

**INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON YOUTH'S POLITICAL INTERACTION AND PARTICIPATION: A STUDY OF MOUNTAIN TOP UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.**

**BY**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT IN MASS COMMUNICATION,  
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## **CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that this research project work titled **“INLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE YOUTHS POLITICAL INTERACTION AND PARTICIPATION: A CASE STUDY OF MOUNTAIN TOP UNIVERSITY.”** was carried out by KODILINYE DAVINA CHISOM, with the matriculation number 16020601019. This project report meets the requirements concerning the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) Degree in Mass Communication, Department of Mass Communication of the Mountain Top University, Ogun State, Nigeria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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**Dr. C. A. Mbaka**

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**Dr. O. O. Babatunde**

## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to the almighty God for His faithfulness to me throughout the period of writing this project.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I give all glory to God for His faithfulness and I magnify Him for sustaining me throughout the period of writing this project. Without Him I am nothing. By His grace, he has made my ending in Mountain Top University better than my beginning. All glory, honour, and praise be ascribed to you, Lord.

I give special thanks to my supervisor, Dr.C. A. Mbaka, for having the patience to attend to me, read my work and corrected the errors and mistakes despite her busy schedule. I am really grateful and appreciate your timeless and invaluable effort in making this project work a success. God in His majesty and glory will bless you and grant you good success.

I appreciate my parents, Mr. Kodilinye Steven and Mrs. Kodilinye Uchenna, who with their unconditional love, support, prayers, and encouragement aided the completion of this project. I pray that the almighty God will keep you safe and sound to reap the fruits of your labour and investment in me. God will continually enlarge your coast. I also appreciate my siblings for their unconditional love and support.

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## ABSTRACT

*The study examined influence of social media on youth political interaction and participation using Mountain Top University students as the study population. social media have the capacity to educate, inform, and entertain the audience. The aim of the study is to find out the extent to which the students engage in political interactions on the social media and how these interactions influence their real-life political participation and interactions. The study adopted the survey method and employed the multiple stage sampling technique to select 140 respondents for the study. Questionnaire was the instrument for data collection and the obtained data were analyzed using descriptive statistics on the SPSS. The findings revealed that majority 65 (46.4%) of the students use social media especially Facebook. There is a significant positive relationship between social media usage and political participation and interaction among the students in Mountain Top University. The study revealed that majority of the students have a positive attitude towards using social media as a tool for participating in politics. It is therefore recommended that youths should not limit their political activities to social media, but try to take them to the streets, offices and get involved more in offline political activities.*

**KEYWORD:** Social media, youth, political interaction, political participation.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Social media are mutual computer-aided technologies that facilitate the sharing of information, ideas, images, videos, and career interests through social platforms or forums. For many people who do not use various social media websites on a daily basis, the term "social media" can be considered quite new. In reality, it is based on technologies from thirty years ago that could be mysterious to the vast majority of modern-day social media users. Although it has taken decades for social media to develop as a viable medium for connectivity and business, the rate at which technology has evolved and evolved over the past few years is difficult to overcome. Within weeks or months, an examination of current development and new technology may occur. While theoretical study on social media is relatively well formulated and established (Kaplan and Heinlein 2009, 2011; Hannah, Rohm and Crittendon 2011; Constantinides and Stagno 2011; Akar and Topku 2011), no previous research has provided an accurate framework which explains the development of social media during the years, capturing its various life cycle stages. Many social media tools fall into this category, including dating sites, forums, Facebook, Six Degrees, Friendster, MySpace, Asian Avenue, Magnet, Black Planet, Live Journal and many other "traditional" social networks. Included. These sites were still in their infancy at the end of Social Media 1.0, but in recent years they have been moved to their sites, revolutionizing the way they communicate.

It is significant to consider what effect social media is causing on traditional media, and at the moment, it's hard to say. Traditional media, such as CNN, BBC and the *New York Times* for example, are very active social media users, and although they allow users to be connected to other platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, they are able to maintain their own identity and fan base (Euromonitor International 2010). Lievrouw and Livingstone (2006, p. 1) argue that "new media have not substituted older media, any longer than broadcast medium replaced print in the mid- 20th century. Relatively, the data and connectivity worlds of individuals have been more personalized and commodified, incorporating print, audio, still and moving pictures, television, telecommunications, computing, and other communication and knowledge exchange modes and networks. Social media allows for two way communication which makes it different

from web 0.2, it also allows a user-user communication instead of the old-creator user communication like analog technology that the radio and television provided.

In Nigeria, the numbers of social media users are increasing daily. Social media has moved from being merely interactive to a form of mass media. Social media has been anticipated as a sturdy force in shaping public opinion explicitly in the area of politics and governance. Social media has additionally been an expression of the complexities of the media and society (Idakwo, 2011).

Social media can serve as an efficient route of communication for governments to reach individuals and communities, as well as alert responders to where and what type of relief is needed. From the unit of analysis performed with the aid of the researcher from the sector internet information (2012) it became observed that out of the overall population of 170,123,740 Nigerians, 5,860,240 amongst them used Facebook as at 2012. In continuance to this, Florunso et al. (2010) were of the view that social media network in Africa had become extensively unfolded compare to how it appears and look to the people about the usage of this technology.

Media refers to the means of communication among persons young and old where they build, disseminate, and exchange ideas and comments among themselves using various networks at their disposal. In today's environment, social media has become a daily routine to everyone. People access all kinds of information with comfort through the use of mobile phones and computers. Social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube are exposed more and common among students across Nigeria (Umar and Idris, 2018). Amidst the anxiety about decreasing youth political engagement, it is repeatedly suggested that social media can give a solution to this challenge. In these arguments, social media are perceived to serve two functions. First, it can deliver a new medium of communication in which reputable political institutions and actors can reach out to youths. Alternatively, youths use social media by suggesting new ways to express their political leanings beyond traditional political affiliations such as voting or joining a political party (Kiting & Mellis, 2017). Social media are technologies that facilitate social interaction, enable collaboration, and enable the deliberation of stakeholders across boundaries, time and space. These technologies comprise of blogs, wikis, media such as text, photo, video, audio, sharing tools, networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc, (Buhari, 2004; Bryer and Zavatarro, 2011). Social media platforms have become what Onomo (2012) defined as a worldwide device for oral exchange and exchange of thoughts, helping persons and

organizations with just reasons to achieve a phenomenally full-size target audience that could hitherto no longer be reached by conventional or traditional media. Social media are a group of Internet websites, services, and practices that support association, community building, engagement, and sharing (Hughes, 2009). Social media give users the opportunity to interact with one another making it possible to share information, videos and photographic images. This new form of social interaction also brings people of different social background together in a forum and enables them to interact regardless of location and time (Olorunsogbon and Ajibade, 2017).

On the sojourn of transforming the way we live, learn and connect to others, social media has had many groundbreaking moments. The idea that an average person could log on to the internet and write about what they are thinking, feeling and doing and that these posts could be read by anyone at any time and responded to, helped people begin to understand the full significance of the internet. Social media is seen as a process that has recently taken over the web, allowing more connectivity and interaction between web users and it encourages contributions and feedback from anyone who is a member of any virtual community (Tesorero, 2013).

The use of social media platforms in politics has changed dramatically how campaigns and political participation are addressed, and how Nigerian youth relate with their appointed officials. Nigerian youth are exposed via social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube to a vast amount of information on political and social issues, given this evolving media landscape, how do youth interact with political participation or social media news? This is a significant question to discourse because young adults (ages 18-25) are in a life phase of “emerging adulthood,” a dangerous period of time for exploring worldviews and political identities. The widespread acceptance of social media by youths could make them more accessible to experimentation and change, as politics can often be found on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, which are presented in an informal and personalized format such as personal stories, online memoirs and video comments (Wang and Mark, 2017). Studies have suggested that when the materials were delivered in informal forms such as comedy sketch, youth are introduced to political and social issues in a way that could have a direct effect on them, youth responded to and engaged better in politics (Wang and Mark, 2017). While some researchers applaud the social media platform to promote youth participation

in politics, others are worried that there has not been any increase in youth political knowledge or offline civic acts like voting (Wang and Mark, 2017).

Do the political news on social media move young people to take part in politics like voting or even knowing the elected leaders on the seat and knowing the policies that guide the country? This is another critical question that we need to ask again: Do the youth know their rights as a citizen or even know how to defend themselves against wrong government? These are concerns that we need to explore before concluding. The research also extended the work on managing disclosure and perception by exploring the political participation of youth on social media. It is well known that youths are less likely to be active in institutional political events in their teens and 20s (such as voting or joining political parties) as they are concerned with finishing their schooling, seeking jobs and completing the transformation to adulthood (Henn et al., 2002; Smets, 2015; Van Deth, 1989). But, despite the huge potential of these online tools, the proof has mixed up to now. On the one hand, several surveys have shown that the youths use online political engagement platforms more frequently than older ones (see, for example, Jensen and Anduja, 2012), which reinforces the essay that online tools can better address interracial issues. An imbalance of political commitment. However, because online participation requires less resources (financial or otherwise).

Likewise, the online political interaction and participation stratification appears to be questioned too. Political participation includes, but is not limited to, political activities such as joining civic / political groups and attending face-to-face meetings, engaging with politicians, voting, contacting government officials by telephone or writing letters, signing online petitions, making political donations on social media, participating in marches, fundraising, volunteering or campaigning and deliberating with political figures, institutions and organizations (Tang & Lee, 2013; Vissers, Hooghe, Stolle, & Maheo, 2012; Waller, 2013). However, political communication scholars argued that political participation is declining due to a reduction in youth's civic engagement which pose a threat and negative consequences for the health of a representative democracy (Putnam, 2000). Recent research indicates that youth's interaction through social media can replace some of these lost forms of civic engagement this is because evidently, social media has provided an additional network for youth to engage politically with each other and their government. Therefore, one way of reaching youth is through social media

such as Facebook and Instagram because it offers a place for young people to express themselves politically, locate political information, and interact with their peers about politics (Pew reports, 2011). Alternatively, young people redefine political engagement through social media by finding new ways of expressing their political preferences outside the limits of traditional political engagement, such as voting or joining a political party. (Keating and Melis, 2017).

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

By their nature, social media have the capacity to educate, inform, entertain and inflame the audience, above all they have a contagious and sensitive influence that is lacking in conventional media, Osahenye. (2012). However, the problem lies in the point that the purpose which the users apply the new media for are still less visible. In Africa, social media platforms have become widely spread than it has ever been before and it tends to be mainly accepted by youths. (Folorunso, Vincent, Adekoya and Adewale, 2010:326). Although we recognize that social media can have a positive influence on young people, the negative effects it often has on young people cannot be overlooked. (Nigeria Internet Registration Association, NIRA; 2014). Research showed that most researchers left the political aspect of students towards social media use and the influence it has on them and focused solely on academic performance, but this study will be about the influence of social media use on youth's political behavior in Nigeria now. Nigerian youth are exposed via social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube to a vast amount of information on political and social issues, given this evolving media landscape, how do youth interact with political issues or news? This is significant question to investigate because young adults (ages 18-25) are in a life phase of “emerging adulthood,” a sensible period of time for exploring worldviews and political identities. Youth political participation and interaction has been an issue of concern around the world (Skoric & Poor, 2013), because they are the important target group to political parties and politicians due to their extraordinary characteristics such as strength, expectations and mental tendency to comfy and support new ideas (Fjerza, Gega, & Memaj, 2014).

Therefore, youth participation is authoritative to consider because it offers understanding into future offline political participation (Vissers & Maheo, 2012), and it is revealing of adult participation of those youth. Nevertheless, despite the findings that some literatures have identify youth as active, diverse and easy to accept and support new changes in the society (Harris &

Younes, 2010), but youth have not been recognized or involved in politics and decision making that may help them to build self-confidence and acquire skills that are relevant such as effective communication or teamwork (Diemer & Li, 2011). These concerns suggest that young people are significantly dissatisfied in existing elected government bodies. (Milner, 2011) which have been generated by a number of trends such as youth refusal to participate in the electoral processes, low rates of electoral turnout and even intense dislike to politics (Putnam, 2000; Wattenberg, 2012). The way elections and civic engagement are discussed and how Nigerian youth communicate with their elected leaders has changed drastically with the use of social media in politics. Although unwelcome messages, photographs and videos are the most experienced concerns, though the aim of social media was to make this global community more connected, but more than that it has become the fourth meal of the day for the younger generations. (Umar and Idris, 2018).

This study will be focusing on Facebook, Twitter, Telegram and Instagram because they are the most commonly used social media site for the youth.

### **1.3 Aims and objective of the study**

1. To determine the extent at which students of mountain top university use social media for political interactions and participation.
2. To examine the extent social media affecting the real- life political decisions of students in Mountain top university.
3. To investigate the perceptions of student in Mountain top university about the use of social media as a tool for participating directly or indirectly in governance.
4. To determine the extend of which social media celebrities influence the political participation and interaction among students of Mountain top university.

### **1.4 Research questions**

1. To what extent do students of Mountain top university use social media for political interactions and participation?
2. To what extent do social media affect - real life political decisions of students of Mountain top university?

3. What is the perceptions of student in mountain top university about the use of social media as a tool for participating directly or indirectly in governance?
4. To what extend does social media celebrities influence the political participation and interaction among students of Mountain Top University?

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

It is significant because the findings will shed more light on the benefits and challenges that are available in the use of social media for political engagement of the youth in Nigeria. This current study contributes to a growing body of research on political awareness for youths. Also, it provides new insight in this area. This study may be a good academic resource for researchers, especially at Mountain Top University, where such literature probably does not exist. This research will be a reliable academic source and will pave the way for academics, teachers, and students to learn about the effects of social media and the effects on youth participation in politics. It will raise awareness about the positive and negative impacts of social media on politics.

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

This study focuses only on social media and youth's participation in politics. This study examines the students in a private university (Mountain top university). The findings of this study will be based on the data collected (questionnaire) from students in mountain top university.

### **1.7 Operational Definition of the key terms**

#### **Influence:**

A power to affect persons or events especially power based on prestige. Causing something without any direct or apparent effort.

#### **Politics:**

The Study of the state government and other political entities. A social relationship that involves intrigue to gain authority or power.

#### **Participation:**



The process by which individuals, groups and organizations consult or have the opportunity to actively participate in a project or program of activities.

**Social media:**

The forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content such as videos.

**Political participation:**

The act of sharing in the activities of politics indirectly or directly in governance or political participating such as voting or balloting.

**Youth:**

An early period of development which is from age 19-29, which is a time of life between childhood and maturity.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviews relevant literature on social media and Youth participation on politics. This review is done under three broad headings; conceptual review, theoretical review and empirical review. Specifically, the chapter covers the concept of social media, social media and the youth, use of social media, social media and governance, Hegemonic communication, current trends in E-participation. It further provides both theoretical framework for the study, and review of empirical studies on social media and youth participation on politics.

#### **2.1 Conceptual Review**

##### **2.1.1 Concept of social media**

Social media is described as a website that allows you to develop profiles and visualize relationships between users (Boyd & Ellison, 2008); web-based applications which provide functionality for exchanging, relationships, community, conversation and profiles (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre, 2011). Social media has been referred to as "social media platforms" (Diga & Kelleher, 2009), or a set of information technologies that promote networking and interaction (Kapoor et al., 2017; Oestreicher-Singer & Zalmanson, 2013).). There seems to be a broad consensus, however that Web2.0 technologies have played a major role in social media growth and adoption. Another definition of social media applies to "Web 2.0-developed Internet-based apps", Whereas Web 2.0 applies to both an ideology and a collective knowledge harnessing forum (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013 p. 246).

Social networking such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn provide large network access for individuals (Asur & Huberman, 2010). Social networking has seen a dramatic increase of user counts in recent years and has been the focus of statistical research (Wigand et al. 2010; McAfee 2006). More than 800 million users are members of the Facebook network worldwide, for example (Facebook 2011), while Twitter accounts for a total of more than 200 million accounts (HuffPost Tech 2011). The word widely used to refer to modern kinds of communication involving interactive interaction is social networking. The word social media refers generally and narrowly to the Internet's more contact-oriented and interaction-oriented parts, including forums, social networking sites such as Facebook and micro blogging sites such as Twitter, as well as digital platforms for sharing audiovisual content (e.g., YouTube, Flickr). In 2005, the terms "social media" first appeared to be used and represented an interest in the creation of relatively more recent interrelational areas of the internet, often referred to as Web 2.0 (Ito et al., 2010). (Ito et al., 2010). Social media are new technological communication networks through which individuals communicate with each other, exchange thoughts, experiences, images, messages and awareness of shared interests. It is its dynamic nature that separates social media from traditional forms of communication, enabling the public to engage in it from every part of the world in which they live. (Ezeah, Obiorah, and Asogwa, 2013).The introduction of digital and mobile technology made it simpler than ever before for people to communicate on a wide scale; and as such, a modern media age was born in which interactivity was put at the core of new roles in the media. One person could now speak to many and immediate input was a possibility. Where people and customers used to have small and somewhat skewed voices, they can now share their views with many. The low cost and usability of digital technology has created more options for media consumption than ever before, so people now have the option to search for information from various sources instead of only a few news outlets and to participate in discussion with others via message boards. At the heart of the current movement is social media (Manning, 2014).

Any type of digital channel, whether mobile or stationary, is involved in all social media. Nevertheless, social media is not necessarily something that is physical. In defining social media, two prevalent characteristics support. Next, social media allows for some form of interaction. Even if social networking sites such as Facebook can often require passive viewing of what others are sharing, social media is never completely passive. Usually, at the bare minimum, a

profile must be established, which enables the potential for interaction to begin. The per se quality separates social media from conventional media where the standard is not personal profiles. Second in line with its participatory nature, social media requires contact. This contact may be with friends, relatives, or acquaintances that are formed or with new people that share similar interests or even a common circle of acquaintances. While many social media have been, or are, initially viewed as novel, they are less seen and more anticipated as they continue to be incorporated into personal and professional lives (Manning, 2014).

Social networking is the social interaction between people who make, post, or exchange images, ideas, opinions, and networks in virtual communities. They use web-based media to provide an interactive conversation. Social networking increases civic engagement and encourages individuals to keep in contact with friends, families, and culture. Around the same time, through social networking sites, social media changes the way people communicate with each other, making people more linked with each other, but at the same time making individuals more disconnected and forming a new subculture. Ten years ago, young people were only permitted to be in touch with peers and peer groups when they went to school or met in town. It is now possible to reach young people through instant messaging, social messaging, networks, online games and many other resources. In a continuously linked world, young people grow up (Jain, 2015). Former individuals use electronic media and print media to obtain data, education, news, etc. Social media, such as newspapers, magazines, radio and television, are different from earlier industrial media or conventional media (Jain, 2015)

A social media is an online site used by people to establish social networks or relate to other people with like minds, hobbies, histories or real-life relationships. Social media has various forms, including forums, micro-blogs, wikis, social networking sites, photo-sharing sites, instant messaging, video sharing sites, pod casts, widgets, virtual worlds and more. Billions of people around the world use social media to share and communicate information. Social media is an innovative idea, with more opportunities and more change. With the advancement of social media organizations many use this medium to enhance their practices (Akram and Kumar; 2017). 'Social media' refers to 'web-based resources and services that allow users to create, share, rate and search for content and information without logging into any specific portal site or portal destination. These tools are 'social' in the sense they are built in ways that enable users to

communicate and share with each other. (Bohler-Muller & Van der Merwe, 2011). This includes social networking sites, blogs, microblogs, video blogs, discussion forums and others.

### **2.1.2 Use of social media**

Baran (2010) argues that "technology is useful in ways otherwise ... technology is a double edge sword. The influence-for good and for bad-resides within us. "Social media enables us to communicate with our friends and relatives, to acquire knowledge of new things, to cultivate your interests, and to entertain. At the professional level, you can use social media to strengthen or expand your knowledge in a particular area and connect with other professionals in the industry to build a network of professionals. Social media enables us to have an interaction with our audience at the business level, to gain customer feedback and to elevate your brand. We can advertise or interact with the social networking in a more successful way. Likewise, people don't have to rely on the newspapers or television to get their regular dose of news as they can all access from a social networking site. People from all over the world can track or get information (Akram and Kumari; 2017).

Utpal (2012) It has been found that the instant and widespread nature of social media spreads like fire in forest-based and information-sharing societies is based on social promotion and knowledge-sharing practices originating from many different societies and helping to bring about a social revolution. First, students use social media to share information, discuss course materials or topics, and communicate online for course assignments or projects. Social media also provides a convenient means of sharing knowledge and collaborating among peers. (Eid and Al-Jabri, 2016). Second, students can be expected to actively participate in social media to experience unity and happiness (Valkenburg, Peter & Schouten, 2006). Therefore, students with lower levels of life satisfaction may try to participate in networks to enhance their personal well-being (Allison et al., 2007). Third, Students spend time on social media to keep in touch with old friends and to keep in touch with peers.

By using social media, individuals seek to maintain and increase their social networks (Ellison et al., 2007). Finally, students use social media for sexual exploration purposes. For example, one study found that though students did not go out of their way to seek sexual materials such as sex clips and nude pictures from porn sites, they encountered these contents mostly through social media platforms (Adu-Kumi, 2016). The use of social media can be in several forms like social interaction, information seeking, pass time, relaxation, communicatory skills, convenience utility and entertainment.

### **2.2.1 Social interaction**

This usage theme is defined as using social media to interact with different individual. The subject matter comes from Ko et al.'s (2005) investigation on social interaction motivation and web site period Their scale items included "meet people with my interests" and "keep up with what is going on".

### **2.2.2 Information seeking**

This theme is defined as Using social media to research information or educate oneself. The topic of this topic comes from Papacharissi and Rubin's (2000) data retrieval and internet usage research. Korganovkar and Wolin (1999) also have the same concept of information motivation, which they define as the way consumers use the web for self-education and information. Our classification of this topic includes both information seeking and self-education. Piedra, Chicaiza, López, Tovar, and Martinez (2009) conceive that sharing information and experiences obtained by experts using social platform is the key factor of Impacting changes in youth.

### **2.2.3 Relaxation**

This social media usage category is defined as using social media to relieve day-to-day stress.

### **2.2.4 Pass Time**

This theme is defined as using social media to occupy time and relieve boredom. The title comes from Palm Green and Ray Byrne's (1979) research on the use and satisfaction of television. Papacharsi and Rubin (2000) also had a construction called Pass Time, which they used when studying Internet maps. Items on their scale include statements such as "When I have nothing better to use the Internet" and "Take your time".

### **2.2.5 Communicatory Skills**

This class of social media use is defined as communication facilitation and providing information to share with others. Korgaonkar and Wallin (1999) also had similar creations called Inspiration for socialization to use the Internet. They describe its construction as useful in terms of interpersonal communication and the communicative and supportive value of the actions. This construction differs from the construction of social interactions discussed earlier. The communication utility helps facilitate communication rather than providing social interaction.

### **2.2.6 Entertainment**

This form of web 2.0 use is defined as the use of social media to provide entertainment and fun. Palmgreen and Ryburn (1979) and Papacharisi and Rubin (2000) had a dimension of entertainment in their scales. Korgaonkar and Wallin (1999) also had a factor related to internet usage which they called escape. They defined escape as enjoyable, fun, and enjoyable.

### **2.2.7 Convenience Utility**

This family of web 2.0 use is defined as a facility or utility for individuals. Papacharisi and Rubin (2000) had a construction called Facility for Internet Uses and Co et al. (2005) was an inspiration for interactive advertising. Korgaonkar and Wallin (1999) also had the term "convenience of shopping on the web" in some of their articles.

### **2.1.3 Social media and Youth**

In examining social media and youth, it is also important to distinguish what is meant by youth. This term can cover different ages in different countries; in some society's youth extends into the late twenties, whereas in others such an age would be considered young adulthood. Meanwhile, the legal definitions of adulthood, the age at which young people are legally allowed to do different things (e.g., have sex, drive, buy alcohol), vary culturally.

The emergence of web 2.0 has contributed immensely to expand the limits of good governance. From open government data, and citizens reporting on government abuses, it has also provided a medium to connect citizens with one another and empower them to hold government accountable. Ehidiamen (2013) says social media has a crucial role to play in ensuring Nigerian leaders are held accountable. The technology of web 2.0 is relatively cheap, and it has made it

very relatively easy to access and disseminate important information. Web 2.0 has also helped activists organize. And Governments have used its emergence to monitor protest and public opinion on its policies. Citizens now quickly report crime to the law enforcement agencies. With the advent of social media, web developers and tech savvy youths have developed several web and mobile applications to propagate the information and make their findings public knowledge. The beginning of the use of web 2.0 actively in socio-political issues or governance is usually pegged at the 2011 general elections, when there were many strategies taken by both politicians and the mostly young electorate to harness the social media for campaign and information purposes. President Jonathan declared his intention to run for the presidency with an update on Facebook. In less than twenty days, he accumulated over 100,000 fans. Today, his page has grown to become the second most “liked” head of states in the world after US President Barack Obama. However, those who really took the social media by storm in Nigeria during that time were the youths.

Agboola (2013) adds that the police, who are sometimes complicit in election malpractice, would have had to be on the watch out as any brutality or unfair play would be reported on the social media. At the same time, traditional media houses also used new media to disseminate information and gather feedback from viewers.

Again, during the January 2012 Fuel subsidy protest in Nigeria, YourBudgit.com played an instrumental role in ensuring a re-adjustment in the Nigerian budget. The team created a budget cut application during the Occupy Nigeria Movement, a protest instigated by the heavy increment in fuel price. The application helped start an engagement on national budget among users, improving understanding of budget issues. Some of the information released by Budget IT went viral. The most prominent example was an analytic thinking of the Nigerian budget, which showed the President was allocated one billion naira for food allowance. Young Nigerians shared the information on different social networks, and it became a hot topic for discussion not just on social media, but on the mainstream traditional media in Nigeria as well.

#### **2.1.4 Social Media and Governance**

Communication is an important element in any political system. Media messages have gone a long way in fueling opposition cycles. It could be for good or for bad, like Adolf



Hitler's infamous propaganda. People are now turning to social media innovation in an effort to move the government towards positive action. Oli and Ecarafu (2013, p. 30) emphasize that "today social media has become the engine of social movement in the world." He added that social media has introduced a new meaning in democracy by providing a collective voice that now helps the people to document their change and their struggle for a better society.

In Nigeria, the influence of social media is perceived as a number of issues. It's easy to resonate with the January 2012 anti-fuel subsidy protest. During this period, Nigerians, especially young people, went out to the streets in protest of Occupy Nigeria. But what stood out was the scale of the online activity that took place before the street protests, which is believed to have spawned the Nigerian occupation movement. Twitter, Facebook, Naira Bhoomi, YouTube, and LIB were the basis for the activity, and people shared information about the removal of subsidies, ongoing budget discussions, and ongoing street protests. Additionally, creatively crafted statements were used in expressing feelings about the subsidy debacle. The literature suggests that social media is much more likely to be used for governance purposes, but it is not capitalized in most contexts. Many governments use e-government strategies to disseminate information through online channels, but do not seek public feedback. With two-way channels, it is not very clear whether civilian response will be implemented. Social media has promising evidence to increase the transparency of organizations and government ministries, but little evidence of whether this accountability will increase. There are some cautious examples of EG government working successfully in some programs, but the general evidence is that social media is not widely used as a direct line of communication with the government. There is even less literature on social media used to monitor or report on the activities of a company or the rule of other organizations. In general, the literature strongly suggests that access to the Internet and social media improve transparency, accountability, and good governance, but there is little evidence to support this. Social media has influenced governance in the following ways:

**2.4.1 Political participation:** Governments provide formal online channels for citizens to report crime, comment on policy, or request changes. Broadly it is limited to a small elite group of Internet users, and government websites are not popular. Citizens often use social media to organize among themselves for action and protest.

**2.4.2 Transparency and Accountability:** Citizens have used social media to communicate, inform and map out society, which has increased pressure on governments to respond.

**2.4.3 Peace Building:** Social media is used to help peace-building to monitor violence. However the media can also be used to incite violence. .

**2.4.4 Private Sector:** The social media used by companies can increase transparency and customer communication as well as create new forms of leadership.

**2.4.5 Internal governance:** New laws and regulations for social media are controversial. Some online hate speech is a crime, and some governments have shut down internet services to control social media.

### **2.1.5 Social Media and Political participation**

Political participation includes among other things, political activities such as joining civic/political groups and having face-to-face meeting, interacting with politicians, voting, contacting government officials by phone or writing letter, signing petition online, making political contribution on social media, participating in protest, fund-raising, volunteering or participating in campaign and deliberating with political figures, institutions and organizations (Tang & Lee, 2013; Vissers, Hooghe, Stolle, & Maheo, 2012; Waller, 2013). This type of political partnership is the key element and foundation of a successful democracy (McManiman, 2014; Putnam, 2000). The Internet and social media provide young people with opportunities to engage in political conversation through various online groups, pages and accounts. Bimber and Copeland (2011) provided a platform for political participation and emphasized the role of new media in changing its political influence. A study by Schulz (2005) found that new media users are active in politics and political discourse. The Internet has increased consumer interest in politics, increased the political influence of defendants, and created online and offline political involvement. Jiang (2016) investigated the effects of the Internet on online and offline political participation. He also investigated the role of the Internet in shaping public political awareness. These strong relationships generate interest in political effectiveness and elections among Internet users and increase their political engagement (Jiang, 2016). The use of the Internet has

become an important source of political effectiveness and political participation, raising awareness about voting and campaigning. New media is increasing the percentage of voter turnout among users. He develops a methodology that helps with voting and campaign donation for politics (Larson, 2004). User effectiveness helps them better understand political affairs by getting political information from new media. Kahn, Middo, and Allen (2014) studied the rise of youth, new media, and participatory politics and concluded that new media provided a platform for information and communication with a larger audience and a way to engage in political activity. Kokkare (2011) showed that activists used social media for collective action.

### **2.1.6 Political Participation and Youth**

The utilization of web 2.0 has grown in recent elections particularly among the youth. Of significance for the age group is the rise in the use of social media for obtaining political information, creating user generated political content and expressing political opinions and views. Political participation includes among other things, political activities such as joining civic/political groups and having face-to-face meeting, interacting with politicians, voting, contacting government officials by phone or writing letter, signing petition online, making political contribution on social media, participating in protest, fund raising, volunteering or participating in campaign and deliberating with political figures, institutions and organizations (Tang & Lee, 2013; Vissers, Hooghe, Stolle, & Maheo, 2012; Waller, 2013). These types of political participation are the important components and foundations of successful democracy (McManimon, 2014; Putnam, 2000).

Therefore, one way of reaching youth is through social media such as Facebook, twitter or Instagram because it offers a place for young people to express themselves politically, locate political information, and interact with their peers about politics (Pew reports, 2011). Thus, do political activities on media platform such as Facebook affect offline political participation among youth since this category is considered as young voters whom were traditionally perceived as apathetic with regards to civic engagement?

Therefore, the use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram to engage young people is of particular interest as young people are the least represented part of the population in many political activities, including voting and campaigns. Participating in (Daily Carpini, 2000). While researchers examined and discovered a significant association between the use of social media and political participation, more and more studies have found a decline in formal forms of political participation among young people, particularly voting and party activities, and increasing youth participation in more direct activities. Demonstrations and activities such as demonstrations (Dalton, 2011). However, it is widely acknowledged that the use of social media for political activities has helped to remove barriers to youth participation in political activities and expand the scope of informal activities. Is (Dmitrica, 2016). Similarly, the popularity of Facebook particularly among young voters has provided a highly obvious atmosphere for candidates to promote themselves, articulate their platforms in detail, and interact with voters in fundamentally different means. Likewise, social media allowed youth to network with each other about political problems and to share and discuss their opinions. Studies on the political role of social media reveals that online political expression has positive effects on offline political participation (Jung & Zuniga, 2011; Vitak, Smock, Ellison & Lampe, 2011).

For example, Jung et al. (2011) suggested that posting messages and comments in online political messages such as current political issues and public affairs is actively related to political participation in offline flights. Another analytical approach emphasizes the purpose of online engagement (such as finding information) and the dynamics of interaction (such as peer sharing). For example, Xtreme and Stuman (2015), in a two-wave panel survey of young people in Sweden, classified activities into three types of online activities: information gathering, social interaction, and creative production. The direct effects of creative production were seen in offline and political online political participation, but the effects of information aggregation and social interaction were indirect. Activities Subsequent forms of online activities lead to greater involvement in political online political debates, resulting in increased online and offline online political participation. Similarly, Gil de Ziga, Molinex and Zheng (2014) distinguish between two types of social media usage: use for news and use for social interaction. However, evidence for the role of political information seeking shows that social media sites are positively tied to offline political participation and likelihood of voting

(Yamamoto, & Kushin, 2014). But little is known about the relationship between social media use, interactivity with political figures, social media quality information, political interest and youth offline political participation. Contrary to this background, the participation of youth in political offline activities is considered an important component for a vibrant and strong democracy (Baker & Versus, 2011). Therefore, the political participation of the youth is fundamental to democracy and without it, the next generation of youth can join the political process without the necessary knowledge, skills and determination to bring themselves into the political interest. For example, young people may lack the motivation to investigate government actions, and may make little contribution to policies that affect their lives (Farson, 2013). Of political participation I. What and what effect this issue has is inevitable for both researchers and political figures. Offline political participation is a vital necessity for the republic (Putnam, 2000), because the political process, campaigns, elections and policy decisions and the various stages of its implementation have the same level of youth influence Is influential (Vingardon, 2012). Opportunity and choice. It may also be true to say that voting and elections in general symbolizes an important way of engaging youth in the democratic processes is the most significant political activity (Dalton, 2008).

Youth are frequently posting political issues online, their views and opinions in relations to politics, sharing news and informative articles, their interaction with political actors and viewing videos about political activities. Therefore, it can be safe to say that Facebook, Twitter, Telegram and Instagram is suitable medium to spread political knowledge among youth and in turn increase their offline political participation. Additionally, young adult of today get their political information from social media rather than the legacy traditional media such as radio, television and newspapers. The information given is more interactive, user friendly, brief and easier to comprehend. Youth are frequently posting political issues online, their views and opinions in relations to politics, sharing news and informative articles, their interaction with political actors and viewing videos about political activities (Lahabou & Wok, 2011). Therefore, it can be safe to say that the social media is suitable medium to spread political knowledge among youth and in turn increase their offline political participation. Political knowledge, as defined by Carpini (2000), is the series of factual and true information concerning politics or political actors that is kept in a long-term memory.

Although social media generally provides young people with important opportunities to interact with politicians and various stakeholders, young people can become friends and interact with politicians, politicians' representatives, government officials and key leaders on Facebook (Tang and Lee, 2013). As a result, young people's friendships and interactions with these important political figures can be an important source of political information and perspective (Gramping, 2014). Therefore, these political figures, especially politicians, grassroots activists and political observers, have a tendency to motivate and influence young people to participate in offline political activities (Faizal et al., 2009). Therefore, dialogue with these political figures can increase political engagement as political interaction and dialogue can promote interest in offline political activities as the process of dialogue influences the formation of public opinion (Ziazik et al. Et al., 2014 V Venezuela Turner, 2011). Youth recently are so enthusiasm about events and happenings around them particularly political activities by seeking more knowledge and information about a political party and candidate. Their quest to know and learn more about political activities propels them to develop interest in politics and social issues by getting and sharing political information, willingness to follow political figures and engaging in political discussion (Kyranakis & Nurvala, 2013).

In the same way, it is also found that youth declining in political interest is attributed to declining in offline political participation (Chao et al., 2012). This explains the fact that youth do not think of conventional ways of political participation such as taking part in voting exercise hence they often discard it. Consequently, Facebook is now the alternative platform of political expression and political interest appears to be a significantly related to online and offline political participation among youth (Kim, Kavanaugh, & Pérez-Quñones, 2007; Yamamoto & Kushin, 2014; Yang & DeHart, 2016). Facebook political activities such as reading and posting political opinions, interacting with politicians on Facebook and discussing politics with friends on Facebook groups may likely impact curiosity and knowledge about positive social and political issues, later facilitating participation in other online political activities and more demanding offline political activities (Visser et al., 2012).

### **2.1.7 Hegemony Communication**

Hegemonic communication refers to a communication system within society in which messages, technologies, messages, and communicators are strongly controlled by those in power, usually for selfish and partisan reasons. In Nigeria, the political system has inherited a tradition of secrecy and privilege, and the media was not completely confused, but most political documents and newspaper pamphlets do not report information about what the media is. It was. It's political, but he expressed his opinion on what it should be. An important entity of hegemonic communication relies on assumptions about fundamentally flawed media consumers. These false assumptions are costly. They prevent people from using the talents, abilities, and motives that exist in the masses that consume media. Media management has become a central issue informed by the recognition that communication technologies are likely to benefit the people who manage and use them. But with the advent of social media, Olley & Ekharrafo (2013, p.30) states that the media is in the hands of those who want it. The days when the most powerful people in society dominated the media and, by extension, people are over. This marked the end of Nigeria's legacy in hegemonic communication.

### **2.1.8 Current trends in E-participation**

Many social media sites are being used by youths to participate in governance, make their voices heard and bring their leaders to order. They include foreign/international media applications and platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. There are also the indigenous platforms, made by Nigerians for Nigeria that have become very popular among Nigerians at home and in the diaspora. These are Naira land, ReclaimNaija, BudgIT, Bella Naija, LIB etc. With access to internet getting cheaper, more youths are spending substantial time on the internet on a daily basis. Inevitably, they come across social media posts that relate to governance and socio-political issues, and may get involved in the discussion. This marks the beginning of their participation. In the last few months, issues of insecurity and terrorism have beleaguered the nation.

For many young Nigerians, the social media remains a popular source of not just information about updates, but also place to hear assessments and make sense of the situation together with other users. When about 200 girls were kidnapped from Chibok in Borne state, the issue appeared to be losing publicity without the girls being found, until an internet campaign sprung with a classic social media strategy, the ‘hashtag’ represented with ‘#’. The #bring back our girls’ campaign has almost become a household phrase now, with people lending their voices from different parts of the world. It began with just some young Nigerian Twitter users, who were determined that the gravity of the situation was not underemphasized, and sought to raise support for the missing girls through the social media.

## **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theories relating to social media and politics are reviewed under this section. Most researches on social media use on the youth’s political participation have often used uses and gratification theory, media system dependency approach and agenda setting theory.

### **2.2.1 Uses and Gratification Theory**

Media theorists want the audience to believe that media serve a number of needs such as communication, social control, cohesion and cultural continuity in a society. Considering the individual, the media provide the audience with the needs of surveillance, identity formation, personal relationships, personal learning/guidance as well as diversion/ entertainment. The underpinning proposition of the functional view of the media is that the uses and gratifications need and therefore appropriately seek the media to fulfil them. Media do not do things to people: rather, people do things with media.

Rubin, (2002:526) submits that the uses and gratifications study is “a psychological communication perspective” that “stresses individual use and choice”. Ruggiero, (2000:14) It also argues that "as new technologies provide people with more media choices, motivation and satisfaction become even more important components of audience analysis." In the various studies, identified gratifications include surveillance, escape, arousal, sociability, instrumentality,



diversion, reassurance and companionship. Thinking of motivations, gratifications seem to lead to both ritualized (passive) and instrumental (active) use of the media (Metzger and Flanagin, 2002).

The study is anchored on the Uses and Gratifications theory. This theory was propounded by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch (1974).

The theory is concerned with what people do with media instead of what media do to people. The assumption is that people influence the effects media have on them. Use and gratification theory presupposes that the audience is not passive and plays an active role in interpreting and coordinating the media in their lives. Asemmah (2011) states that the theory emphasizes the motivation of the audience and the need for self-actualization. Therefore, this principle applies to this study. The reason is that Internet users deliberately prefer social media to meet their involvement and awareness needs in national governance issues. Here they need usefulness at the level of government participation, and social media has been specially adopted by them to increase their need. It's all about what you do and benefit from using social media. For example, the purpose for young people to use social media in the areas of political interaction and participation, and what they get in return. Getting information about his citizenship when a less active young man doesn't know.

### **2.3 EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

Ujia's study, Brenda Engusul (2015) examines the impacts of social media on Nigerian youth's participation in socio-political issues. The study was conducted using a survey method with a questionnaire for selected respondents. Results A large number of young people spend time online and participate in social networking discussions on socio-political issues affecting the country. They are informed and sensitized to a variety of topics through electronic advertising and events, thus promoting better governance in different ways such as accountability. The findings of the study suggest that social media has changed the landscape of citizenship and leadership, the collective cry ization, governance and politics, and the way people take their leaders into account. The study recommends better media literacy on the part of enthusiastic social media users and activists to make more discoveries for

socio-political participation and to reduce false or malicious information becoming viral. Affecting society. Furthermore, a study by Joseph Kahne and Benjamin Boyer (2018) on the political importance of social media and social media activity. The study examines panel data from two waves of a participatory youth policy survey of a nationally representative sample of young people in the United States. Common forms of online activity It uses cross-shift design to study the ways in which forms of political activity online and offline. The result of the cross-shift model indicated that the two forms of political engagement are related to each overtime. They specifically examined the influence of friendship-driven (FD) and interest driven (ID) online activity on online participatory politics and interaction and offline forms of political action.

The findings of this study reveal that FD and ID activity relates to political engagement and interaction, but in different ways. They also found that the size of young people's social media to promote political interaction and participation influenced the activity of both FD and ID. This shows that exposure to "low levels" (due to large social networks) promotes high levels of political involvement. Further findings from this study show the need to identify the types of online activities young people are engaged in, and more broadly, the political importance of social media and social networks.

Tokunbo A. Adaja and Felix A. Ayodele (2013) investigated on Young Nigerians and Social Media: Harnessing the Potential of Academic Excellence. The study examined the extent to which young Nigerians used one of the most popular social media platforms, Facebook, in their studies. The survey research method was used for the study. The population of the study consisted of undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria. One department, Mass Communication, was purposively selected for the study. The respondents were selected through simple random method without replacement. The survey results reveal that young Nigerians are working effectively on the features and potential of social media, especially Facebook. Approximately two thirds of the sample population uses the Facebook platform for social relations and interactivity instead of exchanging academic material. The study recommends that the youths should be encouraged to harness the potential of the platform for scholarship to boost their academic excellence.

Taufiq Ahmad, Aima Alvi, and Muhammad Ittefaq (2017) Considered the use of social media for political participation of college students: Analysis of findings in rural Pakistan. This study examines the political effectiveness of rural Pakistani college students and the impact of online political activity on actual political participation. This study also sheds light on the relationship between political activity and political consciousness. In this study, a survey of (N = 200) female and male undergraduate and graduate students at Narowal University in Pakistan. We used Qualtrics software to distribute surveys to students for data collection. The study found that online media has a significant impact on students. This creates political efficacy for all respondents. A select sample of university students who actively use online media is well informed about government events. The results show that the majority of students use social media to obtain information and political awareness. Political effectiveness depends largely on political participation on the Internet. The survey results show that political activity on the Internet is strongly correlated with political awareness and political participation offline. In rural Pakistan, the younger generation is very active on social media at political events online and offline.

Ahmad Jahed Mushtaq, Abdelmadjid Benraghda (2018) investigates Effects of Social Media on Undergraduate Students 'Academic Achievement' This study was designed to uncover the positive and negative impact of social media on students' academic achievement at the University of Alberoni, Afghanistan. A quantitative approach was adopted to collect relevant research data, and 371 survey questionnaires were conducted among nine undergraduates at the University of Alberoni. We applied SPSS software to analyze relevant data in the study. It was concluded that, despite public opinion on the misuse of social media among students in society, most students are concerned about the active use of social media for their education. The positive effect of social media on undergraduates is greater than the negative impact. ANOVA results show that there is no statistically significant difference between the positive and negative effects of social media and the student's academic achievement. Educators and students can use social media as an information and communication tool to streamline and improve the learning process.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

Methodology describes the procedures to be followed in realizing the goal and objectives of the research (Ogolo, 2012). This chapter therefore presents in details the procedures that is employed for this research. It discusses the research design, study area, population of the study, sample size and sampling technique, source of data collection, instrument for data collection, method of data analysis, and model specification.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

For any research to be carried out, there is the need to identify the right research approach/design as this determines how the vital information for the study will be incurred. The research design to adopt to carry out a research highly depends on the problem being addressed by the research. According to Check & Schutt (2012), Survey research is defined as “the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions.” This means that a sample from the population of the study is selected. Survey defines and clarifies why certain situations occur (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011). Therefore, the research design adopted for this study is the survey design. Survey design was adopted in this study because it allows data to be collected from a sample with the aim of discovering the interactions among variables. In other to do this, a questionnaire was used as the means collection of data.

### **3.2 Population of the Study**

The population for this research study refers to the totality of the population from which samples are drawn from. The universe of the study comprise of youth, who are students in Mountain Top University between the ages of 15-40, which is 1300 and 24 department in total. This population was selected because they make up for the most vibrant section of the society and also the most users of social media sites.

### **3.3 Sample size**

A sample size is derived from the estimated population of the study. A sample size is referred to as a subset of the population that serves as a representation of the entire population of the study from which generalizations can then be made. Available sample was used to select fifty from each of the three department for the study. This gave a total of 150 students for the study. However, at the point of collection of data, only 140 copies of the online questionnaire were retrieved.

### **3.4 Sampling Technique**

The study employed multi-stage sampling technique, departments in the university were divided into clusters. Simple random sampling technique was used to select three department

from the clusters for the study. The students from the College of Humanities, Management, and Social Sciences were randomly selected since they are perceived to be more inclined. Students from the College of Basic and Applied sciences were randomly selected but a few.

### **3.5 Research instrument**

To gather data for this study, the main instrument to be used is the Questionnaire. They include a set of standardized questions that examine a specific topic and gather data about demographics, opinions, attitudes, or behaviours. Questionnaire copies will be distributed and administered by the researcher to undergraduates in 100-400 levels from Mass Communication, Public Administration and IRPM. The questionnaire includes close and open-ended questions drawn up by the researcher.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument**

This is concerned with the extent to which the instrument used measures what it is supposed to measure. The questionnaire was given to the researcher's supervisor, and was further reviewed by experts in the field of Mass communication and Computer Science. Following this review, corrections, suggestions and amendments were made and implemented before it was administered to the respondents.

### **3.7 Method of Data Collection**

The data was collected virtually using the google form for distribution, it was done virtually because of the pandemic, which has served as a limitation to reaching the main aim of the research. The google form was designed and sent to the respondent through the departments Whatsapp groups. Only 140 responses were received out of the expected 150.

### **3.8 Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected were analysed using the descriptive counts and percentages for the demographic information of the respondents and for the research questions. This was done using the SPSS. Frequency tables and graphs were used to present the data.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the researcher focused on the presentation and analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire administered to the sampled undergraduates in Mountain Top University. The researcher used tables, charts, frequency tables and simple percentage to compute and analyse the data.

#### **4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents**

The demographic part of questionnaire consists of four items, which are gender, ages, Education years and line of study (Department) of the respondents. The following explains demographic information of respondents.

#### 4.1.1 Gender of respondents

**Table 4.1**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
a) Male	66	47.1%
b) Female	74	52.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.1 shows the gender of the participants. From the 140 participants that took part in the study, majority 74 (52.9%) of them were female, while 66 (47.1%) were male. It shows the superiority of female students in the university than the males.

#### 4.1.2 Ages of respondents

**Table 4.2**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
a) 15-20	41	29.3%
b) 21-25	68	48.6%
c) 26-30	20	14.2%



d) 30-35	11	7.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.2 shows the age distribution table that 41 (29.3%) are within the ages of 15-20, 68 (48.6%) are within the ages of 21-25 and 20 (14.2%) are within the ages of 26-30. The smallest groups of respondents 11 (7.9%) are 30 and above years. The largest groups of students 68 (48.6) comprised of those in the age groups of 21- 25 years.

#### 4.1.3 Studying year of respondents

**Table 4.3**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
a) 100	60	42.9%
b) 200	22	15.7%
c) 300	18	12.8%
d) 400	40	28.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.3 depicts education years of respondents. According to the table, from 140 respondents, 60 (42.9%) were first-year students and 40 (28.6%) were fourth-year students. In addition, 22 (15.7%) were second-year students, while 18 (12.8%) were third-year students.

#### 4.1.4 Department of respondents

**Table 4.4**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
a) MCM	100	71.4%
b) PAD	17	12.2%
c) Computer science	23	16.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.4 shows the results of the distribution of respondents by departments. The highest frequency of 100 and highest percentage of 71.4% is Mass communication department. This is followed by the department of Computer science and Mathematics with a frequency of 23 and the percentage of 16.4%. Public Administration have a percentage of 12.2% with a frequency of 17 respondents.

## **SECTION B**

### **4.2 Research Question 1**

What is the level of youth political interaction on social media?

To answer this question, questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the questionnaires were examined.

#### **Question 1: Do you have a social media handle?**

**Table 4.5 student's response to having a social media handle**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
a) Yes	136	97.1%
b) No	4	2.9%

<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>
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Table 4.5 shows that 136 (97.1%) agreed that they have a social media handle, 4 (2.9%) does not have a social handle.

**Question 2: Which of the social media platforms are you more exposed to?**

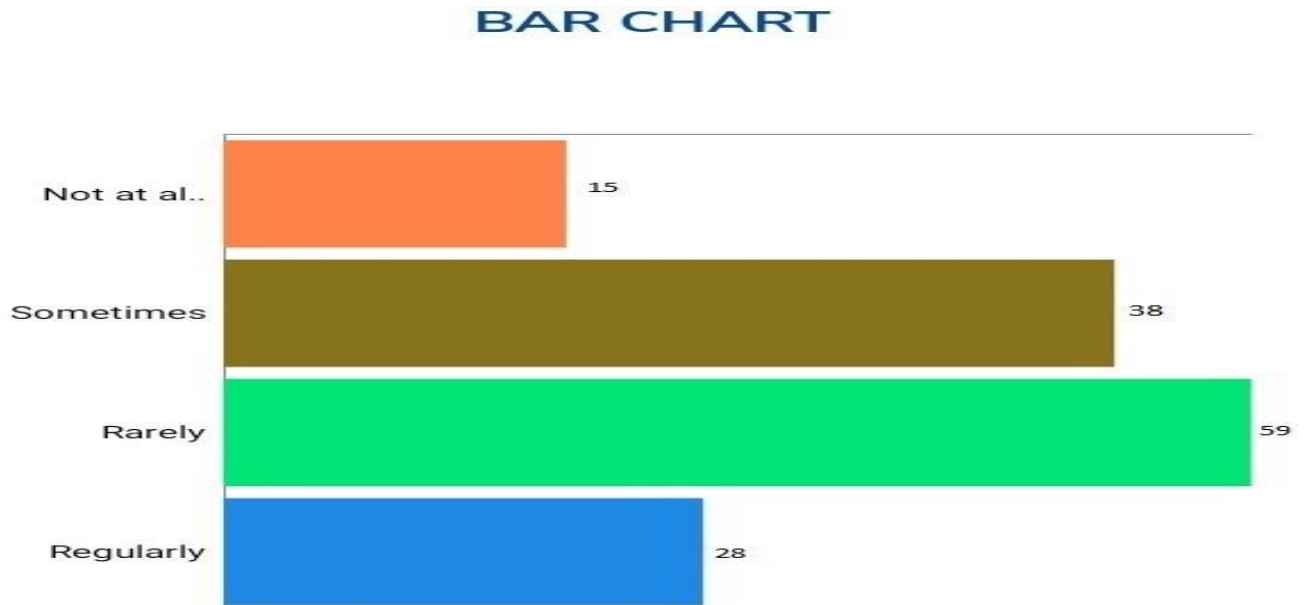
**Table 4.6 Youth's most exposed social media platform**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Valid percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative percentage</b>
a) Facebook	65	46.4%	46.4%	46.4%
b) Twitter	29	20.7%	20.7%	67.1%
c) Instagram	25	17.9%	17.9%	85%
d) Telegram	21	15%	15%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Table 4.6 indicate the social media preference amongst our respondents. The data presented above show that, Facebook 65 (46.4%) is the most preferred social media platform, followed by twitter. 29 (20.7%) respondent with 25 (17.9%) respondents preferred Instagram and 21(15%) of the respondents preferred Telegram. This result indicates that Facebook is the most preferred social media platform for Mountain Top University Youths.

**Question 3: How often do you interact with your friends about politics on any of these media platforms?**

**Chart 1 Undergraduates interaction with friends about politics on any media platform**



**Source: Researcher’s Analysis, 2020**

The above chart shows How often the respondents interact with their friends about politics on any of these media platforms. Out of the 140 respondents, 42.1% rarely do interact. 27.2% sometimes do interact, 20% of the respondents interacts regularly with their friends about politics while 10.7% don’t interact at all.

**Question 4: Which political activities do you engage in on the social media?**

**Table 4.7 student’s engagement in political activities through social media**

Options	Frequency	Percentage	Valid	Cumulative
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			percentage	percentage
a) Enlightenment	71	51.7%	51.4%	51.4%
b) Voter Education	20	14.3%	14.1%	65.5%
c) Electioneering Campaign	13	9.3%	9.2%	74.7%
d) Political Issues Analysis	36	25.7%	25.3%	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

From Table 4.7 it shows the political activities engaged in on the social media by the respondents. 71(51.7%) respondents said they engaged in political activities through enlightenment, 36 (25.7%) said they engage through political issues analysis, 20 (14.3%) engaged in political activities through voter’s education, while 13 (9.3%) respondents engaged in electioneering campaign.

**Question 5: How often do you engage in political activities on your social media platforms?**

**Table 4.8 How students participate in political activities through social media**

Options	Frequency	Percentage
a) Regularly	30	21.4%
b) Rarely	53	37.9%
c) Sometimes	45	32.1%
d) Not at all	12	8.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 4.8 it indicates how often the respondents engaged in political activities on their social media platforms. Out of 140 respondents 53 (37.9%) rarely do engage in political

activities, 45(32.1%) sometimes do engage in political activities, 30 (21.4%) do engage in political activities regularly, while 12 (8.6%) don't engage in political activities at all.

#### 4.3 Research Question 2: To what extent does social media affect your real-life political decisions.

To answer this question the Lickert scale questions was used in the questionnaire.

**KEY: GE- Great extent, SE- some extent, UD- undecided, LE- little extent, NE- no extent**

**Table 4.9 Extent to which social media affects youths' real-life political decisions**

	<b>GE</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>LE</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>Total</b>
6. Social media helped me decide on who to vote in an election.	44.3% (62)	21.4% (30)	14.3% (20)	10.7% (15)	9.3% (13)	100% (140)
7. Social media made me believe that an average Nigerian politician is corrupt.	50.7% (71)	20% (28)	6.4% (9)	15.7% (22)	7.2% (10)	100 (140)
8. The information I got on social media affected my decision about going into politics.	22.1% (31)	52.9% (74)	13.6% (19)	7.1% (10)	4.3% (6)	100 (140)
9. I know and defend my right more because of what I learn from social media.	57.9% (81)	13.6% (19)	10.7% (15)	15.7% (22)	2.1% (3)	100 (140)
10. Your reaction towards political information on social media platform has enhanced your view on political matters.	47.2% (66)	25% (35)	11.4% (16)	10.7% (15)	5.7% (8)	100 (140)

Table 4.9 shows that the majority of the participants have chosen the categories “Great extent to some extent” for two statements. For instance, the percentage of “The information I got on social media affected my decision about going into politics.” is (75%). “Your reaction towards political

information on social media platform has enhanced your view on political matters.” Is (72.2%). About 11.4% of students chose little or no extent with the first statement and 16.4% with the second, whereas the rest were undecided. The qualitative results imply that the majority of the students use social media networks as an information platform when it comes to political affairs. The information gotten has affected their decision about going into politics and also has helped to provide more insight on their view on political matters. It may be due to the fact that despite lack of credibility or the internet, it mentioned that it often opens links that lead one to interesting ideas even if they are not credible. Almost half of the students chose the categories “Great extent to some extent” with the following statements: “Social media made me believe that an average Nigerian politician is corrupt.” (70.7%); “I know and defend my right more because of what I learn from social media.” (71.5%); and “Social media helped me decide on who to vote in an election.” (65.7%). For the first statement, almost (22.9%) chose little or no extent and the rest were undecided. The same trend was (17.8%) noticed for the second statement. For the third statement, little or no extent was slightly higher, and those who chose the “undecided” choice reached 14.3 percent. These results are mostly good, partially bad. In the qualitative results, students expressed how they believe that an average Nigeria politician is corrupt through the exposure to different social media platforms, has been strengthened. Due to the information gotten through these platforms, social media has made the students to know and defend their right more in economic matters and provide more confidence to their participation toward political activities. It has also helped in the decision of who to vote for in an election due to the information gotten from social media and the economic profiles of the political candidates.

The consequence of these findings is that the social media has changed the landscape of citizenship and leadership, mass mobilization, governance and politics, and the way people can hold their leaders accountable. This conforms to Olley and Ekharrafo’s (2013, p.46) assertion that ‘Nigerian government and political office holders must be conscious of the capacity of the people to galvanise themselves into action using social media tools’. Youths, who engage actively in social media, have moved from the level of just entertainment and interaction with family and friends, to that of involving actively in issues relation to politics, governance, leadership, corruption and security.

**Research question 3: What is the perception of students on the use of social media as a tool for participating directly or indirectly in governance?**

In answering this research question, question 11 and 12 of the questionnaire were administered.

**Question 11**

**What is your view on using social media as a tool for participating in governance and politics?**

The aim of this question was to find out the views of the respondent on using social media as a tool for participating in governance and politics. Due to it being an open question, most of them noted that using social media as a tool for participating in governance and political related purposes is easier for them.

I think it is more appropriate if used in a proper way. In the last election, a group was created for voter's education and electioneering campaign on different platforms and through it, more information about the political candidates were disseminated to the public. As a citizen having the ability of discussing these matters and sharing and commenting brings the rest of the citizen present in the group together and enabled us exercise our civil rights properly.

My view of social media used as a tool for political participation is an excellent idea because it gives intellectual knowledge to the youth about the basic things they should know about politics and how they improve by engaging in politic interaction and awareness.

Participating directly or indirectly in politic through social media is what I never imagined Nigeria for. It's not enough tool when it comes to using social media as a tool, because political participation can also be done offline as well.



This finding conforms to the Uses and Gratification theory, where it is stated that people use the media to fulfil specific needs or desires.

**Question 12: How do you prefer to receive your information about politics on social media?**

**Table 4.10 How respondents prefer to receive their information on social media**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
a) Text	32	22.9%
b) Animation	22	15.7%
c) Video	69	49.3%
d) Pictures	17	12.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.10 above sought to seek information on how the respondent prefer to receive information about politics on social media. It can be seen that majority of the respondent 69 (49.3%) prefers to receive information about politics through videos. 32 (22.9%) prefers written text. 22 (15.7%) prefers information about politics in the form of animation. While 17 (12.1%) prefers pictures.

**Research question 4: To what extend does social media celebrities influence the political participation and interaction among students of Mountain Top University?**

To answer this research question, question number 18 of the questionnaire was administered.

**Question 18: To what extent do you have different opinions with social media influencers on political issues?**

**Table 4.11 Extent of youth opinion on social media with political issues**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
a) Great Extent	10	7.1%

b) Some Extent	69	49.3%
c) Undecided	16	11.5%
d) Little Extent	35	25%
e) No Extent	10	7.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table shows the extent to which the respondents have different opinions with social media influencers on political issues. Out of the 140 respondents, 69 (49.3%) to some extent do have different opinions with social media influencers. 35 (25%) of them little extent, 16 (11.5%) of the respondents have undecided opinions, while 10 (7.1%) noted no extent and great extent. Therefore, social media influencers, to some extent influences youth’s participation in politics and governance in Mountain Top University.

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **5.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher provides the summary of the study, the conclusion, and recommendations made based on the findings.

### **5.1 Summary**

The study focused on influence of social media on the youth political interaction and participation: A case study of Mountain Top University. The primary objective of this study was to examine the level of youth's political interaction on social media, the extent to which social media affect real life decisions and attitude, also to investigate the perception about the use of social media as a tool for participating in governance directly or indirectly among the youth and finally, to examine the influence of social media use on youth's political activities. Surprisingly in this study, participant indicates that they rarely use social media in participating in political activities.

The research design adopted for this study was the survey research design, the method through data were gathered and sampled to facilitate this research was the primary method of data collection in which information were sourced using questionnaire. In analyzing the data, the researcher used descriptive count and percentage. The result of the study shows that there was a significant positive relationship between the youth, social media and political participation. This implies that the use of social media like Facebook and Twitter increases the political participation of students in Mountain Top University.

#### **5.1.1 Summary of Findings**

Data presented in this study, provide some insight into the subject matter of social media and youth participation in governance. The study was employed to find answers to four research questions.

The first research question asked what extent do the student of Mountain Top University for political interaction and participation. Chart 1 in the study above shows that out of 140 respondents, 42.1% rarely do interact, 27.2% sometimes do interact, 20% of the respondents interact regularly with their friends about politics while 10.7% don't interact at all. This indicates

that a huge number of youths in Mountain Top University rarely interact in politics and governance and hardly contribute online.

The second research question examined if social media affects real life political decision of students and to what extent, this question is was answered using table 4.9 which is a Likert scale model According to Taufiq Ahmad, Aima Alvi, and Muhammad Ittefaq ( 2017), the results disclose that the majority of the students use social media for political awareness and information, it further suggest that online political activities strongly relate to political awareness and offline political participation. The result from this study correlate with what the researcher got in the study which says that social media to a great extent affects the real- life political decision of the students in Mountain Top University.

The third research question surveyed what is the perception of student in Mountain Top University about the use of social media as a tool for participating directly or indirectly in governance, for this an open- ended question was used. According to Uji, Brenda Mngusuul. (2015), the results showed that large numbers of youths verified that using social media as a tool for participating in governance and politics made them intellectually sound about that matters that arises in politics. by participating in social media discussions on political matters and participating directly or indirectly in governance which affects the country. This is in line with the result that was gotten from the study's findings, most of them noted that using social media as a tool for participating in governance and political related purposes is easier for them.

The fourth research question examined the extend to which social media celebrities influence the political participation and interaction among students of Mountain Top University, table 4.11 shows that 69 (49.3%) to some extent do have different opinions with social media influencers. 35 (25%) of them little extent, 16 (11.5%) of the respondents have undecided opinions, while 10 (7.1%) noted no extent and great extent. The findings imply that social media influencers, to some extent influences youth's participation in politics and governance in Mountain Top University.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The study investigates social media, youth and political participation. The growth in social networking will continue to be an aspect of our daily life and will continue to be a part of

it. This will continue to influence youth practices and their decision-making about government and politics. Social media has proven to be a very effective platform for students to partake in civic movements while they use it to expand their awareness and practice their fundamental civil rights. It is a modern technique which enlightens the youth in Mountain Top University about politics and the rights they have as a citizen. However, the negative effect of social media seems to be very poor as compared to the positive effect. There is a significant influence of social media on youth's political participation in Mountain Top University.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

1. Youths should not limit their activities to online media, but try to take these movements to the streets, offices and get involved more in offline activities. The percentage of offline activists is very low compared to the high number of online activists.
2. The social media should be recognized as a genuine tool for aggregating public opinion by public office holders, and should encourage free expression therein, and let such views guide their activities.
3. A strong recommendation for the users of social media is that they have to remember the purpose of using social media and always use the informative sites.
4. Government has to make policies to check out unfair reporting of media which ruin the society.

### **5.4 Limitation of the Study**

- This research focused on one study location in Nigeria: Mountain Top University, which is a privately funded institution and students are not allowed to use cell phones at their discretion only the school provided device is used for academic inclined purposes. However, in the course of carrying out this research, the researcher encountered some constraints which limits the scope of this study. These include the limited time frame given for the completion of the study, difficulty in gathering data due to the pandemic which limited the number of the survey questionnaire, among others. Despite these challenges, the research came out with valid and reliable result. The findings were limited to the influence of social media on students' participation in political activities in Mountain Top University and as such findings of the study cannot be generalised for the entire population of youths

in Nigeria. It can however help in predicting future usage patterns of social media in political activities.

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**QUESTIONNAIRE ON INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON  
YOUTH'S POLITICAL INTERACTION AND PARTICIPATION: A CASE  
STUDY OF MOUNTAIN TOP UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

**Dear Respondent,**

My name is **KODILINYE DAVINA CHISOM**, 400level of the department of Mass Communication at Mountain Top University (MTU). This questionnaire is distributed with the purpose of an academic research which aims at examining the influence of social media on the political participation of students in Mountain Top University.

The information provided in this questionnaire will be treated with confidentiality and is strictly for academic purpose. Your sincere and honest response will be appreciated.

**SECTION A**

Please tick (√) and fill in where appropriate

**SEX:** Male: ( )      Female: ( )

**AGE:** 15-20:( ) 20-25: ( ) 25-30: ( ) 30-35: ( )

**LEVEL:** 100level: ( ) 200level: ( ) 300level: ( ) 400level: ( ) others: ( )

**DEPARTMENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION B**

### **Research question 1: To what extent do students of Mountain top university use social media for political interactions and participation?**

- 1) Do you have a social media handle? YES ( ) NO( )
  
- 2) Which of the social media platforms are you more exposed to? Facebook ( ) Twitter ( )  
Instagram ( ) Telegram ( )
  
- 3) How often do you interact with your friends about politics on any of these media platforms?  
Regularly ( ) Rarely ( ) Sometimes ( ) Not at all ( )
  
- 4) Which political activities do you engage in on the social media? ( ) Enlightenment ( ) Voter  
education ( ) Electioneering campaign ( ) Political issues analysis
  
- 5) How often do you engage in political activities on your social media platforms? Regularly ( )  
Rarely ( ) sometimes ( ) Not at all ( )

**Research question 2: To what extent do social media affect - real life political decisions of students of Mountain top university?**

**Kindly tick the extent you believe in the following statements to be true:**

**KEY: GE- Great extent, SE- some extent, UD- undecided, LE- little extent, NE- no extent**

	GE	SE	UD	LE	NE
Social media helped me decide on who to vote in an election.					
Social media made me believe that an average Nigerian politician is corrupt.					
The information I got on social media affected my decision about going into politics.					
I know and defend my right more because of what I learn from social media.					
What is your reaction towards political information on social media platform					

**Research question 3: What is the perceptions of student in mountain top university about the use of social media as a tool for participating directly or indirectly in governance?**

11) What is your view on using social media as a tool for participating in governance and politics?

12) How do you prefer to receive your information about politics on social media?  Text  Animation  Videos  Pictures

13) Do you respond to topical issues raised on social media about governance or election? YES (  ) NO (  )

14) How often do you do so? Regularly (  ) Rarely (  ) Sometimes (  ) Not at all (  )

15) Do you engage in offline political activities such as voting or balloting? YES (  ) NO (  )

**Research question 4: . To what extend does social media celebrities influence the political participation and interaction among students of Mountain Top University?**

16) Are you a social media influencer? YES(  ) NO (  )

17) Do you have a social media influencer that you follow on social media? YES(  ) NO (  )

18) To what extent do you have different opinions with them on political issues ? Great extent (  ) Some extent (  ) undecided (  ) Little extent (  ) No extent (  )

19) Do social media usage influence your interest in politics as a youth? YES (  ) NO (  )

