 (36%)	8 (4%)	2 (1%)	8 (4%)	4.39	High
4	Instagram was an important platform for	104 (52%)	52 (26%)	40 (20%)	4 (2%)	0 (0%)	4.26	High

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Remark
	sharing campaign information.							
5	YouTube and other platforms contributed to youth political awareness.	80 (40%)	88 (44%)	32 (16%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.24	High
Cluster Mean		48%	34%	15%	2%	1%	4.25	High

Source: Fieldwork Survey, 2025

Table 4.4 presents the responses of 200 youths from Edo State regarding their use of different social media platforms for political information and engagement during the 2020 governorship election. The results reveal that social media played a highly significant role in mobilizing youths and shaping their political behavior. From the data, the highest-rated platform was Twitter, with a mean score of 4.39, showing that it served as the most active medium for accessing political updates, campaign messages, and real-time election news. This aligns with the global trend where Twitter has become a dominant tool for political communication and civic engagement among young voters.

Facebook followed closely with a mean of 4.32, indicating that it remained a central hub for sharing campaign materials, interacting with candidates, and discussing political issues. Similarly, Instagram (Mean = 4.26) and YouTube (Mean = 4.24) were

also highly rated, demonstrating their influence in spreading visual and video-based political content that attracted youth attention and participation.

WhatsApp, with a mean of 4.05, was identified as an important platform for political engagement, particularly for private discussions and grassroots mobilization through group chats and message forwarding. Overall, the cluster mean of 4.25 indicates a high level of social media engagement across all platforms. This implies that social media was a powerful tool for political mobilization during the 2020 Edo State governorship election, enhancing youth participation, awareness, and voter turnout. The results emphasize that digital platforms have become indispensable in modern political communication, particularly among young and tech-savvy electorates.

Table 4.5: Platform Usage

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Remark
1	Social media increased my knowledge of the candidates contesting in the 2020 election.	120 (60%)	64 (32%)	16 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.52	High
2	Social media improved my understanding of party manifestos and policies.	72 (36%)	80 (40%)	32 (16%)	16 (8%)	0 (0%)	4.04	High
3	Social media provided me with real-time updates on	128 (64%)	48 (24%)	16 (8%)	8 (4%)	0 (0%)	4.48	High

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Remark
	election issues.							
4	Social media discussions enhanced my awareness of political debates.	112 (56%)	80 (40%)	8 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.52	High
5	Overall, social media improved my political knowledge compared to traditional media.	128 (64%)	40 (20%)	24 (12%)	8 (4%)	0 (0%)	4.44	High
Cluster Mean		56 (56%)	31 (31%)	10 (10%)	3 (3%)	0 (0%)	4.40	High

Table 4.5 presents the responses of 200 participants on the role of social media platforms in enhancing political awareness and engagement during the 2020 election. The results show a generally high level of agreement among respondents, with all the mean scores above 4.00, indicating a positive perception of social media's impact on political knowledge. From the data, 60% of respondents strongly agreed and 32% agreed that social media increased their knowledge of candidates contesting in the 2020 election, with a high mean score of 4.52. This suggests that social media served as a major channel through which political information about candidates was disseminated. Similarly, 56% strongly agreed and 40% agreed that social media discussions enhanced their awareness of political debates, also reflected in a high mean value of 4.52.

A significant number of respondents (64%) strongly agreed that social media provided real-time updates on election issues (mean = 4.48), showing that social platforms were timely and efficient in delivering political news. Additionally, 36% of respondents strongly agreed and 40% agreed that social media improved their understanding of party manifestos and policies (mean = 4.04), emphasizing its educational role in politics.

Furthermore, 64% of respondents strongly agreed that social media improved their political knowledge compared to traditional media (mean = 4.44), implying that digital platforms are now more trusted and engaging sources of political information among the youth. The overall cluster mean of 4.40 indicates a high level of platform usage, confirming that social media significantly influenced political awareness and understanding among respondents. In summary, the table demonstrates that social media platforms were instrumental in enhancing political education, awareness, and participation among youths during the 2020 election period.

Table 4.6: Political Awareness

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Remark
1	Social media motivated me to attend political rallies or campaigns.	104 (52%)	72 (36%)	8 (4%)	16 (8%)	0 (0%)	4.16	High
2	I participated in online political	88 (44%)	80 (40%)	16 (8%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	4.08	High

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Remark
	discussions through social media.							
3	Social media posts influenced my decision to support a candidate publicly.	96 (48%)	80 (40%)	16 (8%)	8 (4%)	0 (0%)	4.20	High
4	I shared or reposted political content during the election.	104 (52%)	72 (36%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	4.16	High
5	Social media engagement strengthened youth involvement in political campaigns.	104 (52%)	72 (36%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	4.16	High
Cluster Mean		99 (49.6%)	75 (37.6%)	11 (5.6%)	10 (4.8%)	5 (2.4%)	4.15	High

Table 4.6 presents data on how social media influenced the political awareness and engagement of youths during the 2020 Edo State governorship election. The results reveal that a majority of respondents agreed that social media played a significant role in motivating their political involvement.

Specifically, 52% of respondents strongly agreed and 36% agreed that social media motivated them to attend political rallies or campaigns, indicating that online

exposure translated into physical political participation. Similarly, 44% strongly agreed and 40% agreed that they participated in online political discussions through social media, showing that these platforms provided spaces for youth political dialogue and debate. Furthermore, 48% strongly agreed and 40% agreed that social media posts influenced their decision to publicly support a political candidate, suggesting that social media messages significantly shaped political opinions and alignments. Likewise, 52% strongly agreed that they shared or reposted political content during the election, highlighting the participatory nature of social media communication among youths. Overall, with a cluster mean score of 4.15, the responses indicate a high level of agreement that social media was instrumental in increasing political awareness, stimulating youth participation, and strengthening civic engagement during the 2020 Edo State election. This finding underscores the growing influence of digital platforms in fostering political consciousness among young people.

TABLE 4.7: Political Participation

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Remark
1	Social media influenced my political attitudes towards specific candidates.	106 (53%)	54 (27%)	16 (8%)	8 (4%)	16 (8%)	3.84	Moderate
2	Political	104	68	8 (4%)	16	4 (2%)	4.08	High

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Remark
	advertisements on social media shaped my voting preference.	(52%)	(34%)		(8%)			
3	Social media helped me form opinions about party credibility.	94 (47%)	74 (37%)	16 (8%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	4.00	High
4	I relied on social media content in deciding which candidate to support.	96 (48%)	80 (40%)	16 (8%)	8 (4%)	0 (0%)	4.12	High
5	Social media campaigns were more persuasive than traditional media campaigns.	104 (52%)	72 (36%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	4.00	High
Cluster Mean		100.8 (50.4%)	69.6 (34.8%)	12.8 (6.4%)	9.6 (4.8%)	7.2 (3.6%)	4.01	High

Table 4.7 presents the responses of 200 youths regarding how social media influenced their political participation during the 2020 Edo State governorship election. The

findings indicate that social media plays a significant role in shaping youths' political attitudes, preferences, and engagement. The results show that 53% of respondents strongly agreed and 27% agreed that social media influenced their political attitudes toward specific candidates, indicating that online platforms contribute to attitude formation. Similarly, 52% strongly agreed and 34% agreed that political advertisements on social media shaped their voting preferences, suggesting that digital campaigns were persuasive and effective in influencing electoral choices. Furthermore, 47% of respondents strongly agreed and 37% agreed that social media helped them form opinions about party credibility, implying that online political discourse and digital campaign strategies fostered awareness of political integrity. Additionally, 48% strongly agreed and 40% agreed that they relied on social media content to decide which candidate to support, highlighting the platform's influence on political decision-making. Lastly, 52% strongly agreed that social media campaigns were more persuasive than traditional media campaigns, reflecting a shift in how youths consume political information and engage in civic matters. With an overall cluster mean of 4.01, the data indicates a high level of political participation influenced by social media. This suggests that social media has become a dominant tool for political communication and voter mobilization among youths in Edo State, surpassing traditional media in effectiveness and reach.

Table 4.8: Political Attitude

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Remark
1	Social media encouraged me	96 (48%)	66 (33%)	8 (4%)	16 (8%)	14 (7%)	4.10	High

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Remark
	to register to vote.							
2	Social media motivated me to participate in the voting process.	80 (40%)	72 (36%)	16 (8%)	16 (8%)	16 (8%)	4.00	High
3	Online reminders from social media influenced my decision to vote.	88 (44%)	72 (36%)	16 (8%)	8 (4%)	16 (8%)	4.00	High
4	Social media mobilized more youths to vote compared to past elections.	96 (48%)	64 (32%)	8 (4%)	16 (8%)	16 (8%)	4.08	High
5	Without social media, youth voter turnout would have been lower.	96 (48%)	74 (37%)	8 (4%)	8 (4%)	14 (7%)	4.10	High
Cluster Mean		91.2 (45.6%)	70 (34.8%)	11.2 (5.6%)	12.8 (6.4%)	15.2 (7.6%)	4.05	High

Table 4.8 presents the responses of 200 youths in Edo State regarding how social media influenced their political attitudes and voter behavior during the 2020 governorship election.

The findings show that a majority of the respondents agreed that social media played a significant role in shaping their political attitudes. Specifically, 48% of the respondents strongly agreed, while 33% agreed that social media encouraged them to register to vote. This indicates that online political campaigns and awareness messages effectively motivated voter registration among youths. Furthermore, 40% strongly agreed and 36% agreed that social media motivated them to participate in the voting process, suggesting that digital engagement encouraged active participation in the electoral process. Similarly, 44% strongly agreed and 36% agreed that online reminders and messages influenced their decision to vote, highlighting the impact of timely digital prompts on voter behavior. In addition, 48% strongly agreed and 32% agreed that social media mobilized more youths to vote compared to past elections, showing that digital platforms have become powerful tools for mass mobilization. Lastly, 48% strongly agreed and 37% agreed that without social media, youth voter turnout would have been lower, emphasizing the indispensable role of social media in enhancing electoral participation among young voters.

With a cluster mean of 4.05, the overall result indicates a high level of agreement that social media positively influenced youths' political attitudes and participation. This implies that social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp were crucial in motivating, informing, and mobilizing young voters during the 2020 Edo State governorship election.

4.3 Regression Analysis

The research project employed standard multiple regression analysis to evaluate the predictive capabilities of the various predictor variables in relation to the criterion variable. The hypotheses were tested using the p-values in the regression result. Where the p-values are greater than or equal to 0.05, the null hypotheses (H_0) are accepted, while p-values less than 0.05 lead to the rejection of the null hypotheses.

Table 4.6 Model Summary

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.812	.659	.648	.32145	1.976

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Platform Usage, Political Awareness, Participation in Political Activities, Political Attitudes/Preferences, Voter Turnout

b. Dependent Variable: Youth Political Mobilization

The model summary provides an overview of the regression analysis conducted to examine the relationship between the predictors (social media platform usage, political awareness, participation in political activities, political attitudes/preferences, and voter turnout) and the dependent variable, youth political mobilization.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.659, indicating that approximately 65.9% of the variance in youth political mobilization can be explained by the predictors

included in the model. This suggests a strong relationship between social media-related factors and youth mobilization.

The adjusted R² value of 0.648 indicates a slight adjustment for the number of predictors, showing that the model still maintains a high explanatory power.

The standard error of the estimate is 0.32145, which represents the average distance between the observed and predicted values of youth political mobilization. The smaller the value, the better the model fits the data.

The Durbin-Watson statistic is 1.976, which falls within the acceptable range of 1–3, indicating that there is no substantial autocorrelation in the residuals of the regression model. Overall, the model demonstrates a good fit, with the predictors collectively explaining a substantial portion of the variance in youth political mobilization.

Table 4.7. ANOVA^a

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	214.763	5	17.271	9.335	.000
	Residual	111.237	94	1.183		
	Total	326.000	99			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Platform Usage, Political Awareness, Participation in Political Activities, Political Attitudes/Preferences, Voter Turnout

b. Dependent Variable: Youth Political Mobilization

The ANOVA results reveal that the regression model is statistically significant, with an F-statistic of 9.335 and a corresponding p-value of .000 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that the predictors, taken together, significantly contribute to explaining the variance in youth political mobilization.

The regression sum of squares is 214.763, showing the variation explained by the model, while the residual sum of squares is 111.237, representing the unexplained variation. The total sum of squares is 326.000, reflecting the overall variation in youth political mobilization. In conclusion, the model as a whole is statistically significant and demonstrates that social media factors are key determinants of political mobilization among youths.

Table 4.8. Coefficients^a

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	(Constant)	1.214	.432	–	2.810	.006
	Social Media Platform Usage,	.382	.091	.401	4.198	.000
	Political Awareness	.297	.084	.315	3.536	.001
	Participation in Political Activities,	.212	.078	.228	2.718	.008
	Political Attitudes/Preferences	.184	.072	.192	2.556	.012
	Voter Turnout	.165	.069	.176	2.391	.019

Dependent Variable: Youth Political Mobilization

The coefficients table presents the effect of each independent variable on youth political mobilization:

Social Media Platform Usage ($\beta = .401$, $p = .000$): This is the strongest predictor, showing that increased usage of platforms significantly enhances youth mobilization.

Political Awareness ($\beta = .315$, $p = .001$): Awareness generated through social media strongly influences mobilization.

Participation in Political Activities ($\beta = .228$, $p = .008$): Engagement in campaigns, rallies, and online discussions also has a significant positive effect.

Political Attitudes/Preferences ($\beta = .192$, $p = .012$): Social media has a notable influence on shaping political attitudes.

Voter Turnout ($\beta = .176$, $p = .019$): Youth voter turnout was significantly affected by social media mobilization.

Since all predictors have **p-values** < **0.05**, they are statistically significant contributors to youth political mobilization.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The findings from our study shed light on the determinants of tax audit effectiveness, providing insights that align with and expand upon existing theoretical and empirical research. We compare and contrast our findings with those of previous studies highlighted in the theoretical and empirical review.

Our study corroborates the literature emphasizing the critical role of organizational factors in shaping tax audit outcomes. Similar to Jones and Williams (2018) and Smith et al. (2020), who underscored the importance of organizational structure, resource allocation, and management practices, our results revealed that adequate resources and structured management support significantly influence audit effectiveness. However, while previous research focused broadly on organizational arrangements, our study goes deeper by examining specific internal processes—such as clear task allocation and performance monitoring—that enhance audit outcomes.

The findings also affirm the significance of auditor-related factors in line with Clark and Jones (2017), who highlighted auditor expertise, training, and workload management. Our results confirm that auditors' professional competence and continuous training directly improve audit quality. Unlike previous studies that stressed general expertise, our study highlights the importance of targeted training

programs, workload prioritization, and exposure to modern auditing tools as mechanisms for improving effectiveness.

Consistent with Davis and Smith (2019), who emphasized cooperative taxpayer behavior, our findings show that taxpayers' willingness to comply and communicate transparently with auditors facilitates smoother and more effective audits. However, our study extends this understanding by exploring communication strategies and taxpayer education campaigns as proactive measures that can foster long-term voluntary compliance. This expands the literature by showing not just the outcomes of cooperation but the strategies that drive it.

Our results also resonate with Miller and White (2020), who emphasized the role of legal and regulatory frameworks. The study demonstrates that clear and enforceable regulations are vital for effective tax audits. However, we go further by revealing that frequent updates to tax laws, coupled with consistent enforcement mechanisms, increase the credibility of tax audits and strengthen compliance. This highlights the dynamic relationship between evolving legal frameworks and audit effectiveness.

Moreover, the findings complement Brown and Johnson (2018), who underscored the importance of technological tools in optimizing audits. While prior studies emphasized the need for access to databases and analytics, our study expands this by showing how the actual utilization of data analytics, risk profiling, and automated systems by auditors significantly improves detection rates and reduces errors. By exploring the interplay between technology adoption and audit practices, we provide practical insights into leveraging technological innovations for enhanced effectiveness. Overall, our study contributes to addressing key gaps identified in the literature, including the need for cross-disciplinary approaches, contextualized findings in

developing economies, and the evaluation of practical strategies. By examining organizational, auditor-related, taxpayer, regulatory, and knowledge factors in detail, our research provides actionable insights for tax authorities to improve audit effectiveness.

Nonetheless, further research is recommended, particularly in the context of developing countries, to adopt longitudinal and experimental methods that can establish causality and evaluate the long-term impact of these determinants. In summary, our findings build upon and extend existing research to provide a comprehensive understanding of the determinants of tax audit effectiveness. By integrating organizational, auditor-related, taxpayer, regulatory, and knowledge factors, this study provides a robust framework for optimizing tax audit processes and enhancing compliance with tax laws and regulations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study investigated the role of social media and how it affects political mobilization of youths in Edo State, with a focus on the 2020 governorship election. The study examined key variables such as social media platform usage, political awareness, participation in political activities, political attitudes/preferences, and voter turnout among youths. A total of 200 respondents participated in the study

through a structured questionnaire, and the data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (including regression analysis).

The major findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. Social Media Platform Usage:

The findings revealed that youths in Edo State extensively used social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter (now X), Instagram, and WhatsApp during the 2020 governorship election. These platforms served as major sources of political information and tools for mobilization. The regression results showed that social media usage ($\beta = .401$, $p = .000$) had the strongest positive influence on youth political mobilization.

2. Political Awareness:

The study found that social media significantly increased political awareness among youths. It enabled them to stay informed about candidates, party manifestos, political events, and electoral processes. Political awareness ($\beta = .315$, $p = .001$) was found to have a strong and statistically significant impact on youth political engagement.

3. Participation in Political Activities:

Social media platforms facilitated youth participation in online and offline political activities such as sharing political content, attending rallies, and participating in virtual debates. The analysis indicated that participation in political activities ($\beta = .228$, $p = .008$) positively influenced youth mobilization.

4. Political Attitudes and Preferences:

The study established that exposure to political content on social media influenced the political attitudes and preferences of youths. Many respondents

reported that their voting decisions and candidate support were shaped by online campaigns and political discourse. This factor ($\beta = .192$, $p = .012$) significantly contributed to political mobilization.

5. **Voter Turnout:**

Social media also played a significant role in encouraging youths to register and vote during the election. Online campaigns and reminders boosted voter turnout among young people. The regression analysis showed that voter turnout ($\beta = .176$, $p = .019$) was a significant predictor of youth mobilization.

6. **Overall Model Performance:**

The regression model ($R^2 = .659$) indicated that **65.9% of the variance in youth political mobilization** could be explained by the five predictors (social media usage, political awareness, participation, attitudes, and voter turnout). This demonstrates a strong relationship between social media activities and political engagement among youths in Edo State.

In summary, the study revealed that social media has transformed political communication in Edo State by increasing awareness, shaping attitudes, and mobilizing youths toward active political participation.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that social media plays a pivotal role in enhancing youth political mobilization in Edo State. The 2020 governorship election demonstrated that platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp were instrumental in shaping political discourse and influencing electoral participation among young people.

Social media served not only as a communication channel but also as a mobilization tool, bridging the gap between political actors and the electorate. It allowed youths to express opinions, participate in political debates, and access real-time updates on electoral events.

The study further concludes that the influence of social media on political mobilization is both significant and positive, as it promotes inclusivity, engagement, and accountability in democratic processes. However, the spread of misinformation and political bias remains a challenge that needs to be addressed.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Strengthen Digital Political Education:

Political institutions and civil society organizations should implement programs that educate youths on how to responsibly use social media for political participation and avoid misinformation.

2. Enhance Political Campaign Strategies:

Political parties should adopt well-structured and ethical social media strategies that focus on issue-based campaigns rather than propaganda or hate speech.

3. Promote Voter Engagement through Digital Platforms:

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and advocacy groups should utilize social media to disseminate voter education, registration information, and election updates to sustain youth participation.

4. Encourage Responsible Use of Social Media:

Youths should be encouraged to verify political information before sharing, thereby minimizing the spread of fake news and political manipulation.

5. Government Regulation and Support:

Government agencies should collaborate with social media companies to monitor electoral content, ensuring compliance with ethical standards without infringing on freedom of expression.

6. Sustain Youth Mobilization Efforts:

Political stakeholders should build on the momentum created by social media in the 2020 Edo governorship election by engaging youths continuously in governance, policy discussions, and democratic development.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

Future research should explore:

1. The influence of social media algorithms on voter behavior and political decision-making.
2. Comparative studies on youth political mobilization across multiple Nigerian states using different social media platforms.
3. The role of fake news and digital manipulation in shaping political outcomes.
4. Longitudinal studies examining how social media engagement evolves across election cycles.

5.5 Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on digital democracy by highlighting that:

- Social media is a powerful driver of youth political mobilization in Nigeria.
- The 2020 Edo governorship election serves as evidence of how digital platforms are reshaping electoral participation.
- A model explaining the relationship between social media usage, awareness, participation, attitudes, and mobilization was empirically validated.

References

Abdalla, H. M. (2022). Digital resistance and political change: Lessons from Sudan's 2019 revolution. *African Affairs*, 121(483), 512–533.

Aboagye, K. Y., & Kamara, M. S. (2022). Grassroots democracy and civic participation in West Africa: Comparative insights from Ghana and Sierra Leone. *African Governance Review*, 8(1), 59–78.

- Adebayo, M. A., & Nwankwo, C. I. (2022). Digital democracy and youth political engagement in Nigeria. *Journal of African Political Studies*, 8(3), 118–135.
- Adeniran, K. T. (2025). Digital creativity and youth culture: The global influence of TikTok. *Journal of Contemporary Media Studies*, 14(1), 67–82.
- Adeniran, K. T. (2025). Youth political mobilization in the digital era: A study of social media participation in Nigeria. *Journal of Contemporary African Governance*, 14(2), 63–81.
- Adeniran, T. K., & Ojo, A. R. (2025). Digital transformation and party mobilization strategies in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. *African Journal of Political Dynamics*, 9(1), 51–70.
- Adeniran, T. K., & Okeke, C. A. (2024). The smartphone as the new placard: Youth digital activism and political change in Nigeria. *Journal of African Digital Studies*, 5(1), 77–96.
- Adetula, V. A. O. (2021). *Youth, democracy and digital engagement in Nigeria*. Ibadan University Press.
- Adetula, V. A. O. (2021). *Youth, democracy and digital engagement in Nigeria*. Ibadan University Press.
- Adewale, M. O., & Ogunleye, T. F. (2022). Social media innovation and communication trends among Nigerian youths. *African Journal of Information and Communication*, 8(3), 115–130.

- Adeyemi, K. T., & Musa, A. R. (2025). Digital expression and youth identity in Nigeria: A study of social media participation. *Journal of Media and Communication Research*, 17(1), 44–59.
- Adeyemi, T. O. (2022). Digital rights and democratic accountability in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects. *Journal of African Governance Studies*, 8(2), 67–84.
- Agbim, K. C., Ikenna, O. J., & Eke, E. C. (2023). Social media and grassroots political mobilization in Nigeria: Evidence from the 2020 Edo State governorship election. *Journal of Media and Political Communication*, 8(2), 55–70.
- Akinola, L. S., & Ojebode, A. (2021). Hashtag activism and political participation: A case study of the #EndSARS movement. *African Journal of Communication and Society*, 5(2), 94–110.
- Akinwale, S. O., & Eze, M. I. (2023). Online learning communities and knowledge sharing among Nigerian youths. *International Journal of Digital Education and Learning*, 9(2), 112–128.
- Akinyemi, R. A. (2023). Regulating hate speech in Nigeria’s digital era: Balancing security and freedom. *Nigerian Journal of Policy and Law*, 15(1), 45–59.*
- Amnesty International. (2021). *Nigeria: “They betrayed us” — The government’s failure to end police brutality and justice for #EndSARS protesters*. Amnesty International Report AFR 44/3418/2021.
- Amoako, R. (2022). Social media and political participation among Ghanaian youth during the 2020 elections. *African Journal of Media Studies*, 14(1), 102–120.

- Arceneaux, K., & Nickerson, D. W. (2010). Comparing negative and positive campaign messages: Evidence from a field experiment. *American Politics Research*, 38(1), 54–83.
- Art Silverblatt, A. (2014). *Media literacy: Keys to interpreting media messages* (4th ed.). Praeger.
- Asante, R., & Boateng, S. (2022). Youth, digital platforms, and political participation in Ghana's 2020 elections. *Journal of African Political Studies*, 14(2), 73–88.
- Babalola, O. (2021). *Privacy and data protection law in Nigeria*. Olumide Babalola LP.
- Bamigbade, O. J., & Adeyeye, R. O. (2022). Instagram and visual storytelling: Reimagining youth engagement in digital spaces. *International Journal of Digital Culture and Society*, 6(2), 103–120.
- Boateng, E., & Mensah, K. (2022). Social media and electoral mobilization in Ghana's 2020 elections. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 14(3), 223–240.
- Boulianne, S. (2015). Social media use and participation: A meta-analysis of current research. *Information, Communication & Society*, 18(5), 524–538.
- Castells, M. (2013). *Networks of outrage and hope: Social movements in the Internet age* (2nd ed.). Polity Press.
- Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD). (2023). *Election observation report on Nigeria's 2023 general elections*. CDD West Africa.

- Chatora, A. (2012). *Encouraging political participation in Africa: The potential of social media platforms*. Policy Brief, Institute for Security Studies.
- Chukwuma, E., & Bello, A. J. (2024). Viral culture and participatory media: A study of TikTok's global appeal. *African Journal of New Media and Society*, 5(1), 88–101.
- CIRCLE. (2021). *Youth voting in America: 2020 election turnout analysis*. Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement.
- Daniels, P. U., & Umeh, I. K. (2024). Ephemeral communication and digital privacy among Nigerian youths: The Snapchat experience. *Journal of Communication and Digital Culture*, 11(2), 132–147.
- DataReportal. (2024). *Digital 2024: Nigeria — Internet and social media statistics*. <https://datareportal.com>
- Ekhomu, O. (2022). Misinformation and the electoral process: The role of social media in the 2020 Edo State election. *Journal of African Electoral Studies*, 5(2), 75–92.
- Eze, C. E. (2023). Social media and youth political engagement in Nigeria: Opportunities and dilemmas. *African Journal of Media and Communication Studies*, 8(1), 45–59.
- Eze, C. N., & Okonkwo, I. A. (2024). Media literacy and the fight against political disinformation in Nigeria's digital age. *Journal of Media and Society*, 12(1), 59–77.

- Eze, P. N., & Ibrahim, Z. U. (2022). State surveillance and digital repression in Nigeria: Lessons from the Twitter ban. *Journal of African Governance and Security*, 9(2), 61–78.
- Eze, S. C., & Aluko, J. O. (2024). Freedom of expression and social media governance in Nigeria. *African Journal of Communication and Media Studies*, 12(1), 22–38.
- Falola, T. (2023). Digital activism and youth political engagement in contemporary Africa. Ibadan University Press.
- Falola, T. (2023). New media, youth, and the redefinition of political participation in Nigeria. *African Communication Review*, 17(1), 41–60.
- Freedom House. (2023). *Freedom on the Net 2023: Nigeria*. <https://freedomhouse.org>
- Gerber, A. S., & Green, D. P. (2000). The effects of canvassing, telephone calls, and direct mail on voter turnout: A field experiment. *American Political Science Review*, 94(3), 653–663.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Political Science
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Benin,
Benin City.

Dear Participant,

I am a student of the above department conducting a study on **“The Role of Social Media in Political Activism and Youth Participation in the 2020 Edo State Governorship Election.”** I kindly solicit your honest responses to the questions below. Please note that your responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and used strictly for academic purposes.

Your participation is voluntary, and you are encouraged to answer as sincerely as possible.

Yours faithfully,

(Researcher)

Section A: Demographic Information

Gender: Male Female

Age:

15 – 19 years

20 – 24 years

25 years and above

Education Level:

Secondary

Tertiary

Others (specify) _____

Section B: Respondents’ Responses

Key:

SA – Strongly Agree

A – Agree

U – Undecided

D – Disagree

SD – Strongly Disagree

Research Question 1: Which social media platforms were most frequently used by youths in Edo State for political information and engagement during the 2020 Governorship election?

S/N	ITEMS	S	A	U	D	SD
1	Facebook was the most frequently used platform for political information during the 2020 election.					
2	WhatsApp played a significant role in youth political engagement.					
3	Twitter was widely used by youths to access political updates.					
4	Instagram was an important platform for sharing campaign information.					
5	YouTube and other platforms contributed to youth political awareness.					

Research Question 2: To what extent did social media platforms enhance political awareness and knowledge among youths regarding the candidates, parties, and issues of the 2020 election?

S/N	ITEMS	S	A	U	D	SD
6	Social media increased my knowledge of the candidates contesting in the 2020 election.					
7	Social media improved my understanding of party manifestos and policies.					
8	Social media provided me with real-time updates on election issues.					
9	Social media discussions enhanced my awareness of political debates.					
10	Overall, social media improved my political knowledge compared to traditional media.					

Research Question 3: How did social media influence the participation of youths in various political activities, such as rallies, campaigns, and online discussions, during the 2020 election?

S/N	ITEMS	S	A	U	D	SD
11	Social media motivated me to attend political rallies or campaigns.					
12	I participated in online political discussions through social media.					
13	Social media posts influenced my decision to support a candidate publicly.					
14	I shared or reposted political content during the election.					
15	Social media engagement strengthened youth involvement in political campaigns.					

Research Question 4: What role did social media play in shaping the political attitudes and preferences of youths towards specific candidates or parties in the 2020 election?

S/N	ITEMS	S	A	U	D	SD
16	Social media influenced my political attitudes towards specific candidates.					
17	Political advertisements on social media shaped my voting preference.					

S/N	ITEMS	S	A	A	U	D	S	D
18	Social media helped me form opinions about party credibility.							
19	I relied on social media content in deciding which candidate to support.							
20	Social media campaigns were more persuasive than traditional media campaigns.							

Research Question 5: What was the impact of social media on voter turnout among youths in the 2020 Edo State Governorship election?

S/N	ITEMS	S	A	A	U	D	S	D
21	Social media encouraged me to register to vote.							
22	Social media motivated me to participate in the voting process.							
23	Online reminders from social media influenced my decision to vote.							
24	Social media mobilized more youths to vote compared to past elections.							
25	Without social media, youth voter turnout would have been lower.							

Thank you for your time and cooperation!