Influence of Social Media on Political News Credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria

Oladokun, Bolaji David[1]; Nsirim, Onyema[2]; Otebe, Fidelis[3], Agih, Abdul[4]; Mbazu, Emmanuel Chinedu[5] & Mohammed, James Dada[6]

[1,3,4,6]Kogi State University
Anyigba, Nigeria

[2]Ajuru Ignatius University of Education
Port Harcourt, Nigeria

[5]Global Wealth University
Lomé, Togo

Correspondence: oladokun.bd@ksu.edu.ng

Abstract

News content from social media comes from several platforms whose credibility, according to literature, cannot be vouched for, unlike the traditional sources which are subject to several editorial gatekeeping checks. Notwithstanding the credibility, it appears the influence of the conventional media as providers of information is waning particularly among young people who rely more on social media for news. This study examined political news consumption in social media by 384 respondents who completed a questionnaire to determine the source credibility in one of Nigeria's 36 states - Kogi. Findings confirm a preponderance of news consumption in social media

with the following sample means *Twitter* ($\bar{x}$=3.23), *Facebook* ($\bar{x}$=3.16), *blog* ($\bar{x}$=3.05), *Instagram* ($\bar{x}$=2.78), *YouTube* ($\bar{x}$=2.59) and *Yahoo News* ($\bar{x}$=2.58) for political news. Findings also show that there is a significant difference in the credibility of political news information on social media among the state's three senatorial zones. One thing is certain: traditional media should start dropping the idea that social media sources are not credible. They should emphasize their social media strategies to reach out to more people, especially the youth. The study is useful for researchers and observers who are interested in knowing the level of trust consumers have in news sources.

Keywords: Social media, news, information, politics, Kogi State, Nigeria

Introduction

Newspapers, magazines, radio, and television were the main mass-media communication channels up until a few decades ago, and professional journalists were solely responsible for disseminating news and information. But with the development of new media technologies, especially social media, the exclusivity that the mainstream media and professional journalists once enjoyed has ended (Omojola, 2014; Bruns, Highfield & Lind, 2012). Alternative media are now the new mainstream media, and internet news sources have a much larger readership than print publications.

In a sea of information where current news comes in from both reliable and unreliable streams, the issue of credibility and believability is inevitably raised. According to Johnson and Kaye (2010), free access is one of the fundamental features of the Internet as anyone can upload any kind of information without much scrutiny. However, such unrestricted access can undermine the authority of online news as a source of information. Mustapha et al. (2022) note that newspapers, books, and television all double-check their facts before publishing them, but fact-checking is less applied on social media.

The most prevalent elements of media credibility that have been identified in previous studies, in addition to plausibility, are accuracy, fairness, lack of prejudice, completeness, depth, and trustworthiness (Wada, 2018). The majority of new media literature relies on these criteria because the source, message, and media dimensions have all been studied concerning the concept of credibility (Okorie, Loto & Omojola, 2018; Mba, 2015, Omojola, 2008). For instance, the early study examined the accuracy of news reporting to determine the reliability of sources. Research on source credibility and interpersonal communication are the key sources for internet-related credibility, but traditional media credibility research is also included. The degree to which websites and

online information are credible, reliable, unbiased, etc., are common variables.

The amount of fake news currently circulated exceeds consumers' expectations while also posing a significant challenge to official sources that are progressively proving unable to offer the public alternatives and measures to combat false information (Vasu, Ang, Jayakumar, Faizal & Ahuja, 2018). The publication of records like newspapers has recently been significantly outpaced by more recent and visually appealing false information sources, giving those looking to topple an administration or advance their viewpoints a wealth of opportunities to taint the information airspace on *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, *WhatsApp* and any other social media platforms at their disposal. (Yartey et al., 2021; Amodu et al., 2019; Damien, 2017). Given this, it is obvious that when researching the topic of misinformation, false news, and the loss of trust in conventional media, the veracity of the material that circulates in an online environment is a crucial component since it can explain the extent or influence of the phenomenon.

Statement of the Problem
The issue of reliability, integrity, and believability is particularly crucial given the abundance of information on social media. Much of the news and information on the Internet comes from multiple sources, as opposed to

conventional news, which is subject to several checks and editorial gatekeeping. The veracity of online political information has, however, come into question. These issues are important since trustworthiness is the foundation of journalism. The public is less inclined to pay attention to the press if they do not trust or believe it (Attah and Amana, 2021).

Thus, as a result of technological advancements that led to the development of the internet and other online media, also known as alternative media, scholars in social media communications have been more interested in the veracity of information coming from these platforms. This new trend has sparked lots of controversy in scholarly literature. However, other researchers have discovered that, in some situations, the credibility of online media was on par with that of traditional media, despite the prevalence of false material online (Dare, 2011).

Preliminary studies (e.g. Mustapha et al., 2020, Folayan, et al., 2018; Olaniru, Olatunji, Ayandele & Popoola, 2019; Morah, Omojola & Uzochuwku, 2016; Mba, 2015; Dare, 2011; Bruns, Highfield & Lind, 2012) have concentrated more on how trustworthy people believe material and news sources to be in the conventional media, but little is known about the credibility challenge that social media like Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc. have brought about. Since trustworthiness, objectivity, believability, and specialist input on

social media information are fundamental concerns in communication ethics, the credibility issue linked with social media news is a major source of worry. Given the foregoing, this study, therefore, sought to examine the influence of social media on the credibility of political news information in Kogi State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do users depend on social media for political news?
2. To what level do social media users perceive online political news as credible?
3. Does the credibility of online news influence the perception of political news?
4. What are the factors that influence users' perception of the credibility of political news on social media?

Hypothesis

H^1: There is no significant difference in the credibility of political news information on social media among the three senatorial districts of Kogi State, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

The study is beneficial to media practitioners, governments/policy makers, individuals and corporate organizations, researchers, students, and among others. The study's findings demonstrate the applicability of how social media may assist consumers credibly in disseminating political news. It especially sheds light on how much young people trust news and information from social networks, compared to traditional mass media, and which news sources they prefer.

The study's findings are helpful to policymakers by giving them knowledge on how to use social media to spread the news to improve governance. This study is revealing the most effective approaches to raising the credibility of alternative media material for the media business as a whole. Theoretically, this study is adding to the body of knowledge regarding the validity of using social media as a news source. What is more, the study is beneficial to academics because it can uncover new areas of research.

Literature review

Social media consists of web-based tools such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Wikipedia, LinkedIn, Reddit, Instagram, WhatsApp, Pinterest, and the like that enable individuals and organizations to create public or semipublic profiles using the Web 2.0 ideology and technology (Yemi-Peters & Oladokun, 2022). One of the primary ways that people now communicate with others who are geographically

distant is through social media (Akoja & Nwenearizi, 2020).

The credibility and dependability of a news source is a crucial factor that affects how a message is perceived by a particular person (Martin, 2018). This fact is even supported by Kang (2010), who adds that the audience's decision to engage with a channel or medium of communication depends on its credibility. According to Bondoc (2019), source trustworthiness has a big impact on how audience attitudes and opinions change. Edogor, Jonah, and Ojo (2015) also support that users' preference for a different medium may be influenced by how trustworthy the medium is. Mande et al. (2022) buttress that today's online material is evaluated, among other things, based on its credibility. However, Edogor et al. (2015) argue that it is essential to distinguish between different types of online sources since the results of information receivers' credibility assessments may vary based on whatever source characteristics are prominent at the time they are analyzing the given information.

Mustapha et al. (2020) added that readers and viewers of the media have started to doubt the accuracy of the news that is posted online every day. As a result, to strengthen the credibility of the information, individuals who give or publish on the Internet must have a high level of credibility. Intriguingly, several studies have discovered that information on social media is more trustworthy than other media, despite some features, such as the freedom of information exchanges and the free flow of information (Popoola, 2019).

The boundaries between media and credibility have become more blurred as a result of the internet (Akoja and Nwenearizi, 2020). Moreover, concerning how the internet influences messages in mass media, Agu (2011) adds that the ability to connect to more networks and communicate with a bigger global audience is made feasible by the internet as breaking news may now quickly spread around the world because to the advent and widespread use of the internet.

According to Mba (2015), it is widely recognized that social media and breaking news go hand in hand. Social media platforms are flooded with the tales being reported before the credible reporter even puts pen to paper. The most obvious advantages of new media over traditional ones are their constant accessibility, availability, and use. Misinformation is frequently spread on social media, whether on purpose or out of ignorance, as the source of most of it cannot always be verified (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Goyanes (2020) states that the use of the Internet and social media by despotic regimes for spying, propaganda, and diverting voters

from politics has also been witnessed by observers. These observers attribute social media in democracies to the rise of populism, the dissemination of xenophobic ideas, and the proliferation of fake news (Mande et al., 2022; Akoja & Nwenearizi, 2020; Wada, 2018). Since the general public relies on mass media for news and information, the media has a considerable impact on knowledge and attitudes (Bode, 2016). According to scholars, the use of and access to news media are necessary for political awareness (Möller and de Vreese, 2015).

Similarly, Agu (2011) revealed that the usage of political news and political awareness are positively correlated. The more often people get the news through media like television, radio, newspapers, or the internet, the better informed they become about politics, which is essential for political engagement (Delli Carpini, 2010). The tendency exists for citizens' understanding of current events to increase as a result of the widespread availability of news and political information on the internet and satellite television. Vinod et al. (2018) have proved that political information may be inadvertently exposed through search engine results and web portals that mix news headlines with entertainment items. This information frequently has a favorable relationship with political information. Wada (2018) found that persons who choose news and those who prefer entertainment have wider disparities in political information and electoral involvement as a result of increased media options.

Edogor et al. (2015) and Okon, et al (2018) found that the influence of newspapers and magazines on citizens' political conduct appears to be reduced as a result of the combined effects of television, radio, the internet, and social media. Similarly, Bode (2016) reveals that due to satellite television, there is a 20% drop in political knowledge because viewers prefer entertainment shows. He acknowledged in his findings that, there are many information sources available to citizens, including the internet, social media, television (local and satellite), radio, newspapers, and magazines, all of which tend to limit access to political information. Just as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, blogs, and other social media apps were used by Nigerian youths to force down fuel prices after #Occupy Nigeria (Oyero, 2013) and to monitor the polls during the 2015 general elections (Mustapha, et al. 2020). Supporting this, Bode (2016) recognizes that social media is quickly becoming one of the most significant news sources, helping to inform the public.

Relatively, Mande et al. (2022) agree there is a correlation between increased access to the usage of news

media and political awareness, which they claim was influenced by age, gender, or educational attainment. A study conducted by Hitesh (2019) indicated that older Americans tend to have more political awareness than younger Americans while younger Americans prefer to watch more television and visit the internet. Summarily, millions of Nigerians utilize the media, according to some of the limited empirical studies that have been conducted, particularly those that focus on social media. However, no empirical research has been done to determine the reliability of social media networks in spreading political news information.

Theoretical framework

This study is anchored on the source credibility theory and technology acceptance model. In the case of source credibility theory, according to Hovland, Janis, and Kelly (1963), people or receivers are more likely to be persuaded when the source presents itself as credible. According to the source credibility proposition, when a source promotes itself as credible, people are more likely to be convinced. Message recipients respect communicators who have a high level of credibility and are more likely to believe their comments. Relating to this study, source credibility theory agrees that people believe in the characteristics or attitude of the sender/source and are not bothered about the medium the sender has employed. This theory asserts that when there is high believability on the part of the sender, then the persuasion to accept the idea/message (political news) is given.

On the other hand, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was created by Davis (1989) to analyze and forecast computer usage patterns. Supporting the tenet of the theory, Davis (1985) suggested that three variables—perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and attitude toward using the system—can be used to explain why users are motivated. He proposed that a user's attitude toward a system had a significant role in determining whether the user would utilize or reject the system. Perceived utility and perceived ease of use were thought to be the two main factors influencing the user's attitude, with perceived usefulness being directly influenced by perceived ease of use. TAM is a theory of information systems that simulates how users adopt and use new technology. Relating to this study, TAM advocates that people accept the use of online platforms such as social media applications in search of political news items and others. This indicates that social media users agree to take political news items on social media platforms as real, reputable, and accurate due to their perceived usability, perceived simplicity of use, and other aspects

permitting the intention to utilize technology for news information readership.

Method

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The study's use of a questionnaire to gather and describe respondents' opinions and behavior meant that the design was appropriate to examine the influence of social media on the credibility of political news information in Kogi State, Nigeria. Therefore, the population of this study comprised all residents across the three (3) senatorial districts in Kogi of Nigeria.

The population comprised residents from Kogi West, Kogi East, and Kogi Central senatorial districts of Kogi state totaling 4,473,500 as projected to 2021 (kogistate.gov.ng 2021). Using Krejcie and Morgan's table for sampling size as a guide for this study, a population of 4,473,500 can be scaled down to 384 samples. Therefore, the sample size through the random system comprised 384 residents spread across the three districts. The results represent those three areas not the entire Kogi State of Nigeria.

The questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The questionnaire items underwent face and content validity by experts in the fields of information science, political science, and communication studies. The reliability test was established by administering the questionnaire for trial testing on thirty (30) respondents at Yagba West and Ankpa and Okehi at 10 copies per place. The scores obtained from the trial testing were subjected to reliability analysis. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha for each item arriving at 0.82 which revealed that the instrument is reliable and can produce the desired result. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the research question. Analysis of variance was used to test the hypothesis (ANOVA). The ANOVA was employed to examine the mean variations between several groups. The error limit is set at 0.05, while the level of significance for mean differences is set at 95%.

Data presentation and analysis

A total number of 384 questionnaires were distributed to the selected numbers of population and 352 were completed and returned representing a 91.6% return rate.

Table 1: Extent to which users depend on social media for political news

S/n	Items Statement	N	x̄	SD	Decision
1.	Facebook	352	3.16	1.071	Very High Extent
2.	Twitter	352	3.23	.900	Very High Extent
3.	Instagram	352	2.78	.966	High Extent
4.	LinkedIn	352	2.16	1.242	Low Extent
5.	Blog	352	3.05	.892	Very High Extent
6.	YouTube	352	2.59	1.260	High Extent
7.	Instant messaging	352	2.37	.724	Low Extent
8.	RSS feeds	352	2.65	.970	High Extent
9.	Wikis	352	2.21	1.249	Low Extent
10.	Podcast	352	2.56	1.197	High Extent
11.	Yahoo news	352	2.58	.909	High Extent
12.	Google news	352	2.35	1.277	Low Extent
	Mean		**2.64**	**.355**	**Accepted**

Table 1 shows a total acceptance by the respondents on their opinion on the extent to which users perceive online news as credible in Kogi State as it amounts to a grand mean of 2.64 with a Standard Deviation of 0.355. This grand mean is above the mean of 2.50. In furtherance, the table shows that users depended on Facebook, Twitter, and Blog for political news to a very high extent.

Table 2: Social media users perceive political news as credible

S/n	Items Statement	N	x̄	SD	Decision
13.	News about government activities is fake	352	2.14	.882	Disagreed
14.	Payments of civil servants' salaries are not true	352	2.38	.656	Disagreed
15.	Stories about winners of elections at state and local government levels are falsified	352	2.79	1.027	Agreed
16.	News about free and fair elections in the state and local government areas is not authentic	352	3.00	1.149	Strongly Agreed
17.	News about political appointments is believed by people when published online	352	3.17	.893	Strongly Agreed
18.	Stories on politicians' decamping are not believed on social media	352	2.15	.692	Disagreed
	Grand Mean		**2.53**	**.464**	**Accepted**

Table 2 presents data from respondents on the level at which social media users perceive political news as credible. The table shows a total acceptance by the respondents on their opinion on the level in which social media users perceive political news as credible in Kogi State as it amounts to a grand mean of 2.53 with a Standard Deviation of 0.464. This grand mean is higher than the mean of 2.50. This implies that several political news stories on social media were perceived as credible.

Table 3: The extent to which users' perception of the credibility of social media influences their perception of political news information in Kogi State

S/n	Items Statement	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
19.	Election-related reports	352	2.75	1.205	Agreed
20.	Political parties activities	352	3.13	.768	Strongly Agreed
21.	Government budget and allocations	352	3.16	1.044	Strongly Agreed
22.	Campaign news	352	2.95	.895	Agreed
23.	Road construction and infrastructure	352	2.20	.588	Disagreed
24.	Appointments of government officials	352	2.90	.938	Agreed
25.	Employment and retrenchment of civil servants	352	2.95	.801	Agreed
26.	Inter-party crises	352	2.75	1.081	Agreed
27.	Intra-party crises	352	2.86	1.111	Agreed
28.	Payment of salaries	352	2.78	1.089	Agreed
29.	Establishment of agencies and institutions	352	3.17	.828	Strongly Agreed
	Grand Mean		**2.87**	**.272**	**Accepted**

Table 3 presents data from respondents on the extent to which users' perception of the credibility of social media influences their perception of political news information in Kogi State. The table shows a total acceptance by the

respondents on their opinion on the extent to which users believe political news content in Kogi State as it amounts to a grand mean of 2.87 with a Standard Deviation of 0.272. This is acceptable because the grand mean is above the criterion mean of 2.50. This implies that the majority of respondents believe in political news content on social media.

Table 4: Factors that influence users' credibility of political news on social media

S/n	Items Statement	N	x̄	SD	Decision
30.	Age of users	352	2.98	1.062	Agreed
31.	Gender of users	352	1.72	.885	Disagreed
32.	Level of education	352	2.74	.997	Agreed
33.	Religious disposition	352	2.94	.936	Agreed
34.	Political ideology	352	2.90	.843	Agreed
35.	Media literacy	352	3.25	.905	Strongly Agreed
36.	Reliability in the media based on the accuracy, factuality, and fairness of their report	352	3.02	1.022	Strongly Agreed
37.	Audience attitude towards the news	352	2.29	.868	Agreed
38.	Interpersonal discussion	352	2.74	1.077	Agreed
39.	Medium's trustworthiness	352	3.22	.942	Strongly Agreed
40.	The personality of the reporter	352	2.98	1.203	Agreed
41.	The number of followership/readership	352	3.16	.933	Strongly Agreed
	Grand Mean		**2.82**	**.434**	**Accepted**

Table 4 presents the data from respondents on the factors that influence users' credibility of political news on social media. The table shows a total acceptance by the respondents of their opinion on the factors that influence users' credibility of political news on social

media as it amounts to a grand mean of 2.82 with a Standard Deviation of 0.434. This is also acceptable because the grand mean is above the criterion mean of 2.50. The table indicates that media literacy (3.25), medium's trustworthiness (3.22), number of followership/readership (3.16), reliability of the media based on accuracy, factuality, and fairness in their report (3.02), the personality of the reporter and age of users (2.98), religious disposition (2.94), political ideology (2.90) and interpersonal discussion and level of education (2.74) were regarded as factors that influence users' credibility of political news on social media.

Test of Hypothesis

The hypothesis is: *There is no significant difference in the credibility of political news information on social media among the three senatorial districts of Kogi State.*

To determine if there is a statistical difference among the three senatorial districts of Kogi State regarding political news credibility on social media, as stated in hypothesis one, an analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was implemented. The result of the analysis is presented below:

Table 5: ANOVA in Respect of the Hypothesis

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	335.846	2	67.923	3.187	.031
Within Groups	71.628	349	12.205		
Total	407.474	351			

Table 5 shows that a calculated F-value of 3.187 resulted in the difference in the three senatorial districts towards online news credibility on social media. This value is statistically significant, given a p-value of .031 which is less than a 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis one was accepted, meaning there is a significant difference in the credibility of political news information on social media among the three senatorial districts of Kogi State.

Findings

Concerning research objective one, which is on the extent to which users depend on social media for political

news information, findings show that the majority of respondents who participated in the research are from Kogi East, Kogi Central, and Kogi West senatorial districts respectively. This may not be unconnected with the fact that there is a significant improvement in the use of social media in Kogi State and a high perception of the credibility of online news because the majority of people in the state depend on social media for news as it amounts to a grand mean of 2.64 with a Standard Deviation of 0.355. Findings show that the majority of the users depended on Facebook, Twitter, and Blog for political news to a very high extent and believed in the reasonable credibility of online news.

Also, some of the respondents made use of Instagram, Youtube, RSS feeds, podcasts, and yahoo news to a high extent. On the other hand, LinkedIn, instant messaging, wikis, and googles news were used to a low extent. This result is consistent with a study by Martin (2018) that the majority of respondents (98.4) utilize nearly every social network investigated in the study, with Facebook and Twitter having the highest user populations. Furthermore, it supports Akoja and Nwenearizi's (2020) findings that the majority (n=300+, 75.0%) of people who used social networks to get information did so through Facebook. This also validates the study of Mande et al. (2022) who

found that Twitter was a popular social media site that young adults in the United States used to access the news. Overall, this outcome demonstrates how effective Facebook is as a source of news and information. This is confirmed by Vinod et al. (2018) who revealed that young people nowadays mostly browse the internet and social media to get information on politics.

Findings from the field survey show the level at which social media users perceive online political news as credible in Kogi State. Respondents agreed that news about free and fair elections in the state and local government areas is not authentic and news about political appointments is believed by people when published online. Stories about winners of elections at state and local government levels which are being falsified were highly regarded as credible political news. Furthermore, the study shows that news about government activities is not fake, payments of civil servants are true and stories on politicians' decamping are believed on social media. This implies that several political news stories on social media were perceived as credible.

This study agrees with the findings of Vinod et al. (2018) who established that citizens who are informed and knowledgeable about politics tend to make decisions that reflect their real interests. Citizens can easily access a wealth of

information that can assist to advance and enhance government performance and accountability while also lowering corruption by simply watching the news, listening to the radio, reading the newspaper, or browsing the internet or social media.

Also, this study is in agreement with the findings of Mustapha et al. (2020) who found that Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, blogs, and other social media apps were used by Nigerian youths to force down fuel prices after *#Occupy Nigeria* and to monitor the polls during the 2015 general elections (Mustapha, Gbonegun and Mustapha, 2016). Similarly, Wada (2018) stated that social media was quickly becoming a key news source that helps create informed citizens.

Concerning research objective three, the study discussed the extent to which users believed political news content in Kogi State. Findings show that news about the establishment of agencies and institutions, government budget and allocations, political parties' activities, news on employment and retrenchment of civil servants, appointments of government officials, interparty crises, intraparty crises, and election-related reports were believed by respondents on social media. Meanwhile, reports about road construction and infrastructure were regarded as unrealistic by users. This implies that

the majority of respondents support social media's use for political news items. This result deviates from the findings of Watson (2019), who discovered that broadcast (traditional network news) was the most popular news source among locals (mean=5.17 hours). Edogor et al. (2015) concur that social networking sites were more favored (n=300, 70.3%) for accessing political news among respondents' source preferences.

Concerning research objective four, the study covered the factors that affect how people judge the veracity of political news on social media. The study revealed that media literacy, medium's trustworthiness, number of followership/readership, reliability of the media based on accuracy, factuality, and fairness in their report, the personality of the reporter and age of users, religious disposition, political ideology and interpersonal discussion and level of education were all regarded as factors that influence users' credibility of political news on social media.

Conversely, findings show that audience attitude towards the news and gender of users were rejected as factors that influenced users' credibility of political news on social media in Kogi State. The results of the current study align with Hitesh (2019) who recognized a link between increased access to and usage of news media and political

awareness, which he said was influenced by factors such as age, gender, or educational attainment. Also in alignment, Martin (2018) asserts that young people nowadays browse the internet and watch television, a few of them read the newspaper while older people in the U.S. tend to have a higher level of political knowledge than young people.

Conclusion and recommendations
If social media-driven campaigns like *EndSars*, *Arabsprings, Bring Back Our Girls, Occupy9ja and Next Level* could be used to enlighten and mobilize people, then it is possible to use the internet and social media to boost political knowledge and participation amongst citizens. It was clear that social media significantly influenced the respondents' attitudes. Social media was primarily used by the youths to communicate with their friends and families. Most people believed they could not live without social media because it is a part of who they are, especially since they were born at this time of developing technology – the Gen-Z. They relied on it for a variety of beneficial things, including research, contact with old friends, and being up to date on events happening locally, nationally, or worldwide.

Source credibility has been a crucial topic of study for many years. Particularly when analyzing information on crises and risks in social media, perceived source reliability becomes an increasingly crucial factor to consider. Several factors influence the credibility of the media and political news stories, some of which are related to media literacy, the medium's reliability, the number of followers/readers, the reliability of the media based on accuracy, factuality, and fairness in their report, the personality of the reporter and age of users, religious orientation, political ideology, and interpersonal discussion were taken into consideration.

These variables alter social networking sites' function as news sources, prompt journalists to rethink their roles in the communication process, and create a new kind of news. These elements could be both beneficial and detrimental to journalists and journalism. However, news credibility is a key concern for new media, and journalists' viewpoints and attitudes toward new media platforms like social networking sites are the fundamental pillars for providing good, effective, and most importantly, credible news. Although the new media has in some ways sped up the news cycle and made media more participatory, journalists and good journalism must always ensure that news, regardless of the source, is credible and dependable. Additionally, many younger Nigerians get their news only from social media, but the older

generation also uses other news sources of their choosing. However, it validates the researchers' concerns that most social media users may not always take the time to verify the legitimacy or authenticity of a news item before using, sharing, or acting on it. Given the findings of the study, these recommendations were reached:

1. That traditional media and other conventional media should adopt the use of social media sites for the promotion of news items and other related matters to the interest of the people since online political news has high credibility.

2. That there is a need for social media site programmers to consequently regulate and monitor unconfirmed reports or fake news items shared and published by media organizations. In this way, news items or reports should be verified by certain regulatory bodies on social media applications before they are published or shared with the public, this is to prevent the crumpling of the high credibility of online credibility.

3. That media organizations should create accounts with social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc with verifiable information/licenses that cannot be duplicated or produced by impostors, this is so because of the high credibility of online news.

4. Social media users should be advised to believe content or reports only on verified accounts of media organizations. Hence, they are liable to be held accountable and responsible in the cases of misinformation and disinformation.

5. Print and electronic media should take advantage of social media as that is where young people are active and because social media is the future of media.

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