



BAYERO JOURNAL OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT



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Table of Contents

Knowledge Sharing in the Legal Profession: The Role of Libraries in Facilitating Knowledge Exchange, Continues Learning and Community Building Among Lawyers in Yobe State <i>by Amina Ibrahim Makintami & Fati Ibrahim Makintami</i>	1
Accessibility and Utilization of Information and Communication Technology by Undergraduate in Selected University Libraries in North-East Zone of Nigeria <i>by Aisha Ali Kafama, Aminu Manuwa & Fadimatu Sa'ad Laido</i>	19
Artificial Intelligence and Big Data in Business Transformation: A Study of Naavah Gate Insurance Company Abakaliki, Ebony State <i>by Achilike I. Nicholas, Nwokeiwu Johnson & Enujioke Isaac Emeka</i>	37
Artificial Intelligence-generated Metadata in Library and Information Centres: The Case of ChatGPT <i>by Sugabsen Martins & Ukawuba Vivian Chinazo</i>	56
The Role of Libraries and Information Centers in Curriculum Development: A Theoretical Perspective Based on Tyler's Model <i>by Aliyu Yaya Aliyu</i>	75
Use of Media Platforms for Information Dissemination by Politicians in Kano State, Nigeria <i>by Saleh Abdullahi Adam, Rita Otibhor Salami & Musa H</i>	86
Use of Health Information for Malaria Prevention among Post-Natal Mothers in Odugbo Community, Benue State <i>by ABUBAKAR, Usman1 & Nura Mohammed Musa</i>	105
Perception of Teachers on the Utilization of ICT Tools in Teaching: Survey of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Katsina Central Senatorial Zone <i>by Nura Abba</i>	126
Roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Sustainable Delivery of Library Services in 21 st Century in Nigeria: A Literature Overview <i>by Dalhatu Usman Mairiga, Bilal Muhammad Lawal & Izdihar Abdulwakil Saleh</i>	144
The Role of Big Data Technology and Artificial Intelligence in the Provision of Information Resources and Quality Education in Nigeria <i>by Muhammad Lawal Akanbi1 & Raliat Alabi</i>	163
Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Nigerian Academic Libraries: A Content Analysis <i>by Yakubu Attahiru Liman & Olusegun Victor Olaogun</i>	176
Exploring the Information Sources Utilized by Women in Purdah for Economic Empowerment in Kano State <i>by Zainab Shehu Habib1 & Razika Mohammed Yahaya</i>	200
Awareness on and Challenges Hindering the Adoption of Online Public Access Catalogue in Selected Federal University Libraries in North East, Nigeria <i>by Ayuba Yakubu, Hilari Edward, Aliyu Yahaya, Emmanuel Tunde Makinde & Omokide Jimoh Maimunat</i>	221
Perception of Engineering Library Users on the Adoption of 5G Technology for Accessing Quality Information at Bayero University Kano <i>by Hadiza Umar</i>	233
Assessment of Digital Preservation, Storage, and Environmental Practices in Selected University Libraries in Southwest, Nigeria <i>by Abdullahi A. Bakare, Thomas Ayinla Ogunmodede & Taofeek Adebayo Olosasa</i>	257
Perceptions of Librarians on the Adoption of cloud Computing Technology in Bayero University Library, Kano <i>by Abba Ahmad Mu'azu, Fatima Junaidu Na'aliya, & Zainab Almustapha Ghali</i>	275

Perception and Attitudes of Undergraduate Students Toward Job Prospect in Library and Information Science Programme in Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto <i>by Idris Ibrahim Saleh, Maryam I. Abubakar & Chigozie Blessing Mba</i>	297
The Role of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Transforming Library and Information Services: An Opinion Perspective <i>by Hauwa Sani Ahmad & Hasiya Salihu Yusuf</i>	319
Utilization of Electronic databases by Users of University Libraries in North-East Zone, Nigeria <i>by Regina Enajite Brisibe, Emmanuel M. K Dawha & Hilari Edward</i>	334
Influence of School Media Resources on Academic Development of Secondary School Students in Umuahia Education Zone, Abia State, Nigeria <i>by Vivian Chinazo Ukawuba</i>	354
Application of Theoretical Knowledge in Practical Library Work Among Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) Students in Public Universities in Kano Metropolis, Kano State, Nigeria <i>by Zam'a Mohammed Alhassan & Hauwa Muhammad Sani</i>	371
Librarians' Insights on Open Science and Research Data Management Practices for Sustainable Library Services Delivery in Nigeria <i>by Binta Ladan Farouk, Rilwanu Adamu & Alkasim Hamisu Abdu</i>	395
Building Bridges: Nigerian Public Library-NGO Collaboration for Sustainable Development in the Digital Age <i>by Kabiru Dahiru Abbas & Ibrahim Ahmed Bichi</i>	419
Awareness, Usage, and Perceptions on the Role of Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital Library in Providing Access to Sexual Health Information: A User-Centered Study <i>by Abba Ahmad Muazu & Zam'a Mohammed Alhassan</i>	434

EDITORIAL KEYNOTE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is the pleasure of the University Library, Bayero University, Kano, to publish the maiden edition of its journal towards the development of academic excellence.

The editorial board is delighted to see the immense responses received from contributors to this maiden edition which has come from several institutions and cut across various aspects of library practice and areas of academic knowledge. This testifies the significant acceptance of the relevance and qualitative capabilities of the University Library, in particular and the Bayero University, Kano in general.

The major aim of the journal is to stimulate and encourage scholarly research, enhance intellectual analytical thinking and provide a forum for advancing research and further exploration in information management and library practice.

We would like to acknowledge with thanks the immense contributions of all the members of the Editorial Board/Advisors for their financial support, scholarly advice and guidance, for making the publication a reality. Our thanks and commendations go to the reviewers of articles and our University Librarian for their sustained drive and guidance.

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Associate Professor Kabiru Dahiru Abbas

University Librarian

Bayero University, Kano

Associate Editor of Editorial Board

Use of Media Platforms for Information Dissemination by Politicians

in Kano State, Nigeria

¹Saleh Abdullahi Adam

²Rita Otibhor Salami PhD

²Musa H. PhD

¹University Library, Federal University of Education, Kano PMB 3045,

Kano State, Nigeria

²University Library Services, Federal University of Technology,

PMB 65 Minna, Niger State, Nigeria

Abstract

This study investigates the use of media platforms for information dissemination by politicians in Kano State, Nigeria. The study addresses two research questions and tests one research hypothesis. The population of the study comprised of 1,464 politicians across 20 political parties in the state, and the data collected using a descriptive survey design. A purposive and proportionate sample of 306 politicians was selected and administered with questionnaires, and 276 questionnaires were completed and returned for analysis. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The findings indicate that social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and X were the most frequently used during information dissemination whereas, traditional media such as television and newspapers were less frequently use by the respondents. The study further revealed that the major challenges faced by politicians in the use of media platforms included high cost of media use, incessant dissemination of false information or groundless allegations by political opponents. Furthermore, the study found no significant relationship between politicians' use of media and the effectiveness information dissemination in Kano State. Finally, the study recommends that to mitigate the high cost of media platforms use,

politicians should focus on cost-effective digital marketing strategies. This includes using social media platforms for the dissemination of efficient and impactful campaign information.

Keywords: Politicians, Use, Media Platforms, Information Dissemination, Kano State, Nigeria

Introduction

In a democratically responsible government, a key factor in success in the complex game of contemporary political campaigning is use of media platforms. The idea of "media use" encompasses the wide range of methods and approaches that political players use to take advantage of different media platforms in order to maximise their influence and audience. According to Uzochukwu, Obinna, Okwuosa, Etiaba and Gilson (2016) opined that the media are the flute by which political parties and interest groups address the electorates. The media integrates these strands of responsibilities by circulating news, information and opinion within the politically minded public.

In this direction, politicians (political advertisers) and candidates' ability to successfully use a variety of media outlets has a significant impact on their ability to communicate with people, spread messages, and affect election results. Politicians refer to political advertisers who promote political messages, candidates, parties, or issues to the public through various forms of advertising. It has been observed that political advertisers from a communication perspective are mostly paid to use media platforms to promote, depend or oppose political issues in favour of their clients (Nasidi, 2022:3). However, politicians disseminate information in pursuit of convincing and persuading voters. They use different media to communicate their ideas or manifestos to the electorates.

Indeed, politicians (political advertisers) get access to media for information dissemination with a view to convincing citizens to act on their favor. Access to media is regarded as a fundamental human right, as enshrined in the Freedom of Information Act of Nigeria (2011). Agba,

Ogri and Adomi (2018:22) pointed out that as the right of access to information [media] continues to gain ground in Nigeria, it is high time fresh perspectives are sought about the importance and role of the media in advancing the right of access to information. Considering the above assertions, it is on this note that, media access by politicians improves circulation of information dissemination.

Specifically, access is a general term used to describe the degree to which politicians (political advertisers) get contact to media as many people as possible for information dissemination. It was observed that, access in the present context depicts the speed at which an information output in any format is obtained by politicians on their day to day activities (Abubakar, 2020). This implies that politicians (political advertisers) access the media to offer substantive messages that have effect on voters, who are guided in most instances by enduring party loyalties. Furthermore, the more accessible media are, the more likely they are to be used. However, politicians tend to use media that require the least effort to access. On this note, media is widely accessible by politicians for political campaign in particular on online platforms (Ali & Qamar, 2020).

From the above assertions, politicians increasingly access media platforms, either fee-based or free-based, to among other things, convey their stands, individual and party manifestos, boost brightness, share periodic successes, and seek public support. With this, media including radio, television, newspapers, Facebook, WhatsApp, X, and other multimedia are seen as public means of mass communication. Over the years, the media has emerged as a powerful means of expression in human societies. Their influence has been profound and felt in all aspects of life. From the view of Abdollahyan and Machika (2017:59), media coverage is the very lifeblood of politics because it shapes the perceptions that form the reality on which political action is based. This indicates that the media are the crucial means of disseminating information in many societies.

From the researchers' existing search of literature, there seems to be no study on use of media platforms for information dissemination by politicians, particularly in the study area. Therefore, it has become imperative to examine the use of media platforms for information dissemination by politicians in Kano State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Access to accurate and timely political information is one of the essential commodities that help electorates analyse politicians' manifestos and make sound decision during elections. Media platforms serve as a vital bridge between politicians and voters, offering opportunities to influence public opinion, clarify political positions, and enhance voter engagement. Therefore, effective use of media platforms during campaigns can empower politicians to reach a wider audience, communicate their political agendas, and foster interaction with the electorates. However, challenges such as poor or limited access to media by politicians can negatively impact the visibility of political aspirants, leaving voters uninformed about campaign promises and undermining their ability to make informed decisions at the polls.

Despite the significance of media in contemporary political campaigns, a review of existing literature reveals a gap in studies that address both the utilization of media platforms and the challenges associated with accessing them in the context of political campaigns information dissemination by politicians, particularly in Kano State, Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to investigate the frequency of the media platforms use for the purpose of information dissemination by politicians in Kano State, Nigeria. It also aims to explore the challenges associated with use of media in information dissemination, providing light on how media use impacts voter awareness and engagement in Kano State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the conduct of the study:

1. What is the frequency of the media platforms use for information dissemination by politicians in Kano State, Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges faced by politicians in the use of media platforms for information dissemination in Kano State, Nigeria

Research Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses was asked and answered:

H₀₁: there is no significant relationship between politicians' use of media platforms and information dissemination in Kano State, Nigeria

Literature Review

The term access is used by different people in relation to quite bits and pieces of the whole, as in “subject access, open access and knowledge access system”. However, each refers to one or more aspects of providing means of access to media platforms or in a fuller sense, to knowledge and understanding. Thus, social media platforms greatly simplified the access and dissemination of political information (Habes, Salloum & Alghizzaw, 2018). According to International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IIDEA) (2014:7) during election campaigns periods, provisions that facilitate equitable media access to politicians are important to ensure that candidates and political parties are able to relay their policy messages to voters regardless of their party size, financial ability to buy media space, and geographical location.

A number of studies, including a study conducted by Oluwatosin, Olusoji, Olusola and Olugbenga (2020:13) investigated the influence of the media on political knowledge among undergraduate students. This study examined the frequency of the forms of media accessed and level of political knowledge among Nigerian students. It also assessed the relationships between political knowledge and access to radio, television, newspaper, and social media. Moreover, it investigated the predictive influence of the frequency of media access on Nigerian students'

political knowledge. The study adopted Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) to explain how media is used to the advantage of people.

Using cross-sectional survey research design, a structured questionnaire was used to collect information on students' demographic, frequency of media access and knowledge of Nigerian politics from 246 randomly selected students of the Polytechnic, Ibadan (Mean age is 25.07 years, SD = 6.23). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Findings identified social media as the most frequently used media, followed by radio, television and newspaper. 31% of the respondents had very high political knowledge while 3% had no political knowledge. Access to radio is the only significant correlate ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$) and independent predictor ($\beta = 0.43$, $t = 3.98$, $p < 0.05$) of political knowledge although access to radio, television, newspaper and social media are significant joint predictors of political knowledge ($R^2 = .18$, $F(4, 241) = 4.32$).

Therefore, the study recommends that various media institutions and political analysts should take advantage of the social media to make more audience politically knowledgeable. This study shared somehow similarities on the variable influence of media on political knowledge, research design, instrument, and method of data analysis. Also, the study was anchored on the same theory, although the current study is anchored on three theories, despite variations in population and study area.

In another development, Familusi and Owoeye's (2014:2) examined the use of radio and other information dissemination methods among Ado-Ekiti residents. It is a survey research employing descriptive research design of the survey type, the instrument used to collect data was questionnaire. The sampled population was one hundred and twenty residents of Ado-Ekiti (120) were selected to participate in the study using simple random sampling technique while the collected data was analysed using tables, bar chart, simple percentage and frequency count, mean and standard deviation.

The findings revealed that the cost of accessing information through radio, television and use of mobile phone were not expensive as shown by the study while that of Internet, satellite and cable television were expensive. Radio was mostly used to access information followed by mobile phone, television, newspaper, social network, satellite and cable television followed by the internet. The three major problems facing the residents of Ado-Ekiti in accessing information were poor television signals, high cost of purchase, installation and subscription of satellite television and many cannot afford the cost of Internet connectivity.

This research is related to the current study being conducted on the variable of radio as information dissemination, research design, instrument, and method of data analysis. Although the two studies differed on a number of audiences, the former was conducted on Ekiti residents, but the latter would be focused only on politicians in Kano State, Nigeria. Additionally, Raji (2021:23) examined radio as a tool for political campaigns in Northern Nigeria, revealed that access to media platforms in Kano State varies between urban and rural areas due to differences in infrastructure, literacy levels, and socioeconomic condition. Radio dominates as the most accessible medium due to its affordability and ability to broadcast in Hausa, the predominant language in the region.

Similarly, politicians in Nigeria face several challenges in accessing media platforms effectively. the high cost of accessing media platforms, such as purchasing radio and television airtime, remains a significant constraint Ojebuyi and Salawu (2020:55) found that many Nigerian politicians struggle to afford consistent media coverage, limiting their ability to reach a broad audience. Media bias is another critical issue. With this, Nyamnjoh (2005) argued that privately owned media outlets in Africa often prioritise partisan interests, leading to unequal representation of political candidates. This submission aligns with findings by Olorunnisola and Douai (2020), who noted that Nigerian media organisation frequently align with political parties, creating challenges for opposition politicians seeking equitable coverage.

Research Method

The study adopted a survey research design to investigate use of media platforms for information dissemination by politicians in Kano State, Nigeria. The study population comprised of 1464 politicians across twenty (20) political parties. In the first instance, purposive sampling was used to draw three (3) political parties included All Progressive Congress APC (462), New Nigeria People's Party NNPP (614) and People's Democratic Party PDP(369) totaling 1445 politicians that were source from secretaries of the three political parties media forum. The criterion for the selection was that only political parties that have media forum were purposively selected. Secondly, proportionate sampling technique was used to draw a sample size of 306 politicians from the three (3) selected political parties. Scholars like Research Advisors (2006) as cited in Haruna (2010) stated that for a population of 1500, a sample size of 306 is recommended at a confidence level of 95% and a margin error of 0.5. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection and out of the number of the questionnaires administered, 276 copies were filled, returned and found useful for the study. Standard deviation was used to analyze the data while inferential statistics (Chi-square test) was used to test the null hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1

Response Rate of the Respondents

S/N	Political Parties	No of distributed questionnaire	No of returned questionnaire	Percentages
1	APC	98	94	35%
2	PDP	78	67	24%
3	NNPP	130	115	41%
Total		306	276	100%

Source: Field Survey (2024)

It can be seen that majority of the respondents are politicians from NNPP and APC political parties representing 41% and 35% respectively.

Table 2*Frequency of Media Platforms use by Politicians for Information Dissemination*

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Not Applicable	FX	Mean	Std	Decision
Statement	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)				
I use Radio stations for information dissemination	168	21	0	87	911	2.9783	1.373	Sometimes
I use Television channels for information dissemination	14	44	69	149	526	1.721	0.912	Not Used
I use Newspapers for information dissemination	27	12	88	149	517	1.6993	0.937	Not Used
I use Facebook for information dissemination	167	69	15	25	1031	3.3696	0.947	Often
I use WhatsApp for information dissemination	155	35	61	25	967	3.1594	1.061	Often
I use X for information dissemination	158	37	35	46	953	3.1123	1.164	Often
I use Billboards/posters for information dissemination	102	14	68	92	752	2.4565	1.291	Sometimes
Overall Mean					2.64	2.6423		

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Table 2, indicates that three media platforms, Facebook, WhatsApp and X fall into the "Often" category with mean scores of 3.3696, 3.1594, 3.1123 and standard deviations of 0.947, 1.061 & 1.164 respectively, this suggests that social media platforms are the most frequently used media by the respondents in information dissemination. Meanwhile, the data suggests that radio stations and billboards /posters are moderately used as they were reported to be used "Sometimes" with mean scores of 2.9783, 2.4565 and standard deviations of 1.373 & 1.291 respectively. On the other hand, television channels and newspapers fall into the "Not used" category; indicating limited use of these media platforms, with mean scores of 1.721 and 1.6993 respectively.

Table 3*Challenges Faced by Politicians in Using Media Platforms for Information Dissemination*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Weighted Sum	Mean	Std	Decision
Statement	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)				
High cost of media access	240	25	0	14	1049	3.80	0.687	Agreed
High cost of data	241	13	8	14	1033	3.74	0.73	Agreed
Some media outlets are bias against some politicians	235	5	14	22	1005	3.64	0.891	Disagree
Poor Internet connectivity	241	13	0	22	1025	3.71	0.807	Disagree
Poor access to media outlets among politicians	248	14	0	14	1048	3.80	0.676	Agreed
Restrictions policy by National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and other laws	240	22	0	14	1040	3.77	0.687	Agreed
Poor agenda-setting on the part of politicians	225	37	0	14	1025	3.71	0.703	Disagree
Incessant dissemination of seditious speeches by politicians	219	49	8	0	1039	3.76	0.481	Agreed
Incessant dissemination of false or groundless allegations by the oppositions.	227	49	0	0	1055	3.82	0.389	Agreed
Overall Mean						3.75		

Source: Field Survey (2024)

The results from Table 3 show the challenges faced by politicians on used media platforms for information dissemination in Kano State, Nigeria. The data on Table 1.3 shows that the majority of the respondents agreed that the major challenges faced by politicians in the use of media platforms in disseminating political information during campaigns were incessant dissemination of false or groundless allegations by the opponents (mean=3.83), high cost of media access (mean=3.80) and poor access to media outlets among politicians (mean=3.80).

Hypothesis Testing

The chi-square test was used to test the research hypothesis using SPSS version 23.0. In conducting the test, 0.05 was used as level of significance for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis. Hence, the decision rule is that, when the computed chi-square is greater than critical p-value ($p=0.05$), then the null hypothesis should be rejected and the alternative hypothesis should be accepted. On the other hand, if the computed p-value is less than critical p-value ($p=0.05$), then the null hypothesis should be accepted and the alternative hypothesis should be rejected. The results of the chi square test of the null hypothesis are presented in Table1.4

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between politicians' use of media platforms and information dissemination in Kano State, Nigeria.

Table 4

Results of Chi-square test on the relationship between the use of media platforms and Information dissemination by the respondents

	Value	DF	Asymptotic Significance (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	144.109 ^a	11	0.001
Likelihood Ratio	156.420	11	0.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.034	1	0.012
N of Valid Cases	276		

Source: Field Survey (2024)

The results from the Pearson Chi-Square test ($\chi^2 = 144.109$, $df = 11$, $p = 0.001$) as presented in table 4 shows that the p-value is less than the significance level of 0.05. This signifies that the relationship between the variables is not significant, $\chi^2(11, N=276) = 144.109$, $P < 0.05$. Hence, this infers that the null hypothesis was accepted and rejects the alternative hypothesis. The overall result of the chi-square test of relationship predicts the absence of significant relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable. This signifies that there is no significant relationship between politicians' use media platforms and information dissemination in Kano State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of his study revealed that Facebook, WhatsApp, and X were the most commonly media platforms used by politicians for information dissemination in Kano State. Equally, the findings revealed that the majority of the respondents do not frequently used television and newspapers. This suggests that social media platforms play a significance role in shaping political discourse and engagement. Indeed, Facebook and WhatsApp, with their extensive user bases and communication features, would likely facilitate both public discourse and private conversation. While X known for its real-time updates and wide reach, serves as a key medium for campaign messaging and public reaction. The frequent used of these platforms indicates their crucial role in modern political strategies and voter interactions.

This finding contrasts with the findings of Oluwatosin, Olusoji, Olusola and Olugbenga (2020:13) who investigated the influence of the media on political knowledge among undergraduate students. Their findings identified access to radio is the only significant correlate ($r=0.42$, $p<0.05$) and independent predictor ($\beta=0.43$, $t=3.98$, $p<0.05$) of political knowledge although access to radio, television, newspaper and social media are significant joint predictors of political knowledge ($R^2=.18$, $F(4,241) = 4.32$).

Also, the findings of the present study agrees with findings of Omotayo and Folorunso (2020:95) who investigated the use of social media for political participation among youths in Oyo state, Nigeria. Their findings also revealed that challenges such as the high cost of media access, restrictions by regulatory bodies, and incessant dissemination of false information or groundless allegations by political opponents were identified as major constraints by the majority of the respondents. These challenges can pose significant obstacles to the integrity and inclusiveness of political campaigns information dissemination, affecting both the quality of information available to voters and the equitable access to media channels for all candidates.

These findings are in line with findings of Ajasa, Arowa, Thomas, and Oyejide (2023) who investigated the effect of radio political broadcast on awareness of Ogun state electorates towards Nigeria's 2023 general election and also found that the three major problems facing the residents of Ado-Ekiti in accessing information were poor television signals, high cost of purchase, installation and subscription of satellite television and many cannot afford the cost of Internet connectivity.

In relation to research hypothesis of the study; it says there is no significant relationship between politicians' used to media platforms and information dissemination in Kano State, Nigeria. The result of hypothesis indicates that the two variables (the politicians' use of media platforms and the information dissemination) have no significant relationship. This implies that there is no significant relationship between politicians' use of media platforms and information dissemination in Kano State, Nigeria. This depicts that politicians can access media platforms but may decide to use them for personal activity, not for political campaign information dissemination. Conversely, limited access to media can constrain a politician's ability to reach voters, thereby reducing their visibility and competitiveness in elections.

The result is in contrast to the findings of Oluwatosin, Olusoji, Olusola and Olugbenga (2020:13), who conducted a study in Ibadan, Nigeria, and examined the influence of the media on political knowledge among undergraduate students. The findings revealed that access to radio is the only significant correlate ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$) and independent predictor ($\beta = 0.43$, $t = -3.98$, $p < 0.05$) of political knowledge although access to radio, television, newspaper and social media are significant joint predictors of political knowledge ($R^2 = .18$, $F(4, 241) = 4.32$).

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is imperative to conclude that social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and X play a dominant role in political campaigns in Kano State, while traditional media such as newspapers are under utilised. The frequent use of these platforms indicates their crucial role in modern political strategies and voter interactions. Despite the significant relationship between media use and information dissemination, challenges such as high costs of media and regulatory restrictions limits access and relevance of media in political campaigns. Addressing these challenges through strategic media access, advocacy for equitable access and media literacy training for politicians will significantly enhance political communication and voter engagement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are put forwards to improve to use of media platforms for information dissemination by politicians in Kano State Nigeria:

1. There is a need for politicians in Kano State to consider integrating a multi-channel media by including Newspapers and Television for broader reach to audience, particularly targeting electorates that are less active in the use of modern technologies.

2. To mitigate the high cost of media access, politicians should focus on cost-effective digital marketing strategies. This includes leveraging organic content creation, focusing on social media to encourage disseminating campaign content.
3. There is a need to conduct media literacy training for politicians. This training should focus on effective use of media platforms, understanding audience dynamics and crafting compelling messages that resonate with the electorates.
4. Politicians should engage with regulatory bodies to create a fair and inclusive media environment for all political actors.

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Author Note

Saleh Abdullahi Adam, **University Library, Federal University of Education, Kano PMB**

3045, Kano State, Nigeria. Email: salehkn78@gmail.com, 08066111786

Rita Otibhor Salami PhD, **University Library Services, Federal University of Technology,**

PMB 65 Minna, Niger State, Nigeria

Musa H. PhD, **University Library Services, Federal University of Technology, PMB 65**

Minna, Niger State, Nigeria