

**AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE  
AND DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES BY GOVERNMENT  
AND EMERGING POLITICAL LEADERS –THE NIGERIAN  
EXPERIENCE.**

**BY**

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is proudly dedicated to my uncle late BABA MARAFA who through Allah's mercy finances my education from Nursery school to PhD. Wish him Allah's rahama now and always.

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## **Glossary of terms and abbreviations**

<b>APP:</b>	African Power and Politics
<b>CGHR:</b>	Centre for Governance and Human Right
<b>CAC:</b>	Corporate Affairs Commission
<b>DFID:</b>	Department for international development
<b>E-Democracy:</b>	Electronic Democracy
<b>E-Government:</b>	Electronic Government
<b>FEC</b>	Federal Executive Council
<b>GCC</b>	Government Contact Centre
<b>G2B</b>	Government to Business
<b>G2C</b>	Government to Citizens
<b>G2E</b>	Government to Employee
<b>G2G</b>	Government to Government
<b>GSP:</b>	Government Service Portal
<b>HCDA:</b>	Human Capability Development Approach
<b>ICT:</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>ITU:</b>	International Telecommunication Union
<b>INEC:</b>	Independent National Electoral Commission
<b>IS:</b>	Information Systems
<b>NBC:</b>	National Broadcasting Commission
<b>NCC:</b>	Nigerian Communications Commission
<b>NCRC:</b>	Nigerian Community Radio Coalition
<b>NEGST:</b>	National e-Government Strategy

<b>NGO:</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NITDA:</b>	National Information Technology Development Agency
<b>UN:</b>	United Nations
<b>UNEC:</b>	United Nations Economic Commission
<b>UNDC</b>	United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UNESCO:</b>	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>PLC:</b>	Policy and Legal Centre
<b>OECD:</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>SAVI:</b>	State Accountability and Voice Initiative
<b>SMS:</b>	Short Message Service
<b>SNS</b>	Social Network Sites
<b>TCA:</b>	Thematic Context Analysis
<b>WWW:</b>	Worldwide Web
<b>WNTV:</b>	Western Nigerian Television

## Definitions of terms

The following terms are defined conceptually (actual meaning) and operationally (as applicable to this study).

**Accountability:** This refers to holding persons especially public office holders responsible for their actions or inactions. But in this study, accountability is understood from the prism of section 22 of the Nigerian constitution which underlined the essence of a free mass media in making governments accountable and responsible to the people. Accountability also means monitoring government performance.

**Social Change:** This means adopting new practices or alternative methods of news gathering and dissemination. But in this study, change means utilisation of the new media including the social media and mobile telephones by Nigerian online users to improve democratic governance.

**Democratic Governance:** This means absence of dictatorship, an administrative structure that places high premium on rule of law, pluralism, tolerance and respect for the dignity of the human person. Governance also involves rule making, capacity building, legitimization, transparency, accountability, policy making and execution, prompt response to citizen desires, and more effective service delivery (Akindele, Olaopa, & Salaam, 2009; Blair, 2000; Pierre, 2009). In this study, democratic governance refers to capacity building, citizen empowerment; democracy as a form of self-rule and people's sovereignty from elite domination.

**Freedom of expression:** From an operational perspective, this refers to unfettered opportunity for dialogue between Nigerians and their government and the capacity to express independent opinion on any subject through any medium of communication. Conceptually, freedom of expression is consistent with Article 19 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights which states inter alia that: everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes the right to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

**Freedom of Information Act:** This refers to a legislation that guarantees every citizen the right or authority to look into or demand any document or information from government that will inform the person of how the business of governance is going on (Vladeck, 2008). The act means that government information is public resource. In this study, freedom of refers to Information act in Nigeria's Senate and House of Representatives.

**Freedom of the press:** This refers to the ability of the news media and news professionals to report news objectively and accurately without harassment, intimidation or fear of government or powerful members of society. It also includes the absence of legal or quasi legal or economic control of the media and by extension information flow. The operational definition of press freedom is the existence of an enabling environment for reporters and editors in Nigeria to do their job without government control.

**Political participation:** This term refers to civic engagement, involvement in the political process, voting in elections, informed political debate, democracy, demand for basic rights, good governance, and civil society initiatives, student and labour activism etc.

The foundation of a democracy is the ability of the people to influence the government through openly expressed public opinion. For the purpose of this study, political participation means voting in Nigeria's presidential election and involvement in election campaigns as well as important debates prior to elections.

**Transparency:** For the purposes of this study transparency refers to absence of secrecy in public administration, and incorruptible practices of journalists and politicians. Conceptually, it means openness in government activities and programs as well as in the private sector. It also includes the definition given to the term by Transparency International, the global anti- corruption watchdog.

**Empowerment:** For the purpose of this study empowerment is concerned with opportunity for people to empower themselves by getting together, communicating, informing, learning, teaching, creating, expressing themselves through the media to change their social being.

**Surveillance:** In this study surveillance refers to government attempt to monitor citizens' online activities

**E-Government:** is the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve the activities of public sector organisations. In this study e-government is seen as usage of ICT and social media application as means of interaction between citizens to citizens and citizens to public officials

## **Abstract**

Most political systems around the world, including long-standing democratic systems, have been afflicted by corruption: non-transparent decision making processes, power distribution, cynical public relations and poor consultation exercises. The consequence has been a sense of prevailing injustice; citizenship inequality and lack of transparency in Governance. The media is often seen as a medium that could address and tackle these current socio-political problems within society. However, the role Social Media could play is widely debated between two schools of thought - media and communication studies and critical political economy – the study of social relations, particularly power relations, that constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of communication resources, and this debate leads to uncertainty about the role of ICTs in empowering public participation.

This research assesses the views of those in Government Ministries, Democratic Institutions, National IT agencies, and emerging citizen leaders in the form of Nigerian graduate and postgraduate students. Nigeria makes an important case study as it sits at the fulcrum of the battle between citizen freedoms and Government censorship. This research asks how Nigeria's government institutions and agencies conceptualises ICTs and to what extent they have used the new ICT tools for political re-engineering of the polity as well as to engage citizen's participation in democratic processes as indices to ICT use for sustainable development in Nigeria. It draws upon power theories and theories on media and technology use in political communications, as theoretical benchmarks to contextualise Nigeria's hegemonic media institutions, to explore the transparency and accountability within government institutions/agencies together with new participatory culture Social Media use.

The study tests various social theories concerning interactive media, and asks whether ,by encouraging audiences to express their opinions, interactive media can be perceived as a tool for expanding the freedom of individuals (Sen, 1999) and in particular their social or political “capability” (Srinivasan, 2007), lending credibility to the label of new ICT's as “technologies of freedom”(Willems, 2013). This study will establish whether or not expansion of interactive media leads, on balance, to more inclusive or more democratic practices and more transparent governance or more just and efficient delivery of public goods. The study examines how these new mediated ‘public’ spaces enable different expressions of public opinion.



## CHAPTER ONE

Chapter One states the rationale and significance of the research and introduces the essence of the issues addressed in this study Introduction:

### 1.0 Introduction:

As the most populous country in Africa, with its youthful population of 173 million as at 2013, and as the world's 12th largest producer, and the 8th largest exporter of petroleum, Nigeria is arguably Africa's dominant economic and political power (World Bank, 2015; Dike, 2014). However, its riches – it has the highest gross national product in Africa – have delivered neither stability nor prosperity. Far from establishing conditions fertile for expansive inclusive institutions, in Nigeria, the colonial legacy bequeathed conditions ripe for exploitation by elites, which created extractive institutions of power, increasing the incentive for ambitious groups and individuals to take control of the state. When, in 1960, it gained independence from the United Kingdom, its nationalist leadership opted to retain colonial borders and govern the country as a federated republic. However, the multiplicity of tribes and languages contained within its colonial legacy of artificially drawn boundaries created the conditions where tribal loyalties surpassed loyalty to the fledgling state. The outcome was a succession of military coups and dictatorship for twenty eight of its forty-seven years of political independence (Falola and Heathon, 2008; Ikejiaku, 2013). Successive military regimes held in common their claimed intent to restore stability, end corruption, ensure free society and prepare the country for a transition to civilian rule. These same military dictatorships siphoned off billions of dollars of oil revenue, creating a culture of corruption that permeated society. In the course of the democratisation process, Nigeria's military regimes proved themselves to be at least as irresponsible as the colonial administrators (Dike, 2014; Lewis, 2007; Omoweh, 1997).

Nigeria's military regimes in these years and previous four democratic periods is well described by Thomas Paine's, prescient 1809 definition of 'mixed Government' as, "imperfect in everything, cementing and soldering the discordant parts together by corruption, acting as a whole, until there is no responsibility: the parts cover each other till responsibility is lost; and the corruption which moves the machine, contrives at the same time its own escape" (p. 159). In this - era of dictatorship, military regimes were accountable only to themselves and remained out of touch with the everyday life of the average Nigerian (Dike, 2014; Folola, 2007; Olukotun, 2002). The Nigerian press remained the only means of checking the excesses of the military governments. The pre-1990s was a period of media monopoly where state and federal government owned the broadcast media.

The currency of power is particularly valuable in regimes with extractive political institutions. To ensure that power remains unchecked, and to control the gateways to economic riches, the elite are best able to serve their interests if the media can be enticed, cajoled and, if necessary, coerced into the role of a distraction medium, one that entertains rather than investigates, one that affirms rather than challenges government. Unchallenged power has no incentive to permit checks against its abuse - particularly in the form of television, and more recently, digital media - and every financial incentive not to, because it's extractive political institutions are partly sustained through the trickle-down influence of corruption. Consequently public service broadcasting's role to inform, educate, entertain and mobilise citizens for active participation in civic and social duties was thwarted. Far from fulfilling their role as society's watchdog, broadcast media were used as the mouthpiece of government in power.

Within the print media sector, speaking truth concerning those in power entailed risk that only a very few were prepared to invite. The means by which civil society voices concern, and sets out political and economic agendas, was effectively silenced by draconian laws enacted by the Government. These illegal coercive measures included Decree No 4 of 1984, criminalising press reports exposing to ridicule an officer of the military Government, and offensive publication (proscription) Decree 35 of 1993, that empowered the president to ban or sanction any publication as he wished (Ojo, 2007; Olukotun, 2002). However, military rule ended abruptly in 1999, while privatisation of the broadcast sector had commenced in 1995. Nigeria's return to democracy in the new millennium, after years of military dictatorship, even though imbued with cautious optimism, could only be expected to be a very gradual process.

### **1.1 Background of the study:**

Media scholars have noted the inveterate weakness of its conventional media has sullied Nigerian political democracy as a form of government capable of paving the road to the Promised Land (Streets, 2001; Machesney, 1999). Consequently, the increased ubiquity and autonomy of new digital media has infused contemporary debates about shaping Africa's democracy and good governance with renewed optimism and it is suggested that the context of ICT use, is capable of becoming a powerful influence in the realm of social development and good Governance across the continent. Western commentators have represented new ICT/digital media as tools capable of shaping myriad forms of political power, freedom development and social change in both developed and developing societies (Shirky, 2011; Benkler, 2006; Kahn and Kellner, 2005; Mudhai, 2013; Rheingold, 1993).

This assumption echoes the notion of technological determinism. Technological determinism holds that a society's technology has a powerful influence, driving the development of its social structure and cultural values, shaping how individuals in a society think, feel, and act. The idea that technology drives human interaction and creates social change is not new. The question is not so much whether or not ICT can bring transformative shifts in society, so much as; what kind of transformative change will they bring? Realisation of the potential of ICT depends on political (censorship and other restrictions), infrastructural (ease of access) social (how they are used) and economic (are they affordable?) factors (Hellström 2008, 2010). The prerequisite for the success of such interventions is an enabling political environment that promotes and protects free speech.

However, a counter-argument against the reductionist technological deterministic view, points to the relevance of contextual elements in technology use. Any given technology's effect depends, to some extent, on the social context. Social constructionists argue that context will influence technology's adoption, and, if the technology is adopted, the social context will have important effects on how technology is used and thus on its ultimate impact.

Despite the fact that access to internet and digital technology is uneven and intermittent in many developing countries (Heeks, 2003; Fuchs and Horak, 2008), interestingly, many African countries have made good use of available digital resources. For example, recent studies show that more than 75% of mobile subscriptions worldwide are based in developing countries (International Telecommunication Union, 2012), and as such, a knowledge of the patterns of mobile use in these countries is helpful in understanding the antecedents to and outcomes of increasing mobile adoption (Pearce, 2013). Nigeria is a leading country in West Africa in terms of mobile phone use and internet penetration. The two are increasingly spreading across the country due to telecommunication deregulation and privatisation of mobile data services over recent years (NCC, 2013; Freedom House, 2014). Cultural and practical factors play their part in making mobile phones the most used digital technology. However, two key factors are believed to have played a central role in the development of internet penetration in Nigeria. Government investment in infrastructure and the private sector increased competition between service providers (ITU, 2012; Thompson, 2015). It is against this background that the federal Ministry of Communications Technology set up a presidential committee in 2012, with the responsibility of developing a National broadband plan to increase Nigeria's broadband penetration fivefold by 2018 (Nkanga and Efem, 2011).

In 2012, internet penetration was 33 per cent, up from 28 per cent in 2011 according to the

International telecommunication Union (ITU, 2012; Bohler-Muller and Merwe, 2011; Nurudeen, 2012). ICT usage in Nigeria is dominated by the mobile phone revolution which has led the number of active mobile phones to increase from almost zero in 2000 to over 117 million subscribers, or 84 per cent penetration, in March 2013 (Nigerian Communications Commission NCC, 2013). The latest ITU record of mobile phone subscriptions, and mobile phone penetration rate, is 68 per cent in 2012, up from 57 per cent in 2011 (ITU, 2012). About four million Nigerians use smart phones, six million people use Facebook, and 50 million uses the internet, - ranking the country 3rd largest in West Africa, and 36th in the world in ICT terms, thus making Nigeria one of the fastest growing mobile phone markets in the world (Adeiza, 2013; Informa Telecoms, 2013). A study conducted by ITU in conjunction with UNESCO revealed that mobile broadband has accelerated the number of internet users, and looks set to increase overall levels of penetration. However, the gap between aspiration and realisation, between legislation and its enactment in Nigerian politics raises the question of whether this widespread penetration and access to technology are guarantors of social change, as Howard and Park, (2012) have predicted? However, it is incontestable that it is not merely technology, but the opportunities and motivation to use and adapt to the technology that shapes attitudes and changes behaviours.

### ***1.1.1 ICT and Social Media in Nigeria***

While core political values resist change (Booth and Chambers, 2014) there is discernible unrest at the margin of Nigerian politics (Ogundimu, 2013 Saluwu, 2013). A brief account of the intersection between digital technology and two contemporary issues of concern - government subsidies and Boko Haram – illustrate how ICT's are becoming a staple of the political discourse.

The Government's removal of the gasoline subsidy on 1st January 2012 caused a sudden rise in the price of basic necessities, ranging from transport to foodstuffs. And the consequent public unrest was orchestrated on social media. Many Nigerians took to the streets to demand a reversal of the decision. Over the next two weeks, protests paralysed many cities, eventually forcing the Government to restore a partial subsidy.

The use of ICTs and social media was reportedly instrumental in the protests, galvanising divergent ethnic and religious groups in a rare show of unity (Kombol, 2014; Akinfemisoye, 2013; Chilwa, 2012). The protests were successful in that information sharing among educated Nigerians via social media greatly increased, and several corruption probes into the petroleum industry were instigated, even if the findings of such probes were never implemented.

Evidence that the use of social media in Nigeria both amplifies and trivialises issues of concern, is

found in the former president Goodluck Jonathan's inappropriate use of the hashtag #bringbackourgudluck2015. Initially, the rubric #bringbackourgirls was used as a campaign slogan on social media applications, particularly Facebook and Twitter, to show concern about the fate of 200 girls abducted by the Islamist Group Boko Haram. The slogan #bringbackourgirls was used by citizens, social groups and civil society organisations campaigning for the release of the missing girls. The hash tag campaign raised global awareness of the plight of the missing girls, and also highlighted the government's failure to rescue them. While it focused attention on the crime, it also focused public attention on the government's inability to remedy their plight. The emergence of Boko Haram can be interpreted as a microcosm of Nigerian frailty and failings. It began as a peaceful movement, calling for the adoption of a purer form of Islam while criticising government corruption. But since 2000 - in response to military brutality, jihadist ideology, and the passivity of the federal government- and lacking an institutional or representative gateway, it has developed into a terrorist group and become a rebuke to government ineptitude (Smith 2015).

Supporters of the president began using #bringbackourgudluck2015 as part of his political campaigning. The hash tag was appropriated for cynical political purposes. President Jonathan subsequently disowned the ham-fisted attempt to raise his public profile which miscalculated how public opinion can be swayed, and how instantly the Twitter grapevine can turn to outrage. This use of #bringbackourgudluck2015 was counter-productive and short-sighted. Rue and Sundarajan, (2014) described its use as 'external visibility', - it attracted global attention, but in Nigeria, the episode spawned rich satire among Nigerians on social media, while suggesting a lack of sophistication on the part of the publicist's use of the internet.

These and other incidents, track the shifting ethos of online journalism from objectivity to a greater emphasis on participation and authenticity, which is better suited to the values of community media. It resonates with a mistrust of institutional power and locates authenticity in the diversity of voices who debate it- educated urban elites, government departments, media organisations and agencies - rather than the political masters of institutional power. Although the process is gradual, these groups already perceive information and communication technologies (ICTs) as mouthpieces for the expression of their goals, and as tools to assist them in the struggle for improved national democracy. The assumption of this study is that ICTs do not replace existing media networks and face to face communication, but add to and supplement them, thus ICTs in this study refers to both new and old media. This study explores ICT and social media usage to assess how, and under what circumstances, ICT and digital media impact on Nigerian society, despite the Government's attitude to control of the media and in particular its attempts at controlling the internet.

## 1.2 Research problem

ICTs are increasingly relevant to the basic right of communication, and also an aid to protecting human rights in general because of the opportunity they present in terms of information dissemination and freedom of expression (UN Human Right Council, 2015). Conversely, ICT media are also seen as undermining authoritative accurate verifiable reporting because the uncertain provenance of articles based on hearsay or plagiarism poses a challenge to veracity, and therefore, the creation of a well-informed audience, while conventional journalism relies on persistence and objectivity to separate fact from fiction (McPherson, 2015; Fuchs, 2015). This issue of provenance and objectivity has been widely debated among Information Systems scholars. There remains insufficient understanding among internet researchers about the role ICTs could play in addressing societal problems in underdeveloped countries and in terms of the risk they pose to the societies in those countries (Fuchs, 2014; Fortunati, 2014; Loader and Mercea, 2012; Morozov, 2011).

These debates are pertinent in Nigeria's context where semi-literate and literate citizens capitalise on limited ICT opportunities to make their voices heard in an irregular and elite dominated mass media landscape. But the impact on Nigeria's complex society and political institutions remains a work in progress, partly because access to ICT continues to expand from a low base-line, and partly because ICT's utility is contingent upon how, why and whether Nigerians can access them in sufficient numbers at affordable prices. In African countries, including Nigeria, one must search for an explanation for the stunted impact of the role of the new communication technologies (Gagliardone et al, 2014; Ufuoma, 2014)

Studies show that inequitable media ownership patterns, pressure and politics continue to challenge the role of the new mass media in deepening good governance in Nigeria (Omenugha, 2013; Okoro, 2013; Chiluwa, 2011). Some Western scholars perceive ICT as a catalyst for the correction of the hegemony of the national media in developing nations. However, this technological deterministic assumption fails to capture the complexity of how governance processes work in Nigeria and the different spaces which ICTs can fill. One can safely argue that media monopoly, censorship, privatisation and commercialisation of the media characterise the old media especially the press in Nigeria, with an increased threat to journalism as a profession (Willems, 2011 p 47; Djankov, 2013; Elliott et al forthcoming). Most recently, internet and mobile shutdown has gone hand in glove with violations of human rights in the digital era.

The Nigerian government's privatisation of the broadcast media and telecommunication industry ostensibly promotes multiple choice within conventional news media, supposedly unrestricted online activities have raised suspicions about government surveillance initiatives. Surveillance increased following reports about the installation of a mass surveillance system and revelations that the 2014 budget contained various earmarked funds for the purchase of specialized surveillance equipment (Freedom House, 2014) and partnership with an Israeli surveillance firm.

In Africa where there are competing demands for scarce funding and inadequate infrastructure, it is not always easy to map out where ICT has made enabling contributions to development aims. Thompson calls for a reorientation in ICT developmental studies in Africa and advocates for a focus on 'developmental ICT' as opposed to 'ICT for developing countries'. By developmental ICT he means the conception, development, implementation, and use of ICT as an explicit vehicle for furthering development aims – where ICT is contextualized and functions as an enabling artefact, and an enabler of a set of social behaviours (Thompson, 2008). This approach would involve a more strategic engagement with policymakers. Within this conception, he warns that for clarity of study, attentions should be paid to the developmental benefits in deploying ICT whilst justifying value for money spent on ICT initiatives such as the e-Government (Wade, 2002; Ciborra, 2003).

Looking at the literature, it is evident that studies with the aforementioned focus are scanty and this research aims to fill this important gap. Hence it explores the concept of ICT for development in Nigeria. Few or no studies have been conducted to critically appraise the multi-perspectives of ICT within the context of power and social media use for political engagements in Africa's largest democracy. This study explores how, where and under what circumstance ICT and digital media impacts on Nigeria's society with specific focus on Governance. Hence, the study focuses on how new ICTs are deployed within the framework of the capability approach. It explores the concept of technology for development amidst multiple complexities identified in the literature on ICT for development (Blake and Quiros, 2010). This includes an assessment of the concepts of freedom and participation to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of how the media and new media is controlled.

### **1.3 Nature of inquiry**

This study engages with globalist liberal outlooks on the construction of relationships between the State, Governments, democracy, and development of both new mass media and ICTs (Curran 2011; Fenton 2012; McChesney, 2013; Freedman, 2014). This engagement poses theoretical and

empirical challenges in Africa (Coleman, 2015; Freedman, 2014; Fuchs, 2014; Williams, 2014; Mercea and Loader, 2012; Mudhai, 2013; Wasserman, 2011). Drawing upon technological determinist and social constructivist theories of technology, the study takes into account both optimistic and pessimistic configurations of the use of ICT and new media, and their relationship with a true information society. With specific attention to contemporary debates about social media, issues raised are couched in the language of power theories, which have their origin in Marx, Gramsci and Foucault. Of particular interest is the work of Professor Christian Fuchs, a prominent critical internet scholar who criticises new ICT scholars for failing to ask critical questions in their research (Fuchs, 2012; 2014).

Liberal democratic theories and participation anchored in the theoretical exposition of James Stuart Mill, and Carole Peteman provide a philosophical backdrop informing debate and discussion in Nigeria. Other supplementary theories considered are the Human development Capability Model (HCDA), (Sen, 1991); of media use in political communications, and e-Government theories. It is in the context of these theories that the study explores Western and Global Meta narratives, and their influence on the local debate in Nigeria. (See Chapter Two).

The study sheds light on community radio and its theoretical aspect, and illustrates how discourses about community radio, development and democracy intersect, and critically examines how community radio development has been restricted in the Nigerian context (Mudhai, 2011; Gagliardone et al, 2014;). Section one of Chapter Three explicitly examines community radio development and how it poses a community based threat to unchecked power. In conjunction with mobile phones, Community radio makes connections between listeners and issues of local concern, amplifying and sharpening grassroots discontent by targeting specific campaigns to improve services. The use of mobile phones in partnership with radio programmes, even in the absence of community radio, allows the public to become a principal protagonist in radio broadcasting, but commercial radio lacks the underlying set of community values which places the public good before profit. Informed by values associated with grassroots communities and other civil society organisations, countries such as Benin, Cameroon, Ghana and the Gambia have made significant progress in reducing imbalances between city and countryside and making freedom of expression more of a reality (AMARC 2008). Community Radio is an integral part of an ongoing and evolving process,

It is clear that, used in conjunction and cooperation with mobile phone owners, community radio rewrites notions of media ownership as they apply in Nigeria. It also extends and amplifies the notion of community. The traditional community becomes much bigger, covering a much larger



area, extending access and community participation. The new digital media used in talk shows and discussion programs in the UK and elsewhere increasingly encourage audience participation through whichever medium is available and affordable. In the Nigerian context, this is the mobile phone, and much more so than in Europe for example, networks or virtual communities are a mix of the written and spoken word. Nigeria is an oral society. The proof of the power of Nigeria's potential to adapt ICT's in its own image –the image of an oral society - is found in the Government's stonewalling and eventual obstruction of Community Radio. Chapter Three sets out the detail.

#### **1.4 Research question**

In this research the researcher is guided by this core statement:

***Research Question: What role, if any, can ICTs play in shaping and empowering grassroots democratic e-governance in Nigeria?***

The central research question is further broken down into three sub questions.

Sub Question 1: How have Nigeria's policymakers' contextualized ICT innovations and social media use for political engagements in view of freedom of expression and democratic processes in Nigeria?

Sub Question 2: From the policymakers' perspectives what are the possible challenges and risk identified with the deployment of ICT innovations for development in Nigeria and what are their strategic approach to capability assessment of ICT use in Nigeria?

Sub Question 3: What drive social media use for political participation in Nigeria and in what way can the identified factors be used to promote good governance, transparency, accountability and social reform?

#### **1.5 Research aim**

The research aims to study the ongoing debate about use of new ICTs/social media to explore its impact in Nigerian society and suggest possible solutions in regards to the usage.

#### **1.6 Research objectives**

The main objectives of this study are:

1. To carry out detailed literature review of the concept of new ICTs and social media and their relevance in strengthening and developing free democratic society.
2. To assess Nigeria's current new mass media deployment within the context of ICT for development as a means of understanding the perspectives of emergence of new ICTs and social media within the concept of e-Government.
3. To understand factors militating against ICT use for e-governance, political participation and proffer workable solutions to relative challenges, and risks that may be associated with the use of new ICTs and social media within the set frame.

## **1.7 Methodology**

This study has applied critical research in an interpretive style. Its epistemological and ontological premises are based on the understanding that reality is socially constructed (interpretive). The inquiry goes beyond everyday life to include a critical perspective of power relations. Approaches adopting this paradigm are useful to investigate the social role IT plays, its uses and consequences (Markus and Silver 2008; Klein and Myers, 1999; 2011). Taking into account the optimist – pessimist dichotomy of views on the information society, the study takes a dialectical approach to answer the central research question i.e. *“what role (if any) ICT and social media play in shaping grass root democratic participation”*? It takes into account different kinds of informationality (or digitality), in different settings, alongside specific political agencies, meaningful political participation, individual and societal capacity, institutional arrangements and cultural context (Srinivasan, 2007; Fukuda Parr, 2003; Sen 1991).

Mixed method approach is grounded in field work and observations; 20 interviews were conducted and supplemented by fifty questionnaires. Purposive sampling is used as a sampling method. The methodological approach provides in depth explanations on the contribution ICT and social media make to political participation in Nigeria, and discusses Government attempts at internet censorship.

## **1.8 Limitation**

This research was limited by necessity to Nigerian urban elites. Nigeria is a country of 170 million population with 500 different ethnicities, many of who have high illiteracy rates. Citizens' activities online such as liking a Facebook posting or tweeting/ retweeting a post does not necessarily allude to active citizenship engagement – especially in a country such as Nigeria, where its 28 per cent Internet penetration is reflective of economic and social welfare distribution. Also, the presentations of figures and graphs in the Nvivo software used for analysis in chapter five

are not visibly clear due to limitation of the software.

## **1.9 Justification**

Marshall McLuhan, described politics as “solving today's problems with yesterday's tools” (Curran, 2011 p 98). One significant question this study attempts to answer is; can we solve some of today's problems with the tools that we use every single day of our lives? Or do we need yesterday's media to solve the problems of today's media and facilitate social change? After all, in much of rural Africa, before the radio became the medium of choice, it is only a couple of generations since information was sent and received from village to village by messenger, or the horn and beating drum rang out to inform adjacent villages of an impending event or noteworthy news, much as the church bell had in late medieval Europe (De Masi, 2011). Today, technology has taken on a leading role in determining predictions about the progress of development in Africa. The extent to which African countries will be affected by these ICT innovations is unclear in that, availability of technology is intermittent and there is limited access to the internet in most African countries. The question remains whether ICT related media will help develop Nigeria's democracy and whether it will help create new forms of citizenship.

ICTs are not consensual objects with an agreed set of characteristics and possible effects, but resources, subject to tension and associated with scarcity, which can be appropriated or resisted by different actors to pursue potentially competing goals; government spokesmen and local activists may present conflicting interpretations of how well a particular service is delivered (Gagliardone et al 2014). The technology that compares to the mobile phone in terms of pervasiveness and accessibility in Nigeria is the radio. Together, literally hand in hand, they can “serve as a broad-distribution participatory media network, with some of the same citizen media dynamics of the Internet, but accessible to a much wider, and non-literate audience”. (Zuckerman, 2007, cited in Gagliardone et al 2014). The adoption of 21st century technology by what remains a fractured and still tribal society and to what uses it is put, the likelihood of Nigeria ‘tweeting its way to what is known as digital democracy is arguably remote. However, in depth assessment remain problematic (Akinfemisoye, 2013; Wilade, 2013). Rather than transplant patterns of European use, Nigeria is more likely to adapt new technologies to its own needs, and learn, by its own mistakes, how to fashion ICT to its own needs. Whether the impact of ICT will translate into meaningful change or have an affect only at the margins will depend on whether a broad based movement mobilizes and organizes, not to take control of extractive institutions, but to transform them into more inclusive ones. Certainly this is a topic that requires on-going research.

### **1.10 Contribution to knowledge**

From the debates developed so far regarding ICTs, social change and democratic participation, it is not clear whether on the whole digital media in particular are tools of domination or tools of empowerment. This uncertainty is addressed and the contribution to the body of knowledge is the finding that still nascent ICT and digital media threaten the virtual government monopoly on sources of information production, and therefore threaten unchecked power and extractive institutions. The process and direction of Nigeria's potential to adapt ICT's in its own image –the image of an oral society – is in development. However, the way Nigerians communicate and interact, has arguably strengthened connections between civil society organisations, the media and public officials. As a result of the change in communication, cell phone applications, social network sites and blogs have become potential of means of empowerment for literate citizens, and, in the case of mobile phone use combined with local radio, a ubiquitous and trusted medium in rural Nigeria for semi-literate citizens.

An assurance was given to the researcher by the incumbent president – President Muhammadu Buhari - that upon completion of this study, a proposal should be submitted to enable the licensing of community radio in rural areas. This consideration may have been influenced by the researcher bringing to the attention of the head of state, that Nigeria remains the only country in the West African sub-region that has not yet licensed any community radio services, even though the Nigerian Broadcasting Code recognizes this sector and has accepted United Nations funding to implement it (UNESCO 2012). If the President remains true to his word, the licensing of community radio stations could rekindle what Mudhai, (2011) calls a 'radio culture' boosted by social networking sites through the internet and mobile phones.

### **1.11 Structure of the thesis**

**Chapter One:** This covers the general overview of the study, it has presented the rationale for conducting the research, the methodological approach to the research.

**Chapter Two:** Covers the theoretical benchmarks guiding the study. The chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section discusses theoretical orientations - technological determinism and social constructivism, and different frameworks for assessing developmental outcomes of ICTs. The second section recaps the major contemporary debates about social media and how they apply to power and democratic theories. Other theories discussed include communication theories, e-

Government theory, and conceptualisation of the Human Capability Development Approach.

**Chapter Three:** Drawing upon power and democratic theories discussed in chapter two, chapter three is divided into three main sections with subsequent sub-sections. In Section one, some core elements of these theories are employed to contextualise Nigeria's historical background in relation to institutionalised elites, Nigeria's hegemonic media institutions, restriction or censorship of mass media with particular attention to the stifling of community radio. In addition, the section also sheds light on threats to journalism and corrupt practices. (Community radio discussed in Section One Chapter three).

Section two builds on the previous section and takes into account the optimistic perspective of ICT researchers as a benchmark to investigate perceptions and insights into the role ICT could play in addressing irregularities in Nigeria's media. The section is divided into two sub-sections. Sub-section one is concerned with theoretical debates about the concept of Web 2.0 and social media and their political uses.

Sub-section two contextualises e-Government literature to investigate if the use of social media applications complements the services of e-Government. This also covers other roles ICTs and social media could play outside the realm of e-Government services, such as election processes.

Building on the previous section which provided some insights in what the media could do to empower the society (the techno-optimist view), the third section of Chapter Three examines the techno pessimist perspective who argue that digital media is a Trojan Horse posing threats to citizens rather than opening opportunities. The focus is on Government attempts to monitor citizens' use of media.

**Chapter Four:** This chapter is concerned with research methods, and justification of the chosen research paradigm and research methods data collection, and qualitative data analysis techniques. Critical paradigm in an interpretive is chosen as the guiding paradigm. (Chapter four covers in-depth discussion).

**Chapter Five:** This chapter presents the findings of the interview and questionnaire analysis. The themes identified were captured using Nvivo software through a matrix query represented in graphs, and graphical charts in this chapter represent the perceptions and opinion in the questionnaire findings.

**Chapter Six:** This chapter presents findings from the interviews and discussion of the themes

identified, and also those of the questionnaire as complementary to the findings of the interview.

**Chapter Seven:** The final chapter presents the conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

## CHAPTER TWO

Technological determinism, social construction of technology and their relevance to the ongoing discussion on ICT and development: A theoretical review.

### 2.1 Introduction

Our everyday encounter with numerous technologies and their constant intrusion into our normal daily routines has led to different conceptions about the role of technology in development. From the literature two popular perspectives emerge. There is the popular thinking that technology has important effects on our lives. This idea reflects prominently in the imagination and political rhetoric, for example in the notion that communication technology is revolutionizing society and economy. The other perspective holds that technology is a socially determined artefact which co-exists within social structures as an emergent process with effects mainly dependent on how it is applied. This two contrasting views sum up to whether developmental influences began through society creating technology, or technology paving the way for societal changes. In this section of the study, a review of these theoretical orientations, namely *technological determinism* and *social constructivism* will be made. More so, this section will cater for the current critique of these two approaches through the critical naturalism as encapsulated in the transformational model of social activity (Lawson, 2004). The chapter is divided into two main sections. Section one discusses and critiques these theoretical orientations and ICT assessment frameworks in developing countries.

The second section examines these theories against a background of debates about social media and their impact on power and democratic theories. The section also discusses relevant theories applicable to the study and choice of a capability approach model that incorporates core elements that requires investigation in Nigerian context. It is expedient to capture these theoretical areas in order to properly situate the aim and objectives of this study.

### 2.2 Media, Technologies and the Democratisation of Political Communications: Africa in perspective.

For a detailed discussion on the developmental potentials of technology, how technologies are supposedly transforming societies, it is important to carefully review what has been written on the role of media and of media technologies on governance and political communications in general. This approach underscores our interest in the concepts of empowerment, participatory, and transformative capabilities of the media as an assemblage of technologies and one of the

agents of socialization. Hence, given the important role of the media in the development of a nation, this section of our theoretical reviews discusses how the media (as technologies of mass communication) fit into the narrative on ICT for development and why, within the African context, they should be pivotal to development initiatives in Nigeria and by extension the continent in this new technology-driven era.

As rightly observed in the literature, the media has been described as a critical ingredient in the transition of society from authoritarianism to democracy, reflections or a “social indicator” of the nature and level of maturity of democracy in a country. Descriptively, the media epitomize what has often been described as the unfettered freedom of expression of ideas and opinions in a society. In other words, it acts as the “thermometer” of measuring the democratic body temperature of a country or society (Ocitti, 1999: 6). Given this pivotal role, in what ways have the new ICTs mainly the internet and mobile phones contributed to the narratives on the “third wave of democracy” in Africa the positions of researchers on the impacts of media and new technologies on democratic processes?

Although there are visible indices such as the proliferation of political institutions, the liberalization of the economic and political landscapes, the regularity of elections hitherto unheard of in certain African countries, and a decline in military coups on the continent – all of which could lend credence to the narrative of a ‘leap’ toward democratic consolidation on the continent. Yet, there is scepticism about the real potential of new ICTs in building qualitative engagement and providing alternative participatory space of the monopolised, commercialised and politicised traditional media. On the one hand, the growing democratisation narrative can be an evident indicator as seen the perceived increased participation in political processes that is traceable to the wave of privatisation which swept across the media sector and later the telecommunications from the mid-1990s to the early decade of this millennium. The African continent received this double dosage of privatisation which opened the floodgate of opportunities ascribed to the transformative effects of the accessible/affordable personal computers, mobile telephoning and Internet technologies respectively.

Ocitti (1999) however observes that amidst these development indicators spurred by the introduced in the privatisation era, conceal a more profound pattern of declining press freedom. This is particularly evident among governments who under the guise of constitutional rule, have enacted of suppressive laws against an increasingly critical media. Even as the population of tech-savvy Africans increases, so the tele-density and ICT penetration on the continent swell with opportunity to harness development initiatives. ICT has empowered citizens with alternative means



of organisation for making their voices heard, and hold governments accountable. But the governments on the continent are still grappling with the potentials of ICT, judging by the outcome of the 2013 conference titled ‘Governing Democratically in a Tech-empowered World’ which was hosted by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), International IDEA, the Omidyar Network, and the Stanford Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law. While the new technologies are providing people with the opportunity to communicate, to seek information, to report corruption, and to hold their leaders accountable, governments still tend to believe that they hold the truth, and they are less aware of the need to listen to what people say. So when the voices are getting too loud for governments’ liking, they tend to shut down the citizen apparatuses to strangle active participation. With this potential, the big question is can ICTs truly change how democracies function? And, can the traditional media be technologically reconfigured to promote democratic ideals and social development?

To start with, media and their technologies of mass communication are by far the most far reaching in terms of social influence. In terms of shaping of governance and more particularly in the sustenance of democratic culture, media play a fundamental role. This vital role underscores the professional role of journalists and of the press as a profession, hence the term the Fourth Estate of the Realm. This symbolic relationship is philosophically theorized in 1956 by Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schram in what is generally known as *Four Theories of the Press*. According to Ocitti, (1999) these theories are the philosophical and political rationales that undergird media/politics in general. They provide the appropriate background to understand how political systems could influence information propagation irrespective of the available technology. To, therefore, set the media properly within the wider context of relationships and control between governments and institutions as the pertain to evolving democratic societies, it is paramount to examine the political climate surrounding the news business and information exchange in a given society. Ocitti (1999) further stresses that, the fact that African countries have lately shown signs of embracing the values of democracy makes it all the more imperative for a theoretical understanding of how this change is affecting relationships between individuals, the media, institutions and the state within Africa itself. The changing political dynamics in the continent, according to Ocitti (1999) brings out even more critically the need to understand the interplay between the media, as the mirror of social and political freedoms, and politics as the ultimate struggle for power in African societies, or in any society for that matter.

First on the list of ‘normative’ theories of media is the *authoritarian* theory of the press which developed in Europe around sixteen century as a result of the political authoritarianism and

social relations that prevailed at this time when political power rested solely with the church and monarchs. The new technology of the printing machine was pivotal to the spread of knowledge at this period as social relations were heavily influenced by the thoughts and writings of philosophers who held pessimistic views of life in the state of nature as well as views on the social redefinition of the notion of truth. With the power to publish as “construct truth” lying squarely with the elites, monarchs and noble men and as influenced by church creeds and ordinances, the press functioned from the top down, whereby the absolute monarchs used the available technology of the press to inform the people of what the rulers thought they should know and what policies to support.

The printing machine, as the technology of mass communication was used to provide support and advance the policy campaigns of the ruling system. Criticism of government policies, in whatever form, was strictly forbidden and ownership of the press could only be granted through a royal patent. Ocitti (1999) notes that within Europe itself, from the early parts of the sixteenth and twentieth century to the middle of the 1940s, the Soviet Communists, German Nazis and the Italian fascists, epitomized this absolutist notion of truth through information control and a massive deployment of propaganda. The influence commanded by the authoritarian regimes such as the Hitler’s Nazi provided one of the early accounts of the media effects school of thoughts and theories such as the Hypodermic Needle or the Silver Bullet theory.

Pre-colonial Africa inherited the authoritarian perception of the truth in the idea and handling of information through media. As rightly observed by Ocitti (1999), it is this “absolutist approach to the media”, an extension of the Western authoritarian political system, that informs the perennial struggles between African journalists and political leaders. On one hand, it is important to see how far African leaders are now willing to give journalists freedom of the press in light of the democratization process under way, on the other, it is important to see how the new ICTs are shaping the profession of journalism especially in the remodelling of information exchange between the media and their supposedly empowered audience.

The second theory, the *libertarian* model, also grew from Europe as a result of the wave of liberalism that evolved between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The libertarian theory argued for limited government and greater individual freedom. As people become more enlightened owing partly to the rapid development of the technology-driven industries and of the print and news businesses, coupled with the expansion of the trans-Atlantic gateway, individuals began to demand greater political freedom from the authoritarian monarchs. The period saw a

general rejection of absolute monarchical perception of power and truth and citizens began to advocate for better treatment 'as rational beings, capable of making independent judgements on social issues and developing their own individual senses of truth' (Ocitti, 1999 p 8). The period also marked the emergence of a powerful middle class, especially in England, as commerce expanded rapidly at the growth of industries. The libertarian atmosphere was kindled by the voices of philosophers like John Milton, John Locke and John Stuart Mill who argued for intellectual freedom and the open marketplace of ideas. This was a time for a social rebirth underpinned by the notions of freedom of thought and opinions as the cornerstone of the emerging change. In relation to the media, libertarians viewed the media not as an instrument of government, but rather as a device for presenting evidence and arguments on the basis of which the people could check on government and make up their minds as to policy (Ocitti, 1999 p 9).

The libertarian theorists argued that the press should stay completely free of government control and influence and that any individual with the economic means to own a press should be allowed to do so. Ocitti (1999) adds that the notion of "truth" was to be left to the free marketplace of ideas, rather than government interpretation, as advocated by authoritarian theorists. The libertarian theory presents the world with the first idea of an "alternative media", especially from the monopoly of monarchical and church-led government of the Renaissance and Enlightenment eras. According to Denis McQuail (1994), an interpretation of this movement toward alternative media narrative, is that "the nearest approximation to truth will emerge from the competitive exposure of alternative viewpoints, and progress for society will depend on the choice of 'right' over 'wrong' solutions". This means that the media was to be allowed as much freedom as practically possible, so as to promote political debate and encourage a multiplicity of viewpoints on social issues, as a way of presenting the truth to the public (Ocitti, 1999 p 9).

Within the African context the libertarian theory is significant because it helps us to better understand the degree to which governments are, or are not able, to interfere with the work of the media during the ongoing democratization process. It also helps us explain what has already been alluded to; namely, that the relationship between the media and governments in a liberal democracy should point towards the open marketplace of ideas. The degree to which this ideology is growing with the emergence of technologies that promote "alternative media" and afford participation from the once neglected citizens and greater transparency from the government is worth examining.

The social responsibility model is the third of the four theories of the press as discussed by

Siebert et al (1956). The theory, as an offshoot of the libertarian theory, extends the narrative of “an alternative media” a bit further to include a question about the role of the media under liberal philosophy. Ocitti (1999) traces the root of the scepticism to ‘the technological advancements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, during which the size, speed and availability of information changed, while the new technology also gave rise to the birth and expansion of various new media, including radio, cinema and television’ (p. 9). In addition, this period also saw the emergence of private/commercial ownership of the media, alongside the rising levels of literacy, urbanization and the growth of the middle class, fanning the ember of capitalist structure which had dominated the media until now. In other words, ownership of the media began to be concentrated in fewer and fewer hands which gave media owners a tremendous source of power, whilst making it increasingly difficult for new entrants into the news business. Moreover, the prohibitive cost of what constituted the technologies of mass communication – satellite and other local transmitting equipment were beyond the reach of an average businessman and citizenry. Hence, media barons determined what constituted newsworthiness, and helped shape public opinion. Consequently, the entrenched top down model of information transfer was used to mould the concept of public interest. Journalist performed a balancing act as they expected to assuage the whims of the business community whose advertisement sponsored the media, -while retaining, a socially responsible edge to educate, inform, and entertain the public in a balanced way (Ocitti, 1999p 10)

The fourth is the Soviet Communist theory of the press. The theory is a product of twentieth century Marxist ideology that maintained the supremacy of the party over the population. The mass media in this theory are not only instrumentally to disseminate government propaganda, but are part and parcel of the party and state machinery. The press functions at the service of the party and state. In George Orwell’s novel ‘1984’, individuals are left with no option but to be loyal to the party and state, and not to criticize party policies whatsoever. In a remarkable similarity with its older authoritarian version, the crucial point of this theory, as Ocitti (1999) observes, was the creation of unity in society as the key function of the press. Hence, the press was merely an instrument of the state, to be used, in the words of Lenin, as “a collective propagandist, collective agitator and collective organizer” (Sierbet et al. 1956: 116).

### **2.3 Toward the Development and Democratic-Participant Theories of Media**

Although a number of African countries borrowed the Marxist ideology and modelled their media performance accordingly, however ‘the global political and economic realities of the late 1980s, as well as mounting domestic pressures for political reforms, forced them to abandon

their belief in Marxism and embrace instead the concept of liberal democracy, and with it more open media policies' (Ocitti, 1999 p 10). Nevertheless, many government- owned media in Africa including countries which never courted Marxism have been observed to operated media policies that reflected the Soviet Communist model. In African countries where one party system, government prevailed, government owned media became the mouthpiece of the party in government. News is centred on and around the main political agents, leaders and events whilst opposition parties are demonised and denied access to media space and print columns. The situation is like this in Nigeria – our case for this study where since 1999, after three decades of military rule and several punctuated periods culminating in a political interregnum, the media have exhibited traces of all the theories reviewed so far.

Post-independence African media systems have been but a reflection of the pre-independence colonial era. African media were therefore a reflection of the global social political climates of the past, and most likely of the future. This position is maintained by Ocitti (1999) that the four theories '...form the basis upon which the media have generally been analysed in the past and will probably be scrutinized in future. Therefore, the 'philosophical and historical foundation of these theories forms, in large measure, the basis upon which other media theories has evolved' (p. 11). The media roles now recognize the different levels of political and social developments in different parts of the world, and also that the effects of the new media, such as videos, satellites, the internet and other new information technologies are more profound now than ever before. Taking historical stock of this situation in Africa, Ocitti (1999) writes that:

“Colonialism in Africa was essentially an authoritarian mode of governance whose nature was reflected negatively both on African societies and the media. The slow flowering of the press in the then Belgian Congo and the Portuguese colonies, for instance, was symptomatic of the brutal experience those countries underwent under Belgian and Portuguese colonial rule. In what was to become the British West African colonies, on the other hand, the press emerged long before colonialism itself had been instituted. There, especially in Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast (Ghana) and Nigeria, the press took a central political role quite early, a trend that eventually spread to other parts of the continent. Because of the power associated with the media, politics and the press became complimentary to each other, with many journalists eventually ending up as politicians. Many also used their position as journalists to become the most vocal advocates for Africa's political independence”.

Consequently, with the effects of the social, economic and technological changes coming into play

on the global political terrain, and as the media became ‘pervasive instrumentalities of modern existence’ (Aggawala, 1979), there have been a rethink of these formative media theories especially within the purviews of the libertarian and social responsibility theories. Two of these recent theoretical positions that reflect contemporary discussion on technology and development - the *Development Media* and *Democratic-Participant* theories (McQuail, 1994) are worth discussing for the purpose of this study.

McQuail’s “development media theory” sees the media as a pivot for national development in developing countries. McQuail (1983 p 131) states the central thesis of the media theory as “the primacy of the national development task (economic, social, cultural and political); the pursuit of cultural and informational autonomy; support for democracy; and solidarity with other developing countries.” The six main principles of the theory are:

- Media should accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policy.
- Freedom of the media should be open to (1) economic priorities and (2) development needs of society.
- Media should give priority in their content to the national culture and language.
- Media should give priority in news and information to links with other developing countries, which are in close proximity geographically, culturally and politically.
- Journalists and other media workers have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination tasks.

In the interest of development ends, the state has a right to intervene in, or restrict media operations and devices of censorship; subsidy and direct control can be justified (McQuail, 1983:95-96). Whilst this theory complements the Siebert et al.’s theoretical propositions, it forefronts the modernization/functionalist paradigm of mass media’s role in development, and presents the primacy of the mass media in achieving development in developing countries.

According to McQuail, development media theory takes as its starting point the fact that countries that are in the transitional stage from authoritarianism to economic and political reforms should not be expected to sustain media freedom comparable to those that exist in the developed countries. Baran and Davis (2000: 112) express thus:

“Development media theory advocates media support for an existing political regime and its efforts to bring about national economic development by supporting government development efforts, media aid society at large. This theory argues that until a nation is well established and its

economic development well underway, media must be supportive rather than critical of government. Journalists must not pick apart government efforts to promote development but, rather, assist government in implementing such policies”.

In other words, in emerging societies, the responsibilities of the media must be emphasized much more than their rights and freedoms. Fundamentally, this theory accepts the notion that, in developing countries, nation-building must precede media freedom. In the immediate aftermath of Africa's independence in the 1960s, this theme won the support of both nationalist politician and academics. It captured the mood expressed by African politicians that the need to unite and build the new nations was a prerequisite for democracy.

For instance, Jomo Kenyatta urged the press to “...positively promote national development and growing self-respect since in Africa it can have a tremendous influence on nation- building. It may constantly inspire or could set out to frustrate the spirit of Harambe or national unity which every young country needs as the fundamental of its progress.” In a similar token, Mamman Daura, a former editor-in-chief of the New Nigerian argued that “...the (mass media), therefore, should be an agent in mobilising the society, in educating the society, in consolidating independence or, in one or two cases, revolution” (cited in Domatob and Hall, 1983 p 10). The expectation was that the media would be part of this process in an instrumental way that both de-emphasized critical appraisal of the leaders' performances and advocated national unity. But this was not the case in most African countries after independence even as press libertarianism was drastically scaled down in favour of the authoritarian media policies that African leaders preferred. Heavy emphasis was placed on the social responsibilities of the media rather than on their rights and freedoms. Although some initial merits were recorded especially in the establishment of television stations (Nigeria in 1949) and several rural newspapers (see Ansah et al., 1981). The authoritarian element of the theory which reigns supreme in most developing countries brought about tension between government/media relations and role conflict for journalist (Oso, 2011). Thus, professionals are always confused on who they owe their loyalty to: the government or the people?

The situation deteriorated when the economic self-interest and competing political demands of tribal and ethnic collectives looked to expand the economic base of their respective communities within a Nigeria. For instance, the political instabilities that gripped much of Africa during the first few years of independence sped, the decline in quality and number of newspapers. A combination of state-sponsored repressive policies against journalists, as political and economic

instabilities set in, and the resultant self-imposed censorship by journalists themselves, grossly affected the freedom and quality of the media. Historically, Hachten (1993) records that during the first twenty five years of African freedom; a total of seventy leaders in twenty nine nations had been deposed through assassinations, coups and purges. He goes on to report that out of forty one independent African countries only seven permitted political opposition, seventeen were one party states and another seventeen were military regimes. Between 1957 and 1981, forty four nations suffered twenty major wars and forty successful coups. During roughly the same period, the independent newspapers that had flourished in the early part of the 1960s began to register a qualitative and quantitative decline. Although qualitatively, some newspapers continued to maintain their journalistic professionalism, overall there was a marked decline in quality.

The economic downturn of the 1970s which continued until the 1980s, also restricted the media's capacity to harness developmental gains. With the exception of South Africa, press revenues declined in tandem with the purchasing power of the public and business community. The print media in particular turned to government and advertisers for sustenance, thereby compromising its objective as a guardian of social responsibility. He who pays the piper was left to dictate the tune. Its impact on politics also declined in the 1970s and 1980s, especially given that the political situation under military rule and the one-party system which gradually and increasingly authoritarian. However, the international political climate provided a counter opinion to the megaphonic role of media and authoritarian systems of many African governments until trade unionists and student activists began to clamour for democratic governance. Consequently, what began as a combination of workers strikes and media criticism in several of these African countries, snowballed into a democratization process through political reforms of the 1990s, including privatisation of the media and telecom sectors. The liberalization of political and economic activities became the adopted modes of leadership styles, whilst elections, rather than military coups, became the means to power. Yet, amidst this euphoria for the media, freedom in its libertarian variant continued to be elusive. Ironically, by the turn of the century, as far as the younger generation were concerned, web-browsers and social media were set to inherit the mantle of media power by supplanting the role of newspapers and the print media in general.

Be that as it may, within this aforementioned setting was nurtured an idea that the role of the media needed to be redefined to at least include some of the libertarian ideals which would allow for the independence of the media and a greater involvement by them in the on-going democratization process. This opens up another clamour for a theoretical orientation and advocacies such as "public journalism", or, what some media critics describe as, 'a desire to



“reconnect” with citizens and their true concerns, an emphasis on serious discussion as the primary activity in democratic politics, and a focus on citizens as actors within, rather than spectators to, the public drama’ (Rosen, 1994 cited in Ocitti, 1999 p 23). This, in essence, is the *Democratic-Participant* theory.

Propounded also by Denis McQuail, Democratic-participant theory emphasizes and supports the media multiplicity, the local nature of the, media, and horizontal media involvement and interaction. The theory is mainly concerned with the people’s right to relevant information, the right to feedback, the right to use the means of communication for interaction in small scale settings of interest groups, subcultures and community. McQuail (2005) sees the theory as reflecting public reactions against the commercialisation and monopolisation of the privately owned media, and against the centralism of public broadcasting institutions, established according to the norms of social responsibility. It propounds a media philosophy where the government and the media come together to chart a course for national development. The theory preaches positive use of the media in pursuit of national economic and social harmony. It also aims to achieve autonomy and cultural identity of individual nations. It accepts economic development and nation building as an intrinsic imperative (Moemeka, 2000). Although the philosophy underlying this theory emphasizes government-media cooperation for national development, it also acknowledges that the government has the right to sanction the media in cases where the latter have acted irresponsibly. The assumption is that in matters of national interest, the government is omniscient and better placed than the media to know what the people want.

In Africa, this theory finds its practical expression in community radio stations and rural newspapers, and may include the call for developing the oral tradition as a means of mass communication on the continent. A section is devoted to this important dimension in the next chapter.

## **2.4 Technological Determinism**

As earlier mentioned, technological determinism is the idea that technology has important effects on our lives. It refers to the belief that technology is the agent of social change. Thought to have first been coined by the American social scientist Thorstein Veblen, it gathered momentum in the 1920s with regards to how the effect of industrialization and the converging technologies of electricity and the wireless were transforming the society and encompasses the idea that the development of technology follows a predictable path outside of culture or political influence. It also proposes that technology, be it media, machinery, the internet or other

innovations is the driving force of social and economic change. Technology as a force is a connotation which echoes the popular expression “technological impacts” which is a metaphor that represent technology in a cause and effect relationships. Technology is therefore seen as a dynamic force causing collisions or impacts on society. (Croteau and Hoynes (2003) presents Claude Fischer’s (1992) account of technological determinism as a force impacting on society through their vivid analogy of the "billiard ball", in which technology is seen as an external force introduced into a social situation, producing a series of ricochet effects. Adler (2006) gives an interpretation of this theoretical thinking which, as he observed, stands opposed to several other dimensions of theorizing technology. Firstly, the idea of determinism which, if interpreted from its philosophical roots, holds that free will is not involved in the transformative effects of technology. The act of invention is independent of society; therefore successful inventions impact upon, and transform society. Technology innovation is never accidental but a product of scientific progress. Yet scientific has no particularity, and would just as soon invent radio as it would a radioactive bomb. Just as scientific progress is the result of its own dynamics, and independent of societal change, technological change is independent of society (e.g. Dijksterhuis, 1950 and Koyre, 1943). Technological determinism theory holds that technological advances are the central element in modernity, without needing an interaction with the environment. Kunz (2006) sums up the proposition of this concept thus:

- that the development of technology itself follows a predictable, traceable path largely beyond cultural or political influence, and
- that technology in turn has "effects" on societies that are inherent, rather than socially conditioned or produced because society organizes itself to support and further develop a technology once it has been introduced.

Rather than acknowledging that a society or culture interacts with and even shapes the technologies that are used, a technological determinist holds that "the uses made of technology are largely determined by the structure of the technology itself, that is, that its functions follow from its form" (Postman, 1993). In sum, technological determinism represents a proposition which considers technological development as an autonomous change that is not influenced by social change. Scholars have written extensively on technological determinism as a theoretical concept for understanding the developmental essence of technological artefacts (Elull, 1964; Heilbroner, 1967; Chandler, 1995; Lawson, 2004; Adler, 2006). In spite of these academic interventions, there seems to be no uniform position on what exactly it captures. According to Bimber (1994) technological determinism is an elusive concept which portrays an array of both “soft” and “hard”

views about the relationship of technological enterprise to other aspects of human activity. Technological determinism ranges from bipolar expression of technology as an inevitable technological order based on certain laws, to claims that technology is the dominant factor in social change but with an effect which stems from the cultural meaning or importance given to the technology by people. The hard deterministic aspect of the term assumes the view that free will cannot exist alongside technology, while the soft side expresses compatibility of some sort and portrays technology as a guiding but not entirely omnipotent force in society. Pannabecker (n.d.) summarizes these variations in terms of the extent of human intervention considered possible, the importance of technical constraints, the relative autonomy of technology, and questions of the historical development of technology. These authors summarize all major theoretical discussions on the subject of technology as having either a minimal or powerful effect (Ellul, 1954, 1964, Wilkinson, 1964; Winner, 1977; Ropohl, 1983; Hickman, 1990).

According to Adler (2006) on discussing the characteristic distinction of ideas expressed in technological determinism concern an effect-cause dichotomous view of technology. The proponents of soft technological determinism argue that technology is an important force amongst other socio-transformative factors while hard technological determinists are of the opinion that technology is the sole driver of societal change. Unfortunately our dependence on technology in the twenty-first century often causes problems in everyday life. Leading twentieth-century philosopher Jacques Ellul realised in this vain that each innovation creates; “pernicious effects that are inseparable from favourable effects” (1964). The question of whether technology is our humble servant or our hypocritical enemy remains unanswered. Hence the aptness of this concept is defeated as its premise stretches on a continuum which underscores human interpretation of the real and perceived transformative effect of technology.

The pervasiveness of “new media” in the last couple of decades and the duality of the narratives which accompany it has stimulated scholars’ interest in the technological deterministic paradigm. Postman wrote in his book - *Technopoly: the surrender of culture to technology* about the alarming rate at which we adopt technology without considering its side effects. Postman applies the term “tecnopoly to build on Ellul’s critique that technology is ‘deified’ unjustifiably awarded a god-like status. According to him, “the culture seeks its authorization in technology, finds its satisfactions in technology, and finds its satisfaction in technology” (p. 33). Judging by the ubiquity and pervasiveness of technology, it cannot be denied that technology has enhanced the modern world, especially with a view to communications improvements, however the control and possession without limits threatened by the technological determinist perspective is alarming without limits.

Bimber explained Ellul's view of technology further; "it is the domination of social, political, and economic life by the adopted goals of logic and efficiency" (Bruce Bimber: *Three faces of technological determinism*: p. 82).

The innovations of the internet and growing artificial intelligence of converged technologies are furthering the threat encapsulated in the idea behind hard technological determinism. Vinge (1992) observes that "the growing possibility of technology and robots greater than ourselves and the industrial concern that they will take humans' jobs are almost making the predictions of true technological unemployment finally come true" (Vinge, 1992 p 14). Hard technological determinists' concern for government, scientists and lay-peoples greed for omnipotent knowledge of technology puts the human race into a potentially treacherous position for the future. To stem the tide, he proposes a theory of Intelligence Amplification (IA,) which is a collaboration between human and machine intelligence, to counter the growing wave of Artificial Intelligence (Vinge, 1992 p 17). Taken together, aforementioned narratives give credence to the idea of 'technology' as an independent entity, a virtually autonomous agent of change.

One might want to argue for the spread of capitalism and the need for profit over investment as the harbinger of technological innovations, ubiquity and diffusion. However, this is not absolutely true. The law driving technological innovation is far beyond profit but evident in Moor's law which stipulates that computing capacity will double every twenty-four months, regardless of profit motive.

Given these observations, Ellul worries that society and governments have ceased to understand the power of technology can simultaneously emasculate and empower. However other critics worry that Ellul is overly negative – perhaps feeding off the opportunity of technology being marketed positively before much is known (particularly bad effects) about it. Postman (1992) recognises the threat posed by a self-perpetuating system as 'Technopoly', where 'deified' technology is granted sovereignty over social institutions and national life. He agrees that advances in medical science are advantageous to the quality of contemporary life, however he does realise that technology "does not invite a close examination of its consequences." Some analysts have advised that society and policymakers should not meddle with the transformative course of technology because this may have unintended consequences. Governments can only prepare themselves for the nascent new technologies and try to deal with their consequences and impact in the most socially compatible way. Hence we are more obligated to allow technology to take its course, the technological determinists say. Reference is made to the Arab Spring of 2011, which as some

believe would not have occurred without the technology of social media.

Technology supported and contributed to it. Realizing this potential has opened the eyes of the world governments, notably in the United Kingdom, to the realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century social movement and the need for internet governance with laws and prohibition when and where necessary.

## **2.5 Social Constructionism and the Social Construction of Technology**

Social constructivism, rather than social constructionism, is an amalgam of assumptions which borders on reality, knowledge and learning. For social constructivists the belief is that reality is constructed through human activity; members of a society (social groups) together invent the properties of the world (Kukla, 2000). Reality, according to these proponents, cannot be discovered separate and distinct from social organisation: it does not exist prior to its social invention. On the account of knowledge as socially constructed, social constructivism stipulates that knowledge is also a human product, and is socially and culturally constructed (Prat and Floden, 1994; Gredler, 1997; Ernest, 1999). Individuals create meaning through their interactions with each other, and with the environment they live in. Social constructivists also speak of learning as a social process. Learning, they claim, is not an individually rooted hermetic process, nor is it a passive development of behaviours that are shaped by external forces (McMahon, 1997).

Meaningful learning occurs when individuals are engaged in social activities. These varieties of social constructivism have made it possible for scholars to adopt this central proposition to fields involving technology use in society. Social constructivism portrays the centrality of “relevant social groups” and “interpretive flexibility” in technological artefacts and change (Pannabecker, n.d.). This is a proposition which explicitly rejects the idea that technical change can be seen as a fixed, monotonic trajectory. The constructivists maintain that there is more flexibility in the design of artefacts than technical and linear analyses would suggest. Hence the design process is but a product of diverse social groups’ interaction, where different actors contribute their own values and concerns. Social constructivism emphasizes the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and constructing knowledge based on this understanding (Derry, 1999; McMahon, 1997).

Social constructivism is closely related to social constructionism, in the sense that people work together to construct artefacts. While *social constructionism* focuses on the artefacts that are created through the social interactions of a group, *social constructivism* focuses on an individual's

learning that takes place because of interactions within in a group. Constructionism is closely associated with many notable contemporary theories on technological educational impact, most notably the developmental theories of Vygotsky and Bruner, and Bandura's social cognitive theory (Shunk, 2000). Hence constructivism is a term that has been narrowly applied to refer to the social construction of technology (SCOT) (see Pinch and Bijker, 1987; Bijker 1995; Woolgar, 1991), with further interpretations in the actor-network theory (Latour, 1987; Callon, 1987) and in the agency-structure debate. The main roots of the SCOT accounts of technology appear to lie in the sociology of scientific knowledge (see Shapin, 1982).

The *Social Construction of Technology* (SCOT) is the view that argues that society and humans drive the development of new technologies. It focuses on the day-to-day decision- in any technological environment. Its emphasis is on the multidirectional interaction of all groups affecting technological decisions, further justifying Hughes' (1983) approach of examining technological change as a system of interrelated factors in the concept of artefacts, institutions, and their environment.

Klein and Kleinman (2002) state four conceptual frameworks which underlay the social construction of technology theory; these are the *interpretive flexibility concept*, the *social group influence concept*, *closure and stabilization concept*, and the *wider sociocultural concept*. For instance, the interpretive flexibility concept suggests that technology design is an open process that can produce different outcomes depending on the social circumstances of development. SCOT scholars based their assumption on establishing how technological artefacts are the product of intergroup negotiations. Earliest examples of works imbued with this thinking include Pinch and Bijker's (1987; Bijker 1995) work on early bicycles, Bijker's (1987, 1995) studies of Bakelite and fluorescent lighting, Elzen's (1986) work on ultracentrifuges, and Misa's (1992) investigation of the manufacture of steel. It however needs to be emphasized that technological artefacts are sufficiently underdetermined in this line of thinking. This to some extent allows for multiple possible designs, so whatever the design that finally results from the process, it could have been different. As Ellul rightly observed, 'as a global society we seek to remedy problems caused by technology with other technical solutions.' Our civilization is directly tied to technological innovations, and with them we measure the history and determine our existence. The social construction of the Internet is worth examining in the light of this thinking.

Some have adjudged, the internet as the greatest invention in human history; the only

technology that effectively proffers solution and provides oceans of information transmittable and accessible in real time. In passing, it is worth remembering that in 1967 Marshall McLuhan responded to television's beaming of images around the globe by paraphrasing a futurist manifesto and declaring 'Time has ceased, Space has vanished' However, in place of television's passivity, the internet offers universality and interactivity, even, the magnitude of its interactivity offers opportunities both for good and ill. It has the capacity to instantaneously make and build aural and visual connections, and to track and store limitless amounts of data.

In his 1993 book, *The Magic Lantern*, Timothy Garton Ash, proclaimed that "in Europe at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, all revolutions are tele-revolutions (Garton Ash, 1993)- but in retrospect, the role of television in those events is difficult to quantify. The internet has become a source of worry for government while offering promises of development through its democratising feature, as well as other affordances such as freedom of expression. While it opens opportunities for businesses, some sectors including the news business are threatened. Because of the openness in the architecture of internet technology, where anyone could decide to set up platforms for anti-government messages, many governments are frantically pushing for its control, either at the local levels or at the international ends.

In China for instance, cultural and political expectations have caused the internet to be monitored. In 1998, the Great Firewall of China was set up to limit free speech and exclude unwelcome foreign influence. In fact, China had pursued an isolationist policy for at least 1000 years, long before the internet or even when the first Jesuit missionaries arrived on Chinese shore. Reportedly around 30,000 specialist 'police officers' monitor individual's internet use for emails or searches that could appear radical and socially unacceptable, and thus have been made illegal. The *Tiananmen Square massacre* (1994) caused the brutal deaths of hundreds of protesting civilians by China's army. This major event cannot be researched on the internet in China in their version of Google – *Baidu*, and is banned along with many other sites including Youtube, Twitter and occasionally the BBC. For the size of China which comprises a fifth of the world's population, any attempt to impose iron-fisted control over a network this big could have detrimental consequences. According to specialists, uprising against control and freedom of speech has been proven to work best in dense population. The case of Sun Zhigang, a migrant worker who died in police detention easily comes to mind. Media coverage of this story was so great that authorities realised too many people knew about this case to try and hide it without creating uproar. In the July 2011 UK riots, BlackBerry agreed to switch off its instant messaging services to limit communication between those involved. This presents us with one of the examples of when

societal problems are the cause of changes in technology. Other notable examples can be seen in the Arab Spring which commenced in early 2011 in Tunisia, and then spread to Egypt. The Egypt Uprising has remained a reference point in discussing the contributions of ICTs, specifically the internet's social media to socio-political movement. Following elections in Iran in 2009, internet access to and from Iran was shut down in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent the world knowing about the turmoil and uprising against the Government. People took to using their mobile phones to give out and receive data from outside the country instead, including the video of the brutal murder of 27 year old Neda Agha-Soltan. Neda was shot by a sniper shortly after arriving at the protests. Film of the incident was very soon made available within and outside Iran through the use of mobile phones. These events present a simple image of how difficult it is for Governments to censor information in the twenty-first century. Citizens have become wiser to political dictatorship, and together work for their freedom of speech and information.

Governments in countries such as China and later Egypt used this information to create centralized internet ports that could be controlled at virtually the touch of a button in order to manipulate knowledge. The disadvantages of this however, appear regularly for The People's Republic of China, as earthquakes often sever undersea cables. Along with the majority of countries, the United Kingdom and United States America, confirm that their media communications would be virtually impossible to switch off due to a distributed national network. The difficulties that China, Egypt and Iran have encountered though trying to disable and control their communication resources is still an ongoing problem. Users of the net, it is claimed, interpret censorship as a violation and try as much as possible to find alternative routes around it (Gilmore, 1993), cited in Wharf, (2011). The implosion of the Arab Spring has challenged the cyber-optimist view that social networking sites can act as a vanguard for social revolution. The internet's potential role in the process of social transformation is a work-in-progress, yet it is still feared by government as a powerful force for activism in public relations. Activist such as those involved in Citizen Journalism in China are arguably playing role in the process of social transformation. While it cannot challenge core regime values, it provides information and monitors public life through a commentary which promotes human rights, freedom of expression and government accountability (Tjanli, 2010). The outcome is that ordinary people are much more less insulated from the process of social discourse construction (Shen, 2009). The speed and spread of digital communications continues to represent a threat to dictatorship, and government continue to struggle to influence and control the perceptions of their citizens and its policies through the internet.

The Social Construction of Technology then, appears to control development slowly, although in



this way it enables the human race to have better control in order to manage a largely unknown future in terms of technological development. Nigeria, with its current size and internet penetration, has had its fair share of access to the internet since the technology was extended to the major urban and peri-urban centres in the country. The Occupy Nigeria protest comes to mind. There are also current issues on the use of ICT to facilitate and coordinate electioneering, even as government under the last administration took administrative steps to censor and monitor its use. This forms part of our concerns in this study in our bid to explore the developmental impacts of ICTs on Africa's largest democracy.

## **2.6 Understanding Media as a form of Technological Determinism**

According to Chandler, media produce one of the most significant changes traceable to technology, hence the term media determinism. As a concept within the technological determinism paradigm, it is a philosophical and sociological position which posits the power of the media to impact upon society. The emergence of this conception brought about the 'powerful effect' tradition among early sociologists and media scholars through the "Silver Bullet" theory or the hypodermic-needle theory. Media determinism emphasizes the relationship between technology and society, and indicates that media technology can be used to effect societal change. In a determinist view, technology takes on an active life of its own and is seen as a driver of social phenomena. According to Innis, (2009) the social, cultural, political, and economic developments of each historical period can be related directly to the technology of the means of mass communication of that period. Media technology is therefore seen as being capable of shaping human behaviour.

## **2.7 Conceptual Frameworks on ICT for Development**

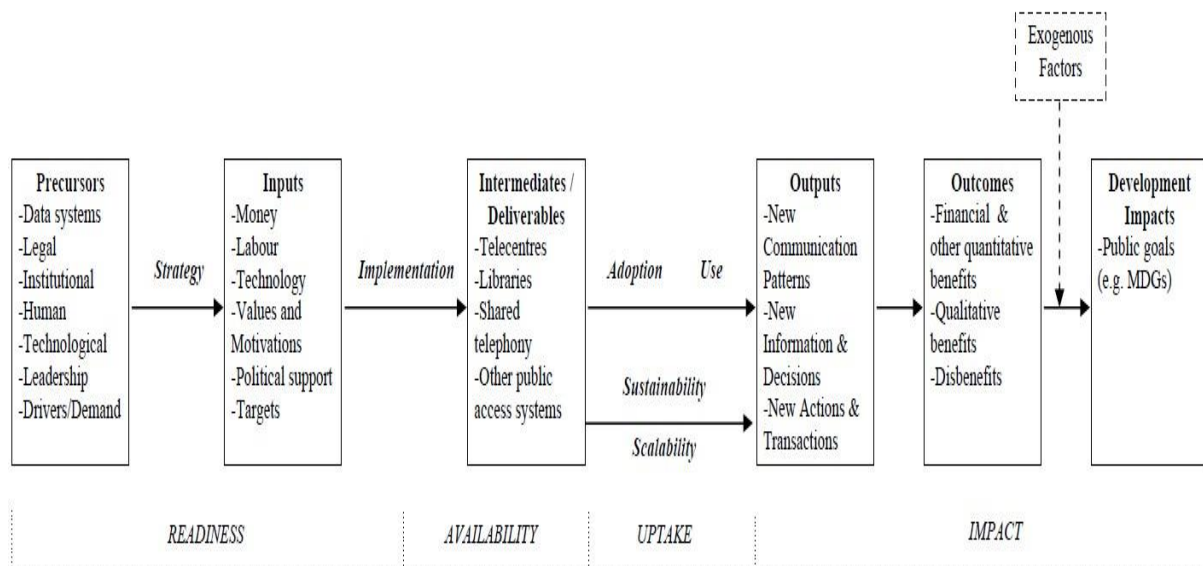
It is expedient to begin our discussion in the section by checking the literature on the contribution of ICTs to development. Heeks (2010) provides useful insight into this important question. Judging by the statistical evidence relating to global investments in ICTs in infrastructure and technological artefacts. Heeks confirms that infrastructural availability could indicate some forms of development. For example, scholars (Heeks, 2010; Denton, 2008) and ICT monitoring bodies (ITU) give accounts of the transformative and unprecedented adoption of mobile phones in Africa has transformed as an index of development in the "world's poorest continent".

However, beyond these dynamics lies the real measure of ICT's contribution to development. As rightly argued by Heeks (2010 p 627) infrastructure and access to ICT artefacts are only the starting point in understanding ICT's contribution to development. Technologies provide inputs

in the value chain of ICT for development and focus should, as such, not only be on the tangible artefacts, but also on the empirically measurable outputs.

Be that as it may, in spite of the huge financial commitments to ICT infrastructure, especially at the institutional/governmental level, there has not been an empirically validated model to justify cost on investment and turnover/value in any available investigation seeking to understand the impacts of ICT for development. Hence until very recently there has been a dearth of frameworks for evaluating the impacts of technology-driven projects in the underdeveloped world.

Heeks and Molla (2009) trace this gap to the lack of political will and lack of motivation from the project investors, as well as lack of knowledge about how to undertake impact assessment of the use of technologies for development. By assessment this means measures of the extent to which the ICT project deliverables are being used by its target population (Heeks and Molla, 2009 p 3). In the model provided by Heeks and Molla (2009) for evaluating the value of ICT for development initiatives, the uptake factors, such as adoption of the technology, technology sustainability and scalability of “deliverables”, all stand at the fulcrum of impact assessment research. These are, however, as important as accounting for the “readiness” of the projector initiators in terms of their ICT skills and policy framework and how it translates to the “availability” of “tangible deliverables” which, in the long run, produce outputs and outcomes to be evaluated. **Figure 2. 1: The ICT4D Value Chain**



**Source: Heeks and Molla (2009)**

Due to the application of ICT for development projects, interest have grown in the measuring of efficiency, effectiveness, and equity as the new indices to assess ICT development in

contemporary research. While studies focusing on these variables are at best scanty, it should be stressed that for typical development impacts assessment evaluation is better done in relation to previously set goals.

In their contribution, Heeks and Molla (2009) offer a five-grid scale for determining impact of ICTs for development project. This verbal scale looks at an assessment of ICT project goals and categorises them as *total failure*, *largely unsuccessful*, *partial successful*, *largely successful* or whether it brings *total success*. To consider a project as total failure, this would mean that the initiative was never implemented or was implemented but could not be sustained to maturity and certainly did not reach the point at which it would produce a meaningful output. A largely unsuccessful outcome would mean that some goals were attained but not at the level one could consider the goals significant to stakeholders' aspirations. Partial success or partial failure - depending on the assessor's perspective, would mean that major goals for the project were attained with some significant undesirable outcomes. To be largely successful it would mean that most stakeholders are satisfied with the outcomes which match their expected goals with little or no undesirable outcome. For an absolute success to be recorded, all stakeholders would have attained their major goals without experiencing any significant undesirable outcomes. It is indeed remarkable that this scale thematically reflects the movement of ICT for development narratives as it ranges from the powerful effect of utopianism to the contemporary result-oriented purview (Heeks, 2010; Heeks and Molla, 2009).

This scale highlights the spectrum from hype to reality phase of ICT for development, while it also spotlights the unsuitability of foreign spending on dysfunctional telecentres – the product of Western imagination – which failed to deliver because of exogenous factors that militate against ICT adoption outcomes. But with the continuous investment by governments and new strategic adoption and/or “appropriation” of technologies such as the internet, and the mobile phones, the continent has shown a real need for empirical assessment of ICT interventions in some sectors. Heeks (2010) notes that, “while the underlying objective need for impact assessment of ICT for development has grown in Africa; its implementation has been hampered significantly by the factors mentioned earlier”. Hence, there has been was no rigorous model to assess the impact of ICT for development except for descriptive studies which often lack ‘a sound foundation of research methodology and framework’ (Heek, 2010 p 630). The next section includes an overview of established frameworks developed to evaluate the impact of ICT for development in developing countries. The researcher then presents a choice of framework used for the exploratory analytic discussion of ICT use for development in Nigeria.

## **2.8 ICT for Development: An Overview of Extant Frameworks**

A conceptual framework is a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs a research. It is an analytical tool which, according to Miles and Haberman (1994 p 18) could be a written or visual presentation that explains either graphically, or in narrative form, the main things to be researched – that is the key factors, concepts, or variables which are to be analysed. A conceptual framework provides the researcher with the ability to move beyond mere descriptions to explanations of processes and reasons behind a concept. It provides a means of setting out an explanation that might be used to define and make sense of the data that flow from the research question. Otherwise called theoretical framework or “idea context”, it represents an outline of how a researcher plans to execute his research and how he has positioned his academic contribution within the larger field of research. For our task in this study, conceptual frameworks are ways of understanding ICT for development projects and organising knowledge about them (Heeks and Molla, 2009).

Conceptual frameworks in ICT for development are fallout of the lack of systemic approach to investigating and validating claims about ICTs potential to fast-track development. On the one hand, as hinted earlier, are the beliefs that ICTs will solve all socioeconomic problems in the Third World Countries, and sooner than later will, through globalization bring them to par with the developed countries of the global north. On the other part of the hype divide is the narrative about the potential of new ICT, the interactive Web 2.0 capacity of bridging the gap between governments and citizens, though new participatory affordance and freedom of expression.

The initial investigation into assessing ICTs’ contribution to development involve either one or a combination of, 1) retrospective assessment of achievement - that is ‘post hoc assessment of what has been achieved so far from investments’, 2) prospecting ‘future development of project investments’ and 3) investigating accountability by ‘enabling agencies to be accountable for their spending on technologies for development (Heeks, 2010 p 628-629).

With this mind-set, initial conceptual frameworks are adopted and adapted from varied disciplines, with studies cross-cutting the fields and sub-fields of sociology, information systems, information science, communication studies, science and technology studies, technology and development, organisation management studies, informatics, and development studies. In fact, interpolations of studies on ICT and development, through a combination of development studies and informatics approaches from the 1980s and 1990s when levels of ICT for development activity were low, have

produced in a research sub-genre in Development Informatics which studies the relation between ICTs and socio-economic development (Heeks, 2010 p 630).

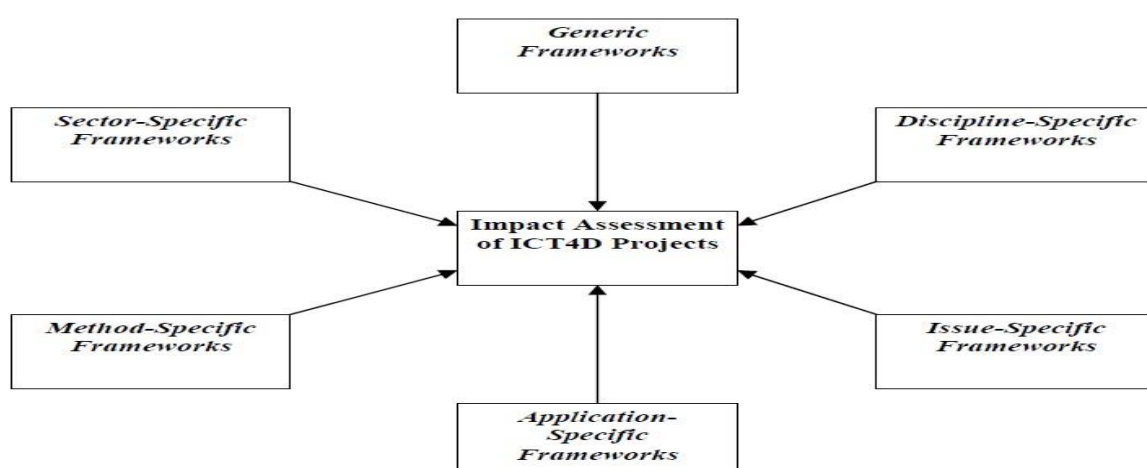
According to Heeks (2010), the strongest conceptual foundation for development informatics comes from the information systems discipline where foundational work undertaken through 'International Federation for Information Processing's Working Group 9.4 on Social Implications of Computers in Developing Countries' (e.g. Bhatnagar and Bjorn-Andersen, 1990, Bhatnagar and Odedra, 1992; Odedra-Straub, 1996; Roche and Blaine, 1996; Avegerou and Walsham, 2000), with focus on understanding issues of technology innovation, transfer and implementation. The focus of these formative studies, as observed by Heeks (2010 p 631), were mainly on examining new information processes within organisations rather than pushing out to look at the development impact of new technology. Avgerou (2008) points out that the core issues of the studies were investigation of information systems failure after adoption (including issues of scale and sustainability), and the development of global outsourcing. Where work has looked at the strategic role of ICTs, it has reflected on the design and diffusion of technology artefacts rather than developmental impact. Many of the conferences in the first decade of the millennium have centred their themes on these issues with ICTs' contribution to development not adequately captured. In one of these early millennium conferences in Nigeria organised at the University of Ibadan's department of communication studies on behalf of one the country's leading figures in development studies, descriptive and interpretive research populated some of the contributions, with little or no rigorous impact assessment study. Uses and gratification and diffusion of innovation theories were popular among these studies seeking to examine ICT use in a number of industries including education, with actor network theory spearheading the social constructivists' interventions. Apart from these, business schools have been identified as sources of ideas which apply organisation/management studies to development informatics, notably through the value chain adaptations.

Heeks and Molla (2009) point to another influence of organisation/management studies in work undertaken on 'the enterprise' as the unit of analysis of studies. Through this, researchers sought to understand the contribution of ICT to development by focusing on its impact on micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises either by looking at enterprise relations or enterprise variables (see Esselaar et al, 2007; Jensen et al, 2011). However, for clarity sake, Heeks (2010) sums up the areas of intervention in ICT and development studies into three distinct 'policy arena issues'; mobiles enterprise, empowerment and gender, and development studies, capabilities and choice. These areas reflect some of the impact assessment frameworks documented by Heeks and Molla

(2009). These include the framework for communications-for-development, livelihoods framework, cultural institutional framework, gender framework, and capabilities (Sen) framework. It is expedient to engage as much as we can some of these important ICT for development frameworks before launching our conception and review of the Sen's Capabilities Framework with which we hope to explore the Nigerian case.

Heeks and Molla (2009) provide a 'compendium' which offers a synopsis of frameworks used in assessing the impacts of ICT for development. These are "ways of understanding ICT4D projects and organising knowledge about them rather than a means to undertake such assessment" (p.6). These impact assessment frameworks are classified into six categories summarized into a block of a four core grid of cells. A complete representation of the frameworks is represented in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. 2: ICT4D Project Impact Assessment Frameworks Overview**



**Source: Heeks and Molla (2009)**

From interpretation of Heeks and Molla, generic framework is useful for assessing any development projects. It focuses on cost-benefit analysis and assessment of project goals from the stakeholders' point of view. The second grid presents discipline-specific dimension which sees interventions from disciplines of communication studies, development studies, information science and sociology. According to this grid, each discipline has its own typical focus and development studies tend to focus on capability approach.

**Table 1: ICT4D Impact Assessment Frameworks in Compendium**

<i>Type</i>	<i>Sub-Type</i>	<i>Focus</i>
GENERIC		Cost-Benefit Analysis
		Project Goals

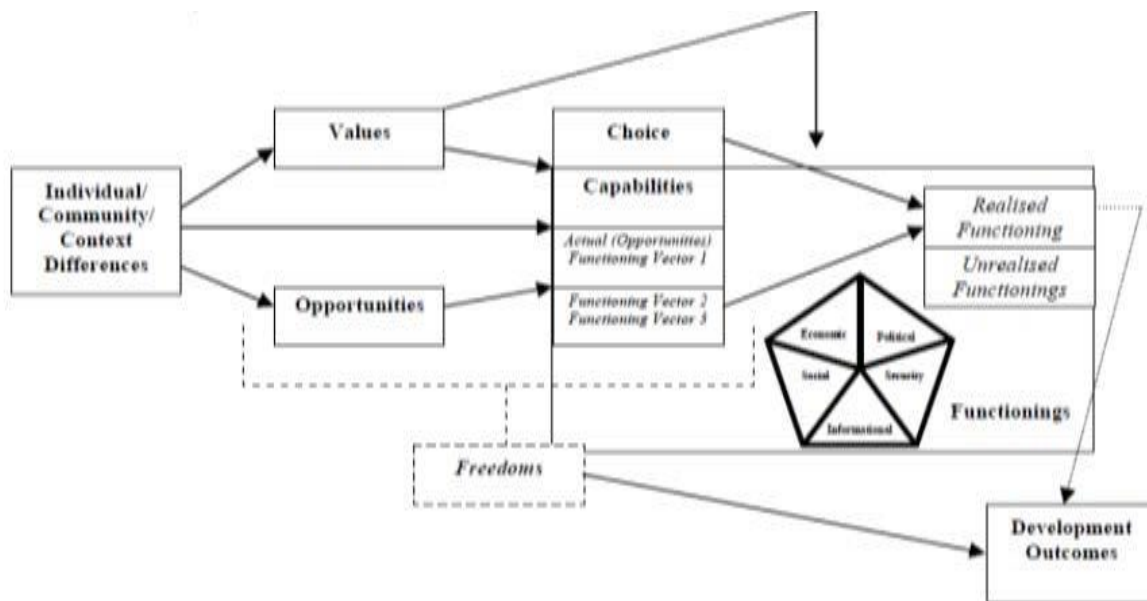
DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC	Communication Studies	Communications-for-Development
	Development Studies	<b>Capabilities/Sen</b>
	Information Science	Livelihoods Framework
		Information Economics
	Sociology	Cultural-Institutional
ISSUE-SPECIFIC		Enterprise (Growth)
		Gender
APPLICATION-SPECIFIC		Telecentres

**Source: Heeks and Molla (2009 p 7) modified by the researcher**

The use of ‘enterprise models’ as a way of understanding developmental impact of ICTs is important to this study because of the focus on the mobile phones which of course is pivotal to this study as well as other studies focussing on ICT in Africa. It is needful to mention that researchers with interest in Africa have devoted substantial attention to the socio-cultural (Olorunnisola, 2009; 2014), policy (Onwumechili, 2009; Dunn and Boafo, 2010), professional (Obijiofor, 2009; 2011) and pedagogical (Steenveld, 2006) implications of the phenomenal growth in the availability of the new media since the turn of the century.

Specifically, mobile phones contributions to development in Africa have equally received numerous academic attentions (e.g. Donner, 2004; 2007; Jensen, 2007; Kamga, 2006; Esselaar et al. 2007; Overa, 2006; Jagun, Heeks and Whalley, 2008; Wasserman, 2012). Even though some of these studies treat mobile phones as products and services, rather than enablers of general business processes, their contributions and findings are by no small means pivotal to understand the developmental impacts of mobiles in Africa. The increased penetration of mobiles in Africa contributed to the popular narratives on ICT and development in Africa. Some researchers did not fail to point out some of the negative impact or disruptive tendencies and cultural/behavioural consequences of the device (Ojebode, 2012; Ojebode et al, 2010; 2011; Oni, 2014).

**Figure 2. 3: ICT4D Impact Assessment Frameworks Compendium: Capabilities (Sen) Framework**



**Source: Heeks and Molla (2009)**

Building on the value chain model developed by Porter, Donner and Escobari (2010) work with a framework that investigates mobile phones contribution to development, Heeks and Molla, 2009 identified a series of qualitative benefits relating to interactions with customers and suppliers that help improve the coordination and quality of those interactions, and build trust. Evidence of mobile phones providing economic benefits to small and micro- entrepreneurs are clearly documented (see also Heeks, 2010; 2012). However, fewer signs that mobile phones can have a more transformational function were found by Donner and Escobari (2010). For instance, they find little evidence that could suggest that market structures are being altered. Hence they conclude that in ‘value systems where mobile telephony is introduced, there is currently more evidence suggesting changes in degree (more information, more customers) than for changes in structure (new channels, new businesses)’ (Donner and Escobari, 2010: 11). Heeks (2010) however points out that the creation of new livelihoods through ICT may show few signs at present partly because of the ‘continuing paucity of the research base’, and the time-contingent nature of ICT where rapid diffusion may easily erode noticeable advantages. One other area mentioned by Heeks (2010) has to do with the concept of digital provide, a ‘mirror image’ phenomenon which sees no ICT owners benefiting from those who can access and referencing Jensen’s (2007) Kerala fishermen study. With mobility affordance and other functionalities of the mobile phone, there is still more grounds to be covered in measuring impacts of mobile phones for development in Africa.



Heeks (2010) calls the second policy arena 'empowerment and gender' and this also reflects business schools' conceptualisation of organisation/management studies whilst working on development informatics (e.g. Corbett and Keller, 2004). There are of course some exceptions to this. Heeks cites the work of Farida and Ghadially (2003) who applied the psychological proposition on well-being to development studies. However, they still draw from management studies for their field study but with conceptualisation on empowerment coming from development studies. Farida and Ghadially, (2003) investigate the impact of ICT on the sense of empowerment felt by young Muslim men and women in Mumbai, which still report clear digital divide along the gender line even in a densely populated area like Mumbai. They found women were far more likely to be non-users and low users of ICTs – operationalised as computers and the internet) outside their college time; compared to their tech savvy male. This appears to be an ongoing story since the narrative on ICT and gender began with the advent of computer-mediated communication research (see Herring, 2001). Heeks explains that for those who were able to gain some additional access to ICTs, there is a continuing gender difference but one which might be rather unexpected. 'Women report greater levels of empowerment as a result of ICT training and use than men. But this has to do with many reasons such as psychological, social, educational and economic indicators. Heeks (2010) is of the opinion that 'once the digital divide has been crossed, that ICTs do have a potential to reduce inequalities; that the idea of technological 'leapfrogging' to development is not as speculated' (p.633).

The third policy arena captures the researcher's interest since it touches on development studies, capabilities and choice. Heeks (2010) mentions the 'relatively little contribution' this dimension has made to development informatics suggesting little academic attention, pointing to under representation of scholars in development studies and over subscription from the informatics departments and allied disciplines of geography, sociology, international relations and politics, with a small number also from management and business studies (Heeks, 2010 p 634). The fall out of this is the evidence of a shallow understanding of development studies concerns and conceptualisations. Without the conceptual tools and language of development studies to hand Heeks (2010) argues that it will be much harder to connect to development studies research and that development policymakers may not be properly guided. Discussion of ICTs' contribution to development in the absence of development studies' ideas to define and understand development has little or no significance. This may translate to poor guidance for technical project designers on how to relate ICTs to development and reinforcing the tendency to techno-centrism seen in ICT4D projects (Schech, 2002).

Recently, there have been attempts to bridge this gap with a few works focusing on capabilities approach with conceptualisations around livelihoods (e.g. Duncombe, 2006; Gigler, 2008). A fundamental work in this dimension is Kliene's (2010) study which combines Sen's (1982) capability approach with frameworks on livelihoods and empowerment. Through her work she establishes that human choices are pivotal to understanding fully the concept of human development. With this ideation, Kleine provides Choice Framework by looking at the impact of ICT on the life of a single female micro- entrepreneur living in rural Chile. With a focus on single human entity's idea of how ICT has impacted on development her study highlights some of the strengths and weaknesses of capabilities ideas. Since each individual would provide their own definition of what development means, it would be highly demanding and time challenging to aggregate such an opinion containing measurable indicators. Negotiating this tension is one of the current tasks in development studies and the researcher hopes to make further contribution along this track with our using Sen's capability approach to explore the use of ICTs for development in Nigeria.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

This section has captured the background theoretical concepts and arguments in studies concerned with ICTs. The views and assumptions of technological determinism, socio constructivism, socio shaping of technology and the criticism of them have been widely discussed. The section has also discussed detailed mass media theories developed in the west and its development in African setting. This discussion was to show that the researcher understands the theoretical aspects which complement the research questions and objectives of the study. For the sake of evaluation and analysis within this study, the section has explained the different framework models available for assessment and development of ICT in developing countries. The choice of Sen's capability model is chosen as framework guiding the analysis of this study.

The next part of the chapter presents how technological determinism, social constructivism and social shaping of technology apply to current debates around social media applications, and how social media debates were dragged into power and democratic theories. Having explained technological determinism and social constructivism, it is important to show how these debates applies to social media in contemporary society and its connection to philosophical power and democratic theories. The core concept of these theories are conceptualised in capability model.

## **Section Two: Current debates about social media and their reconceptualization in IS literature.**

### **Introduction:**

This section serves an extension of previous section with a focus on social media applications. Discussion about contemporary debates is important because it shows that the study is not based primarily on personal instinct but rather, is informed by philosophical established theories (Havner et al, 2004; Simon and Goes, 2011).

Primarily, contemporary debates around social media is concerned with notions of power, empowerment and democratic theories which have become a major themes in studies of ICTs and social media and their impact on society studies (Pellizzoni, 2001, Avgerou and McGrath, 2007; Kelsey and Bennett, 2014; Fortunati, 2014; Stanyer, 2015). The section also analyses how media is conceptualised to complement either notions of power, or notions of empowerment. The themes of the debates in these research themes serves as theoretical lens to contextualise Nigeria's political and democratic struggles, media domination, and the view that media could possibly be means of social resistance or complete domination in the Nigerian context. The aim in mind is to explore issues regarding discrepancies in explanations of citizen's use of the media either in the form of domination or empowerment in order to look at in a more innovative way in Nigerian context.

This section is made up of six sub-sections. Each sub-section contains an introduction and conclusion of what it entails.

### **2.10 Current debates in IS literature regarding Social Media applications**

*“Today, the internet rests on servers located in specific nations and various governments’ laws affects the real issue which is not the continued existence of the sovereign state, but how its centrality and functions are being altered”*

(Nye Jr., 2004 p84)

This section presents a recap of debates, issues and related research questions regarding the relationship between the media and power and democratic theories within the information system (IS) literature. Studies concerned with media use have been associated with the issues of power and democracy since the inception of media (Altheide, 1985). Fourth estate media, television, radio, and newspapers have been massively studied and theorized from this perspective

(Curran, Smith, and Wingate 1987). Over time, these arguments have become more blurred and complex because of the ever-increasing array of ICTs such as mobile phones, personal computer, Internet, smartphones, and tablets (Chadwick and Galley, 2014; Fuchs, 2014; Castell, 2012).

Currently, there are two existing debates in information system (IS) literature regarding the use of new mass media and ICTs in relation to power, politics and democracy: put simply these are the pessimist and optimist perspective. Elsewhere, Leopoldina Fortunati an Italian feminist, theorist, and author, influenced by Antonio Negri, and Karl Marx proposed third approach that consider technologies and human beings as having equal power (i.e., social shaping of technology) (Fortunati, 2010; 2014). This study will explore this view in a Nigerian context where rapid adoption of technology provides one of the most exciting opportunities for African democracy and development.

As indicated in the previous chapter, fourth estate media (TV, radio, newspapers) and ICTs are no longer separate and distinct since “they converge and merge together in many manners, facilitated in this hybridization by digitalization” (Redden, 2012; Small, 2012; Nick, 2012; Doebral and Haseki, 2014). For this reason this study uses the term media here not to only refer to ICT but also to mass media as a basis and viable means for innovative pan-African development (Martin and Olorunnisola, 2015; Gagliardone et al, 2014; Lopes and Srinivason, 2014).

In reference to two academic debates, on the one hand, from the perspective of critical internet researchers (pessimist), three critical interconnected questions run through information system (IS) literature about political impact of ICT media. These critical questions of the media include their potentials as alternative to facilitate social change and transformation; ownership and domination; surveillance and its likely consequences at global and national level (Snowden, 2015; Bennett, 2015; Fortunati, 2014; Fuchs, 2014; Morozov, 2011; Wasserman, 2011). In his book ‘Social Media, a critical introduction’, Christian Fuchs, a prominent scholar of critical internet studies has specifically criticised new ICTs research for failing to confront Government attempts to monitor citizen’s use of new ICTs (Fuchs, 2014 p. 9). In his view, studies of the media should be concerned with who controls society, who is taking important decisions, who is influential, and who has the reputation to influence and change society (Fuchs, 2014). This is a concern in western society, where media institutions responsible for the design and creation of new ICTs monitor citizen’s activities on social networks either for marketing purposes or, willingly or unwillingly, to share users data with Government security agencies, thus posing dilemmas of

privacy and political surveillance than opening opportunity for the public (Fenton and Brassi, 2011; Prodnik, 2012 Amelung, 2013).

Similar concern has been raised about ICT use in Africa in relation to Government attempts to control the internet and its domination of new mass media has become a key concern. Herman Wasserman, a professor of media studies at the University of Cape Town, noted that in most of Africa, the relationship between state and media in the African continent has been fragile and conflicted. Wasserman maintained that many African states exert strong influence in or control of the airwaves, and business interests often align themselves with political power (Wasserman, 2011; Bourgault, 1995). Consequently, media dominance and manipulations is seen as a key concern in Africa's political development with the possibility in some regimes, of posing threats to citizens.

Overall, the whole concept of media ownership, domination and surveillance coincided with European based social theory particularly the notion of power from dispositional point of view discussed a later section. Narratives about the hegemony of institutions over rights of others in the society were greatly emphasized (Gramsci, 1972; Foucault, 1962 and Marx, 1960). This group of critical internet scholars opposed optimist scholars for failing to link social theory with studies of new ICTs use and development in contemporary society.

From the point of view of the optimist wing, prominent scholars have enthusiastically asserted that the new and latest generation of communication technology has fundamental democratic features which cannot be ignored. These scholars share common understanding and view point that, in comparison to traditional media; these new network has the potentials to reconfigure communicative power and democratic relations (Benkler, 2006 Jenkins 2006; Leadbeater 2008; Castell, 2012). In their book, 'Social Media and democracy innovations and participatory politics', Loader and Mercea, acknowledge the role of new social media technologies for playing a part in strengthening key participatory democratic processes and principles of liberal democracy. Such democratic processes include respect for human rights,- freedom of speech, freedom of association, monitoring free and fair elections, and enabling citizens to critically monitor the actions of Government and corporate interest (Loader and Mercea 2012 p.5). These activities have become blurred, for instance mainstream media increasingly becoming reliant upon political blogs and citizen user content, WikiLeaks disclosure of US Government foreign policy statements online, and different style of smart citizen politics and digital activism (Hands, 2011; Gerbuado, 2012; Mercea, 2013; Mudhai, 2013; Cammaerts et al, 2013; Snowden, 2015) .

However, despite above extravagant claim, optimist scholars revealed that influences of ICTs and

social media upon democratic politics reveal a complex picture that researchers should be wary about. Loader and Mercea, 2012 call for an empirical evidence to investigate if digital media offers new opportunities for challenging dominant discourses and the privileged position of power to establish if there is evidence for the emergence of a more personalised politics being played out through new ICTs including response from Government and citizens (Loader and Mercea, 2012, p. 2).

To sum up the argument debatably, in her article 'Media between Power and Empowerment: Can We Resolve This Dilemma'? Fortunati (2014) cautioned against this lack of theoretical clarity, and call for a dialogue, (i.e., social shaping of technology). Fortunati, urged scholars to conduct empirical research to find out whether digital media are tools of power, or of empowerment or both? And if they are both: how could the same tools be conceived in such contradictory and opposing ways to determine the past, present and future of political communications through new media (Fortunati, 2014; Curran, 2015).

Nowhere does emancipatory promise of digital media relate to Africans more clearly than it does in the field of information and communication technologies (ICT) (Wasserman 2012 p 3). These debates are pertinent to Nigeria's fragile democracy, astonishingly corrupt Governance, and the citizen's desire for social change (Booth and Chambers, 2014). ICTs in Nigeria have often been seen as instigators of social change, complementing e-government services and moves toward democratisation, challenging those in power, amplifying new solidarities that stand in the way of social progress and Government attempts to restrict the use of these media (Wasserman, 2011; Freedom House, 2014). Therefore Nigeria's experience of the media may offer a light on these issues.

However, theoretically, addressing the questions of these debates raises issues that are couched in the language of power and resistance/empowerment and democracy. Recognised scholars in this field have noted that the concept of power is central to these claims made about the state, about non-state actors, and about their relations with media, democracy in global trends, authoritarian and semi-democratic political context (Chadwick and Galley, 2014; Fuchs, 2014; Castell, 2012).

Therefore, the next section analyses and discusses the concept of power, its forms and principles from political and sociological perspectives. Then, in the light of reflections that emerge in this section, the following section the study analyse the notion of power from both perspectives of domination and resistance, and look at studies on media to show how their conceptualization could be enriched by the historical reflections on these two concepts. The final section of the chapter contains a summary of the main contributions emerging from the analysis, and then

discusses other relevant analytical theories including frameworks that has been developed that are appropriate for African studies, and what works for Nigeria in particular in terms of government-citizen engagement using media.

## **2.11 Concept of Power, forms and principles.**

*“Digital media have indeed challenged the dominant media institutions of the late 20th century but it fails to recognise that any challenge is only temporary. Google and Facebook are already busy re-establishing rules and reallocating property rights: the media system is ‘thus likely not to stay permanently in a state of chaos’ (Freedman, 2014 p. 22).*

The concept of power has many applications and it is difficult to define. In its denotative essence, it means the ability to do something or act in a particular way. Beyond this denotation, it comes with interferences. Electric power for instance. The power in elementary physics, the rate at which work is done, power as cynicism, violence and power as gift God all comes to mind. This study is concerned with the concept of power from the perspective of philosophy and social theory. The history and notion of power in this context can be traced from two orientations, sociological and political. Sociologically orientated researchers reflect upon the concentration of power and consistently conclude it is over centralised. Scholars trained in political science are of the view that in their communities’ power is widely diffused (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962). From the sociological point of view, power is used by corporations to influence behaviours, improve services and maximise profit. From the political perspective, people can use to form of power to challenge corporations and governments. March’s 1966 argument about power is a good starting point to understand power. According to his opinion, power is a dimension that “conveys simultaneously overtones of the cynicism of the Realpolitik, the glories of mechanics, the realism of elite sociology and the comfort of anthropocentric theology” (p 39) cited in (Fortunati, 2014). Although this definition is useful, it doesn’t relate to the element of power this study is concerned with. This study aims to discuss the element of power from the very perspective that power is a spatial notion. There are four notion of power as spatial that relates with the concept of this study, alongside a special attention to the dispositional notion of power from the perspective of Marx, Gramsci and Foucault.

### **2.11.1 Spatial notion of power**

Worth mentioning is the work of Foucault (1994) and Allen (2003) for an in-depth analysis that

power encompasses a spatial relationship and that space is paramount for any exercise of power. In their view, any form of power relationship can be found in space, where those in power are at the top and rule over and those not in powers are at the bottom, down and under. In reality these expressions can be considered metaphors of spatial orientation, a projection of the physical constitution of our body (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Gibbs, 2008). “Up” is related to a bundle of metaphors that suggest being good, affording a panoptic view, the association of high social position with rationality, having power, and being in control (Fortunati, 2014). Conversely, “down” is associated an opposite meaning: being dejected at the bottom of the pile, being emotional, lacking awareness, being located in a low social position or being a subordinate and lacking control. It is this description of power that makes it attractive and conversely makes the lack of power unattractive.

It is opined that for there to be a relationship of power, the base (subordinate) must have some effect on superstructure (superordinate) and vice versa, (Gramsci, 1992; George Simmel, 1908/1989). A more recent means to explain the spatial dimension of power is to differentiate between “power upon” and “power towards”. McLean, (1966) for instance states that A attempts in some ways try to modify the behaviour of B and so they establish an interdependence between them, or A achieves their goal without necessarily modifying the behaviour of B by allowing the latter to perform any behaviour on the condition that the behaviour of B does not disturb the behaviour of A. In both of these cases, the attitude of A is instrumental towards B and aims to reconfirm their superordinate position. By contrast, the notion of “power towards” means that A uses their power to reconfirm themselves as superordinate but helps B to overcome their condition of being subordinate. In this case, the attitude of A is beneficial towards B. Power towards seems to be most applicable to the concept of empowerment or resistance, since it is more relational and less hierarchical than power upon. Thus, the context in which power acts is taken to be an important factor (Gladwell, 2000). In this study the notion of spatial power is positioned as ‘power toward’ which implies the utilization of the new media including the social media and mobile telephones by Nigerian online users to improve democratic governance.

### **2.11.2 Relation notion of power**

The second notion of power is relational in the sense that power structures itself not only in space and context but also in the social sphere. This form of power is conceptualised as an element that strongly contributes to shaping a social relationship. McLean 1966 summarises power relationships into a four part typology (1) A has effects on B’s choices and actions; 2) A has the



capacity to move B's choices in ways that A intends; 3) A has the capacity to override opposition from B; 4) The relationship between A and B described by propositions 1, 2 is part of social structure. This typology of power relationships is at the core of various sociological notions such as social stratification, and has class and status as its principal dimensions (Tronti, 1966) cited in Fortunati, (2014).

### **2.11.3 Relational notion of power regarding social abilities and social strategies**

Thirdly, the notion of power is also relational to social abilities and social strategies. One element is the ability of the powerful to strengthen their moral claims by conventionalising their moral defaults (Gouldner, 1970). Another perspective is the ability to prevent opposition (Lockwood, 1966). Studies of political power have focused on decision making processes within the state apparatus and institutions, however such studies have been criticised for neglecting the manipulation of the political agenda by powerful groups who prevent issues from emerging and becoming objects of a formal decision making process (Lukes, 1974; Bachrach and Baratz, 1970). Lukes also pointed out that the manipulation is performed by shaping people's perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way that they accept a subordinate role (Lukes, 1974). This form of power is concerned with rules imposed by the state to which the citizens must adhere. Dispositional form of power.

The fourth and final notion of power is dispositional and relates to the disposition of goods on the basis that property owners offered preferment to pursue their interest. Karl Marx suggests the ownership of means of production and the control over labour are the most important power resources upon which several other power resources are built. Fortunati, 2013; 2014 noted that other resources that complement ownership and control are organisational capacity, numerical support, competence, expert knowledge, control of information, occupation of certain social positions, control of religious and moral values, control of legal norms, control of the instrument of force, and reputation of power itself. However, it is important to note that all these power resources are interchangeable. This notion of disposition, the link between power and ownership, is quite important for understanding domination and empowerment and considered in this study as very relevant to contextual matters in Nigeria's society. Theoretical exposition of Marx, Gramsci and Foucault is used as benchmark to explain media development and domination in the Nigerian context and, additionally, how elements of their theoretical expositions and that of liberal form of participatory democracy from Mill, Peteman, as means of empowerment could be link to ICTs and be reconceptualised in Sen's HCDA model to evaluate the actual use and

development outcomes of ICT in the Nigerian context.

#### **2.11.4 Other sources of power**

There are other forms of power such as power as cynicism and violence and the ambivalence towards it; and finally there is power as a form of energy and as gift of God. With regards to cynicism it is worth mentioning the comment of Machiavelli (1532/1989) when describing the opinion of people who are more interested in the ends than the means applied to reach the ends (*The prince should try to win and maintain the state: means will be always judged honourable and praised by everyone*). In relation to violence and the mandate for power, and writing at a time when the Divine authority of Royal rulers was losing credibility, Hume (1748), writes in his treatise of Original Contract: “Almost all of the Governments, which exist at present, have been founded originally, either on usurpation or conquest or both, without any pretence of a fair consent, or voluntary subjection of people.” Given these premises, the ambivalent reaction to power by those not in powers is unsurprising. On the one hand, Bertrand Russell (1938) has pointed out that followers gain vicariously from the achievements of the leader. Finally power in form of energy and gifts of the God: From this perspective, Benveniste (1973) reconstructing the meaning of power in the Indo-European tradition revealed that power is perceived as a gift from Gods, which, in a unilateral decision, is invested given by them to somebody. It is a contingent gift, which has a limited duration. What is important to note here is that power is not in relationship with a particular merit but with an inscrutable divine will. This type of power complements the power explained in the holy Quran where Allah stated that “power” belongs to him. As stated in the Quran Verse 25-26 chapter 3 (Allah said “I am the Owner of Sovereignty, I give sovereignty to whom I wish and I take sovereignty away from whom I wish. I honour whom I wish and I humble whom I wish. In my hand is [all] good. Indeed, I am over all things).

In conclusion of this section, the four aforementioned concepts of power discussed above are related to this study with a particular attention to dispositional notion of power as guide to contextualise Nigeria’s hegemonic media. It seems to be applicable to discuss Nigeria’s contextual political struggle and hegemonic practices in relation to privately owned traditional media companies. Therefore, the next section discusses dispositional notions of power as means of dominance and potential resistance in relation to the recent media use and developmental outcomes.

## **2.12 Dispositional notion of power: Marx, Gramsci and Foucault theories of power as means of domination and potential resistance in relation to ICT media in Nigerian context.**

This section discusses dispositional element of power as the main lens through which to view the elements of theoretical exposition will be used for analysis based on Sen's operationalization approach. Given the ambivalences and contradictions of neoliberalist practices, the intellectual precursor of this argument is rooted in the mainstream beliefs of Marxism and, in particular, draws attention to alternative radical discourse on the views of Antonio Gramsci's concept of power and hegemony, and Michael Foucault's interpretations of power. (Gramsci and Foucault concepts could either be a threat to those at the top or those at the bottom) which can be used as a theoretical lens to address the empirical context of Nigeria's current media development, the emergence of ICT, and the relationship between citizens and Government.

It is worth mentioning that the study employed a loosely theoretical exposition of the dispositional notion of power in the words of Marx, Gramsci and Foucault. Reference is made to conflicts over state "hegemony" with potential theoretical connotations not fully pursued here but understood in general sense as the domination of the state and institutions over social and cultural arrangements. Similarly, it should be borne in mind that in this study, Marx, Gramsci and Foucault's theoretical contribution are not always pure reproductions of their work; instead the study treat the conception of hegemony flexibly and critically through combining their work with other theorists. In summary, development of and consequences of conflicts between state, power, Government and surveillance threats in contemporary society, is looked upon using a loosely Marxian, Foucauldian and Gramscian notion of the terms.

The differences between these three theorists are that Marx maintained the dominant figure that has resources at their hand controls behaviour and actions of the subordinate; they influence and make important decisions of what the society looks like. This is where media 'power' refers to who control the media and their content, and about what effects such controls have (Street, 2001). Gramsci, also someone within the Marxian school of thought share the same view with Marx but further maintained that while base has certain control of the society, the superstructure too has some level of autonomy, because power has different sources. Ordinary citizens through collective effort can use the various forms of power sources to voice out their opinions and attain a certain level of independence. This where this study believes that MacLean's (1966), concept of 'power towards' could be attributed to the use of the media as means for citizen's empowerment. Finally, Foucault worked from an entirely different perspective though somehow

sharing same view with Gramsci on the concept of power and resistance. Kreps et al, (2015) book on rapprochement of Gramsci and Foucault noted that power has different sources and can be contested individually to attain a certain level of independence from the base. From a critical discourse analysis, Kelsey and Bennet, (2014) and Chilwa, (2012) have shown how display of power on social media depending on the context, the discourse and the concept of power, digital media functionalities could be a means of social resistance through citizen participation. Kelsey and Bennett, (2014) work conducted in European context utilising Paul Chamber's case shows how citizen's engagement helped in winning a court case with an authority. While Chilwa, (2012) work is conducted in Nigeria reveals how online interpretation of text is changing media landscape in the country.

Using theoretical expositions of these three major theorists, Marx, Gramsci and Foucault, this section seeks to accomplish a dual task – firstly to show how the Gramscian concept of civil society supports neoliberal practices of media institutions in the Nigerian context in respect to ownership of mass media. And second, this study does not dismiss the state control and dominance through the imposition of neoliberal economic and political policies, as Nigeria is at the receiving end of socio/economic and political policies cultured and imposed by Western capitalist states and institutions (Onimode, 1988; Tar 2009 p 213). However, this study maintains that the freedom to enter markets and the emergence of ICT can itself be a significant contribution to development and empowerment, particularly the development of democratic freedom. In fact, Karl Marx comments in (*Das Kapital*) on the American civil war as “the one great event of contemporary history” related directly to the importance of the freedom of the labour contract as in comparison to slavery and the enforced exclusion from the labour market (Sen 1999 p 19). Furthermore, Marx seems to make room for what later developed as the capabilities approach when he writes in the *Grundrisse* that ‘the capability to consume is a condition of consumption, hence its primary means, and this capability is the development of an individual potential, a force of production’ (Marx, 1993 [1857–1858]: 711; cited in (Gangas, 2014). Similarly, Gramsci also maintains that the political and ideological superstructure has some level of autonomy from the economic base (1992), and recognises that international relations intertwine with internal relations (Femia, 1987). Finally, Foucault also makes power resistance possible. Kreps et al, (2015) have argued that Gramsci's concept of hegemony and Foucault's modalities of power together reveal that the two theorist's theoretical elements of power have an interconnected relationship that can be reconciled thus supporting opportunities for resistance. This is not a solution to the African problem of media use and social changes but rather an explanatory justification of the

theoretical issues that guided the study and description of Nigerian context.

### **2.12.1 Power domination of the media**

Gramsci's notion of civil society is used to support Marx's (1964) famous suggestion about power dominance in media institutions in Nigeria explored in this chapter and chapter three on how the arrival of the new media, though illegitimately serving the interest of the state and media cooperation (according to the views of many scholars), but nevertheless enhances citizenship control of the media and autonomy in Nigeria's hegemonic media relations. With ICT media being more appreciated and used more in more democratic way than the western world, this study argues that media could be a precursor of legitimising key liberal democratic concepts in developing countries (Mudhai, 2013; Douai and Olorunnisola, 2013). Marx, (1850) famously argued that the ownership of means of production and the control over labour are the most important power resources upon which several other power resources are built with a specific reference to private domination. By Marx's account, power is a relatively simple concept, in the sense that it has a clear source and follows predictable patterns. Those who hold the dominant positions in the system of production wield power by virtue of their control of the means of production (Marx 1978, 1990). They solidify their position by taking over civil and political institutions and using these to protect their economic interests. Under capitalism, this means using the state as a tool for maintaining control of subordinate classes and taking control of foreign markets (Kreps et al, 2015).

Gramsci, a Marxian, in the 'The State and Civil Society', supported this view. Gramsci argues, the state and civil society 'corresponds on the one hand to the function of 'hegemony' and on the other hand corresponds to 'direct domination' or command exercised throughout the state' (Gramsci, 1978 p 12). Gramsci's definition of the state as a "coercive power" which legally enforces discipline on those who do not consent, either actively or passively, and rewards those who are submissive (Gramsci, 1978 p 12) aptly reflects the Nigerian media, in the military era and past democratic dispensations. To further support this, keeping in mind the objective concept of power; power is located in coercive institutions that realise the particular will of a group by commanding and sanctioning other groups and individuals (Fuchs 2011 p 225). This reflects new mass media in Nigeria where its influence largely remains hegemonic, maintaining control and restricting relationships with the citizens; the masses consent to the hegemonic order is essentially passive, and intellectuals working in media institutions are rewarded for moderating what needs to be aired (Streets, 2001; 2011). To be sure, ownership of new mass media in the Nigerian context is dominated by the petty- bourgeois political class and the Government who

often exploit its means of coercion and material rewards to gain consent in pursuing its vested interests (Musa, 2011; Okunna and Omenugha, 2012; Omenugha, et al, 2013). This is similar to other countries where the practise of journalism gives rise to a version of hegemonic discourse in that 'journalism does not operate outside ideology and hegemony but is deeply embedded within them' (Carpentier and Cammaerts 2007, 966). The same issue affects Nigeria's media system where ideology and hegemony is not only embedded in them but equally conforms to Gramsci's assertion that "state apparatus employ violence and threats of violence in order to express the will of the state" (Gramsci, 1992). See examples discussed later in the first section of chapter three. Potential power resistance of the media

On the other hand, Gramsci's description of civil society as an 'ensemble of private groups' with conflicting potentials for reproducing and/or challenging 'coercive power', aptly captures the contradictory relationship of associations and their relationship with the government. As Gramsci identified civil society such (Church, student, the media) are key mechanism for the maintenance of authority and he suggested that its effectiveness lies in the way it blurs the distinction between authority and everyday life (Jones, 2005 p. 48).

In his book 'the Politics of Neoliberal Politics in Africa', Usman Tar examines state authoritarianism and neoliberal democratic expansion in Nigeria, and argues that the relationship between the authority and associations has been contradictory and contested even before the arrival of neoliberal ideological projects (Tar, 2009). Gramsci narrated that even when individuals are subjected to a strong disciplinary apparatus, they may be able to exercise power (Gramsci, 1992). The Nigerian power holders' attempts to dominate civil society in their radical approach to manipulating selfish interest, particularly in the military era have been challenged by concerned associations and civil rights activists who have also been potentially autonomous and emancipatory in Nigeria's political and social transformation.

As domination is a key concern in the development of Nigeria's new mass media, the emergence of ICTs through western narratives may seem to offer alternatives by deconstructing the effect of cultural hegemony disseminated through mass media. Elsewhere, it is argued that Marx himself envisioned technology becoming a means to liberation, provided it is freed from the tyranny of capital. To Marx, a writer is also a productive labourer not in so far as he produces ideas, but in so far as he enriches the publisher who publishes his work (cited in Eagleton, 2011).

However, there is a complex picture from a Foucauldian point of view despite Kreps et al (2015) that Gramsci and Foucault's narratives can be reconciled within the concept of resistance.

In Foucault's theory of the state, the concept of surveillance derived from the main theoretical and historical framework of the disciplinary model (the Panopticon). This type of prison, originally designed by Jeremy Bentham, is structured so that a small number of guards can watch all the prisoners in their cells while remaining unseen (Foucault, 1979: 200). In this setting, the source of power and relationships of power are clear but the authority exercising the power is nevertheless unseen. Because the prisoners cannot see the guards, they remain in a constant state of threat even when they are not being watched. The prisoners learn to live in fear of being monitored by the guards, so they learn to discipline themselves. Foucault argues that the basic power structure of the panopticon is reproduced in many different contexts as a means of permitting the authorities to monitor those subject to authority, whether in the military, at work, school or a variety of other roles. The work of Foucault has been pioneered by many scholars who have embraced Foucault's panopticons and extended its principles and applications to the analysis of modern technology (Poster, 1990; Haggerty & Ericson, 2000; Simon, 2005; Lyon, 2006).

In the Nigerian context, there are strong suspicions while citizens are using these medium to record their dissatisfaction with poor Governance and abuse of human rights, Government surveillance increased following a November 2013 report about the installation of a mass surveillance system and revelations that the 2014 budget contained financial provision for the purchase of specialized surveillance equipment. There followed calls to investigate Government attempts to monitor citizen's activities online, and the threat it may pose to contemporary society.

However, as is often remarked, one should neither be optimistic nor pessimistic about the transformation of power structures on the internet (Fuchs et al. 2012). Another key element of empowerment is the concept of disposition. As the most important resources of power are the ownership of means of production and control and command over labour, empowerment must take account of the disposition of those empowered towards commodities, tools, and technologies.

As stated earlier, some scholars have recently refined synopticon surveillance studies in form of media resistance. Foucault's concept of surveillance, where few watch many have been refined by commentators where the many can also watch few. The communication power of digital media is potentially becoming a means by which citizens' engagement and collective effort can enhance and support digital empowerment (Kelsey and Bennett, 2014; Doyle, 2011). Citing Paul Chamber's theory, Kelsey and Bennett, (2014) from critical discourse analysis (CDA) incorporates aspect Foucault's work, refines and expands beyond it by arguing conceptual approaches that Foucault did not accounted for. This is done by partly arguing that the many watch the many and within this

dynamic traits of previous theoretical proposition as well as more recent development. The emergence and effect of new media through social practices, context and actions of users, where instead of the few the watching many, now the many can watch the few once became a problem to those in power and the authority (Kelsey and Bennett, 2014; Doyle, 2011). Rather like Gramsci's model, hegemonic power is never fixed or static since it is open to constant negotiation, resistance and change.

Modern media technologies and society feature these synoptic-panoptic interplays of power through battles of control and resistance. With the widespread diffusion of new media in the last few decades, billions of people now directly have access to information and communication. The power to "control," within certain limits, media gives people the capacity to decide whether, how, to what extent, and for which purposes to use them. Consequently, ICTs have become grass- roots means of production of immaterial goods such as information, communication, education, entertainment, and so on. Although the real ownership is in the hands of firms such as Apple, Google, Facebook, and Microsoft and the people are only peripheral terminals (Zwick, Bonsu, and Darmody 2008), the new-found disposition over useful resources has contributed to their empowerment. However, whether synoptic or omniopic the impact is yet to be known in Nigerian context.

In conclusion, this section has covered dispositional form of power, empowerment and their applicability in Nigerian contextual context. Therefore the study will aim to find out in the Nigerian context what is the current state of media as an institution? Who controls and shapes the society's media platforms? Is domination a key concept in Nigeria's complex society? Do ICT media represent threat to those with power through citizen's engagement or a threat to citizens who uses the applications? What are the implications if any? How do those in Government see the use of media? What importance does it hold? What is the way forward as Fourtnati, (2014) suggested a new way of using media (social shaping of technology) to examine how ICTs may be re-shaped to fit into Nigerian socio-political contexts and an examination as how the media can contribute to their reconfiguration in near future (Curran, 2015).

### **2.13 Democracy: Concept and challenges in regards to ICTs and Social Media**

This section contains an overview of democratic theories and current challenges to them. Specifically, liberal and participatory conceptions of democracy were discussed, highlighting gaps that need to be explored using social media according techno-optimist point of view.

Today 'Democracy' is a pre-eminently acceptable form of Governance, yet debates continue about



its legitimacy and the challenges it faces both in theory and practice, and in different contextual background. Though the idea of democracy formulated, of course, in ancient Greece, is in most occasions incompatible with social and cultural contexts (Arenilla, 2010). Nevertheless democracy today has become a “brand” or a “certificate of quality” for states in international relations (Arenilla, 2010). It is sometimes contested, in relation to the use of ICT, if developing countries such as Nigeria can be considered as benchmarks for perceptions and opinions concerning democratic and social changes. To counter these shortcomings of fledgling democracies in developing countries, Amartyr Sen, conceives democracy as a universal value and dismisses this notion arguing that a country need not to be deemed fit for democracy; rather, fit through democracy (Sen, 1996). Based on this perspective, constructing the evolution of the concept of democracy based on participation or its limitations of participation becomes a tempting offer, particularly in this study, when looking at developing countries in order to resurrect a declining narrative of democratic challenges and social problems in relation to media through experiences and the usage of media applications.

The aim of this study is not to set out global solutions, but rather to set out solutions adapted to Nigeria’s contextual defects regarding how media may possibly address liberal democratic issues and make recommendations in order to exploit full usage of ICT application for participation. Having in mind that “participation is not only considered an element of democracy, but rather its very foundation” (Arenilla, 2010). This section addresses current challenges for liberal participatory democracy and aims to find out how principal elements could be addressed using media. Following the challenges raised in this section, the following section outlines how ICTs and their participatory innovations through Sen’s versions of capability approach may help in addressing these issues in Nigerian context.

### **2.13.1 Definition and challenges of democracy**

Democracy is not a universal or static phenomenon; its specific character varies according to circumstances (Arenilla, 2010; Dahlgren, 2012). What is generally known as democracy today is grounded in the theoretical context of democratic liberalism. Stephen Coleman is a Professor of Political Communication School University of Leeds; his definition of liberal democracy states that at its most basic level the key principles of liberal democracy includes “frequent conduct of free and fair elections, the existence of multiple of political parties, and respect for human rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of association” (Coleman and Blumer, 2009 p 15). This definition is chosen for this study because it encompasses, as

historical and ideological forces, from within and outside the continent, areas of conflict inherent to liberal democracy in third world. Immediately after the cold war, a consensus emerged in the late 1990s and early 2000s that liberal democracy is the best recipe for development in Africa (Abrahamsen, 2000).

Viewed in this light, liberal democracy makes complex demands on fledging states which include, but go beyond the requirement of citizens to vote and for Government to show respect for election results. Commentators have argued with nuanced empirical evidences how media has changed the landscape of online campaigning and prospect of e-voting process including Nigeria (Anstead and Chadwick, 2008; Shirky, 2011; de Zúñiga et al 2012; Galley, 2014; Folarin, 2014). However, voting process, reporting violence at election polls stations and respect for election results is continuously disrespected. Coleman, (2013) has recently spoken of contemporary representative democracies and lack of spaces and opportunities for political deliberation even in established democracies (Coleman, 2013). This goes back to the notion that elections can be deeply defective if they take place without the competing sides being given an adequate opportunity to present their respective cases, or without the electorate enjoying the freedom access to obtain news and to consider the views of the competing protagonists (Sen, 1999).

To complement this argument in an African context, in a keynote address to a conference entitled ‘media and elections in Africa’, Professor Karikari of the University of Ghana stated that in much of Africa including Nigeria, elections have become mere rituals whose conduct and result are predictable. Karikikari further noted that voter apathy is on the rise due to persistent problems such as electoral fraud, voter suppression and even violence that has led to loss of life leading to scepticism as to whether democracy is good for Africa (Karikari, 2014). The media’s role as the eyes and ears of emerging democracies in Africa is not supported by the evidence which suggests they are biased and inefficient, and do not engage with their role of helping monitor elections. The outcome is electoral apathy, and a public opinion tinged with cynicism when it comes choosing the right leaders for Africa. In Mano’s words ‘Liberal democratic politics presupposes a vibrant media’, ‘and sometimes things we presuppose are not there’ (Mano, 2014). Therefore, investigating different people with different educational backgrounds and, more specifically, individuals and democratic institutions who participate in politics and citizens who had become disenchanted with electoral politics will provide rich insight about elections and media (Garcia-Blanco, 2014; Marsh, 2014). Other challenging views in media discourse on the liberal conception of democracy as a yardstick for defining legitimate democracy emerge from the

dichotomy between the individual and the collective perspective. For Bentham or James Mill, individual liberty had to be protected from the state and other citizens so that the individual could develop his private life, participation being merely of instrumental value (Held, 2006). For others, such as John Stuart Mill, political participation had an intrinsic value and was seen as a fundamental mechanism for moral self-development and the protection of individual interests (Held, 2006). Hence the debate that introduction of information and communication technologies in the mechanisms of democracy and its conceptualization as e-democracy reopens old questions about intrinsic and instrumental importance of participation

Another problem of liberal democracy, liberty is the right to be exist within subject the law “and the right of life consisting of peaceful enjoyment and private independence” (Constant, 1988). This subjection to the law relates, mainly, to power itself in such a manner that “power should be a check to power” and a check on the abuse of Government (Rousseau, 1967; Montesquieu, 1989). By highlighting the misuse of political power and the risks of its abuses, the news media are at their best acting according to their democratic ideals, and in so doing, fulfilling their watchdog role. However, for the news media to act as watchdogs denouncing power abuses, power needs to be understood and contextualized as something complex as discussed in the previous section. A liberal conception of democracy can for such a task prove insufficient.

Carole Pateman, Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the Political Science Department at USA, and Honorary Professor in the School of European Studies, Cardiff University (UK) optimistically noted that creating a participatory democracy is still possible and one way of looking at the new expansion of participation is that in poor countries it can help improve governance (Peteman, 2012). However, Peteman cautioned that both from 40 years ago and today the problems of participatory democracy remains the same and lies within individual’s willingness to be politically active (Peteman, 2012). Participatory democracy according to Peteman is located in the notion that “those individuals and their institutions (universities, NGOs, global organizations, political parties, public forums, etc.) cannot be considered in isolation from one another” (Pateman 1970, 42), and that the established representative institutions are not sufficient for democratic action. Instead, the participation of the citizens is required not only for decision-making but also to socialize and develop the individual. “The major function of participation in the theory of participatory democracy”, writes Pateman, “is therefore an educative one, educative in the very widest sense, including both the psychological aspect and the gaining of practice in democratic skills and procedures” (Pateman 1970, 42). The educative effects of participation would, in turn, determine the stability of the democratic system. Participatory democracy,

however, does not necessarily exclude representation. Macpherson argues, for example, that at a national level some sort of representative form of democracy is needed. This issue raises the question today of whether the average citizen possesses the information and knowledge necessary to rationally evaluate Government decisions, as Schumpeter stated (1976).

Moreover, drawing on the ideas of Rousseau, advocates of participatory democracy not only see political equality as a prerequisite for democracy, as is the case with liberal theory, but also give central importance to social equality. This follows Rousseau's argument that high levels of social inequality lead to political inequality (Pateman 1970, 22–23). Political equality in the theory of participative democracy is measured not only in terms of specific rights, but also in terms of the “equality of power in determining the outcome of decisions” (Pateman 1970, 43). This aspect clearly distinguishes participatory democracy from liberal democracy.

All this can be summarised by pointing out that, the central theme of both liberal and participatory democracy has to be found in the meaning of political power, in the nature of the citizen and his/her role in society and in political institutions. It is the opposition between the individual/citizen and the exercise of power which gives rise to the evolution of the concept of democracy. This notion has been debated by many commentators arguing that introduction of information and communication technologies in the mechanisms of democracy and its conceptualization as e-democracy reopens old questions about liberal and participatory democracy (Arenilla, 2010).

#### **2.14 Fortunati's call for social shaping of Social Media: Reconceptualising ICTs within the context capability approach to address democratic and power challenges in the Nigerian context**

Reference to Fortunati's call for social shaping of digital technology, this final section discusses how Sen's capability approach would be use as an analytical framework for deeper analysis of the relationship between media use and outcome development. Having in mind that ICT media have been ascribed transformative powers in the re-resurgence of debates about democracy and social change in African context. Some commentators view such arguments (or rather assertions) as echoes of earlier suggestions related to peculiar fetishisations of ICT in general and Social Media in particular (Miriya, 2012). Others advocate that, the African continent's use of media technology will have a powerful influence on the future of social change, and will play a central role in the careers of young leaders who will chart the course for democracy, economic development and good governance across the continent (Howard, 2012). This section introduces

and justifies the Human Development and Capability Approach (HDCA) as the primary analytical framework guiding the concept of empiricism and analysis of the data not to either support or oppose the views of the scholars but find out the impact of media technology in Nigerian context if it is tool of empowerment or not and how it could be best used to improve the nation's challenges.

This study argues that for ICT media to be democratic, and ensure good governance in developing countries, particularly the African context, they must enter into a positive relationship with their readers, viewers and listeners as citizens. Therefore both means and ends must be evaluated in order to understand their actual use and their actual development outcomes. The media's first task is to remind citizens that they are inhabitants of a world in which they can make a difference. By enabling citizens to encounter and make sense of events, relationships and cultures of which they have little direct experience, the media constitute a public arena in which citizens come together as more than passing strangers. The question that emerges, prior to power and democratic theories discussed in the previous sections, is how can the researcher go deeper in our analysis and study of the developmental outcomes of ICTs within the context of these theories?

Most development projects concerned with media technology in Africa do not provide a thorough analysis of the actual use, consultation, adaptation and development outcomes within the realm of shaping Governance and media technology's potential contribution to social progress. The few studies conducted in African continent regarding internet use for democratic development, focus on a shift of power in the Middle East and North Africa MENA (Miriya, 2012; Alsayya and Guvenc, 2012; Howard and Muzammil, 2013). Even though these studies answer interesting questions regarding citizen's use of the internet, they do not provide us with understanding of which capabilities ICT can provide citizens and their leaders in African countries such as Nigeria.

In order to fully understand the role ICT can play in shaping the society and their potential to induce social change, there is need to analyse their actual use and outcome. As a result of this lack of clarity, one scholar stated that ICTs are unable to capture the complexity of how Governance processes work in African countries (and in general) and that is not possible to capture the different spaces in which ICTs can come to play a significant role (Gagliardone et al, 2014). This study examines the extent to which ICTs and social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter and mobile phones are being used by Nigerian citizens, Government

departments and agencies, and democratic institutions to investigate whether Governmental and citizen's use of Facebook, Twitter and mobile phones fits into previous patterns or whether these groupings are taking advantage of the possibility for democratic interaction afforded by social media.

Analytical orientation for this investigation utilise the Human Development and Capability Approach (HDCA), "as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy to lead the lives they have reason to value" (Sen, 1999 p 3). The capability approach is a proposition, and the proposition is this: that social arrangement should be evaluated according to the extent of freedom people have to promote or the extent to which they achieve the functionings they value (Alkire, 2005). Sen's capability approach is inclusive and does stipulate which variables should be measure (Hatakka and Lagsten, 2012). This is ideal for this study because of the exploratory approach which can be used for investigating ICTs.

The capability approach contains three main concepts: functionings, capabilities and agency. Sen defines functionings as 'the various things a person may value doing or being' (Sen, 1999: 75). These doings and beings include, for example, eating, sleeping, reading and being happy. Capabilities refer to the freedoms available to engage in these valuable activities or reach these valuable states. The actual freedom that a person can enjoy is indicated by exercising choices and "by the person's 'capability' to achieve various alternative combinations of functionings" (Sen, 1992, p. 81). Thus an individual's capability according to Sen is: the various combinations of functionings that a person can achieve. Capability is thus a set of vectors of functionings, reflecting the person's freedom to lead one type of life or another (Sen, 1992, p. 40).

Relating this to potentials of social change and democratic development functioning encompasses being able to go to school, to be literate, being able to make informed choices on matters that affect daily life by choosing to use particular media. Capabilities relates to having basic freedom of choice to lead fulfilling lives and to be able to choose between functionings. Therefore, the capabilities will also examine core elements of power and democratic theories discussed. Are citizens of Nigeria being openly critical of local or national authority figures? Can they say what they want to say on Nigerian internet? Does it matters to them that they are not able to be critical and say what they want say on the net? And finally is there informal censorship on the Nigerian internet, do they notice any sense of censorship and does it really matter to them.

HCDA lies in social choice theory, a paradigm that responds to the problem of rationality and freedom of choice, 'possibilities' for valued choices available to actors based on 'informational

broadening' (Sen, 1999 p 253). The HDCA is an evaluative framework and, especially in the work of Sen, is not a generic template for ideal designs of political institutions or social arrangements. It has its intellectual roots in the ideas of diverse thinkers, from Aristotle to Adam Smith, and their concern with actual human living rather than abstract and ideal conceptualisations of 'the good' and 'the just society' (Arenilla, 2010; Gagliardone et al, 2014; Gangas, 2014). The HCDA thus focuses upon the real freedoms that people have reason to value and that constitute their quality of life. It is 'inescapably pluralist', grounding the evaluation of individual and group progress in the freedoms they have to pursue goals and values they regard as important (Sen, 1999). This aspect has proved critical in the case of ICTs, appreciating them for their nature as "multi-purpose technologies which could empower individuals to attain development outcomes of their own choosing" (Kleine, 2010, p.674; Hatakka and Jenny, 2012; Larry and Tom, 2014).

Information and communication technology for development (ICT4D) studies that employ the Capability Approach can be seen from two broad categories: operationalizations of the framework and applications of the framework. Operationalizations look at the actual outcomes, the extension of freedoms, but they categorize the outcomes differently and focus on different concepts within the framework. In operationalization studies, the framework is often applied to a case to validate the framework. However, there are also studies that more directly apply the concepts to empirical data. For instances, Lunat (2009) explores how ICT can enable Palestinian students to achieve desired freedoms. De' (2007) investigates the impact of eGovernment projects in India and bases the analysis on Sen's five instrumental freedoms. These examples show the explanatory powers of the Capability Approach when applied to empirical data. Even though Sen's theories can be abstract and sometimes hard to apply to empirical data, the key concepts can be used as sensitizing devices in analysing empirical cases (Zheng & Walsham, 2008). Sen famously argued that development and strengthening of democratic process must proceed through three elements. (a) Its intrinsic importance, i.e. political participation such as voting in elections, free expression, and freedom of human life; (b) instrumental contribution, namely, the political incentives in keeping government responsible and accountable and (c) the constructive role, the formation of values and understanding of rights and duties. Sen further argued that no democratic evaluation form of Governance can be complete without considering each of these elements (p 158). Beyond civil liberties and political rights, the actual freedoms citizens enjoy depend upon a whole variety of factors that shape the nature and quality of participation. New ICTs and their various effects represent one such factor.

However, there are methodological criticisms regarding general application of HCDA to case study research. Scholars noted that capability approach potentials in strengthening and contributing to critical theory and case study research in particular could be improved (Zheng, 2011; Geoff, 2010). Arguably, capability approach and critical theory share same similarities as both try to empower individual agency challenges to social wellbeing, and democracy in relation to ICT use and developmental outcomes. But this present theoretical and methodological issues that requires the attention of IS researchers. Zheng and Stahl, (2011) provides a brief overview of both schools of thought and their applications to technology and human development. The scholars identified areas where critical theory can make a contribution to the capability approach: conceptually, by providing a critical account of individual agency and enriching the concept of technology beyond the simplistic notion of commodities. While methodologically, Geoff, (2010) proposes that critical realism provides not only a basis for justification but also guidelines as to how case research might be done and how theory can be fashioned but that it lacks empirical evidence places an emphasis on the reflexivity of researchers.

**Figure 2. 4: Critical theory and capability approach**

	Sen's capability approach	Critical theory
Comparative vision of human development	Development as freedom, or removal of unfreedoms that restrict individuals from exercising their reasoned agency	Emancipation, or removal of injustice, alienation and domination
Individual Agency	Central to the capability approach, the basis of addressing deprivation; embedded in socio-cultural conditions	Emphasis on the effect of social structures on individual agency, especially through hegemony of ideology
Technology	In ICTD studies usually regarded as commodities, i.e. goods and resources; implicitly perceived to be neutral	CTICT highlights ideological qualities and hegemonic functions of technology; sensitive to interpretive flexibility of technology and its role in distribution of power
Methodology	Can be applied in many different ways; the more practical application is to be used as development measurement or evaluative tool	Sensitive to power and political issues; emphasis on reflexivity of researchers; sensitive to reification and hegemonic potential of knowledge and methodologies

**Source: Zheng and Stahl (2011)**

Zheng and Stahl, 2011 urged scholars and researchers to engage in empirical research that uses



the conceptual argument put forward as both capability approach and critical theory which aims to be applied and practical. Such empirical research will be the natural way of finding out whether the complementarity of the two approaches truly lends itself to improving practical outcomes. An important topic is to evaluate the impact of technology on development from a critical capabilities perspective to areas such as managerialism or digital divides and on the discourses on ICT adoption and social development

In view of these reflections, this study employs capability approach as guide to data collection and analysis using a case study approach to investigate policymakers, democratic institutions and emerging political leaders and to investigate developmental outcome of the usage of ICTs and Social Media in relation to shaping and empowerment of grassroots democratic governance. See figure five below for more details. The outcome of the findings depending on compatibility of critical theory and HCDA may serve as another contribution in this study.

***Figure 2. 5: Conceptual Model***



**Source: Fourtunati (2014) and Sens (1991) modified by the researcher**

Other analytical framework considered in the study in response to African media scholars call for a more nuanced approach to the study of new media and democratic engagement in African continent (Wasserman, 2011; Thussu, 2009), includes SAVI, this is a framework initiated by African Power and Politics, a research consortium in collaboration with the Department for international development (DFID, UK) to identify ways of exercising power and conducting politics that work for development in terms of citizen’s engagement and government. SAVI

meaning State Accountability and Voice Initiative (Booth and Chambers, 2014) was employed in the Nigerian context at state and local government level to develop a smart and politically driven framework to keep citizens informed about Government. While Booth and Chamber employed this framework at state and local Government level in Nigeria, this study aims to employ the model at federal level. This framework guided the justification for choosing participants considered in this study. See details in chapter six.

Communication theory: Using communication media theories as a benchmark, history and different definitions of Web 2.0 were discussed including its characteristics and how it differs from social media applications. With an understanding of Social media being a product of Web 2.0; its ideological definitions were explored in section two chapter three with particular attention to social network sites where complete description and its interactive features were examined. The researcher chose Boyd and Ellison's (2008) definition of social networking sites as this is applicable to the context of the research and thus explains the reason for such a selection.

In the African context, Oyeboade, (2008) and Aluma, (2011) differentiated between democratic participatory communication and development communication, arguing that while the former describes the use of the media in Western democracies, the latter is applied to countries of the south, notably Africa. Oyeboade and Aluma link the survival of democracy in Africa with the ability of institutions and agencies, to become truly democratic and participatory.

Finally, e-Government concept was also considered because it encompasses answers to many questions within the empirical context of this study. These include an assessment of the readiness of a country, the nature of projects that are taken up, the organisational and institutional arrangement that can best harness resources and deliver the intended benefits. A policy framework needs to be defined for creating a supportive environment. Most important of all, is the attitude of the civil servants and citizens, who must willingness to change and a modicum of honesty and integrity. This is also discussed in section two of chapter three. The synthesis of the theories discussed above may support an understanding of the impact of ICTs on Africa's democracy and social change. This study has argued that integrating some of the elements of these theories and other relevant issues in the African media landscape may enable public administrators and citizens to achieve their full potential in a democratic society.

## **2.15 Conclusion**

This chapter utilises critical insights from the literature on ICT for Development and on governance in Africa relating to ICT to outline and clarify the main objectives of the analysis and the nature of such transformations, to develop an empirically grounded framework that can capture how new ICTs interact with the structures and practices of Governance in Africa. The chapter also introduces and justifies the use of Human Development and Capability Approach (HDCA) as the primary analytical framework guiding the research analysis under critical realist assumptions. This thesis has suggested that Sen's capability approach provides an opportunity for reconstructing ICTs for development and Governance. The researcher argued that the suppositions of critical theory assumptions in relation to ICT use can be conceptualised in Sen's capability approach to evaluate its developmental outcome. Other supportive analytical frameworks considered include the theories of communication, e- Government, development theory, State Accountability and Voice Initiative (SAVI). See chapter four for detailed incorporation of these models to conduct the study.

This study argues that despite a mass media and media private ownership more or less in lockstep with the commands of the presidential administration, politically smart, problem-driven and locally led initiative through both old and new media can serve to build citizen's capacity to engage constructively with Government.

The next chapter presents an overview of the literature on the current state of Nigerian politics/society and religious and ethnic conflicts, a representation of the role and influence of Nigerian media, on evidence relating to restrictions on freedom of the press, and how, when, and at what cost, that freedom is exercise.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter builds on Chapter Two's theoretical framework and discusses the debates and viewpoints of media scholars concerning the concept of media, digital media's relevance in strengthening and developing free democratic society, and factors affecting the ICT use for Governance and political participation from general overview to a specifically Nigerian context.

The chapter is divided into three main sections. Section one is concerned with Nigeria's current mass media development as means of understanding perspectives of emergence of new ICTs. The section discussed narratives concerning the relationship between democratic Governance and media in the western society with an aim of addressing what literature says about current state of Nigerian politics/society/religious and ethnic challenges, and what the literature says about the representation of the Nigerian media. Also, the section reflects on evidence relating to the freedom available to the press, and when, and at what cost that freedom is exercised. Current narratives about new media has showed that ICTs, particularly social media's capacity can help citizens resist the dynamics of news production and the dissemination, in both Government and privately-owned media institutions of uncritical and unquestioning news agendas (Benkler, 2006; Loader and Mercea, 2012, p 759). Although Gagliardone et al, (2014) do not rule out the role of the press and other media in speaking truth to power and acting as the watchdog of the executive, they highlighted restricted power within the Nigerian context of the media to hold to account a corrupt and unaccountable central authority. In more detail, the overall overview of this section explores the ownership pattern of mass media and its total domination in a Nigerian setting including restrictions placed on ICT community radio by the Government of Nigeria.

Section two presents debates from the optimist point of view about the relevance of ICTs and social media in strengthening and developing free democratic society with a particular attention to concept of e-Government, and social media within the concept of e-Government. The final section discusses pessimist research agenda in relation to factors militating against ICT use for political development. The aim of the chapter is to explore commentators' views and arguments regarding the role media could play in shaping governance in Nigerian context.

## **Section one: Background history of Nigeria and theoretical aspect of community radio**

This section presents brief historical account of the legacies of British colonialism and the complexities of Nigerian social and cultural layers is set out to help illuminate attitudes to the Nigerian media and provide a background understanding of how attitudes to the media and ICT are contested and what purposes can be applied to the use of ICT. It seems inexplicable that these issues are often discussed without reference to the background presence of hundreds of distinct ethno-linguistic identities. Add the religious divisions between a primarily Muslim North and a primarily Christian south and it is not difficult to understand that the process of state formation and the maintenance of political stability have faced severe difficulty. Lastly, Nigeria has suffered the curse of natural resources, namely the oil reserves which have sustained state corruption and created self-serving political elite.

There is an absolute shortage of studies on the role of ICT in contemporary Nigerian studies. The few completed studies limit their concerns to theoretical considerations, as if the complexities of Nigerian history and society have little or no impact on how ICT may be adapted and applied by its citizens. This study lacks the space and resources to set out a detailed description of Nigerian society and culture. Nevertheless, unlike previous studies of how a still fledgling democracy is responding to the use of digital technology, this study aims to go beyond mere abstract and suppositional theories and take into account the pressures and influences of Nigerian history and society which help determine the impact of ICT within a post-colonial society with 500 languages. The truth is that ICTs are not consensual objects with an agreed set of characteristics and possible effects, but resources, subject to tension associated with scarcity, availability, consistency of power supply and literacy. Within a Nigerian context, this study asks what mix of laptops; mobile phones and other resources can be appropriated or resisted by different actors to pursue potentially competing goals? (Gagliardone et al, 2014).

The most important factor determining the emergence of an economically and democratically successful Government is the historical duration of centralized Government (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012). Sound institutions are pivotal to the development of a country's wealth. These robust institutions are made up from the laws and cultural practices that permit and, therefore, motivate citizens to become economically productive, and, in the process, enrich both them and their country. As in the case of any colonial power, the long history of British Government set the foundation for the functioning of the state. The short history of Nigerian Government, attended by the difficult birth-pangs described above, made the foundation of a

functioning state less likely. The weak governance environment in Africa is characterized by underdeveloped institutions of democratic accountability (Omenugha, et al, 2013). As western powers have found to their cost in Iraq and Libya, it is not possible to suddenly introduce Government institutions and expect citizens to adopt them and to unlearn their long history of tribal organisation.

According to the authors of *Why Nations Fail; The Origins of Power Prosperity and Poverty*, Nigeria is a victim of “the curse of natural resources” (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012). Far from being richer than countries with fewer natural resources, the national dependence on oil tends to promote bad features, such as corruption, civil wars, inflation, and neglect of education. Selfish elites found that they could enrich themselves by taking the profits from natural resources for their personal gain, rather than investing them for the good of the nation. Nigeria’s strong tribal affiliations were faced with more than one challenge. In addition to finding accommodation with new democratic institutions, its sectional interests were faced with the challenge of overcoming corruption. Village leaders, or less kindly, godfathers of influence, act as middlemen passing on royalties from oil companies intended for local landowners, but the leaders often retain much or all of the royalties, following the age-old practice (validated by their colonial masters as detailed in the account below) by which clan leaders pursue their personal interests and their own clan’s interests, rather than representing society’s interests (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012). Of course, practices embedded in the colonial era pre-date the story of Nigerian nationhood, a story of populations grouped together with very different languages and cultures into a national unit not chosen by its peoples.

The socio-political behaviours associated with the clash between colonialism and tribalism is fresh in the memory of the older generation of Nigerians and still influences contemporary political practice. The rulers of the new state failed to consolidate the foundations of civil society – a free press, an effective court system and a fair distribution of the country’s wealth.

Italian philosopher, Antonio Gramsci has written of “the state political institutions, including the military, police, courts, and prisons all represent dimensions of state coercive power and emphasizes that these political institutions employ violence and threats of violence in order to express the will of the state” (Gramsci, 1992). Violence in Nigeria is safely argued as a tool with which to negotiate power relations (Falola, 2009). Colonial officials pragmatically recognized the limitations of violence as a tool of control. For Africans, violent resistance was more than an instinctive response to foreign domination and the associated exploitation and inequality it brought

in its wake. Some Nigerian chiefs used violence, or the threat of violence to win concessions and enhance their social position. European power brokers applied a basic measure of common sense and preferred to negotiate rather than coerce their subjects. Falola concludes that violence, or the threat of violence, in contemporary Nigeria continues to mediate the relationship between rulers and citizens (Falola, 2009). According to Amnesty International, the Nigerian people are still trapped in the middle of a vicious cycle of violence (Amnesty International, 2012).

Falola argues that colonial invaders offered the benefits of trade, Western education, and Christianity, and singled out for preferential treatment Nigerians who interpreted British imperialism from “a narrow and self-interested point of view”. Low level corruption, sanctioned by colonial rulers, proved fertile ground for the roots of political godfathersim, which refers to a practice – absorbed into the political system –where “persons of lesser social status” attach themselves to others “of higher social integrity” for economic benefits (Attah and Haruna, 2014). There is no doubting the power of political elites. Their power can be seen operating in the streets with men kowtowing to other men of influence. The certainty that “elite members of minority groups “would pursue ‘selfish’ ends was offered as an argument against Community Radio. Those entrenched in power had the audacity to suggest that the bottom-up arrangement of Community Radio would fail because it could not resist replicating the hierarchical power relations of other Nigerian institutions. “Opinion leaders, that is elite members of minority groups, would become self-selecting oracles and could not therefore be trusted as spokesmen for community interests” (Ayedun-Aluma 2011). This is self-serving argument might have some application to the monopoly the Press, but not to grassroots Community Radio. As the colonial power exited, ethnic leaders disguised their rivalries in elevated language and rhetoric. Just as the colonisers policy of divide and rule was central to the process of establishing colonial control, so too the process of colonial disengagement once again turned one Nigerian group against another in a fight for political dominance. Ibhawoh writes that elites in the Southern Nigeria Protectorate used the language of rights to oppose the colonial state at the turn of the twentieth century, but also used rights language to promote their own sectional class interests when in conflict with those of other groups of Africans.

These earlier traditions of rights discourses are relevant to understanding current debates about human rights in Nigeria. Ibhawoh shows that rights’ talk was one of many discourses Africans adopted as a means of articulating and promoting their interests within colonial society (Ibhawoh, 2007). For example, within ‘racial’ limits, colonial missionaries aided and abetted African Christian converts who saw Christianity as a means to escape the restrictions imposed by



local customs and the colonial order. If the English are perceived to have been successful colonizers, a large element of this success is attributed to “the consideration invariably shown by them to the people whom they under take to govern, affording them at the outset the full liberties and privileges of British subjects” (Ibhawoh, 2007 p.71). One hundred years before the internet provided a forum for the exchange of ideas and information, Africans and Europeans used the forum of the Law to contest relationships of power and authority, and to interpret new understandings of morality and culture, and negotiate access to resources such as land and labour.

By 1900 an articulate class of educated Africans controlled the local press. In common with countries such as India and Ireland, newspapers became the mouthpiece for opposition to the excesses of colonial rule. Press freedom (one of the principal “liberties and privileges of British subjects”) presented the same dilemma for colonial officials as the Press and internet presents for rulers of present-day Nigeria; where to strike the balance between media censorship and criticism of the regime and its leaders. According to Ibhawoh, (2007) colonial officials in the 1930s adopted a common sense interpretation of press freedom as a means to reduce tensions through the nonviolent public expression of grievances. This tolerance was extended to the Press because newspapers only infrequently opposed colonial policies, and generally supported colonial rule. The same can arguably be said for much of Nigerian contemporary media.

A successful transition from colonial to democratic rule requires the new ruling elites to extend the same consideration shown by their erstwhile colonial rulers so that the people whom they under take to govern (the citizens of the fledgling Nigerian democracy) were also afforded at the outset the full liberties and privileges set out in the Constitution of Nigeria. However, the fledgling Nigerian democracy fell victim to sectional interests before it could spread its wings.

The African Court of Human and Peoples’ Rights is tasked with enforcing the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights, which guarantees citizens throughout Africa a broad array of fundamental freedoms. Unfortunately, the Court has significant shortcomings. Under the current Charter, individuals and human rights groups cannot bring cases before the court unless their country has signed a special declaration allowing such complaints. To date, only seven countries have signed this provision (Human Rights, 2014). Also, in 2014 African leaders further weakened the Court’s human rights mandate when they voted to give sitting heads of state and certain senior government official’s immunity from prosecution. The amendment, which has yet to go into effect, caused an outcry among African human rights groups, who see it as another

incentivize for authoritarian leaders to hold onto power at any cost.

For reasons stated above, Nwauwa argues that "democracy is... misused and abused in relation to Africa..." Nwauwa's contention is that prior to the introduction of Western liberal democracy in Africa, African countries practised their own indigenous democracies because: Inherent in pre-colonial African traditional political systems were democratic values and mechanisms for checks and balances that were disrupted, however, by the consequent European colonization. The main problem with Western-sponsored democracy and democratization is that it tends to be culturally biased and insensitive to indigenous political initiatives (Nwauwa, 2005).

### **3.2 Nigeria's current state of news mass media**

Like any other country, Nigeria is a signatory to press freedom and the press have fought for political democracy since the inception of Nigeria's independence in 1960. The first television broadcast was recorded in 1959 when the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, one of the front-line nationalists, established Western Nigeria Television (WNTV), two years after the National Broadcasting Service (NBS) radio was set up. The trigger to the establishment of WNTV was said to be the public slander of Chief Awolowo and his nationalist activities by the colonial administration through their radio. Awolowo, however, was denied a response on the same channel: hence he set up the WNTV, with its slogan 'First in Africa'. To date there are programs and news reporting which are broadcast in many Nigeria's dialect such as Hausa in BBC and Voice of America radio stations. The press and other sources of media have fought against military dictatorship by campaigning implementation of democratic dispensation in the Nigerian context.

In his book, Street, (2001) refers 'media power' to who controls the media and their content and also discusses what affects such control (Street, 2001). Street states three forms of such mainstream power: firstly, there is discursive and ideological or knowledge powers, i.e. the way media present particular discourses and construct particular forms of reality. Secondly, is gate keeping powers, the way in which the operation of mass media controls (acknowledges or excludes) the range of voices (identities or interest). Thirdly, there is the resources power, the way in which media owners (industry) can affect the actions of the Government and state.

In Nigerian context, three main typologies of media ownership exist: ownership by Government, ownership by private persons/institutions and co-ownership by Government and private persons (Omenugha, et al, 2013). It is a common theme of the literature that Nigerian society and its media are confronted by the same elements: ownership patterns and elitism, patronage and corruption,

ethno-regional rivalry and the resignation of Nigerians who are weary without a voice to represent them.

Corruption is another factor affecting the media's performance and public attitudes of trust and respect in the era of new media technologies (Ikpe and Olise, 2010). The various measures that the Nigerian Government takes to make the media conform to its whims and caprices make the job of the Press to ensure a responsive and responsible Government more difficult (Omenugha, et al, 2013). For valid reasons set out in Chapter One, critics of the Government weigh their words carefully before expressing themselves in print. Negative comments aimed at individual politicians are conspicuous by their absence. How can we account for this gap in the public discourse? It may be that some critics are simply mealy mouthed, avoiding the use of plain speaking language because of timidity.

Another explanation is that journalists are cowed and intimidated through fear or anxiety. In Freedom House's recent ranking of worldwide press freedom, Nigeria ranks 11th in the world for serious unpunished violence against the press. The most recent case was the January 2012 killing of Enenche Akogwu, a reporter and cameraman for Channels TV, who was shot dead while interviewing witnesses to terrorist attacks in Kano (Freedom House, 2014). No arrests had been made in the case as of the end of 2012. Similarly, a recent report by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) documented 143 attacks on journalists in 2012. Of these cases, the Government and security forces were associated with 79 percent. One journalist, Bagauda Kaltho of the News magazine, abducted in 1996, died in jail, during General Sani Abacha military era (Olukotun, 2002). Other similar incidents include four senior editors of Tell (a news magazine) (Nosa Igiebor, Editor-in-Chief; Ayodele Akinkuotu, Senior Associate Editor; Kolawole Ilori, Executive Editor; and Onome Osifo-Whiskey, Managing Editor) who were placed in detention in 1993. Any sense of anxiety held by journalist may be driven not by the threat of violence so much as a perceived threat to their careers and their access to people and spheres of influence. It is certain that many reporters take great care when phrasing criticism of authorities.

There is a repeated tendency to use euphemism and understatement when discussing corrupt behaviours. Writing about the prevalence of corruption in Nigerian journalism Ikpe and Olise, (2010) state that corruption has "adversely affected the integrity of the profession" Okafor (2002) points out how euphemism is used to disguise press role in manipulating political preferment and influence; it is simply rebranded as Public Relations. Okafor, (2002) explains that many forms of bribery are erroneously described as media/public relations practice. But corruption

can also be used to control which stories are published and to exclude unflattering reports from print media. Ikpe and Olise (2010) explain that “in Nigeria for instance, it is commonly believed that some media gatekeepers ask for ‘white envelope’ in one way or the other before accepting stories and news release from organizations (Ikpe and Olise, 2010). However, journalist feel bound to qualify or water down their criticism; hence “sometimes, some journalists” without recourse to professional ethics, reject newsworthy stories. It is not surprising therefore that “occasionally, there have been issues of distrust or mistrust in media relations”. The suggested remedy by Ikpe and Olise is aspirational and lacks a sense of conviction that circumstances will change – “media gatekeepers must ensure that they operate within the confines of the ethics of their profession” (Ikpe and Olise 2010).

Most of the literature seems to lack any sense of moral outrage, indignation or surprise. This could be explained by the fact that Nigerians, many against their wishes, are caught up in the network of clans, affiliations and favour giving. Indeed, there is a near-universal sentiment among Nigerians that corruption is one of major issues blighting Nigerian political society. Given its pervasive influence, the attitude of ordinary citizens is, at best, one of hopeful cynicism about civil society and anti-corruption. However, it is difficult to see how the problem can be overcome (Falola, 2008). Godfatherism, corrupt elitism and patronage make any Nigerian journalist vulnerable to the blandishment of the establishment and challenged them to maintain intact throughout a career, their sense of integrity. McChesney, (1989) and Petley, (2004) have point out how journalistic integrity is compromised through their necessary involvement in the front row of the dark intricacies of politico- economic deal making, while their independence is assailed by a mix of inducements and intimidation.

### **3.2.1 Mass Media Hegemony in Nigerian context**

In their study of Good Governance and Media Ownership in Nigeria, Omenugha et al, (2014) agree that ownership patterns, and politics continue to challenge the role of the media in contributing to good democratic governance. Despite their feelings of powerlessness in the face of a complex set of political, economic, and social problems, Nigerians have always been actors as well as victims in their struggle. Perhaps for this reason, Omenugha et al, (2014) restrain themselves from “heaping the blame on the media” and view the failings of the media “within the larger context of the failings of the social system in which the media are embedded”, noting the fact that “various stakeholders other than the media have a role to play in enthroning good governance in the Nigerian polity” (Omenugha, et al, 2013). Some of the literature makes passing reference to the

idealised traditional role of the media in Europe as the societal watchdog of the citizens “fundamental rights” (Oyovbaire, 2001) and the voice of the voiceless. However, it is generally dismissive of how Nigerian media is “capable of aspiring to “such lofty responsibilities”.

Okunna and Omenugha, (2012) refer to an ownership theory associated with developing nations. Such opaque language can disguise a multitude of functions. Making the media function as “government instruments for achieving economic growth, political stability, national sovereignty, and cultural development” (Okunna and Omenugha, 2012) sounds laudable, but is open to abuse. As Okunna and Omenugha acknowledge that the use of the media has turned these developing nations into “mere megaphones of their owners” and these owners could be either the Government or private media barons, pursuing a selfish profit driven agenda.

UNESCO lists the possibilities associated with community radio. A 2012 report relates that Nigerian community radio meets several of aims that the Press had once claimed to fulfil, but had failed to deliver. Community radio gives access and voice to marginalized peoples; empowers them to improve their lives and immediate environment; helps build capacities of societies to hold leaders accountable; helps to tackle poverty, to support conflict resolution, to preserve cultures and promotes sustainable development. The Nigerian radio’s National Mass Communication Policy has such lofty objectives as: disseminating information to enhance the welfare of the people and improving the quality of their lives; ensuring broadcast programmes are used to mobilise the rural populations for national development and improving the quality of their lives; and providing regular channels of communication between the Government and the people (Akingbulu, 2012). Both State radio and the putative community radio share the aim of improving peoples’ lives, but only one has the aim of helping society to hold leaders accountable.

### **3.3 ICT and Community radio prospect in Nigeria**

Community radio is conceived of as a ‘tree of speech’, managed by the community and requiring its participation in order to develop. Regardless of what it is called - local radio, native radio, popular radio, educational radio - it is a true instrument of democratisation, all the while recognising cultural pluralism (Bonin and Opoku-Mensa, 1998). One of the main criticisms of Nigerian media is based on restricted ownership which allows elite interest groups to control the media agenda. There is a sense of dissatisfaction linked to the elite - focused, and mainly urban-based programs, which do not impact the lives of the rural dwelling majority. Mainstream Press and broadcast media have been unable to provide adequate coverage and engagement for grassroots governance and development (AMARC, 2008). There is scepticism from Nigerian authors at how Western efforts to buttress African democratization are concerned with establishing

hegemony and the spread of Western culture as part of globalization, serving the purpose of maintaining the country's neo-colonial status.

Nigeria has been slow to develop a pluralistic broadcasting landscape. Change that requires the active commitment of the legislature and executive emerges only slowly, if at all. This is well illustrated by the campaign to set up Community broadcasting. Nigeria remains the only country in the West African sub-region that has not yet licensed any community radio services even though the Nigerian Broadcasting Code recognizes this sector and the government has cooperated with UNESCO to make it happen.

Just as the Western bias of commentators and politicians was too quick to represent the new digital media as a tool for enhancing democracy, the same bias does not take account of how new technologies are transferred to, and absorbed in, developing countries. Community radio is one example, in the Nigerian context, of how the negative influence of power and politics can interfere with grassroots attempts to adapt and adopt new technologies. The concept of community radio offends some of the central assumptions underlying the operation of Nigerian media. Principally, the notion that Community radio should be owned by and accountable to the community it serves is contrary to all other Nigerian broadcasting policy (Nassanga et al, 2013). As shall be reported, the Nigerian government procrastinated for 12 years on its declared policy of encouraging community radio. This delay may be connected to anxiety at losing its near monopoly of media outlets. Many other radio stations encourage listener participation. But Community radio is characterised by listener participation. "Multidirectional participatory communication" consciously and deliberately involves local communities and treats its listeners as citizens not as potential consumers to be won over with advertising (Nassanga et al, 2013). With public and private media largely operating in a uni-directional information flow, community radio and the use of mobile phones has expanded the parameters of locally based radio offering community access and community participation services to wider audiences across countries and regions. Although the impact of the integration of ICT into the community radio is difficult to assess with precision because it does not reflect a dramatic change, its integration nevertheless reflected a slow qualitative change in the community. A variety of sources assert that the integration of ICT into community radio has great potential to narrow the information gap and contribute to poverty reduction in Africa, particularly in the rural communities (Lopes and Srinivasan, 2014; AMARC 2008; UNESCO 2012).

The policy of the communities' ownership of community radio stands in contrast to the vast

majority of media ownership in Nigeria. Owned and managed by communities, community radio transmits community-oriented programming and pursues a social development agenda. They base themselves on a philosophy of social gain and community benefit, not financial gain. They encourage the community to participate as planners, producers and performers in program production and in management (Nassanga, et al 2013)

It is clear that both UNICEF and UNESCO value Community Radio as a breeding ground for change and community development. They fulfil this role by involving the community in management and production, and by producing programmes that contribute to the development and social progress of the community. Community Radio is an integral part of an ongoing and evolving process in countries such as Benin, Cameroon, Ghana and the Gambia (AMARC, 2008). Through the efforts of grassroots communities and other civil society organisations, they have made significant progress in reducing imbalances between city and countryside and making freedom of expression more of a reality (AMARC, 2008).

The use of mobile phones in partnership with radio programmes, even in the absence of community radio, still allows the public to become a principal protagonist in radio broadcasting, but commercial radio lacks the underlying set of community values which places the public good before profit. Informed by the values described above, it is clear that, used in conjunction and cooperation with mobile phone owners, community radio can rewrite notions of media ownership and public participation and raise notions of accountability which can be understood. Community radio also extends and amplifies the notion of community.

The traditional community becomes much bigger, covering a much larger area, extending access and community participation (Nassanga et al, 2013). The new digital media are used in talk shows and discussion programs in the UK and throughout the World. They increasingly encourage audience participation through whichever medium is available and affordable. Multiple varieties of networks or virtual communities use a mix of the written and spoken word to discuss and respond to issues that affect their lives as if they were in one geographical community. Nigeria is an oral society; there, radio is the most popular and trusted medium for talk show and discussion programs (Lopes, Srinivasan, 2014).

### **3.4. Community Media policy in Nigerian context**

In 2003, the beginnings of the development of community radio aimed to “actualise a pro- poor, pluralist environment” (Akingbulu and Menkiti 2008) (AMARC, 2008). In the intervening years, licensing of non-government broadcasting operators has been more or less restricted to the

commercial sector. Community broadcasting has still to emerge. The story of Community broadcasting in Nigeria is the story of good intentions foundering on sectional interests, and the story of dashed hopes which may propel Nigerians towards resignation and cynicism, or may cause indignation and trigger a movement of bottom up participation, using the available ICT tools which are a fit with their very much oral, as opposed to written, culture.

The integration of new ICT into community radio acts as a window for the community to look outward. According to UNESCO, “there is no doubt” that the characteristics of empowerment, participation and improved access associated with community radio would “hold true in Nigeria” as they have done in much of West Africa, and yet, despite the investment of time, resources and optimism, Nigeria remains the only country in the West African sub-region without a broad based community radio service (UNESCO, 2012). In 2004, only three African countries - Mauritania, Guinea Conakry and Nigeria- were without community radio (Adegbola, 2008 p 77).

Perhaps awareness of this disparity between Nigeria and other countries in the region is one of the reasons why, in its 2010 report, UNICEF listed the Nigeria Community Radio Coalition as one of its three most important partnerships in Nigeria. It went on to explain that the partnership had initiated a system to grant community radio licenses and this had resulted

in revision of the national radio policies. These developments, with their strong potential to give community advocacy a voice and a medium, were celebrated by UNICEF. Their success in effectively, winning a commitment for the adoption of clear airwave guidelines was subsequently approved by the President in 2010. The expectation was that it would clear the airwaves for community radio to be operating soon. Even though UNICEF’s celebration, appears in 2015, to have been premature, UNICEF’s enthusiasm can be understood in the context of having made progress in what has been a contentious area for Nigerian media freedom. But before Community Radio can be implemented, it requires a genuine liberalisation of the airwaves, and a truly independent regulatory body (AMARC, 2008). However, the promise of a breakthrough in this Nigerian media bottle-neck did not materialise.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

This section has covered Nigeria’s complex historic tribal, religious and cultural issues. It has also explained the current state of Nigerian media and how community-based radios with internet connectivity could play an important role in democratic development. However, in this case, the news media in Nigeria is hegemonic in the Gramscian sense. Demand is growing for community-



owned, community-run radio but only the Office of the President signs off on all radio licences, based on recommendations from the state-controlled regulator, the National Broadcasting Commission (Adeyanju and Okwori, 2005).

However, it is worth mentioning the author of this study had an opportunity to meet the newly elected president before the elections. During a brief discussion about Nigeria's vicious circle of extractive economic institutions which lay the seedbed for its exploitive political institutions which in turn smother free expression of opinion, the president assured the researcher that upon completion of this study, a proposal should be submitted for the consideration of licensing community radio in rural area. Licensing of community radio stations could rekindle what Mudhai, (2011) calls a 'radio culture' boosted by social networking sites through the internet and mobile phones, to provide audience, feedback and participation offering an optimistic assessment of the potentials of new technologies to contribute to grassroots democratic participation and giving shape to alternative discourses of development outside the established mass media channels.

In line with this, the next section discusses the relevance of other ICTs from the techno-optimistic perspective such as the social media applications within the context of Government sector and the prospect of digitisation of democracy through young citizen's usage from general a overview to the Nigerian context.

## **Section Two: Relevance of ICTs and Social Media in Strengthening and Developing Free Democratic Society.**

### **3.6 Introduction**

This section discusses the techno-optimistic view of new ICTs, a field of research concerned with the use of ICT and social media applications as means to empower citizens to access public institutions and have their voices heard. Debates within this research theme help nurture research questions that revolve around complex definition of social media; social network sites (SNS) (Boyd and Ellison, 2011), and their potential as means of communication between Government and the public.

Techno-optimist scholars contend, that, "with more widespread use of ICTs and social media and their absorption into the mundane of practices of lived experience, their potential to shape social relations of democratic Governance becomes all the greater" (Loader and Mercea, 2012; Goldberg, 2011 Shane, 2011). However, as pointed out in Chapter Two, section 2.10, these scholars cautioned that the influences of ICTs and social media upon democratic politics and

Governance reveals a complex picture of which researchers should be wary. Loader and Mercea, (2012) called for an empirical investigation of whether digital media offers new opportunities for challenging dominant discourses and the privileged position of power, to establish if there is evidence for the emergence of a more personalised politics being played out through new ICTs, including response from Government and citizens (Loader and Mercea, 2012 p. 2).

In an attempt to answer this call, this chapter explores different research themes around definition of social media and Social Network Sites (SNS) and also discuss the concept e-Government within the context of social media platforms. This is to provide insights into perceptions on different meanings attributed to SNS and also find out whether Governmental use of social media fits into patterns of service delivery oriented e-government, or whether citizen's use is taking advantage of the possibility for democratic interaction (e-participation) afforded by features of social media applications (Small, 2012). The section presents a theoretical and empirical studies addressing recent ICT use as well as a closer look at developments in Nigeria with a specific view to assess whether Governmental and citizens use of ICT and social media could potentially promote locally salient but politically tractable issues such as corruption, elections manipulation and ways in which ICT and social media use could and do, aid Governance (e-Governance) generally outside above stated areas.

### **3.7 Web 2.0, Social Media and Social Network Sites (SNS)**

This section is concerned with concepts and philosophies of Web 2.0, social media and SNS in the academic field of information systems (IS). The literature shows that understanding and definition of social media reveals a complex picture. Four themes are attributed to the meaning and functionalities of social media. These themes cover social media amplifying changes in the media landscape as an avenue for dissemination and engagement (Benkler, 2006; Loader and Mercea, 2012). For some critics social media is part of participatory culture which empowers users (Jenking, 2006) to produce their own content. For others, social media is part of broader 'structural affordance of capitalist economy (Andrejevic, 2011; Fuchs 2014), in which the use of free labour is exploited for the benefit of corporations (Lovink, 2012). For yet others, social media is understood in the same way a sociologist understands production in an industrial context (Bank and Humphrey, 2008).

These widely varying ideas, criticisms and exhortations about social media reflect the complex social processes that engage with it. As digital media continues to move into mainstream of everyday life in many urban setting globally, this study considers the first theme of these

debate, which is dissemination and engagement as a dichotomy to acknowledge the changing meaning of social media across the variety of platforms in the Nigerian context.

Specifically, this section explores the rise of Web. 2.0 as way of contextualising the ideologies in which social media operates, and also engage with concept of social network sites (SNS), the way they have been theorised as means of dissemination and engagement and then applies SNS to practical examples of social media in action through online activism. The aim is to find out in Nigerian context the tacit knowledge and understanding online users attributes to social media as Lovink, (2012 p 1) once noted about new digital media “the moment of decision is upon us: which side are you on”?

Web 2.0 is presented as a way of contextualising the ideological environment in which social media operates. There is confusing notion concerning Web 2.0, in that understanding of social media being a feature of Web 2.0. This study examines the way in which Web 2.0 functions as an ideology that cooperate world profit maximisation and also examine how its participatory features has been aligned to participatory culture where people and organisation engage with each other in a conversation. Arguably, this realisation is central to philosophy of Web 2.0 according to some commentators. In addition, this study examines social network sites as the interface between people and social media. This part explores research that reveals complexity that lies behind SNS. This study begins with a working definition of SNS in order to find out in the Nigerian context the structural features of sociality afforded by SNS.

The terms Web 2.0 and social media have in past years become popular for describing types of World Wide Web (WWW) application such as blogs, micro blogs, Twitter and social network sites. The term Web 2.0 was coined in 2005 by Tim O’ Reilly (2005), the founder of publishing house O’ Reilly Media, which focuses on the area of computer technology. According to O Reilly:

*Web 2.0 is the network as platform, spanning all connected devices; Web 2.0 applications are those that make the most of the intrinsic advantages of that platform: delivering software as a continually updated services that get better the more people use it, consuming and remixing data from multiple sources, including individual users, while providing their own data and service in a form that allows remixing by others, creating network effects through an “architecture of participation”, and going beyond the page of metaphor of Web. 1.0 to deliver rich user experience (O’ Reilly, 2005).*

The impression created by O’ Reilly is that WWW, featuring blogs, Flickr, Google and Wikipedia

etc., was in 2005 radically new and different from the earlier Web 1.0. O'Reilly consequently spoke of Web 2.0 as a new platform that features "new applications". After the crisis of the internet economy in 2000 and then the novelty fits well in the post crisis situation, investors had to be convinced to invest into a new internet start-up companies which was difficult after the 2000 crisis. It is from this perspective that scholars conceive Web 2.0 to be fundamentally derived from the logic of capitalism, marketing and commercialisation. In the opinion of critical scholars, Web 2.0 was born in the situation of capitalist crisis as ideologies aimed at overcoming the crisis and establishing new standbys and models of capital accumulation for the corporate internet economy (Fuchs, 2014; Lovink, 2012). O'Reilly admits that the term was mainly created for identifying the new economic strategies for internet companies after the dot.com crisis in which many financial bubbles burst and which caused the collapse of many internet companies. The changes said to be part of Web 2.0 are sold to users as desirable primarily because they apparently increase user control over their environment: freedom through control. However it is pertinent to say that the changes from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 improve the agency of the networked individual, and through doing this apparently give all users more freedom. Thus, the complex revelations of Web 2.0 can be regarded as the internet companies embracing the user and giving them more control over what they can do online, it can also be regarded as a way for companies to gain more control over the operating environment by building better knowledge of their users.

The real revolution encompassed by Web 2.0 is a revolution in thinking, where internet companies have finally come up with a way of understanding the internet and working out effective methods for using it as a technology of control in the networked society. Thus, the tensions between control and freedom should not be treated as absolute positions, where one takes side and fights to the end. Instead, these positions represent extreme ends of spectrum in which complex interactions play out. Sometimes social media is empowering, and may work very effectively to increase user's activity and ability to interact with their environment. Sometimes social media can be controlling, providing significant financial benefits to the social media Company but little or no compensation to the user for their time and energy.

The difference between Web 2.0 and social media is that Web 2.0 is the general platform where the interfaces of social media applications are situated, and more broadly, social media is the interface between social networking sites are used for interactions and engagement. The sub section below explores the concept of social networking sites under the light of social media applications.

### 3.7.1 Defining social Network sites and presenting practical examples

*“What makes social networks sites unique is not that they allow individuals to meet strangers, but rather they enable users to articulate and make visible their social networks”* (Boyd and Ellison, 2007)

*“SNS are also both global and local thus how can we understand ourselves and the world we live in if we accept, if only for a moment, that we do not live with, but in media”* (Deuze, 2012 p. 3).

In so many ways, SNS are the definitive social media technology. They are the interface through which people all over the world engage with social media, and increasingly they are the way that the people engage with the internet. SNS are shining examples of Web 2.0 discussed above. They are user oriented, providing space and avenue for people to make things, share things, communicate and connect with each other, allowing for a wide range of empowering practices from activism to creative production. SNS represent some of the most well known and most highly recognised brands in the market. Examples of SNS sites are Facebook, Twitter, Smart phones etc., which boast millions of users who use these services to build connections with other people, to stay in touch, to find support and answer questions, to reinforce common ideas and values to share news and other information, and to be entertained (Jenkins et al, 2013; Hinton and Hjorth, 2013).

As a result of these changes in terms of communication and interaction enabled through internet and SNS in particular, coupled with series of ‘cultural practice’ and ‘artefacts’ that includes both commercial and cultural factors, arguably SNS are becoming an integral part of identity, social and political engagement (Benkler, 2006; Paparazzi, 2011). With such extravagant claim, critical researchers have challenged this assumption urging for enquiry that requires a definitive answer regarding the social aspect of SNS.

Fuchs, (2014 p.9) critically asked what is social about social media and Lovink, (2012), further asks if pervasiveness of SNS result in a flattening definition of ‘social’. Other enquiries include what does ubiquitous nature of social media, especially as it becomes incorporated with mobile say about contemporary media practice specifically in developing world (Wasserman, 2011; Wendy, 2014)? Are SNS transforming notion of publicness (Boyd, 2011)? Or are the changes more dynamic and complex as previously theorised. This study aims to answer some of the questions in the Nigerian context but using a working definition of SNS as a benchmark.

There are countless sites that meet the functional definition of an SNS. At the most fundamental level, SNS allows users to create some kind of online presence and communicate with others. In attempting to define SNS and apply a definitive definition, it is worth mentioning the differences between network and networking as they are used interchangeably in most critical literature. Boyd and Ellison use the term ‘network’ because for them ‘networking’ implies the initiation of a relationship by strangers. An example is a business networking event where the point of the event is for people who have certain interests to meet other people who also share those interest. The emphasis here is on construction of new relationship. While on the other hand the term ‘network site’ emphasises a role in the maintenance of relationships that in many cases exist in offline and online. At the core of social networks sites is the construction of social network sites that are enabled by the internet.

Boyd and Ellison definition of SNS has been the most accurate and is chosen the guide this study. According Boyd, SNS are

*Web-based services that allow individuals (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of others users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within a system (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).*

Most SNS sites share a number of common similarities and features such as profile, list of connections, comments and private messaging. Users have a list of connections or relationship with other users of SNS and these connections are sometimes called ‘friends’ although, as Boyd and Ellison point out, people in these list may not actually be considered friends by the user; the system allows individuals to assert relationships with other individuals on the network. The links created depend on the site. Some of these applications have a central theme where as others do not have. For instance, LinkedIn has a central theme oriented towards work related context. Romantic relationship initiation (the original goal of friendstar.com), the college student population (the original manifestation of Facebook) and information exchange and sharing through Twitter: for all theses the original incarnation was to serve as a means of connectedness between users, regardless of time and region (Yuri Takhteyev, 2012). Participants may use the sites to interact with people they already know in real life or to meet new people.

There are other many dozens of SNS, with some based on a theme, while others do not have a theme at all, other than offering a way for people to make connections. The variety and complexity of social networking sites raises the need to classify them in a manner that will yield practical

lessons for future use. This study employed Kaplan and Heinlein's (2010) classification of social networking sites (SNS). Kaplan and Heinlein classified SNS in a systematic manner, relying on a set of theories in the field of media research (social presence, media richness) and social process (self-presentation) considered as the two core elements of social networking sites (Kaplan and Heinlein, 2010). The classification is as follows, according to their relevance to this study.

### **3.7.1.1 Facebook**

Facebook is the most widely accepted and popular social networking site on the internet. Currently, one billion users are registered on the platform from all regions around the world. Specifically, the Facebook application enables users to present themselves in an online profile, become "friends" with peers who can post comments on each other's pages, and view each other's profiles and activities through posting images (Boyd and Ellison, 2009). Through this application, Facebook members can also join virtual groups based on common interests, see what classes they have in common, send offline and online instant messaging and learn each other's interests, musical tastes, and romantic relationship status (Boyd et al, 2008; Ellison, 2008; Subrahmanyam et al, 2008). In addition, Facebook has an application that reveals user's activities, such as profile views, thereby publicly displaying users' online behaviours and preferences. This network has an interface with the potential of mobilising political activists about public matter of importance, at the same time improving political connectivity and sustaining counter hegemonic discourses (Mukhongo, 2014).

### **3.7.1.2 Twitter**

Twitter is a microblogging service where people are able to post and exchange text messages limited to 140 characters, either through personal computers or mobile devices. The interactive mechanism allows users to interact to follow and be followed by other registered on the platform, enabling them to comment or post opinions, propagate news and exchange information related to their interest. Various research findings have shown that Twitter is becoming an important communication tool that enhances the characterization of electoral processes, and group online political protest (Borondo et al., 2012; Livne et al., 2011; Maurice and Hermans, 2014). A simple Tweet can reach a large audience, which then enables citizens to engage with the political scene from various cultural contexts. Currently, there are over 200 million users registered on the Twitter platform enabling citizen, engagement and communications, via short text messages which are immediately propagated (Mislove et al., 2011; Gayo-Avello, 2015).

### **3.7.1.3 YouTube**

YouTube is a web based application that allows users to upload videos on the internet and allows participants to post comments. Research has revealed over 1 billion users log on to YouTube on a daily basis to watch or stream videos and post comments. In the same vein, YouTube is considered to be part of the development of social realities that can provide space for progressive movements, and emancipative potential of the web which can give a voice to alternative political positions (Neumayer, 2012).

### **3.7.1.4 Wikipedia**

Wikipedia created in 1994 enables users to upload written information or an individual's profile. Wikipedia allow users to read and edit information enabling knowledge sharing and information exchange, thus providing an example of a successful non-profit user-generated content project that has attracted a vast number of contributors and millions of regular readers (Trevino and Hargittai, 2011). Because many internet users have an opportunity to contribute and structure information online, the web is potentially empowering for individuals and communities.

### **3.7.1.5 Blogs**

A blog is a website on which users can post message that are chronologically stored and other users can comment on these entries. It is a sort of online diary that has public character and hence breaks down the border between private and public. There are many examples for the influence of blogs, such as their role in the debate on the French direct vote on the European constitution in 2005 and the protest against the war in Iraq (war blogs), also blogs have played political role in communicating political opposition in Iran and the US presidential elections in 2004, 2008 and 2012. These activities according Kahn and Kellner can transform the internet itself and result in phenomena such as political blogs that would form a "vital new space of politics and culture (Kahn and Kellner, 2004).

### **3.7.1.6 Mobile phones**

The Mobile phone plays an increasingly important role in the scenery of contemporary society. Users take pictures on their phones, call friends to find them in the crowds, keep those who stayed at home updated about events, read news updates and chain text messages to find out about the next actions, and send text messages to their friends (via mobile phone) or to a potentially large public (on the smartphone) through social media platforms such as Twitter or Facebook.



Mobile Internet access affords the ability to look up information online irrespective of time and place and to immediately and flexibly respond or adapt to it, a process described as “flexible alignment” (Bertel, 2013). Consequently, mobile applications have been acknowledged for providing platforms on which social economic and political freedom can be expanded (Castell, 2012; Benkler, 2011).

Arguably, social networks are becoming sources of political awareness and civic engagement and present an alternative to youths who otherwise would be politically inactive offline (Dahlgren, 2012; Coleman, 2013). However, the pattern of use, penetration, social practices, and dimensions of power relations associated with these new technologies are not yet clear in Nigeria, despite the claim that they are a significant pathway to the development of social transformation both in developed and developing countries (Benkler, 2006; Shane, 2010; Paparazzi, 2011). It is still not clear to what extent these assumptions apply to Nigerian citizens where access to these new media technologies is not as widespread as in developed countries. The aim is to find meaning and assumptions that online users attribute to SNS and also find out whether ICT and social media use could potentially change Government interaction with the public and political and social landscape in relation to how its extractive institutions influence Nigeria’s poor and unequal governance

### **3.8 The concept of e-Government**

This section is concerned with a general overview of e-Government. Its different definitions, the types of e-Government interaction, the stages of e-Government development and its benefits are explored. These general concepts were contextualised from the literature to Nigerian context. This section sets a background for the following section where social media application are contextualised with e-Government initiatives. In the final section below, the study looks at SNS political participation through elections.

Arguably, the subject of e-Government is still considered relatively new and open to debate based on scholar’s perceptions and views. There is no agreed comprehensive definition that captures all the elements of the e-Government concept (Bhatnagar, 2009). Therefore, definitions of e-Government vary and depend on its applicability within the context of a study. Consequently, e-Government as it is used and understood in this study is based on the following definitions. E-government is “the use of ICT and its application by the Government for the provision of information and public services to the people” (Global E-Government Readiness Report 2004). More broadly, e-Government can be referred to as the use and application of information

technologies in public administration to streamline and integrate workflows and processes, to effectively manage data and information, enhance public service delivery, as well as expand communication channels for engagement and empowerment of people (UN e- Government report, 2014). This definition encompasses the usage of ICTs to improve efficiency of work flow, management of information and its availability for citizens to be kept informed about the activities of the public sector. The use of ICT tools ensures efficiency of work flow, the provision of better services and assists in responding to demands for transparency, accountability, and citizen's participation in public affairs (Bhatnagar, 2009; 2014). For developing countries such as Nigeria, implementation of the e-Government agenda is perceived to reduce the rate of Government corruption within the public sector (Asogwa, 2013).

The development of ICTs have also proven to be effective platforms to facilitate knowledge sharing, skills development, transfer of innovative e-government solutions and capacity-building for sustainable development among countries. E-government can generate important benefits in the form of new employment, better health and education. According to some commentators, in some developed countries such as UK, USA and Canada, the developmental outcome of e-Government services are considered as primary method for delivering services to members of the public. These services include seeking social services and unemployment benefits; renewing licenses; jobs application; paying taxes; citizenship application; scheduling appointments; and completing numerous other Government forms or functions online (Bertot et al, 2013, 2012; Dawes, 2009).

In the Nigerian context, a couple of e-Government activities take place. For instance, students can now check their National Examination council (NECO), West African Examination Council (WAEC), and Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) results online. Other e-government projects include the Nigerian customs Assycuda programme computerization of payroll of some organizations (ePayment), and computerization of land and Certificate of Occupancy documentation in the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) (Ridwan, 2015). Another definition is OECD's definition of e-Government which refers to the "use of information and communication technologies, and particularly the internet, as a tool to achieve better Government" (OECD, 2003, p. 11). This definition denotes that democratic political participation must involve the means to be informed, the mechanism to take part in decision-making and the ability to contribute and influence policy making (OECD, 2001 p 32). Building on these definitions, techno-optimistic scholars, specifically those who have undertaken digital activism and social movement studies have presented case studies where citizen's engagement through the media have provided a disruption in certain cases, thus influencing decisions of the

Government towards policymaking (Bakardjieva, 2012; Castell, 2012; Nermayer and Stald, 2014).

Bakardjieva, (2012) present empirical findings in the Bulgarian context where content generated by citizens through the new media has been influential in forcing traditional media and governing bodies to shift their foci and to absorb issues and concerns stemming from the civic grassroots onto their agendas. Cell phones with cameras, video recorders and other recording device helps the citizens to break down barriers to information dissemination often erected by Governments, especially in undemocratic and semi-democratic states. More recently, Neumayer and Stald, (2014) undertook an analysis of two case studies concerning the role of mobile communication in two protest - the civic outrage of young people concerning the destruction of a youth centre in Copenhagen, Denmark in 2006, and the use of mobile phones in antifascist protests in Dresden, Germany in 2011. The two scholars argued that information provision through mobile communication increases activists' repertoire of actions and foster resistance by creating counter narratives to the authority.

The final definition relevant to the study is the World Bank definition of e-Government. According to their definition, e-Government involves use by government agencies of information technologies (such as Wide Area Networks, the Internet, and mobile computing) that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses and other arms of Government. These technologies can facilitate a variety of Government activities such as better delivery of Government services to citizens; improved interactions with business and industry; citizen empowerment through access to information, or more efficient Government management (World Bank, 2011). In turn, the benefits can be less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth and/or cost reduction (Bhatnagar, 2009 p 57). Using India as a case study, where economic and political opportunities are overshadowed with high rate of corruption and mismanagement of Government functions, Bhatnagar, (2009) revealed that the use of ICT in the form of e-Government is building the country's competency to become a more economically viable country. Studies of e-Government have revealed that the rate of corruption, through the use of ICT has been reduced especially in the developing countries.

In relation to the three above definitions, the researcher perceived e-Government from a beneficial perspective, which is compatible with a view of a person living in a developing country (Kanaan, 2009; Bhatnagar, 2009). While differing in emphasis, most of the definitions of e-government involve the use of ICT to improve the delivery of Government services. The opportunities offered by the digital development of recent years, whether through online services,

big data, social media, mobile apps, or cloud computing, are expanding the way e-Government is perceived.

### **3.8.1 Classification of e-Government**

Generally, e-Government comprises electronic interaction of four types i.e. Government-to-Government (G2G); Government-to-business (G2B); Government to employee (G2E) and Government-to-consumer (G2C) (Chadwick and May 2011, Taylor, et al 2013). Recently, because of the ubiquity, utility and speed of the internet, because of social media acceptance and the degree of communication openness available for business strategies and for political and Governmental power, and for user participation globally, a more holistic and multi-stakeholder approach is taking shape through the use innovative social media (UN e-Government report, 2014). However, implicit within this concept of e-Government are the four user aspects: Government-to-citizen (G2C), Government-to-business (G2B) and Government-to-Government (G2G) and Government to employee (G2E). Government to citizens (G2C) is subject to debate which this study aims to investigate considering the techno-optimistic view that argues citizen-centric approach in which e-government priorities are much more responsive to citizens' needs development agendas (UNDESA, 2005; Chadwick and May, 2003).

#### **3.8.1.1 G2B (Government to Business)**

G2B aims to provide business sectors with the ability to conduct all kinds of electronic transactions with the Government (Al-Shafi, 2009). 'In addition to increasing governmental efficiency, e-government may serve to increase the business usage of IT and the Internet in the form of increased e-business activity, thereby facilitating an increase in its national economic performance.

G2B is primarily concerned with transaction services. This includes "E-services such as e-procurement, e-banking, e-commerce are among the services included in G2G and G2B services" (EMMANUEL, 2005, p.26). These services help Governments to create an appropriate environment that supports existing and new businesses through facilitating administrative requirements (Carter and Belanger, 2004; McClure, 2001), enabling employees to interact more effectively with the Government. (Kanaan, 2009). This is achieved through providing employees with information about regulations and civil rights (Carbo and Williams, 2004), besides enabling e-mail and electronic learning capabilities (Kanaan, 2009).

Telecommunications and ICT are vital as catalysts for sustainable economic development and growth. A World Bank study has shown that every 10% increase in broadband penetration boosts

GDP by an average of 1.3% and every 10% increase in mobile telephone density results in a 0.7% increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a nation. According to the findings of report compiled by the World Bank, the African Development Bank and African Union in 2012 revealed that Government investment in ICT has led a number of entrepreneurial companies throughout Nigeria to capitalise on the opportunity within the mobile payments space, which has created a new set of mobile entrepreneurs and new business models, with strong value realization in a market of over 90 million mobile subscribers. The increasing mobile phone presence, for instance through “the umbrella people” of Nigeria once led to the assertion in the Financial Times that Africa’s cell phone boom is “sweeping up all levels of society” and that no other technology, not even the internet, has changed lives and works in Africa as much as the mobile phones (White House, 2003). The impressive growth recorded in the Nigerian telecommunications market has opened windows of opportunities for small and medium to enterprises to conduct businesses locally (Mudhai, 2013; Rufai, 2014).

In addition, effective mobile payment companies have provided the Nigerian population with an innovative and detailed payment management process that covers the entire scope of the value chain across all the participants in the mobile payment system. The recent focus on initiatives and licensing opportunities in both the mobile and financial industry on mobile banking and payment services has driven a number of companies to develop innovative mobile payment solutions to transform Nigeria’s banking landscape. InterSwitch is a leading provider of electronic transaction switching and payment processing services in West Africa. The company’s business footprint covers the provision of shared, integrated message broker services for financial transactions, e-commerce, telecoms value-added services, e-billing and payment collections/monitoring services. Through its Super Switch infrastructure, InterSwitch provides an online, real-time electronic payment system to support automated customer transactions from different customer touch points and transaction channels ([interswitchng.com](http://interswitchng.com)).

#### **3.8.1.2 G2G (Government to Government)**

This relationship works to reinforce the collaboration between Government institutions or between one Government and other international Governments (UN e-Government report, 2012). The development of these services implies ICT-driven intra-organizational and inter-organizational changes and arrangements, which can be described as the virtualization of public administration. Fountain describes this process as the rapid transfer, sharing and integration of information and communication processes and flows across organizational boundaries.

Organizational boundaries begin to blur. This will enhance the quality of Governments' services through facilitating communications of Governmental departments located in different places (Bose, 2004; Ndou, 2004).

#### **3.8.1.3 G2E (Government to Employees)**

G2E implies to exploiting ICT in Government ministries and agencies to interact with employees. This form of interaction is strictly between employees and the Government. This is to ensure that fraudulent activities within the public sector are minimised, recorded and centralised in order to aid the public service-commitment to continuous improvement. Examples of G2E initiative include the use of computers and networks to improve the personal productivity of government workers and changes to more efficient business processes associated with a transition to offering government services electronically. In this context, an emerging imperative is to rethink e-government policies and programmes to exploit these capacities.

In 2008, the Nigerian government in coordination with the World Bank began implementing an integrated personnel and payroll information system (IPPIS) to decrease fraud and increase accountability in payroll administration and HR recording. Some estimates say the technological implementation has already saved 12 billion Naira (USD 120 million) in solely the pilot phase by eliminating 'ghost workers' or fraudulent payees on the payroll.

#### **3.8.1.4 G2C (Government to Citizens)**

This form of interaction expounds that the Government should use e-Government systems to provide its citizens with appropriate support to conduct online activities such as the possibility to download brochures, policy reports, regulations and other official documents available to citizens (Ndou, 2004; Bose, 2004; Heeks, 2002). This form of interaction considers the Government as the provider of information to its citizens. The state or Government is regarded as the source of information for citizens to remain informed about the status of public affairs within society. E-participation, then, is the process of engaging citizens through ICTs in policy and decision-making in order to make public administration participatory, inclusive, collaborative and deliberative for intrinsic and instrumental ends.

Governments should consider how best to reach the various social groups among its population by deploying the optimal mix of online and offline modalities within their jurisdictions. This outreach should be differentiated from efforts by people to participate in civic life, often through grassroots movements. The United Nations e-Government Survey, (2012) provided a three-level

model of e-participation that moves from more “passive” to more “active” engagement. The model includes:

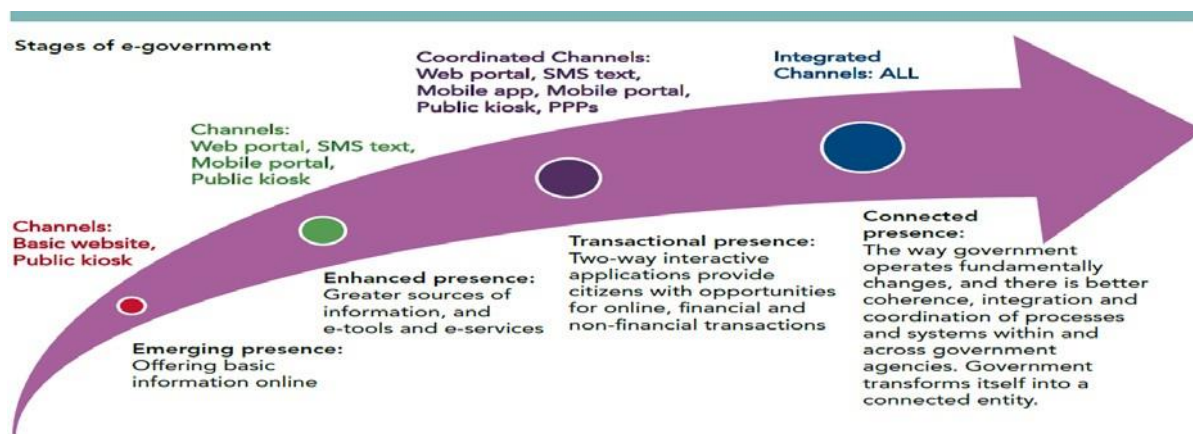
- (1) E-information that enables participation by providing citizens with public information and access to information upon demand.
- (2) e-consultation by engaging people in deeper contributions to and deliberation on public policies and services and
- (3) E-decision-making by empowering people through co-design of policy options and co-production of service components and delivery modalities. This model of e-participation is based on the assumption that a shift from more “passive” to “active” engagement brings about true people empowerment, a necessary condition for sustainable development.

More recently, The 2014 United Nations e-Government Survey introduced updates to the 2012 Survey questions on e-participation, and introduced new questions. The updates ensured that information on whether up-to-date web tools was made available during e-consultation and e-decision-making activities by government agencies could be assessed. New questions addressed data publishing and sharing by government agencies. Other new features and updates included the availability of information on the citizens’ rights to access government information, providing outcome on feedback received from citizens concerning the improvement of government online services, providing the tools to measure public opinion for public policy deliberation through social media, online polls, petition tools, voting tools, online-bulletin boards and online discussion forums. So far this study seeks to focus on the availability of government data and the consideration that Government can learn to use social media as a tool to collect and take into account people’s views and feedback (UN 2012; 2014).

### **3.9 Nigeria’s status of e-Government**

The UN model of e-Government development is chosen as a guide to examine the development of e-Government’s status in Nigeria. This model denotes that stages of e-Government development start with four phases: the emerging presence of information, online enhanced presence, transaction presence and finally integrated channels (which is the a way a government operates, fundamentally transforming itself into a connected entity).

**Figure 3. 1: Channel used for each stage of the UN model of e-governmentDevelopment**



**Source: National e-Government Report (2014)**

The framework is chosen because it helps in determining the current status of Nigeria's e-Government strategy with particular attention to the use of ICT by employees of government (for example, use of computers), the availability of ICT to Government organizations to use of ICT by government organizations (for example, whether a website exists), supply of e-government services to citizens (by publicly accessible websites), (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2012).

Like any developing country, the Nigerian Government set up an e-Government initiative termed the "National e-Government Strategy" (NeGSt) for the purpose of using an ICT infrastructure to enhance public services. The Federal Executive council (FEC) approved a national information technology policy in March 2001, and began the implementation via the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA). In collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa UNECA, NITDA developed policies and guidelines to implement an e-Education strategy, e-Security and Law Enforcement Agency, an e- Agriculture strategy, e-Health strategy, an e-Infrastructure strategy, and a Nigerian National private sector Development e-Strategy etc. Each one of the strategies have been an improvement compared to old traditional way of Governance.

Presently, the effort of the country to become a digital economy has started to yield results. The most recent United Nations e-Government development ranking showed an upward movement for Nigeria of 21 points. Nigeria rose to 141 out of 193 countries rated in the UN Global e-government Development Index for 2014. Similarly, the country was ranked 97th in the e-Participation index, an improvement of 22 points from the rating of 75 in 2012. Initially Nigeria was ranked 162 in 2012. The upward movement of Nigeria in the 2014 ranking is a welcome



development, an indication that shows that progress is being made by the efforts of the Nigerian government (through the Ministry of Communication Technology to promote e-governance.

The Ministry of communications has embarked on initiatives to deploy ICT to drive transparency and efficiency in governance and public service delivery. To enable internal efficiency in government, the Ministry is promoting ICT in Government-by facilitating e- government, which enhances transparency, efficiency, productivity and citizen engagement. The 'Getting Government Online' initiative, is geared towards ensuring that government deploys technology as a mechanism to transform the way it operates enhancing the effectiveness of government service delivery for the benefit of its citizens. This has led to the implementation of two flagship projects, namely the Government Service Portal (GSP) and Government Contact Centre (GCC).

The Government Service Portal (GSP) provides a single point of access for citizens to government services provided by various Ministries Departments and Agency MDAs. It is Multi-featured and includes collaborative channels that deliver core content management capabilities.

The primary objectives of deploying GSP are to create a single point of entry to Federal Government services, enhance accountability and improve the delivery and quality of public services through technology-enabled civic engagement (mobile technology, Facebook, Twitter, Interactive Mapping, Blogs, Wiki etc.), transform government processes to increase public administration efficiency, increase end-user productivity by integrating many different services or data access paths of MDAs – under a consistent presentation standard and make accessible some of the government's non-sensitive datasets on the portal.

Phase one of GSP included the automation of 10 government processes from the Federal Ministry of Education; Federal Ministry of Health; Federal Ministry of Agriculture; Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment and the Federal Ministry of Communication Technology. Some of the processes automated are Drug authentication, Farmer's Registration, Registration and Accreditation of Seed companies, Seed Import and Export Permit, Trademark registration, Patent registration, Acquisition of License for Class type license and Acquisition of individual type license, and e-Land administration (Sanjo and Kayode, 2013).

The Ministry is currently automating the pre-incorporation and post-incorporation processes of the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) and online payment on the Government Service Portal. The Ministry is also setting up Government Contact Centres, which will facilitate efficient response to citizen requests through a two-tier response approach. The Contact Centre, located in the six geopolitical zones of the country is planned to house robust databases as well as accommodate

150 operators. Before the creation of the Ministry of Communication Technology in 2011, most MDAs did not have domain names. But in line with its mandate to improve the quality of public service delivery, all websites of Ministries across the federation have been migrated to a standard domain name at ‘.gov.ng’.

The vision is “by 2020 Nigeria will be one of the largest economies in the world able to consolidate its leadership role in Africa and establish itself as a significant player in the global economic and political arena” (Vision 20:2020). Research has so far revealed that e-Government initiatives in the Nigerian context have provided faster access to Government information, lower administrative costs, increased transparency in Government ministries, and have the capacity to reduce bribery and corruption (Asogwa, 2013; Onwudebelu et al, 2012).

## **Conclusion**

This section has shed light on the concept of e-Government from the theoretical point to practical viewpoint. Three definition were explored, types of e-Government services, the benefit of e-Government, and the current status of Nigeria’s e-Government development. The relevant research question in this section has asked whether or not social media is facilitating some of the activities of e-Government? Arguably, many believed that progress in e-government development has been attained through increased e-participation and, the growth of the mobile channels. Recent social media penetration through mobile phone applications has expanded usage and burgeoning open government data. In the African in context particularly, general e-Government trends are perceived to be inclined toward mobile government initiatives and social media strategies (UN, 2014). How realistic is this assumption? The next section discusses Social Media within the context of e-Government.

### **3.10 E-Government and Social Media**

This section is concerned about the debates that argue that the influence of social media applications is as a catalyst for open participatory and collaborative Government. Recent studies show that social media use in Government is becoming one of the major trends in Electronic Government (e-government) research and practice worldwide (Dennis, 2011; Bertot et al, 2012). Most of these studies have addressed the potential of social media for the innovation of public sector organisation (Luna-Reyes et al, 2012; Criado, 2013; Bertot, et al 2014). Some commentators have gone beyond looking at the potentials to apply these technologies as national priorities for citizens to take part in decision-making processes (Chuna and Luna, 2012; Mergel, 2012; Loader

and Mercea, 2011). In response this study aims to interrogate the role of social media in the straightforward area of e-Government to find out how officials use these new online environments, the changes in Governmental actions due to the use of social media and also cover the real use of these tools by online citizens and clarify the impact of the usage on public sector (Bonsón et al, 2012; Bertot & Jaeger, 2012; Bannister & Connolly, 2013).

A review of e-Government literature in the age of social media has generated optimistic views where commentators point out that rather than just passing and sharing information, social media also expands the role of the citizen from one of “mere passive consumption of public services to one of active involvement to jointly tackle social problems” (Linders, 2011; Small, 2012; Bertot, et al 2014). According to these optimist scholars “the creation of informal users” networks facilitates the flow of ideas and knowledge by channelling the efficient generation, dissemination, sharing and refining of informational content, through social networking, blogs, online video sites, wikis, social bookmarking, and microblogs (Harris & Rea, 2009; Murugesan, 2007). These functionalities were interpreted in the light of social media as a movement away from service delivery by e-government to more participation and democratic forms, thus changing the development of e-government (Small, 2012). Some commentators such as Constantinides and Fountain (2008, p. 232–33), moved a step further to argue that “adoption of Web 2.0 activities requires a shift in focus from publishing information to sharing information and from passive consumers of information to interactive and participative users who may also generate content.”

While these emerging trends and concepts have not been the subject of extensive scholarly analysis, they have moved well beyond theory into experimentation and full-blown government implementation. Developed Governments around the world, for some time, have recognised the potential of the ICTs through its collaborative features to bring citizens and their Government closer by actively increasing their online presence.

Examples are the Obama administration's Open Government Initiative, with its emphasis on transparency participation and collaboration (Linders and Wilson, 2011; Meregl, 2014). Elsewhere, some Government use Twitter and Facebook to keep the public informed (e.g., tweet MP to follow Australian Members of Parliament on Twitter, the Facebook page of the Bedfordshire Police), release data sets that can then be used in mash up projects (e.g., Mashup Australia or data.gov.au to access and reuse public datasets from the Australian Government), and engage people through public consultations (e.g., Public Sphere to engage people in public policy

development, Future Melbourne to involve people in the design and strategy of the future shape of their city, Together for London to encourage commuters to debate behaviour on public transport).

The social pressure for developing countries in Africa to implement e-government in the public sector is based on the assumption that e-Government is regarded as a critical tool in increasing honesty and reducing corruption (Quah, 2011). There is, for example, some interesting research about the impact of e-government and the internet on government corruption in the third world (Andersen, 2009; Garcia-Murillo, 2013; Shim and Eom, 2008). Bannister, (2012) stated that the concept e-Government applied in the battle against corruption can be successful through delivery of greater fairness by removing the human element from the process and the decision-making chain. For example, the process of formalizing rules in a system and embedding them in digital codes could reduce or even eliminate the risk of corruption and abuse of the law by public servants. In addition, another development is the use of technologies such as data mining and analytics for detection of fraud (Cleary, 2011).

Whilst it is undoubtedly true that technology of itself may not make people more honest; some scholars have argued that it can make them behave in a more honest manner. Though as often argued, it is possibly too soon to evaluate accurately the impact of technology on dishonest behaviour, but in the longer term, there are other ways in which ICT could have a mildly transformative effect on these values. As Anderson observes (2009, p. 210): “implementing e-government significantly reduces corruption, even after adjusting for a propensity for corrupt governments to be more or less aggressive in adopting e-government initiatives”

Social media and online collaboration platforms today offer a number of advantages for fostering collective action over its “off-line” variants all over the world, including the fact that it is much easier to discover and attract members with shared interests; exchange information; make group decisions on a larger scale; integrate individual contributions; supervise a group with less need for hierarchy; and manage group logistics due to elimination of time and space constraints (Amichai-Hamburger, 2008). In their recent research article Bannister and Connolly (leading scholars in e-Government and ICT in governance) have pointed out gaps worth exploring in regards to the use of new digital technology in the public sector). While there is vast literature on the relationship between ICT and governance, Bannister and Connolly (2013) speculate about the link between citizens use of social media, the use of SNS and public service and increased honesty (Bannister & Connolly, 2014; Chuna et al, 2011)

The communication paradigm follows a highly regulated vetting process that does not allow for fast- and furious exchanges on social media sites. Changes in the existing paradigm mean a change in behaviour and standard operating procedures. Following Rogers' definition of technology innovation, social media applications present a form of technological and behavioural innovation for government and are therefore perceived as challenging or even disruptive (Christensen & Overdorf, 2000; Rogers, 1995, 2005). The question at the centre of this study's investigation is whether and how these advantages and functionalities of ICTs and social media are able to impact the government-citizen relationship in the Nigerian context. Within the Government of Nigeria, there is an awareness of the potential benefits of Web 2.0 for Government, but the impact of these technologies in terms of passing information between the Government and the citizens remains uncertain.

Investigating the changes in Governmental actions associated with the use of social media and finding out the real use of these tools by online citizens and the impact of the usage on the public sector should add to our understanding of social media within the context of e-Government. The final section explores the literature on the second question in this chapter which addresses whether the citizens is participating in liberal democratic activities through the use of social media.

### **3.11 Political uses of SNS: The consideration of elections**

This final section aims to discuss social media's role in enhancing democratic participation. To understand the conflicting findings regarding SNS effects on political participation, it is necessary to establish how SNSs mobilise and who exactly is being mobilised and under what circumstances. First, like any media, SNS can be used politically or non-politically. This section looks at the debates within the context of social media use in political engagement with a specific attention to elections from a general perspective to the Nigerian particularly concerning the adoption of technology in electioneering (Olsson, 2007; Strandberg, 2013; Chadwick and Galley, 2014; Adeshina and Ojo, 2014).

This section covers a brief account of optimistic researcher's second contention about use of social media as trend amplifiers of socio-political and democratic changes within the society (Cammaerts et al, 2013; Castell, 2012; Papacharissi, 2012; Mercea and Loader, 2012). Most of scholars attribute a role to the new media in the revolts that overthrew long-time North African powerful men, namely, Tunisia's Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali in January 2011, Egypt's Mubarak a month later, and Libya's Muammar Gaddafi the same year. In addition to these scholars, a number of key organisational players are optimistic about the possibilities of the new media and their effect on

democratisation. The United Nations (UN) sees e-Governance as presenting a historic opportunity, including the opportunity to empower citizens for participatory democracy, particularly in African states. However, in her convincing findings, Mariam Airough has provided a nuanced account of how ICT played only a limited role of information dissemination for networking citizens, while the main source of power that led to revolution came from the barrel of a gun.

There is a broad recognition that government information belongs to the people, and technology is enabling a new wave of sharing this information. Some practical uses have already been identified and implemented in government, at state as well as local level. For example, with a tweet or an SMS, potholes on the road, broken street lights and other issues are being reported and fixed. The 311-Twitter service in San Francisco, has answered over 7 million calls and thousands of more requests online. Politics and political discourses today are no longer limited to known, centralized locations the way they were previously. Governments face enormous challenges in monitoring people's political opinion and stemming any sudden negative tides that emerge. Online networking and the exchange of information through social media encourage opinion building in ways over which governments have little control. No clear ways have emerged to handle this. While on the one hand policing social media would be seen to be undemocratic, giving it too much leeway can threaten to upset the political and social order.

Therefore it is the argument in this study that ICTs have not themselves brought about social-political transformations in the African continent, but they have acted as a change catalyst, and possibly a means of empowerment to ensure participation. Thus the consideration of elections in this study:

### **3.11.1 Digital Media and Elections**

While information system research has generated important insights into media and their role in electioneering, prominent ICT scholars have suggested that it should now be joined by fresh analysis of the role of digital media in international election campaigns which would connect the study of digital media explicitly with questions concerning democracy and power, and elections (Chadwick and Galley, 2014). These questions include how and to what extent digital media has changed the organisational characteristics of campaigns and democratic institutions responsible for conducting elections and the roles media could play in shaping voter activation (Bimber, 2014; Marsh, 2014; Viccari, 2014). Democratic theories have shown that elections are an important component of democracy. Through voting, people can voice their opinions, express

their hopes and aspirations, discipline their leaders and ultimately control their nation's destiny. According to Dahl, (1998) free, impartial and frequent elections constitute a form of popular government and are due, in part, to demands for inclusion and participation in political life. Some commentators noted that elections are also the public's source of power, but in order to use it most effectively, the public must know where candidates and parties stand on public policy issues. The media is often seen as a medium, positioned to enthrone good governance and complement these activities through its watchdog roles.

Academic literature show that digital media is playing an important role in the processes and outcome of conducting elections. Bruce Bimber, professor of political science at the University of California, noted that “election campaigns nowadays are regarded as communication campaigns” (Bimber, 2015). In policy-advocacy arenas, in citizen participation, and campaign coordination, the digital media revolution has already led to demonstrable changes in the structure and strategy of political organising around the world (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Bimber et al, 2012; Chadwick, 2007; Karpf, 2012). Facebook, Twitter and other new media applications, widely used by young people, are been seen as a potential vehicle to re-engage youth in political debate.

The potential utility of such applications for creating networked public groupings and mobilising political action was highlighted recently where Facebook and Twitter were used (e.g. in the United States) to target potential youth voters. For instance, Bimber noted that President Obama’s use of ICT in 2008 and 2012 has changed American politics reminiscent of just the way Kennedy used television to change the face of American politics (Bimber, 2015). Candidates willing to contesting for a political position showcase their policies, achievements and manifesto for the wider public to decide whether to vote for them. In addition, Bimber (2015) maintains that increased use of digital media in their campaign strategy have become a medium for contacting with voters, setting out and responding to issues and encouraging the voters out to cast their vote, and therefore determines who is likely win an election. In the 2008 elections, the presidential candidate for the Republican Party, Senator Mc Cain confession of his computer and digital illiteracy neither endeared him to the youth vote nor presented him as a youthful minded candidate.

Despite the fact that Romney, the republican presidential candidate in 2012 used a Twitter handle to communicate with citizens in the 2012 election, his usage was more ham-fisted not as prevalent as that of President Obama. Many commentators believed that Obama’s policy and achievements were more extensive than that of Romney and played a key role in winning votes

particularly youths and mostly women (Galley, 2014).

In the European context, Hansen and Kosiara-Pederson (2014) find variation in adaptation across parties in Denmark, while Koc-Michalska, Gibson, and Vedel (2014) argue that, in France, weaker parties have adapted to the new environment as effectively as have their larger, richer counterparts. Similarly, Marcinowski et al, (2014) find that in a state-level German election, the personal experience of candidates with digital media predicts the sophistication of their campaigns' use of new media tools, hence giving room for voters to directly engage with politicians willing to stand for a public office. Segerberg (2013) also reported an interesting finding that the use of social media in the 2011 Finnish parliamentary elections was nonetheless influential for some citizens even though SNS use had little impact on voting decisions in general. However, from a different perspective Koc-Michalska et al, (2014) show, in Poland, parties and candidates have adapted by offering more personalised images to citizens while also trying to limit the citizen interaction and expression that are facilitated by the digital media environment.

Views on the influence of the Internet on civic and political life in democratic regimes differ. At the extremes, one can point to pessimists who see it as a distraction or impediment to democracy (Morozov, 2013) and optimists who view it as the means to regenerate political life (Coleman and Gøtze, 2001). One of the debates that have regularly featured the literature on Web campaigns has been the so-called normalization versus equalization argument. Put simply, this refers to the use of new media increasing the power of the minor players and strengthening the role of the grassroots as opposed to simply reinforcing the power of the major parties and existing elites. As parties, candidates, and citizens all expand their use of the medium of social media, a call has been made by prominent scholars for a review of global practices in e-campaigns and particularly a revisiting of these four major foci that have occupied the heart of academic discussion on the topic, namely diffusion, democratization, normalization, and mobilisation in newly democratic countries.

The African context is unique in assisting in such a research inquiry. Election fraud and abuses are common in rural and urban areas. International monitors are incapable of covering each countryside district, so national and local elections were often marred by significant fraud and the culprits remained confident they would not be exposed. With no concrete evidence of ballot stuffing, voter violence, or other tricks of the ruling party's cronies, there was very little that authorities could do to take action on such events, from domestic and international viewpoints. Hearsay and conjecture are unlikely to ever bring down a government, or bring



about international sanctions. However, documented human rights abuses and confirmed electoral discrepancies certainly can bring about international attention.

For instance, in the case of Zimbabwe, it should be no surprise that despite Robert Mugabe carrying out much of the same political strategy employed since he ordered his Red Brigade into Matabeleland to crush dissenters in the 1980s; it is only recently that the world has begun to take notice of Zimbabwe's political crisis. The growth in international interest in Zimbabwe's situation closely mirrors the acceleration of mobile penetration on the continent. Now, with a broadband mobile connection and a camera phone, election monitoring quickly becomes a task everyone can take part in.

### **3.11.2 Social Media and Nigeria's elections**

In the Nigerian context particularly, Nigeria's path toward democratic rule has been fraught with electoral problems. Nigeria's record of economic development and political stability has been slow and erratic (Ademola, 2007). In her visit to Nigeria in 2007, Hilary Clinton, the US secretary of State noted that Nigeria is considered one of the most corrupt countries in the world. Wide-spread voter fraud was reported in Nigeria's last two general elections conducted in 2007, which saw the hegemonic ruling party retain power for Nigeria's sixteen years of democracy. Accusations of missing ballot boxes, inflated voter counts and even voters being shot at polling stations were made by the opposition candidate. Although Nigeria continues to have a television and radio-centric style of political information, political uses of the Web have increased since the exponential growth of social networking sites, and especially Facebook, Twitter and local Nigerian blogs and websites.

The turning point for ICT and social media as a tool for political engagement in Nigeria was 2010. In May of that year, the former President joined Facebook. Arguably, it was a potent endorsement of social media platforms in a country more populous than any other country on the African continent. In 2011 the president declared his intention on Facebook to re-run for the presidency. He published two books via Facebook titled "My friends and I: Conversations on Policy and Governance" and "Bring Back the Book" detailing the feedback he garnered during the electioneering campaigns of 2011, stressing the need to re-ignite the dwindling reading culture among Nigerians and particularly the youth, who form the majority of Facebook users (Katu, 2013). Since then, Social Media applications have changed how information is, and consequently, "citizens accessed information directly and more accurately, resulting in unsurpassed participation in politics during the 2011 elections and participating in public affairs" (Asuni &

Farris, 2011). In Nigeria, in 2007 and 2011 respectively, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) adopted direct data capture technology (DDCT) to register eligible voters and revalidate the voter list throughout the federation. The purpose was to thwart moves by unscrupulous politicians to manipulate the registration of voters to their advantage. According to the INEC's Director of Public Affairs, "the change from an Optical Mark Reading System to the DDC was because of the portability, ruggedness, transparency and efficiency of the system, and to make the exercise more transparent, speedy, and less cumbersome during election" (Asogwa, 2013).

In the March, 2015 general elections which the ruling party lost, the electoral commission employed the use of an ICT card reader to control voter registration. Despite challenges faced during the elections, the card reader has arguably reduced the incidence of result manipulation and violation of voter's right. However, what is not clear in the Nigerian context is how and to what extent the use of ICT has changed the organisational structure of electoral bodies and how, and in what ways do voters generally respond to using of ICT for conducting elections; and how do they perceive its role in keeping them informed about political participation. Elsewhere, it has been noted that these questions require empirical investigation to consolidate the claim of ICTs to be new communication channels for citizen empowerment, greater democratic deliberation or any other normative goals (Bimber, 2014).

### **Section three: Risk, Challenges, Digital Divide and Future of ICTs use in Nigeria**

#### **3.12 Introduction**

The previous two sections discussed Nigeria's hegemonic media institutions and techno-optimist views about the functionalities and potential of ICT and social media use. This section takes into account the socio-critical perspective of ICT, a field of research concerned with social research in communication studies guided by the desire to promote a better society. Critical internet scholars agree that social media applications have made a considerable impact on contemporary life; and they also argue that digital media are in particular celebrated for levelling access to communication and participation by empowering otherwise powerless actors (Fuchs, 2010; 2012).

Debates within this research theme, particularly the production of ICTs/social media and its culture, help to explore questions that revolve around media empowerment, and possible risks and challenges involved in the use of ICT in contemporary society (Gothenburg et al, 2013;

Coleman et al, 2015). In more detail, arguably, three critical interconnected factors relate to ICT use contemporarily, media as means empowerment within society, issues relating to media ownership and dominations through monopoly, and finally digital surveillance of citizens activities and its likely consequences at global and national level (Fuchs, 2012; Curran, 2015).

This section aims to address these areas in relation to the pessimist emphasis on Government attempts to monitor citizen's activities through ICTs (Fuchs, 2014; Snowden, 2014; Morozov, 2011). These scholars refer to Governments illegally and unnecessarily spying on internet and phone use, thus posing threats to citizens rather than presenting them with opportunities. A recent well-known example is Edward Snowden's decision to blow the whistle on US surveillance of its friends and foes, which has changed the face of digital communications around the world.

US IT companies –from Apple to Google – face a conundrum. They design and manufacture efficient and highly functional infrastructure that locks in other countries, creating an inveterate and unwelcome long-term dependence. (China's disruption of Gmail connections is part of its effort to reduce its citizens' reliance on American-run communication services thereby protecting its technological sovereignty). However, the universal appeal among consumers could be put at risk if these companies are seen as mere proxies for American interest. These companies need to assert their independence, especially after the Edward Snowden revelations demonstrated a too comfortable relationship between America's business and state interest. So, the conundrum is what balance to strike between the autonomy and freedom from surveillance due to consumer of their products, and their obligation to the security of the state and system in which they are embedded and their capacity to resist its intrusive power. In the light of these reflections, African media scholars and other recognised international monitors of human right abuse have noted that owners of the media are in control of the media thus resulting to Governments attempt to monitor and punish citizen's use of the new ICT especially those criticising Government (Wasserman, 2011; Mukhongo, 2014; Freedom House, 2014). Nigeria suspected of having threatened citizen's use of new social media because of threat the usage poses to its power holders. However, there is no evidence whether citizens use of the media is being censored or whether the usage possesses threat to those in power or the citizens. This section is divided into three sub sections. Each contains an introduction and conclusion of what it entails.

### **3.13 Sub section one: ICTs and Social Media and Empowerment**

Debate and discussion about 'empowerment' and 'media' is increasingly gaining attention in Information System academic literature. This section looks into the perspective of empowerment,

media empowerment, how digital media has been appropriated for empowerment, and the way in which media serves as a means of empowerment in a Nigerian context.

Empowerment as understood within the context of this study is a process by which the empowered “gain mastery over their personal affairs, influence over the political problems that affect them, ability to articulate their own stories, capacity to access information and resources, confidence and autonomy to make meaningful and free choices and to translate their choices into desired actions and outcomes” (Baron and Gomez, 2012). This notion of empowerment is concerned with capacity to increase agency for shaping citizen’s lives and the community in which they live, and so on. Another notion of empowerment relevant to the study is that empowerment often deals with the notion of social inclusion that involves that individuals or members of groups who have been subject to social discrimination and exploitation and to whom opportunities for self-sufficiency, self-efficacy, and full self- support have not been given (Loader et al, 2000). These two concepts of empowerment reflect Nigerian society where opportunities for participation are limited particularly in regard to poor governance and total domination of the media.

There are basically three forms of empowerment considered in this study. Like previously discussed in chapter two, where power is described as spatial relationship, likewise empowerment is also spatial relationship, but, different from power. The spatial power relationship is attributed to ‘power upon’ and ‘power towards’. But empowerment includes the utopia of a non-hierarchical space where equal, “horizontal,” and peer-to-peer relationships are considered possible. Arguably, this notion of empowerment can be seen in the context of Web 2.0 and social media where influence of digital media is “indeterminate and contingent upon a multitude of clashes between social agents, groups, and institutions” (Loader and Mercea, 2011). The interactive nature of horizontal networks in technological platforms has enabled new forms of communication and mass self-communication providing autonomous construction of a social actor/social actors, be it individual or collective vis a vis the institutions of society. According to Castell (2012) in what he termed as ‘networked society’, power is multidimensional and it is organised around networks programmed in each domain of human activity according to interest and values of empowered actors. He therefore concluded communication networks are decisive sources of empowerment-making (Castell, 2012 p.7)

Another key element of empowerment, as for power, is the concept of disposition. As the most important resources of power are the ownership of means of production and the control and command over labor, empowerment also entails that disposition over commodities, tools, and technologies which is important for empowered people. One can learn from the classical debate on

power regarding the importance of the disposition (Fortunati 2006; 2007). With the widespread diffusion of new media in the last few decades, billions of people now directly have access to information and communication. The power to “control,” within certain limits, media gives people the capacity to decide whether, how, to what extent, and for which purposes to use them. Consequently, ICTs have become grass-roots means of production of immaterial goods such as information, communication, education, entertainment, and so on.

The third conception relating to power produces unexpected or unintended effects. Relating this to digital media empowerment, the advent of such media has opened the door for the emergence of many unintentional practices, purposes, modalities, and meanings of use, giving rise to a broad process of empowerment. Although the real ownership is in the hands of firms such as Apple, Google, Facebook, and Microsoft and the people are only peripheral terminals (Zwick, Bonsu, and Darmody 2008). However, while Google and Facebook are already busy re-establishing rules and reallocating property rights: the media system is ‘thus likely not to stay permanently in a state of chaos’ (Freedman, 2014 p. 22). Development of individualization processes, of education and the material and immaterial well-being of the users, has also facilitated the transformation of the social personality, which has become more proactive. This view tallies with the view of Beer and Burrows who noted that commercial rerouting of collaboration is indeed an ideology behind the creation of media technologies, and that SNS users seem equally likely to become immersed into a ‘participatory culture’ of content consumption that hinges on the aggregation of their preference rankings (Beer and Burrows, 2010). According to these two authors, such aggregation underpins the inner workings of social media whilst arguably rendering them profoundly democratic, thus complementing the type of resistance described by Foucault and Gramsci (that did not presuppose an intentional control over power, it only requires that an activist may be able to direct power in ways that produce contradiction and unintended consequences).

#### **3.14.1. Media Empowerment in the Nigerian context**

Generally, in African context, the widespread use of ICT and social media application has brought out a number of social changes. The use of these internet applications have been seen as an instigator for social change and potential means of social transformations (Chiluwa, 2012; Mudhai, 2014; Wasserman, 2010; Douai and Olorunnisola 2013). Mobile phones, the ‘new talking drums of Africa’ (Wasserman, 2011), are becoming increasingly central to the way Africans interact with the online public sphere. With their vast penetration in the region, mobile phones

applications and social networking are challenging endogenous and exogenous hegemony (Eskine, 2010; Mukhongo, 2014), and are amplifying other ICTs to form new solidarities that challenge the practices of leaders that stand in the way of social progress (Nyamanjoh, 2009; Ogundimu, 2013; Martin and Olorunnisola 2013).

Nigeria, considered by scholars of African power and politics (APP) as one of the places in the world where there is the most need for both understanding of a complex country reality and innovative practices to assist progressive change (Booth and Chambers, 2014). Commentators have claimed that Facebook and Twitter are specifically changing the way Nigerians are discussing issues that affect them regarding the activities of the Government (Chiluwa, 2012; Ogundimu, 2013). Ogundimu, (2013) further argues that social media applications such as Facebook, provide Nigerians with form of anonymity that allows them to share their views without intimidation; it is a site where “lone individuals and colossal powers interact” (Ogundimu, 2013), thus enabling mobilisation and influencing oppositional power against authoritative style of Government. For example during the oil subsidy crisis in 2012, political leaders expressed their anger over citizen’s use of ICT media, exposing corruption in public affairs.

Before the advent of ICTs, many Nigeria leaders tightly controlled the dissemination of information exposing only dominant political and economic views to significant air time. Despite limited resources and the cost of internet access, greater numbers of Africans, both on the continent and in the diaspora, are making effective use of internet communications. In Nigeria, grassroots movements have harnessed the potential of the internet to forge solidarities, organise displays of resistance, and articulate alternative visions of world order.... The growing visibility of networked citizens demonstrates how ICTs have precipitated an explosion in transitional communication (Crack, 2008 p 2).

Following the oil subsidy price rise in 2012, when the Government doubled the price of a litre of petroleum (from N65 to N140), the equivalent of a rise from (£2 to £4), thousands of angry messages appeared on Facebook account of Mr president’s Facebook account from citizens, who for the first time, had a chance to communicate their feelings ‘directly’ to the power holders in charge. Online text comments, mocking videos, collective participation and pressure mounted by civil society organisations through Facebook, Twitter, local political blogs and websites played an important role in organising a national protest which lasted for more than a week.

Such a protest, according to Amaefule, (2012), was an unprecedented development in the annals of civil rights protest in Nigeria. According to him, the use of social media served as a wake

-up call for political leaders to respond, albeit reluctantly before the situation escalated further (Amaefule, 2012). Ibrahim, (2013) also noted the 2012 Occupy Nigeria through social media protests renewed Nigerians long agitation for good governance. This according to him and some commentators, the role played by social media in organising protest venting frustrations and attracting global attention contributed to making the Government negotiate and lower pump price from N120 to N90.

Due to the widespread acceptance and usage use of social media applications, despite the technological gap and cultural challenges, scholars have noted citizen's use of social media is becoming a problem for political leaders and Governance (Chiluwa, 2012). The instantaneous way social media allows people to focus on political gaffes have been challenging to power relations between the leaders and the led. No sooner does a politician embarrass himself than hashtags pop, Twitter accounts are launched and Tumblr blogs start chronicling the funniest of these reactions.

According to Dijck, (1999) networks can lead to either a more powerful state, through the concentration of power or more power for citizens and social interest, through the dispersion of political power but they can also have "the opposite effect, amplifying political and social fragmentation by enabling more and more identities and interests scattered around the globe to coalesce and thrive". The Nigerian context is one example of such scenarios; political leaders have displayed their concern at how citizens are using social media to demean their image in the country. Nigeria's Senate President (third in the hierarchy of power in Nigeria's Government) who at one time advocated and commended social media usage in Governance has responded bitterly. In a national daily newspaper, the distinguished senator stated that "social media has become a threat to the ethics of media practice and good governance because of its "accessibility and absolute freedom". He further vented his annoyance by stating that "every freedom carries a responsibility, even in advanced democracies, where we all agree that good Governance is practiced, there is no absolute freedom". This outbursts according to Salawu, (2013) on social media censorship is nothing but a reflection of the body language of the ruling elite in Nigeria, who have spent the better part of their leadership apprenticeship under the terror military rule.

It has been suggested that the most powerful engine of social change in the "relative decline of states and the rise of non-state actors is the computer and telecommunication revolution". Grugel (1999) points out that identifying a central role in the politics of civil society – the non-marketized sphere of associations of networks, agency and resistance to the state has led to development of "civil society". Beyond doubt, the diffusion and evolution of new media

technology in Africa have enabled activist and civil society to organise, campaign and engage in political struggles in new ways. Whether through SMS campaigns, mobile phone based crowdsourcing, blogging, or video clips or internet radio, these tools offer opportunities to keep local groups informed. They also compile location data and shrink the distance between civil society actors. Gramsci's view of resistance, noted that that even when individuals are subjected to a strong disciplinary apparatus, they may be able to exercise power (Gramsci, 1992). Gramsci further argued that civil and political institutions may help in ways to enable the superstructure to express power (being autonomous), in the same way the base exercises power over the superstructure depending different pattern of the power, its sources and interest it serve.

Bennett argues that just as media systems are changing shape, so too is citizenship and the public sphere. Younger age groups are moving away from traditional sources of information. A networked public sphere is emerging where 'many citizens are actively creating their own methods to communicate directly with each other and to make that communication increasingly hard for both elites and the mass media to ignore or marginalize' (Shirky, 2011; Bennett, 2013). Possibility it is pertinent to say that Nigeria might stand a chance of addressing some of its current political and social challenges.

### **3.14 Risk and challenges of ICT and Social Media use in Nigeria**

This section is concerned with the second question posed by critical internet researchers regarding political threats and risk involved in the use of the media for political engagement. ICT surveillance is of great interest in this study. Arguably, surveillance is not a new concept. It has always existed in the history of time. What has changed or improved are the means of surveillance. Surveillance, which for most of human history was a matter of face-to-face surveillance, augmented with forms of recording, is now characterised by high-technology applications (Lyon, 2007). As a result, scholars in surveillance studies and information society studies have developed a number of categories that describes the interconnection of computing surveillance.

French philosopher Michael Foucault adopts it as a symbol of his whole argument. Originally, the concept of surveillance was derived from the major theoretical and historical framework of a disciplinary model (the panopticon) by the panopticon is a model prison designed by utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham, and is structured so that guards can watch all the prisoners in their cells while remaining unseen (Foucault, 1979: 200). In this setting, the source of power and relationships of power are clear but the authority exercising the power remains unseen. Because the



prisoners cannot see the guards, they themselves to be in a constant state of low-level even when they are not being watched. The prisoners learn to live in fear of being monitored by the guards, so they learn to discipline themselves. Foucault argues that the basic power structure of the panopticon is reproduced in many different contexts as a means of permitting authorities to monitor citizens whether in military, at work, or at school. The panopticon induces a sense of permanent visibility that ensures the functioning of power, and perfects the operation of power by increasing the number of people who can be controlled, and decreasing the number required to operate control. Power and knowledge come from observing others. Extending these insights to the digital world, it is arguable that that operates economically and invisibly and aims to increase the docility and utility of all elements of the system. Perhaps, the real power of smart technologies lies in their ability to act as agents of change: one group at a time, one place at a time. Where we can draw the line between security and freedom, especially when modern surveillance technology is increasingly used urban public spaces to control or modify behaviour, tracking people who aren't incarcerated, but mobile and innocently going about their business.

Foucault argues that the more sophisticated societies offer greater opportunities for control and observation. Can smart phones make a difference by providing a format to organise even more appropriate and more mobilised counter-power protests, and offer more sophisticated avenues for defending democratic liberties and personal right, but their use is restricted mainly to urban professionals in Nigeria? It may be possible that coordination and cooperation, brought about by smart-phone technologies, will provide new forms of social power through organisation based on principles of just 'in in time' and 'just in place'. Perhaps the real power of smart-phone technologies lies in their ability to act as agents of change, one group at time, one place at a time. Foucault says it is better to forget the State in our struggle against power, and instead, concentrate on local struggles.

Technology is increasingly used in urban spaces to control or modify behaviour. This has resulted in many categories of surveillance such as new surveillance (Marx, 1988, 2002), dataveillance (Clarke, 1998), the electronic (super) panopticon (Poster, 1990), electronic surveillance (Lyon, 1994), the World Wide Web of surveillance (Lyon, 1998), digital surveillance (Graham & Wood, 2007), or and more recently Social Networking Sites in the Surveillance Society (SNS3) (Allmer, 2015). Some of these scholars have cautioned that surveillance and monitoring of citizens activities will continue to be an area of concern in the emerging role of new ICTs for citizens engaged in political activism and social movements.

Economic and marketing surveillance is theoretically grounded in Marxism, and is concerned with institutional structures commoditizing internet users for profit making. This form of media surveillance or wealth creation and economic growth, (specifically, the capitalist relations of production in which SNS and Web 2.0 apps are operate, the “design of the machine” in industrial technological context) commoditizes and exploits (Mosco and Fuchs, 2012). This form capital surveillance is exceptionally well placed, especially where the ambition is to unveil cultural production in relation to marketization in developed countries.

Technology analyst Morozov’s argument is that social media – by virtue of being “social” lends itself to glib overestimation of its own importance. He rejects the rosy narrative celebrating how Facebook and Twitter have enabled freedom movements around the world needs. In addition, to being a life-enhancing social communication tool, Morozov argues that technology has other guises; it is now a surveillance machine, a mis-representation tool, a handled marketing device, and a global platform for ideologues and zealots (Morozov, 2011). in reality, to confront a more sinister tale, which is how greedy companies, fostered by western Governments for domestic surveillance needs have helped suppress them. Facebook reports a 24% rise in government requests for personal data (BBC, 2014). Government requests for Facebook’s user information rose by about a quarter in the first half of 2014 over the second half of last year. Because of such requests for personal information, Fuchs, a prominent Marxist critical communication and media scholar, refers to the threat posed by surveillance technologies such as Deep Packet Inspection (DPI), which monitors the Internet traffic and its associated and content. He interprets, these technologies in the light of the emergence of a new mode of governance, in which the economic interests of the security industry and state interests interact, thus posing a threat to the society (Bendrath and Mueller, 2011; Fuchs, 2014). In this respect, Fuchs noted that DPI technologies are produced and sold by companies that strive for profits in the security business noting that DPI’s surveillance technology carries societal implications societal implications that need to be carefully considered.

According to the Wall Street Journal, French company Amesys, sold deep packet inspection technologies to Libya where Gaddafi’s regime used them in an internet spying centre in Tripoli to monitor the internet usage of Libyan and political opponents (Wall Street Journal Online, firms aided Libyan spies. Similarly, it was reported that the British Firm Gamma International sold its FinSpy software to Egyptian security authorities and the Italian firm Hacking Team sold surveillance software to security agencies in the North Africa and Middle East (EUobserver.com, 2011). In addition, WikiLeaks has described the purpose in the following way: “When citizens

overthrew the dictatorships in Egypt and Libya that year, they uncovered listening rooms where devices from Gamma Corporation of the UK, Amesys of France, VASTech of South Africa and ZTE Corp of China monitored their every move online and on the phone. Surveillance companies like SS8 in the U.S., Hacking Team in Italy and Vupen in France manufacture viruses (Trojans) that hijack individual computers and phones (including iPhones, Blackberries and Androids), take over the device, record its every use, movement, and even the sights and sounds of the room it is in.

Other companies like Phoenexia in the Czech Republic collaborate with the military to create speech analysis tools. In relation to such incidence Fuchs urges scholars to investigate how government try to monitor social media use by emerging leaders and why it could be problematic (Fuchs, 2014). Technologies such as “cookies, data mining, collaborative filtering, ambient intelligence, clickstream analysis, spyware, web crawlers and log file analysis allow an extension and intensification” of surveillance of internet users (Fuchs et al. 2012, 9-10). WikiLeaks categorized the documented surveillance technologies into six types: Internet monitoring, Phone monitoring, Trojan, Speech analysis SMS monitoring, GPS tracking are put in place to monitor citizen’s usage (Nayar, 2010)

Elsewhere in the African context there are reports that during the 2013 elections in Kenya, the National Commission for Integration and Cohesion (NCIC) monitored all political discussions and exchanges on social media in order to arrest anyone who engaged in hate speech during the political campaigns. In the campaign to the 2013 elections, bloggers were arrested for expressing sentiments on their blogs that were evaluated as “hate speeches”. The Kenyan government has engaged in intensive surveillance, especially during the electioneering period, in attempts to monitor online “hate speech”. Kenya’s historical experiences have created concerns about “hate speech and violence, leading to efforts aimed at censoring inappropriate messages that are intended to harm internet users or compromise the security of the nation”.

In another instance, when the Walk to Work Protests started in 2011 in Uganda, the Communications Commission of Uganda ordered all Internet service providers to block Facebook and Twitter, blaming them for fuelling the flames. However, in other cases, filters can be employed by the social networking sites, on a national platform Filtering on national platforms is often used because norms with regard to what counts as appropriate or inappropriate content are very much culturally defined which is why most platforms deploy national filters (Dijck and Poell, 2013, 148).

Similarly in the Nigerian context, although no individuals have been sentenced to prison or physically attacked for online activities as of April 2012, security agencies in late-2008 detained and interrogated two overseas bloggers upon their arrival in Nigeria. There are also reports the Government has prepared a legislative bill for to punish online citizens who criticises or demean leaders on ICT platforms. In addition there are reports that the Government connive with Israel to install massive surveillance tools for monitoring citizen's political activities and terrorism on the internet. This echoes Fuchs narrative where western countries for economic gain sell ICT tool to semi democratic nations for profit maximisation and thus pose threat to citizens utilising the media.

Jonathan Elendu, author of the website Elendu Reports, was arrested in October 2008 by the State Security Service, which takes orders directly from the president. He was reportedly questioned in relation to national security issues and for "sponsoring a guerrilla news agency." Many observers believed he was detained for an alleged connection with another online platform, Sahara Reporters, that published photographs of the President's 13- year-old son "waving wads of money around and holding a policeman's gun," or for falsely reporting that Yar'Adua had died during the 2007 presidential election campaign. Elendu was released after two weeks without facing charges. The following month, another U.S.-based online journalist Emmanuel Emeka Asiwe, editor of the Huhuonline website, was detained. The State Security Service similarly stated that Asiwe was being questioned about "matters of national security" and released him after a week of interrogation.

Most recently in January 2011, Okey Ndibe, a non-resident columnist and online blogger for a local newspaper was briefly detained on arrival in Nigeria. His passport was seized, and he was directed to report to the State Security Service offices. Mr. Ndibe told the Associated Press that "he believed his brief detention and the passport seizure came from the government's displeasure over his articles." According to the news blog TransparencyNG, "Ndibe's columns criticized the 2007 election that brought late President Umaru Yar'Adua to power... From then on, Ndibe never referred to Yar'Adua as the president." The government did not comment about the reason for his arrest as returned days later. In the light of these experiences, the aim is to find out factors that affects citizens use of the internet and Government understanding of internet censorship in Nigeria.

The internet's potential role as a bulwark or alternative to state power has been undermined but not invalidated by Edward Snowden revelations about the extent of internet and phone surveillance by US intelligence. Confirmation that the US practices the surveillance techniques that, until recently, it claimed distinguished it from its non-democratic political opponents, does not call into question the

internet's efficacy as a tool for political change.

With regards to the digital divide, infrastructural challenges and a lack of digital literacy remains an issue in the Nigerian context. In their recent book titled 'Digital Divide in Africa, James and Avijit, (2015) examined two case studies, the South African governmental role in ICT diffusion, and the challenges of mobile telephony in Nigerian small enterprises. The two scholars noted that the gap between have and have not still exist in these countries. James and Avijit, (2015) suggested on African policy to improve openness, ICT laws, and regulations and foster relevant socio-economic development.

### **3.15 : Conclusion**

The chapter is made up of three main sections. Section one addressed the historical background of Nigeria and the current status of press media. This section also discussed restriction on information dissemination by the state authority by ostensibly encouraging but in fact stifling the emergence of community radio despite the constitutional rights. This is to set a background and understanding on how the emergence of ICT is opening doors for public participation in Nigerian context.

The second main section discusses the concept of Web 2.0 and social network sites, types of SNS relevant to the study and chose a guiding definition for the study. As social media are complex and difficult to define particularly with regard to and different practices in different cultural background, the importance is to understand the perceptions of Nigerians toward the digital media, the digital media they use and purpose of using chosen media. This section seeks to establish whether Nigerian governmental use of digital media is complementing the activities and service delivery of e-Government whether the citizens are taking wider advantage of the use of social media for political communication. Elections are considered as form of democratic participation. Despite that e-Government is still in its infancy stage, a UN e-Government Report has concluded that the use and spread of SNS has increased the level of participation in public affairs.

The last section of the chapter discusses internet censorship, risk and challenges involved in the use of digital media from general overview to Nigerian context. Other areas covered include digital media empowerment. The essence is to investigate in the Nigerian context in what ways if any is digital media artefact empowering citizens and what could be the implication to the society in terms of political communications.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the basic theoretical assumption and the methodological decisions underlying the study. The chapter contains five sections with each section sub- thematically organised for clarity and explanatory purposes. The first section presents an overview and definition of the research and establishes the research philosophy. The ontological concept of critical realism is discussed. Section two presents the research methods: this covers both the qualitative research, and quantitative research methods, with a critical assessment of what is generally known as mixed methods. Section three presents a Case Study as the main research design. The rationale for this choice, linking it to studies focussing on critical theory is also established.

Section four elaborates on the research design and its implementation, and also covers other aspects of the methodology such as data collection procedures, sampling technique, interview protocol and piloting. The final section, section five, contains a description of the process employed to analyse the qualitative and quantitative data collected from the field work.

Hence, the research is conducted based on ideas and reasoning, reflection and critique, and on dialogue among researchers with a common aim of explaining the world (Petre and Rugg, 2012 p 117). The reason for this research is to explore and analyse perceptions, use and actual outcome of ICTs within Nigeria's democratic setting

### **4.2 Overview of research, research philosophy and research paradigm**

The first section covers a general overview and a scholars' perspective concerning definitions of research, the concept of research philosophy and research paradigm, and justifications for the paradigm choice. The researcher intends to show his understanding of these concepts and the reasons for the choice of research paradigms.

#### **4.2.1 Definition of Research**

Scholars define research according to their perspectives and according to views that reflect their background and research interest. Briony Oates defines the term 'research' as the creation of new knowledge, using an appropriate process, to the satisfaction of the users of the research (2005 p 4). In a more detailed elaboration, Oates states that research is frequently employed in our daily activities, it involves identifying a problem, gathering data or information, analysing and

interpreting data and drawing conclusions that may serve the purpose of the research or satisfy users (Oates, 2005). In a similar vein, Collis and Hussey, (2009) define research as a “systematic series of enquiry and investigation that is expected to yield and increase new knowledge” (p 3). This definition identifies a problem and employs appropriate procedural steps to address problems for research to fill gaps in the literature.

In the field of management of information systems, researchers may use different research philosophies, methods and strategies to conduct a study. Data can be collected in various ways. This includes questionnaires, observations, document analysis or interviews, and draw conclusions based on the findings. The purpose for conducting this research is to investigate a more grounded appraisal of ICTs and social media’s potential as a conduit and catalyst for democratic participation and development in an African context with particular attention to Nigeria’s unequal Governance.

#### **4.2.2 Research philosophy**

Research philosophy relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge. A researcher’s inclination towards a philosophy of research takes personal belief into account, incorporating important assumptions about the way in which the researcher views the world, and their reasons for obtaining knowledge in addition to the rationale he/she chooses for the research. In social enquiry, there are basically two ways of thinking about research philosophy – ontology and epistemology. Ontology comprises the nature of existence in terms of whether the realities of the social world are perceived from an objective or subjective nature (Burrell and Morgan, 1979, p.1). Epistemology is concerned with the study of the nature of knowledge; this extends to three philosophical positions, namely positivist, interpretive and critical approaches, as different epistemological positions adopted by researchers in information systems (Myers 1997; Chen and Hirschheim 2004, Krauss 2005). The epistemological methodology adopted by researchers to conduct research depends largely on their pattern/model of thinking (Paradigm) and the way they view the nature of the world (Ontology) and the way they acquire knowledge about it (Epistemology) (Lee, 2004). All research (whether quantitative or qualitative) is also based on some underlying assumptions (paradigms) about what constitutes 'valid' research and which research methods are appropriate.

#### **4.2.3 Research paradigm**

Guba and Lincoln, (1994) view a paradigm as a “set of basic beliefs that deals with ultimate or first principles. It presents a worldview that defines, for its holders: the nature of the world, the individual’s place in it and range of possible relationships to that world and its parts, as, for

example, cosmologies and theologies do” (p. 107). In other words, paradigm is seen as a set of shared assumptions or ways of thinking about some aspect of the world (Oates, 2005 p 282).

Considerable controversy surrounds how various paradigms should be classified (Bernstein, 1983). Burrell and Morgan, (1979) suggest four research paradigms in their classic framework: functionalist, interpretive, radical humanist, and radical structuralist. Their framework has been severely questioned, some arguing that the dimensions of their framework “obscure important differences in current research orientations and lead to poorly formed conflicts and discussion” (Deetz, 1996 p. 191). Orlikowski and Baroudi (in Lee, 1989) suggest three paradigms: positivist, interpretive and critical. While these three research epistemologies are philosophically distinct (as ideal types), in the practice of social research these distinctions are not always so clear cut (Lee, 1989).

There is considerable disagreement as to whether these research paradigms or underlying epistemologies are necessarily challenged, or can be accommodated within one study. Guba and Lincoln, (1994) suggest four underlying paradigms for IS research, positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, and constructivist. However, they themselves, in their most recent work, have acknowledged that there are issues contradicting their own classification pattern (Guba and Lincoln, 2005).

More recently, Oates, 2005 noted that most studies conducted within the context of IS/IT are grounded in three schools of thought, the positivist, interpretive and critical paradigms. Considering this study is theoretically grounded in the field of information systems, with an ultimate goal of comprehending digital media’s role in contributing to, maintaining, or enhancing the healthy democratic functioning of contemporary changing societies, Oates’ (2005) classification of paradigms is considered as a benchmark for selection of paradigms that guide the study.

#### **4.2.3.1 The Positivist**

The positivist paradigm, also called ‘the scientific method’, is an approach to research in the natural sciences such as physics, chemistry, biology and metallurgy (Oates, 2005), to prove or disprove a hypothesis. The term Positivist is originally based on the philosophical ideas of French philosopher August Comte, and on the ideas of Bacon, Newton and Galileo, who emphasized observation and reason as a means of understanding human behaviour.

Positivist researchers hold that research is based on experience, and sensing true knowledge can be obtained by observation and experiment. What unites positivist researchers is the shared perception that; the world exists independently of humans: there is a physical and social world that exists out there, and not solely in our minds, to be studied captured and measured.



Positivist researchers tend to ignore the fact that people think and act, that people are active makers of their physical and social reality (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991). For this reason, this study ruled out the applicability of positivist research as the study aims to investigate people and their perceptions, attitudes and experience of the use of the ICT and social media.

#### **4.2.3.2 Interpretive paradigm**

The interpretive paradigm known as constructivist, attempts to identify, explore and explain how all factors in a particular social setting are related and interdependent (Klein and Myers, 1999). The role of interpretive researcher is to understand human thought and action in a social or organisational context. According to Kline and Myers, (1999) interpretive research has the potential to produce deep insights into information systems phenomena including the management of information systems and information systems development. Interpretive researchers trust and prefer qualitative data which is most often related to an inductive approach, and develops a theory due to qualitative data analysis. In keeping with this imperative, scholars have noted that qualitative data is more accurate in capturing the process and flow of social truth (Neuman, 2004; Saunders et al., 2007).

Oates, (2005) notes that interpretive research may be conducted in an organisational setting, developmental project, department or society etc. to investigate an event or phenomenon. IS research can be classified as Interpretive if it is assumed that knowledge of reality is gained only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, documents, tools and others artefacts (Klien and Myers, 1999).

Interpretive research attempts to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them, hence creating a rich understanding of the reasons and rationale for actions or behaviour involved in conducting research. For instance, a research study that aims to find out whether citizens use of the media is embracing technological change or inhibiting it, could yield fruitful knowledge and understanding about current debates about ICTs and social media in political communication and social activism studies.

Researchers shape the research process with their own beliefs, values, assumptions and actions. Research is aimed at studying people in their natural social set-up, and not in the laboratory (artificial) as in the case of the positivist. Interpretive researchers believe that any observable organisational pattern is changing, the organisations are not static and that the relationship between people, organisations, society and technology are not fixed, but constantly changing. For instance, individuals' attitudes shape their exposure to political information in technological change era. The use of interviews and a review of documented literature and in depth case studies, ethnography or

grounded theory is often emphasised.

The researcher has taken into account the characteristics of these paradigms together with a number of arguments and the nature of the current study, whose aim is to gather sufficient information and understanding about the use, perceptions, attitudes and aspirations of Nigerians towards the role of ICTs and social media as a potential means of social empowerment. Research of this nature requires views, understanding and experiences regarding usage of the media. Many commentators argue that interpretive research is more appropriately applicable to understanding individual's perceptions of the world rather than investigating insight about statistical analysis (Yin, 2013; Welshman, 2010; Kline and Myers, 1999). With this in mind the researcher considers the interpretive paradigm as the chosen paradigm guiding this study.

#### **4.1.1.3 The critical paradigm**

Critical paradigm is considered by some scholars, not well established in information systems (IS), as interpretive and positivist. It shares similar assumptions with interpretive but goes further to explain a certain view of the world, and challenges phenomena and assumptions often taken for granted (McGrath, 2005; Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2011; Durham and Alpert, 2015). In its simplest definition, critical research in IS and computing is concerned with identifying power relations, conflicts and contradictions, and empowering people to eliminate them as a source of alienation and domination (Oates, 2005 p 296). More convincingly, as Klein has often emphasized, critical research means socially critical research, which challenges established social conditions and institutions and oppressive forms of control, often enabled and supported by IS, which prevent the realisation of humane just and free organisations and society (Klein, 1999, 2009; Cecez-Kecmanovic et al, 2008). An investigation in the critical paradigm is concerned with social issues such as freedom, power relations, social control and conflicts, ongoing usage, development and impact of technology and implementation.

Critical researchers explore the development of these processes and challenge institutional structures and social arrangements to offer suggestions for the benefit of wider society (Klein and Myers, 2011; Kempster and Parry, 2011; Tsang, 2014). The critical paradigm is also used in this study to pose the question - if the Internet represents a power-vacuum waiting to be filled, and if it acts as a "politically neutral constant", whose main effect is to "amplify political situations to new heights" (Best, 2009), which Nigerian interest groups or factions are appropriating its power and to what ends? Is it associated with a tendency "to improve civil rights and political liberties" as would be expected in a democratic political environment, or does it "tend to exacerbate the brutality of the regime" as would be expected in an authoritarian political environment (Best, 2009). Empirical

findings will contribute to ongoing debates between technological determinism and social construction's view about ICT development.

#### **4.2 Clarificatory justification for choosing dual research paradigm**

There is no single best method of conducting research; choice depends on the researcher's aims and subject matter. The selection of a paradigm depends on which concepts are judged to be of most relevance to a particular social situation being studied. There is no agreed fixed theory in conducting IS research, it depends on the researcher's choice and suitability, and the ability to convince the reader the study is in line with its underlying paradigm (Oates, 2005).

In relation to the context of this study the guiding philosophical approach adopted to investigate and explore the use and developmental outcome of the new media in relation to democratic development and power struggles is critical research in an interpretive style. All the research questions formulated in this study require multiple explanations and interpretations, and critical assumptions i.e. the world is socially constructed but not entirely so.

Having in mind that critical realism sustains the interpretive and critical research agenda by incorporating meaning and human interpretations in societal analysis (Smith, 2006; 2015), this study will apply an interpretive epistemology and critical realism based on ontological assumptions. Critical realism first of all makes the ontological assumption that reality is difficult to comprehend; for instance, assessing the relationship between the capabilities afforded by new technologies and political communication processes that utilize them. Avoiding making deterministic assumptions through remembering that consequences are defined by how technologies are used and by whom, not by what they enable. This stems from empiricism - that "the world is what men can experience", and "whatever men currently experience is unquestionably the world" (Bhaskar, 1978 p 58).

Analysis of societal change arising from new technology should therefore be accompanied by analysis of power relations, culture and discourses, institutions, actors and their causal linkages. An empirical critical realist investigation in a postcolonial developing country may give fresh insights including underlying 'subaltern' perspectives. The central analytical axiom in research would be a value such as emancipation and freedom for ontological recovery. Critical realism embodies such aspirations implied in ICT4D literature on human development and freedom (Bhaskar, 1993)

With this perspective, evaluating Nigeria's social political institutions and investigating policy-makers, democratic institutions and general citizens through ontological assumptions of critical

realism is expected to yield coherent, rigorous and novel philosophical positions that substantiates case study as a research method.

Moreover, this study follows a subjective and deductive approach which involves thoughtful in depth research with the objective of understanding theoretical assumptions through critical realist thinking involving the use of digital media utilised in the policymakers and citizens' relationship through social media for political communications.

#### **4.2.1 Reasons for choosing interpretive and critical paradigms**

The reason for adopting an interpretive style is that interpretivism is concerned with "understanding the social context of an event, the social process, which is developed and constructed by people and through which it influences, and is influenced by, its social setting" (Walshman, 2005; 2010, Klein and Myers, 1999). The advent of ICTs and ubiquitous technology and its saturation in contemporary political society is a complex process with multi-layered and often misunderstood meanings and perceptions (Fuchs, 2014). IS researchers have maintained that knowledge of users' attitudes to the media, the type of media use, when, where and how the media is used, will enable a valuable understanding of how media could influence society'.

Drawing from the definition of SNS from Boyd and Ellison (2007) which defines social network "as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd and Ellison, 2008), and also bearing in mind a number of events that have taken place in a Nigerian context,, this research aims to investigate what citizens do with ICTs, the meaning and perceptions of social media and their consequences in relation to transformational development.

In addition, according to various interpretive scholars, interpretive research is aimed at producing an understanding of the context of the information system and the process where information influences and is influenced by its context (Walshman, 2005; 2014). Interpretive researchers disregard dogmatism in approving or disapproving an almost known result, (e.g. social media use is good for development of democratic governance) but rather tries to investigate and understand the nature of reality of an event that has taken place, that is, the way new media such as the Internet, hand- held wireless devices (mobile phones, PDA's, etc.), and social media (Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, RSS feeds, etc.) has broad implications for Governance and citizens'

participations, thus creating a rich understanding of the reasons and rationale for actions or behaviour involved in leveraging ICTs and social media for political communications.

Through interaction of human thoughts and actions, the researcher should be able to interpret meanings and attributes of social media applications and the impact they may have on democratic settings in the Nigerian context. As pointed out by various scholars, interpretivist thinking, (a study conducting interpretive style) holds that, to understand this world of meaning, one must interpret it, and that knowledge is gained through the interaction of human thought and actions in social setting (Kline and Myers, 1999; Walshman, 2005). This is consistent with the conventions of this study, which aim to explore the perceptions, meaning, understanding of people towards the use of technology and its development in a democratic setting and how people's perceptions and actions of technology usage have changed overtime. Also worth considering in line with arguments discussed in Chapter Three section two is how meanings and understandings of social media applications differ from one person or group to another. This study has also complemented the view of interpretive research because while external realism advocates that reality exists independently of our construction, subjective idealism indicates that each person constructs his or her own reality (Walshman, 2010).

Although interpretive researchers and critical researchers hold that reality is socially constructed (Myers and Klein, 1999; 2011; Oates, 2005 Eric, 2013), commentators have proposed that the two paradigms need not be separated as they yield sufficient knowledge and understanding (Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2011). Nevertheless interpretation and understanding are associ- the basic assumption of the interpretive style, are not sufficient to produce social reality in the case of new digital media and its consequences in a complex society with a history of political and fragile Government.

Events or outcomes and context are what critical realists investigate, that is the external and visible behaviours of people, systems and things as they occur, or as they have happened (Walsham, 2009). If the functionalities of social media applications have a role to play in shaping a good quality of life, how and why, and under which circumstances are they doing so? What challenges may likely affect citizen's use of the new platforms? The phenomenon of social media applications involves human actions and human behaviour that is unpredictable and relative to conditions and circumstances ; as (Jack, 2008) noted, Web 2.0 term as a social technology. Hence the reason why this study further employed a critical paradigm to investigate the phenomena of ICT and democratic engagements from the social arrangement point of view in a

Nigerian context.

Furthermore, McGrath, 2008; Cecez-Kecmanovic, (2011) argue that the IS field has not reached a position where the theory and practice of doing critical research inform each other. It is in this respect, the study employs a Marxian view of power domination to describe the current state of Nigeria's hegemonic media institutions. The Gramscian concept of civil society and Foucauldian view of power domination and resistance are used as a lens to discuss the historical struggles in Nigeria. The combination of theoretical interpretations of these theorists reveals two complex pictures in the Nigerian context: (1), how the base (bad Governance) continues to impose self-interest against the wish of the superstructure and, (2) two the initiative or agency at individual or group level to challenge domination and reimagine their struggles, victories, challenges and aspirations. This is expected to answer the call of critical IS scholars who urge the development of an historically grounded social theory that could be used to practical effect in real world situations, with the aim to free human subjects from oppressive regimes within societies and within the institutions that constitute them (McGrath, 2005; Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2011).

Hilary Clinton once described ICT as "the biggest technological challenge facing parents and children today," calling it "an instrument of enormous danger" (Clinton, 2005). Clinton understood Danger as the distraction power of the Internet for the children of affluent parents in consumer-led European democracies. Many adults are fearful that the unrestrained freedom of the net will lead to their children becoming distracted from their studies, or corrupted and led astray from a morally responsible lifestyle. However, a much different set of economic and political conditions and opportunities exist in Nigeria. The Nigerian cultural expectation is that youth's easy online access to an array of consumer and entertainment products should be controlled and restricted. Geographical, economic and educational factors will determine if the infrastructure to deliver it, the affluence to make choice an option, and an untrammelled sense of free speech to give it authenticity and limitless knowledge. Investigating danger in the Nigerian context will ICT use will link understanding of the Nigerian experience with broader conditions, power relations, and social structures. The study takes a critical view of possible risk such as Government control, ,and restriction and manipulation of media and the internet particularly, these media are empowering or not. Other challenges looked into relate to socio-economic and infrastructural challenges.. Finally, the critical paradigm with an ontological view of critical realism is the major paradigm guiding this study.

This in line with the assumption of critical research which is concern with certain way of seeing

the world and how the wider societal historical perception differs about a phenomena and the relative importance why such phenomena is shaping the society (Cecez-Kechmanovic, 2011). It is believed that knowledge is grounded in social and historical practices (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991). Conversely critical studies assume that social world is real independent of its source (Ackroyd and Fleetwood, 2000; Bhaskar, 1978). ICTs may be designed for marketing strategy and maximisation of profits or an extension of neoliberal ideas yet such objectives may have possible positive or negative impact in contemporary society. With this significant belief on mind, the researcher's philosophical beliefs about this research are in line with critical paradigm and this can be seen in the framework of principles for conducting critical research.

The table below summarises both elements of critical and interpretive paradigm in this study. Note the researcher's idea is written in Italics

Table 2: Elements of critical and interpretive paradigm

Principles of Critical research	This research	Assumption of interpretive	This research
<p><b>Principle of using core concepts from critical social theorists</b></p> <p><b>The principle of taking a value position:</b> Advocates freedom, participation, human right, and fair society.</p>	<p><i>The study takes a critical look at theories and “devise questions and strategies for exploring its concepts such as Marx conception of power and dominance. Gramscian concept of civil society and superstructure autonomy and Finally Foucault concept of surveillance”.</i></p> <p><i>Consideration of elections time as the most ultimate time for democratic participation, human right abuse, and issues related to censorship</i></p> <p><i>This is intended to investigate</i></p>	<p><b>Believes about knowledge</b></p> <p>Epistemological: Scientific explanation of human intentions sought. Their adequacy is assessed via the criteria of logical consistency, subjective interpretations, and agreement with actors’ common-sense interpretation</p> <p>Methodological: Ethnographic work, case studies, and participant observation encouraged</p> <p><b>Beliefs about Physical and Social Reality</b></p> <p>Ontological:</p> <p>Social reality is emergent, subjectively</p>	<p><i>Researcher of this study believes in subjective reality and explanations.</i></p> <p><i>Contributes to realist beliefs through case study</i></p> <p><i>Communication is essential to understand social reality.</i></p>



<p><b>The principle of individual emancipation:</b> Self-reflection, self-transformation and human needs</p>	<p><i>Individual's reflection, views of transformational change and improvement to standard of living.</i></p>	<p>created, and objectified through human interaction.</p> <p><b>Human Intention and Rationality:</b></p> <p>All actions have meaning and intention that are retrospectively endowed and that are grounded in social and historical practices</p>	<p><i>Investigation of social practices.</i></p>
<p><b>The principle of improvements in society</b></p>	<p><i>Constructive way of citizens/government relationship.</i></p>	<p><b>Societal Order/Conflict: Social order assumed.</b></p> <p>Conflict mediated through common schemes of social meanings.</p>	<p><i>Assumes social order</i></p>
<p><b>The principle of improvement in social theories</b></p>	<p><i>Further understanding Marx, Gramsci, Foucault theories of power in relation to ICT use: whether tools of empowerment or oppression</i></p>	<p><b>Relationship between Theory and Practice:</b></p> <p>Theory seeks only to explain action and to understand how social order is produced and reproduced.</p>	<p><i>Aims to understand and gain explanations of the situation studied.</i></p>

**Source:** Kline and Myers (2011; 1999) and Chua (1986), modified by the researcher. The researcher's modification can be seen in italics.

## **Conclusion**

This section has presented and discussed an overview of research paradigm and the research philosophy and has chosen epistemological and ontological assumptions guiding the study. A further explanation for the choice of dual paradigm was presented. The researcher makes strong links between aspects of both interpretive and critical paradigm and their applicability in the research. Hence, the researcher's philosophical beliefs about this research are in line with critical and interpretive paradigm and this can be seen in the paradigm comparison shown in Table 2 which is adapted after (Kline and Myers, 2011; 1999 and Chua 1986).

### **4.3 Research methods**

This section provides an overview of the qualitative and quantitative methods, and presents a review of the mixed research method. It also discusses the justifications for adopting the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. A set of guidelines to conduct mixed research methods in IS, developed by Venkatesh et al, (2013) is adopted to justify employment of mixed approaches. The guidelines generally focus on appropriateness of a 'mixed methods' approach in IS. The goal of the framework is to demonstrate how the guidelines can be used to apply the process of conducting and validating mixed methods' research in IS. A connection can be made between the positivist approach and quantitative data, and there is a link between critical and interpretive approaches to qualitative data.

However, Bryman, (2012) argues that many researchers and scholars perceive these methods by looking back to their epistemological foundations, where quantitative is associated with positivist while qualitative is associated with interpretive and critical. Both methods differ in the way they are designed and the way in which the research is conducted. A quantitative method is designed to study natural science, through the help of survey, numerical methods and laboratory experiments (Myers, 1997). While qualitative is designed to conduct a study applicable to social science, such as social and cultural phenomena through the aid of interviews, document analysis and observations. In relation to divergent argument and issues regarding the choice of dual paradigm and adoption of different research methods, the view is of this study consistent with researchers who put forward the peaceful coexistence of multiple paradigms and combination of two research methods in a single research inquiry.

#### **4.3.1 Qualitative research methods**

Quantitative research attempts to find a correlation between variables while qualitative research is freighted with assumptions, a specific world view, to study research problems by inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a socially constructed issues (Creswell, 2007 p. 37). Qualitative research tends to have certain characteristics: one is a natural setting, where the researcher collects data in the field and where participants have direct experience of the issue under study. The researcher collects data by examining documents, observing behaviour and interviewing participants. Qualitative research data relies upon multiple rather than single sources. After collecting the data, qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories and themes. In the entire qualitative research process, the researcher is expected to focus on learning the meaning that participants hold about an issue or a problem. Qualitative research also allows emergent design – the initial plan for the research can change or shift to make interpretations on what is seen, heard and understood to develop a complex picture of the problem being studied (Oates, 2005 p. 265).

When asking the question when and under what conditions should a researcher use a qualitative research design, the answer is when there is absence of existing theory in regards to a particular phenomenon and when an existing theory lacking explanatory power. Qualitative research helps in explaining the structure or linkages of problems or issues that needs to be explored in casual theories or models. Furthermore, qualitative research is also useful research purposes. For example, it is beneficial for understanding a problem or issue that needs to be explored (in order to provide a detailed understanding of the problem) by talking to people directly, thereby empowering individuals to share their stories` with the aim of understanding the context or setting in which participants of the study address a problem or issue. What is particularly interesting about qualitative research is that it enables the researcher to discover new phenomenon and factors that could possibly affect the subject and the processes where by actions and event took place. This helps to develop theories when partial or inadequate theories exist for certain populations and samples (Creswell, 2007 pg. 40)

#### **4.3.2 Quantitative research methods**

Quantitative research methods are the main type of data generated by experiments and surveys, although such outcomes can be used and generated by other research methodologies too. The whole idea behind quantitative data analysis is to look for criteria in the data and draw conclusions. A wide range of established techniques are employed for analysing data. In simple analysis, tables, charts or graphs could be used; these allow the reader or researcher to see some more pattern. For complex cases, simple descriptive statistical techniques is employed to allow more patterns to be

found (such as the average value of a set of instrument readings) and for more complex statistical techniques permits the researcher to find out whether patterns seen in the data do really exist and are not just a chance (Oates, 2005). This research employed both method to investigate the usage and the perceptions and attitudes of Nigerian citizens towards the use of ICT and social media for political communications with an aim to find out whether the usage is empowering in a Nigerian context.

### **4.3.3 Qualitative and Quantitative approach (Mixed method)**

In simple terms, the mixed approach means collection of both numeric and text based information which represents quantitative and qualitative data (Bryan, 2001). Mixed methods uses quantitative and qualitative research methods, either concurrently (i.e., independent of each other) or sequentially (e.g., findings from one approach inform the other), to understand a phenomenon of interest. For example, a researcher may use interviews (a qualitative data collection approach) and surveys (a quantitative data collection approach) to collect data about a phenomena of interest. Another researcher might employ an ethnography (a qualitative method) and a field experiment (a quantitative method) to understand the same phenomenon.

Quantitative research is said to fall within the positivist paradigm, which assumes that the purpose of a research is to discover the general patterns of behaviour. On the other hand, qualitative research resonates with the interpretive and critical paradigm, which assumes that social reality is multifaceted, and as such the aim of social research is to explain people's subjective behaviours (Bryman, 2001). However, arguably, it is noted that the adoption of the two methods in a single research inquiry yield fruitful understanding and valuable contribution to knowledge and practice.

Creswell, 2009 states that:

*“There is more insight to be gained from the combination of both qualitative and quantitative research that cut across different multiple methodologies and paradigms than a dichotomous qualitative/quantitative approach” (Creswell, 2009 p 204).*

Such narrative denotes that it is useful to have the combination of both methods to investigate rich insights into various phenomena that cannot be fully understood using only a qualitative or quantitative method in a single project. When the two are employed at the same time or sequentially, the outcome is richer and more rigorous than the single method.

There are also arguments raised by commentators regarding the leading research method in a study (whether the qualitative or quantitative approach) or whether they should be treated equally.

Brannen, (2008) noted that a mixed methods researcher does not always have to treat both qualitative and quantitative studies equally. In other words, it is possible that, in some cases, the quantitative study is the dominant component and, in some other cases, the qualitative study dominates. Regardless of the choice of the researcher in terms of choosing dominant component, mixed methods research has the ability to provide stronger inferences than a single method or worldview (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

Keeping these views in mind, this study uses qualitatively driven mixed methods, as it positions itself in a critical and interpretive perspective: the basic assumption of this thesis from both philosophies is the creation of a more just society, which reflects itself in interpretive philosophy through the experience and interpretations of individuals who suffer from discrimination or oppression and those in high positions in terms of policy-making. Therefore, the advantage of conducting a qualitative study is that it allows the researcher to be part of the real life situation to explore the challenges that stand in the way of social progress, and the impact ICT and social media use has in setting a more freer and liberal society. The study will also take into perspective the clarification of assumptions attributed to ICT and social media: to identify whether and how the internet and social media truly hold potential as instrument of democratic participation and to look at the challenges or restrictions that limit this potential.. Researchers have acknowledged that qualitative research represents a fruitful research and powerful means of obtaining insights, and making recommendations (Yin, 2011 p 7; Oates, 2005).

As indicated, this study primarily is complemented by a quantitative method. A mixed research approach serves purposes beyond the core purpose of research methodology (i.e., help researchers conduct scientific research inquiries). This research chooses four out of six suggested guidelines for the purpose of conducting mixed research. See table 2 below.

**Table 3: Purposes of Mixed Methods Research**

<b>purposes</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>This research</b>
Complementarity	Mixed methods are used in order to gain to gain additional insights on complementarity views about the findings of quantitative same phenomena or study regarding ICT and social relationship	A qualitative research was used to gain additional insights on the findings of quantitative study regarding ICT and social media use in Nigerian context
Completeness	Mixed methods design are used to make sure a complete picture of a phenomena is obtained	The qualitative data results provided further explanations of the findings from quantitative study
Developmental	Questions from one strand emerge from the interferences of previous one (sequential mixed methods), or one strand provides hypothesis to be tested in the next one	Not applicable in this study
Expansion	Mixed method are used in order to explain or expand upon the understanding obtained in a previous strand of study	Not applicable in this study
Corroboration/ confirmation	Mixed method are used in order to assess the credibility of inferences obtained from one approach (strand)	Quantitative data was obtained to confirm the findings of qualitative study
Compensations	Mixed method enable compensation for the weaknesses of one approach by the other	Qualitative results compensated for small sample of data in the quantitative data
Diversity	Mixed methods are used with the hope of obtaining divergent views on the same phenomena	Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to compare perceptions of three different participants towards the use of ICT and social media

**Source: Adapted from Vankatesh et al, (2013) Note the researcher's input in italics.**

Scholars acknowledged that it is appropriate to use qualitative research where a problem or issue needs to be explored (Patton, 2004). This exploration is needed, in turn, because of a need to study a group or population, identify variable that can then be measured, or hear silenced voices (Creswell, 2009 p.41). The above exploration is also known as triangulation which uses both

qualitative and quantitative in the study. Patton, (2004) noted four types of triangulation methods, these include:

- 1      Theoretical triangulation: a theory from one discipline is used to explain a phenomenon in another discipline.
- 2      Data triangulation: data is collected from different sources or at different times to study of a phenomenon.
- 3      Triangulation by investigators: where different researchers collect data independently on the same phenomenon and compare the results.
- 4      Methodological triangulation: when data collection is used from both quantitative and qualitative methods

In relation to this typology, this study employs methodological triangulation where the combination of data collection uses qualitative and quantitative methods. To get more detailed qualitative data, in-depth interviews were also held with Government official at various Ministries, National IT agencies, Democratic institutions and general citizens were also interviewed. The rapid advancement of a new and complex array of information technologies, the diffusion of the Internet, the proliferation of numerous non-work related systems and social media, and the availability of myriad IT enabled devices have become an integral part of individuals' lives. Since interviewees had different backgrounds, different interview guides were used for each group. As Quinn (1980) has pointed out, the purpose of such interviews was not to put thoughts things in the respondent's mind, but to access the interviewee's perspective .

To complement the findings of the interviews a semi structured questionnaire survey was used to collect quantifiable data from a sample of 100. The questionnaire was designed to elicit information about attitudes to the Nigerian Internet , how it is used and how it has impacted on Nigerian society. It asks about what citizens do on the net, how they use it, and about their opinions and understanding of the Nigerian Government's attitude to control of the media and in particular to its control of the

Internet. It is worth noting that a large number of citizens were targeted so a large number of responses could be obtained. ); For instance, personal views, perceptions, interpretation about usage are considered sensitive issues for collecting data were major factors in selecting the most appropriate research method.

## **Conclusion**

This section discusses : qualitative, quantitative and mixed research methods. The research is a qualitative driven study but complemented by a mixed method approach. Interviews and questionnaires are used as the means of data collection. The section also discusses the rationale for employing a mixed method approach. The next section presents the research strategy employed to conduct the research.

#### **4.4 Research strategy**

This section is concerned with the research strategy or design used in this study. Research design is referred to as the plan to conduct research that involves the intersection of strategies of inquiry, and specific methods (Creswell, 2013). Research design is also a framework that also contains other aspects of research such as a set of techniques and procedures for selecting subjects (and object), measuring or observing phenomena, and collecting processing and displaying data in response to the initial questions of study (Yin, 2014).

In addition to selecting a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods study , the inquirer also decides on a type of study within which these three choices could be contextualised. This study chose a case study design research and combination of mixed method, interviews and questionnaires as the research techniques. The importance as noted by Creswell, (2013), of choosing a research design and specific approaches i.e. quantitative, qualitative or mixed method, is to provide a specific direction for procedures in a research design. Creswell, (2013) suggests three settings for choosing a research strategy. These settings are quantitative design, qualitative design and mixed methods (p 13). The choice of research design is very important, Yin, (2013 p 9) provided general conditions for selection of case study design. These conditions are

- (a) The type of research question posed
- (b) The extent of control a researcher has over actual behavioural events.
- (c) The degree of focus on contemporary events as opposed to entirely historical events.

The Table below displays these three conditions and show how each is related to five major research methods and in particular this study.



**Table 4: Relevant situation for choice of mixed method design**

Method	Form of research question	Requires control of behavioural events	Focuses on contemporary events?
Experiment	how, why	yes	yes
Survey	Who, what, where, how many, how much	no	yes
Archival Analysis	Who, what, where, how, many, how much	no	Yes/no
History	How, why	no	no
Case study	How, why	no	yes
<b>This research</b>	<b>How, what and why</b>	<b>no</b>	<b>yes</b>

**Source: (adopted from Yin, 2013). Researcher's work modification is in bold letters.**

In selecting the research design research questions are very important. This is because research design has its ways to answer the research problem or an event in the study. As shown in the table above, the diagram compares this study to the one provided in different strategies. The research design can be placed in all three rationales of descriptive or exploratory or explanatory research (Remenyi, 2012 p.10). According to Myers (1997), there are four research methods being used by IS researchers including ethnography, action research, grounded theory and case study.

In this research, a case study approach has been chosen as the most appropriate research strategy for critical interpretive qualitative research. Here the ontological view of critical realism has a rather clear answer. Thus the question must be of the form “What caused the events associated with the phenomenon to occur” (Walsham, 2009; 2013). As suggested by Walsham, (2009), it is only possible to understand a social phenomenon by recording and analysing the associated events that take place as a result of the actors acting, whether they are human or non-human (e.g. machines such as computers). The events can be recorded live or exist in records of the past including the memories of those human actors who can attest to the events such as the globalisation of Information Technology (Walsham, 2013).

Therefore this study is set to explore and scrutinise ICT and social media in terms of the ways in which they feed meaningfully or otherwise into a process of substantial political engagement, under which conditions they are doing so, and whether such usage empowers citizens to participate in political processes, or to challenge the established centres of power in the Nigerian context. The

following section explains the advantages of case research design as a research method in the field of information systems.

#### **4.1.1 Case study research**

Case study research allows challenging research questions to be addressed using multiple sources of data or evidence. The definition of a case study supplied by Yin is still probably the most useful : “a case study may be defined as an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, when the boundaries between phenomena and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1989).

Five issues are addressed in this definition and these are:

- (a) Empirical enquiry; this means that a case study should be based on primary or sense based data.
- (b) Contemporary phenomenon; a case study should address issues no older than, say, five years
- (c) Real life context; this means studying situations over which the researcher does not have control.
- (d) Boundaries are not clearly evident; This means that the research does not have the clear cut focus associated with laboratory research
- (e) Multiple sources of evidence. Suggests the use of any data or evidence which can facilitate understanding or help to answer the research question

These features of case study research are notably useful when a researcher needs to understand some particular issues or situation such as politics, processes and relationships that constitute the messiness of the real world. As noted, the aim is “to obtain a rich, detailed insight into the ‘life’ of that case and its complex relationship and issues” (Oates, 2005 p.141). Such interrelationships could be technology, legislation, group dynamics, power and politics etc. Yin, (1994) and other recognised commentators highlight the advantage of the case study stating that:

*“The advantage and strength of the case study approach is it enables the researcher to employ multiple sources of information” (Yin, 1994; Oates, 2005; Creswell, 2006).*

Therefore, the case study approach can be qualitative and quantitative in nature; and it can

employ a variety of data collection techniques (Hamal et, 1993) etc.

According to Creswell, a case study is selected because it involves an issue that is explored through one or more cases within a context; therefore it is highly important for the researcher to gather contextual accessible, obtainable and available material to describe the setting of the case. The researcher is also expected to obtain comprehensive information in order to present an in-depth picture of the case (Oates, 2005 p.143) and “events or outcomes”, that is the external and visible behaviours of people, systems and things as they occur, or as they have happened – these issues are what critical realists investigate (Walsham, 2010; 2014). The scope of this research is bounded by place (Nigeria) and by time - the researcher collected data was after the pre- and post-election period in 2011- when the country was politically active following the disputed presidential elections. In general, election time and periods of political upheaval in Africa are moments in which the internet, email and mobile phones generally reach the height of their deployment by journalists, civil society, Government and wider citizens alike.

#### **4.4.2 Common limitations of case study research and their management in this work**

The strength of case study research is that it allows the researcher to study people and take into consideration their specific characters and behaviour (Beins, 2004, p.94). Similarly, a fatal flaw in doing case studies is generalisation of sample and therefore some consider it to be the greatest weakness of case study, because it cannot represent people in general or beyond the individual or group of people studied (Yin, 2014 p. 39). Under these circumstances, the mode of generalization is analytic generalization, in which a previously developed theory is used as a template to compare the empirical results of the case study (Yin, 2014 p. 39).

In this work this limitation is not going to be an issue, since the critical and interpretive design will be generalising to theory (Oates, 2006) and not to a sample of population. In addition, Walsham, (2009) stated that from a critical realist perspective, expansion and generalisation come from identifying the deep processes at work under contingent conditions via particular mechanisms. A causal explanation in a single case must be based upon a theory structured in terms of what comprises a critical realist causal explanation. The best explanation, that is the one most consistent with the data, is what is being sought.

Some researchers argue that the design of the case study can be built on any combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection processes. The more challenging the research question, the more likely is the need to draw on both qualitative and quantitative data techniques (Remanyi, 2012). In a broader sense, a case study can accommodate inquiries to retain the holistic and

meaningful characteristics of real-life events “such as individual life cycles, organizational and managerial processes, urban development, neighbourhood change, international relations, and the maturation of industries” (Yin, 1984, p.14). According to (Oates, 2006, p.143) an exploratory study is used to define the questions to be used in a following study and help the researcher understand the research problem. She points out that it might be used in the case where there is little literature about a topic, so a real-life subsequent is researched, in order to identify the topics to be covered in a following research project (Oates, 2006). Yin (2014) specifies that the case study is an appropriate strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, since it allows the researcher to determine not only what happened but also why it happened. He also recommends case study strategy when the researcher has little control over the events and when the focus is on current phenomena. This study has its focus on current events, as it attempts to profile Nigeria’s online users to give a description of what they do online, where they do it, how they do it, why they do it, what devices they use to access the internet, and the factors which affect what they do online at any particular time. Additionally, the researcher has no control over this phenomenon. The case study strategy was chosen for this research due to the exploratory nature of this study, and the questionnaire was adopted as a research instrument.

To summarise, a case study strategy was chosen for this research due to the exploratory nature of this study. It explores in-depth various Government ministries, National IT agencies, Democratic institutions and general citizens in relation to the research to answer research questions and to fill in the gap that was found in the literature in regards to the use of ICT and social media for social transformation in a Nigerian context. In addition, a case study strategy is useful in the early development of a particular research area, for instance the study of ICT and social media in developing countries. The following reasons for selecting a case study strategy are presented below:

The case study strategy utilises multiple sources of evidence and methods (Yin, 1984, 2009; Creswell, 2003; McQueen and Knussen, 2002). Using multiple sources, and using both quantitative and qualitative methods, offers flexibility; also, using mixed methods serves the purpose of gathering, exploring and analysing the practical materials from sources to answer the “what”, “how” and “why” questions, (See Table 3). These descriptions according to Sayer, (1992) are entirely consistent with critical realist ontology. Formal questionnaires and statistical analysis are employed to look for regularities, patterns and similarities while interviews are employed for qualitative analysis to ask what produces change?, What produces casual explanations?

Also a case study is chosen because critical realism is a coherent, rigorous and novel philosophical position that substantiates case research as a research method and also provides helpful implications for theoretical development and research process (Geoff, 2010). The study describes the critical realist approach utilised by Sayer and develops a general application of a critical realist approach to case research. An example of its use in practice is presented using a case study of the development and assessment of ICT and social media use by policymakers, democratic institutions and general citizens. A case study strategy has been adopted in this research because this is an exploratory in-depth study which explores assessment of ICT and social media between in their use and developmental outcomes between Government and General Citizens. Case study research helps in understanding the degree to which certain phenomena are present in a given group or how they vary across cases (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p.87). A single case study research also helps in theory development as it is likely to have important strengths such as originality, testability and realistic validity, which arise from the intimate linkage with empirical evidence that is independent from prior literature, or past empirical observation (Eisenhardt, 1998 p.548). Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to a better understanding of the use and developmental outcomes of ICT and social media in a Nigerian context using both qualitative and quantitative methods in its conduct of case study research.

The researcher triangulated the data within the organization of case study research and used a quantitative approach as an aid based on what Venkatesh, et al, (2013) stated: “Interviews, a qualitative data collection approach, can provide depth in a research inquiry by allowing researchers to gain deep insights from rich narratives, and surveys; a quantitative data collection approach, can bring breadth to a study by helping researchers gather data about different aspects of a phenomenon from many participants (Venkatesh et al, 2013). The stated reason above offers the freedom and flexibility to use mixed methods.

#### **4.5 Research Design and implementation**

This section covers the research design and implementation. Research designs are logical blueprints. The designs serve as “logical” plans that involve the links among the research questions, the data to be collected, and the strategies for analysing the data in order that a study’s findings will address the intended research questions (Yin, 2011 p 76). The logic also helps to strengthen the validity of a study, including its accuracy.

The first component of research design is concerned with formulation of the research question which in case study consists of ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’ providing important clues regarding the

most relevant research methods to be used. This may be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. The research questions for this study were derived from the literature and structured based on Sen's Human Capability Approach (Sen, 1991). Evaluating the impact of technology on development from a critical capabilities perspective can make a contribution to the capability approach theory and the critical theory (Zheng and Stahl, 2012). Thus capability approach was used to contextualise core elements of power theories, democratic theories, and communication theories, these were contextualised in the interview and questionnaire questions. HCDA is human development theory nowadays used to evaluate the use, developmental outcome, and challenges in regards to the use of ICT in developing countries.

In relation to this, therefore, this study is an exploratory study designed to explore factors (either positive or negative) identified in the literature that can be investigated to explore the relevance of ICT and social media use between relevant public organisations and wider society that have not been previously explored in Nigerian context. The qualitative data provides in-depth insight on the effect of ICTs and social media use in organisational context and wider society while the questionnaire will provide information on the perceptions, attitudes and views regarding the use of new technologies (such as the internet, electronic mail, mobile phones and interactive multimedia systems) and their effect on democratic engagement with a particular attention to censorship. The research questions were presented to different Government officials to contextualise their understanding about ICT innovations, the use of ICT and social media in a Government setting; democratic institutions and general citizens for participation in grassroots democracy; these are related to subject of academic setting identified in the literature regarding the use of ICT for open Government and engagement. The different participants employed, and the mixed method approach helps in cross relating the findings of the study.

#### **4.5.1 Interviews**

Interviews involve an interaction between an interviewer and a participant (or interviewee). Interview is defined as a method or a way of acquiring data or information through questions and answer sessions between two or more persons (Oates, 2005). In the context of academic research, an interview is considered as one of the most significant methods of sourcing information, experience and opinions. In case study research, the main objective is to acquire data or evidence which used in creating transcript which will, in turn, facilitate the answering answer the research question. Interviews are essentially a qualitative gathering tool research that can be either conducted over video, telephone or face to face. There are three types of interview in academic

research. These are structured interviews, semi structured and unstructured interview.

Structured interview are interviews conducted when the researcher, from the outset, knows what information is needed (Sekeran, 2013 p.119). Semi- structured interviews contain questions on a particular topic and incorporate a general discussion (Remanyi, 2012). Finally, the objective of unstructured interview

*“Is to bring some preliminary issues to the surface so that the researcher can determine what factors need further in depth investigation” (Sekeran and Bougie, 2013 p. 118).*

Academic research interviews must be planned if they are to be success. Remanyi, (2012) suggests that it is also important to plan the number and type of informants required for the study. In selecting respondents for interview, the researcher chose knowledgeable respondents about the topic in line with arguments in the literature review (such as the role of ICT and social media in a Governmental setting and its influence in enhancing social and democratic change). In view of the topic the researcher has prepared a list of principles in line with the literature review.

The principles are:

- i. The samples include participants from different and opposing political viewpoints.  
For example pro-government and anti-government
- ii. The samples include citizens, government officials, election officials and parliamentarians
- iii. The sample considered views of different social media activists.
- iv. The sample includes individuals who are knowledgeable about IT as well as those not so well proficient with IT
- v. The sample also includes the views of students and young people.

The researcher decided to conduct interviews with Government officials as they have the authority that can answer research questions 1 and 2, and assist in objectives 2 and 3. Participants in democratic institutions and general citizens are interviewed in order to answer the central research question, and research questions 1, 2, and 3; these will assist in achieving objectives 1, 2, and 3.

According to Oates, (2005) both semi-structured and unstructured interview enable the interviewees to ‘speak their minds’ and so are used where the primary purpose is discovery. In other words, it allows the interviewees to express their personal beliefs by answering freely questions concerning their ideas and thoughts. This enables the interviewee to voice his/her

opinion freely and allows the interviewer to illicit further information from the interviewee if required.

As this study is an explorative research case study, the choice of semi-structured interview was employed to give the researcher an opportunity to conduct a face to face interview to obtain particular information required by the investigation. This is because the face-to-face interview is a purposeful conversation between participants who are physically in the same place (Oishi, 2003 p.1). Face-to-face interviews provide in-depth information and enable the researcher to include scenic details, participants' motivations and intentions, and the web of social relationships in which events occur and in which individuals take action. Therefore the researcher can make observations of the surroundings during the interview, and describe the meanings a participant attributes to the subject of inquiry, motivating the researcher to use interviews. The interview avoids the shortcomings of the self-completion questionnaire. This is because rich data through the interview is seen as imparting intimate knowledge of the social situation or phenomenon of interest. (which is unlike most quantitative studies, which are generally limited to thin descriptions of phenomena by way of frequencies, distributions and statistical patterns of relationships between constructs (Brekhus et al., 2005).

According to Remanyi (2012 p. 20) interviews offer room for more clarification and the asking of further complex and follow up questions, which is not possible in a written questionnaire. Therefore, more clear data can be obtained by allowing participants to expand on their answers and offers the researcher the opportunity to question in-depth some of the responses which cannot be anticipated at the outset of this exploratory study. In this study, interviews are purposefully selected to obtain specific information that will give insight for the research under study. The following sections will justify the selection of the purposeful sampling for this study.

#### **4.5.2 Questionnaire**

In academic research, a questionnaire is a data or evidence collecting device consisting of a series of specific questions which when answered by an appropriate informant or group of informants, will help lead a researcher to greater understanding of the research question/s and provide insight into possible answer (Remanyi, 2012 p. 90). This means of data collection is normally presented as a list of questions in the shape of a form used to collect a wide range of data concerning the state of affairs of an individual or concerning attitude, opinion or belief. The information is collected without the presence of the researcher but quite helpful in exploring insights within the minds, attitudes, experience, knowledge and opinion of respondents. This means that the participants



respond to the questionnaire without physical interference of the researcher (Sekaran, 2000).

Arguably, the questionnaire survey is often seen as the only possible way for providing a full picture suitable for capturing the attitudes, features and characteristics of a large population of respondents (Saunders et al. 1997, p. 244). The Questionnaire shares similarities with structured interviews, as it is written in a set of pre-formulated questions and the participants record their answers on the questions asked (Sekaran, 1992).

Two definitions of questionnaire are given below:

*“A pre-defined set of questions assembled in a pre-determined order” (Oates, 2006, p.219). It is commonly used in quantitative research to obtain numeric data and to gain opinions in a structured manner” (Remanyi, 2012).*

Among the main reasons for using a questionnaire is that it provides an analysis of pattern and possible comparison that can be accomplished in several ways, either statistical analysis or statistical interpretation. However, this need not necessarily be the case. Some questionnaire is designed to be analysed or interpreted in a qualitative way. Also, even when the majority of a questionnaire is quantitative it may also include open or qualitative questions asking the participants for explanations which require a non-statistical approach to analysis. Thus questionnaires can and often do straddles the quantitative-qualitative divide in academic research (Sekeran and Bougie, 2014).

Questionnaires are considered to be a quick, inexpensive and easy way to collect data. This can be delivered in person or by email or electronically to wide different geographical zones thus saving precious research money and time. The advantage of online questionnaires is the ease of implementing structured responses, adaptive questions, and point-and-click responses (Van Selm and Jankowski, 2006; Remanyi, 2012). However, the views expressed by these authors on the costs of questionnaires can be inaccurate since even with a questionnaire there are costs associated for example with the promotion of the questionnaire, sometimes the increased need for incentives to motivate participations such as random survey winners and monetary rewards for anyone who completes the questionnaire. It is important to avoid being unreliable with a large sample and this also could improve the statistically considerable results (Bell 1993). Although this study is not positivist in nature and statistical validity is not considered essential, questionnaire data will be used to provide context to the analysis.

A researcher's attitude to questionnaires is rooted in his or her philosophical approach to research. As Hughes, (1991) pointed out:

*“No technique or method of investigation is self-validating....they operate only within a given set of assumptions about the nature society, the nature of human beings, and the relationship between the two and how they may be known” (Hughes, 1991).*

The questionnaire was selected to obtain data on perceptions towards the use of ICT and social media. The questionnaire answers research question 3: what role, if any, can ICT and social media play in shaping and empowering grassroots democratic governance, and what are the possible factors that affect the use of ICT and social media which reflects objectives 2 and 3 discussed in Chapter One. Therefore, the self- completed questionnaire was designed based on an extensive literature review. There are two types of questions that can be used in questionnaires: open-ended questions and closed ended questions (Sekaran, 1992, p.190).

- Open-ended questions

In an open-ended question, respondents are allowed to answer questions in any way they choose. Oates (2006, p.222) notes that open-ended questions give the respondent liberty to answer in their own style . Open-ended questions do not follow any kind of specified choice of answers and the respondents' answers are recorded in full (Sekena and Bougie, 2014 p. 150). It is sometimes suggested that open questions can be a bridge between the questionnaire and the interview method of collecting data, because open questions allow the informant to write whatever he/she wishes.

- Closed-ended questions

Closed-ended questions, in contrast, are types of questionnaire that ask the respondents to make choices among set of a set of alternatives given by the researcher (Sekena and Bougie, 2014 p 150). The main advantage of closed-ended questions are: they help the researcher to code information easily for subsequent analysis; they help the researcher to compare answers from different respondents, the greater likelihood that respondents will answer a question even when topic is sensitive; minimisation of irrelevant or confused answers to questions, and finally duplication is easier (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992, p.242; Neuman, 2004, p.178).

The main disadvantages of closed questions are: Closed questions cause frustration if the respondents cannot find the predefined response that matches the answer they want to give (Oates, 2006 p 222), thus forcing the respondent to choose from a range of answers that are available in the questionnaire which in reality might not be the answer they really want to give (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992, p.242; Neuman, 2004, p.178).

#### **4.6. Research's data collection technique and rationale**

The selected case study strategy chose two data collection techniques to explore the potential use of ICTs and social media, as well as to present data and evidence to understand the true situation and also achieve the objectives of the research. Interviews and questionnaires are the chosen techniques utilised with participants in Government ministries, democratic institutions, national IT agencies, civil society organisations and general citizens. The techniques were piloted in advance to ensure that the questions are clear and are worded correctly.

Immediately, after the researcher got an approval to collect data from the University of Salford Ethics Committee on 14th December 2012, the researcher made contact with potential respondents for the study through email and phone calls in order to set up interviews. A letter of invitation, an introduction letter by the supervisor, and an approved consent form were attached to the emails. The reason for sending these emails before the departure of the researcher was to inform the participants and prepare them mentally for the interview and secure time, date and venue.

The researcher considered that most Government officials are busy people who travel often. Informing them in advance would allow them to find a date for an interview as the researcher travelled from the UK to Nigeria to conduct the interview in person. However, before the researcher left the UK none of the respondents had agreed to a certain date or time, the researcher met all the participants upon his arrival in Nigeria. All the interviews were conducted in respective offices and universities.

Participants were recruited in Abuja, Nigeria's federal capital city. The city is strategic because the bulk of the country's Government IT agencies are located there, as are most eminent Nigerian IT professionals. The researcher did not consider using representativeness as a selection criterion because he felt that a purposive sample was more appropriate for the study. A purposive sample makes a deliberate selection of participants with rich experience and knowledge about the phenomenon under investigation (Silverman, 2000). There is no consensus among qualitative researchers in relation to adequacy of sample size for a study of this nature. Bertaux, (1981) suggested that 15 is the minimum sample size accepted in qualitative research, while Morse (1994) insisted no fewer than 6 participants for case studies. Creswell (1998) stipulated between 5 and 25 interviews. In this study 20 participants were interviewed.

Participants in the study were Nigerian IT professional employed by Government and National IT agencies. 10 public officials were purposively selected in the study. Initially the researcher intended to conduct about 15 interviews as the first phase of the interviews but on receiving too much repetition of same answers (which is called saturation in academic terms), the researcher stopped at

10 interviews.

#### **4.6.1 Interview Protocol and Pilot**

Face-to-face interviews are designed and conducted with Government officials both at ministries and national IT agencies, to gain information on e-Government and incorporation of social media, and on perceptions and the use of ICT and social media for elections . Interviews were also conducted with general citizens to get the full picture on the concept of ICT and social media use in Nigerian context.

- Structure of the interview protocol

The interviews used a semi-structured face-to-face strategy consisting of different numbers of questions depending on the participants' specialty to explore the issues about social media and Governance.

- Generating and determining the interview questions.

The main purpose of the questions used in the interviews was to collect sufficient data and information to achieve the aim and objectives of this research. The literature review and previous studies were the main sources for forming the interview questions and they were organised according to contextual factors from the theory. The interview questions were discussed with the supervisor. Collis and Hussey (2009, p.126) suggest some useful techniques such as: "... regarding what has been done in similar research studies, using a single focus and specifying the research site and using open-ended questions without reference to the literature or theory, unless otherwise dictated by the research design". (Collis and Hussey, 2009, p.126).

- Developing the interview questions

In this step the researcher developed the interview questions after discussion with the supervisor and two supervisory teams. They checked the suitability of the interview questions for the participants, and checked if the questions were easy to understand and were clear for the participants in this study. Moreover, this development of the interview questions provided the researcher with excellent feedback about the suitability of the questions to be used in the real case study. This check by the supervisor and supervisory teams also tested the information dependability of the questions (See Appendix 3). An example of the edits that were made for the interview questions and how they were refined are given below.

- Conducting the Pilot Study

Before conducting the pilot study, ethical approval was obtained from the University of Salford. Experts in the area of research methodology believe that the interview questions should be subjected to preliminary testing which is known as a pilot study (Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Sekaran, 2003; Yin, 2009). The research used the pilot study to test and check the participants' understanding of the research issue and their understanding of the field interview questions. The pilot study also provided positive feedback about the suitability of the questions and their information dependability. This pilot study was undertaken in March 2012

#### **4.6.1.1 Interview sampling**

The first interviews were conducted with 4 Government officials; 5 interviews were undertaken with people within National IT agencies, and 4 interviews with people from democratic institutions (these include the independent national electoral commission, human right commission and member house of the parliament).

The other 10 participants were chosen from civil society organisations, and emerging leaders. The reason to conduct interviews with Government official is that several scholars have emphasized the role Government can play in deciding the impact of ICTs and its application as a means of mediation with citizens. Prominent scholars on ICT usage and Governance, including Coleman, have stated that any initiative to promote democratic interactivity or open Governance through ICT between Government and its citizens depends for its success upon the extent to which Governments are willing and able to respond to its citizens (Coleman 2011; Stringer, 2006). In the African context Nwanko, (2010) argues that Government is the mirror of Nigerian society, and is professionally and constitutionally responsible for representing, reflecting, and defining the attitude of the Nigerian population on matters relating to political expression, transparency, accountability, freedom of expression and democratic governance.

#### **1 Government officials**

The researcher therefore interviewed four Government ministries responsible for coordinating the use of ICTs to interact with citizens. These are Federal Ministry of Communications, Federal Ministry of Information, Federal Ministry of Education, Federal Ministry of Science and Technology. The first interview was conducted at the Federal Ministry of Communication. The ministry was created by President Goodluck Jonathan's administration, to foster a knowledge-based economy and information society. The Ministry was created to facilitate the use of ICTs as a

key tool in the transformation agenda in the areas of economic growth and transparency of Governance. The Ministry's mission statement is to utilise ICTs to drive transparency in governance and improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of public service delivery in Nigeria. The interview was conducted with the Director of the e-Government Department. The reason for choosing this Ministry is that some important activities of the ministry are in line with ICT usage to drive transparency in governance.

The second interview was conducted at the Federal Ministry of Information with the director of ICT of the department. The mission statement of the ministry is to provide the citizenry with credible and timely information on Government activities, programmes and initiatives through a proactive technology driven public information hub, with effective feedback mechanism which aims to promote information management and control in a democratic society.

The third interview was conducted at the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology, with the Director of the ICT department. This Ministry is responsible for transforming Nigeria, in the near future, into one of the fast developing Scientific and Technologically progressive nations and lead Africa in scientific and technological development. The fourth interview was conducted at the Federal Ministry of Education; one of the functions of this ministry is to ensure IT literacy to Nigerian citizens.

## **2 National IT agencies**

The national IT agencies that took part included the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), National e-government Strategies (NeGSt), and the National Centre for Technology Management (NCTM). The fifth interview was conducted at the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) which is clearing-house for IT projects in the public sector. The agency is committed to bringing the Government and its services closer to the people through IT. Interviews were conducted with two participants from the Department of Strategic Planning and Research because two of their on-going projects, the Nigeria National e-legislature Strategy and Nigerian National e-Government strategy are in line with the context of the research. After conducting the interview two sample handbooks on the projects of e-legislator and e- democracy development were given to the researcher.

The sixth interview was conducted with the National e-Government Strategy, another Government IT agency responsible for promoting transparency and efficient delivery of service (along with increasing citizen -Government interaction) and for facilitating, driving and implementing Nigerian e-democracy Programme under a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. The rationale is to

acquire data from knowledgeable participants to explore further knowledge and understanding

### **3 Democratic institutions**

The decision to interrogate democratic institutions was also derived from the literature where maintains that any attempt to enhance engagement between citizens and the Government (particularly in relation to popular liberal democratic activities such elections, abuse to human rights and freedom of expression) cannot be isolated from democratic institutions (Peteman, 2012; Coleman, 2012). The seventh interview was conducted with an Honourable member of the House of Parliament to explore the extent to which parliament's use of social media equates to substantive forms of public engagement. Two interviews, 8 and 9 were conducted at Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The commission was set up by government to conduct free and fair elections. The commission is seen as Nigeria's first agent of democracy and one of several organisations targeted by Nigeria's e-government initiative (Kathy and Maiye, 2010). In the previous two elections, the commission used ICTs and social media applications, particularly to keep in touch with citizens during elections. The tenth interview was conducted at the Human Rights' Commission. The Human Rights' Commission aims at creating an enabling environment for the promotion, protection, and enforcement of human rights and also provides avenues for fighting corruption and presenting good governance. Reports about corruption issues and human rights violation are sent through ICTs and social media.

### **4 General Citizens**

In line with the context of the research, the final phase of interviews was conducted with emerging leaders to complement the literature review. General citizens become the leaders of civil society groups, media activist, schools and journalist that make up the society. . Students are considered because they are perceived to be the leaders of tomorrow. In addition, research has documented the relationship between students and new technologies in Africa. For example, Kuby et al (2001) noted the increasing use of the internet by university students while Jones et al (2009) report that students are heavy users of the internet (Jones, 2009). According to Jones 'New online technologies such as, Facebook were invented on college campuses, and initial development of the internet took place in academic setting.

In Africa, research suggests that students constitute the main consumers of new technologies (Omotayo, 2006; Mwesige, 2004; Sairose and Mutula, 2004) and are the main users of internet (Furuholt et al, 2008; Furuholt and Kristiansen, 2007). However, the extent to which university

students in Nigeria and the diaspora use new technology as popular media to empower themselves and participate in the public sphere remains largely unknown (Obijiofor, 2011). Hence, students from different universities were chosen for interviewed to establish their perceptions about the use social media for democratic engagement.

A hermeneutic approach to research requires that the participants have good knowledge of the subject or phenomenon under investigation (Bibby, 1997; Creswell, 1998).S The selection of these Government officials and the interview methods used arose out of a concern for issues related to validity, reliability, credibility, and affordability. The researcher selected experienced and credible public servants and interviewed them on a one- to-one basis. Osborne (1993) argued that the readiness of participants to exchange ideas on the subject of inquiry helps to develop a close affinity with the researcher. Furthermore, the interview method gave the participants freedom to question any of the researcher’s assumptions on the role of social media and also provided instant feedback as to whether the study made sense to them or not. This approach reflects Willig’s 2008 conceptualization of validity in qualitative research. The validity is enhanced by the fact that the interviews of government officials took place in their work settings thereby fulfilling what Willig 2008 called ecological validity.

**Figure 4. 1: Sample of participants interviewed**



**Source: The SAVI triangle, Booth and Chambers (2014) modified by the researcher**

**Table 5: List of interviewees and their Nvivo codes**

No	Organisation	interviewee	Nvivo code
1	Ministry of Communications	Director e-Government Department	G01
2	Ministry of Information	Director ICT Department	G02
3	Ministry of Science and Technology	Director ICT Department	G03
4	Ministry of Education	Director ICT Department	G04
5	National information Technology Development Agency	Research and Policy Department	N05



6	Nigerian e-Government strategy	Director e-Governance	N06
7	National Assembly (House of Parliament)	House chairman of ICT committee	D07
8	Independent National Electoral Commission	Director ICT Department	D08
9	Independent National Electoral Commission	INEC citizens contact Centre department	D09
10	Human Right Commission	Director Department of Freedom of Expression and the Media	D10
11	Centre for Democracy and Development	Chairman civil society organisation	D11
12	General Citizen	Social Media activist	GC12
13	General Citizen	IT professional	GC 13
14	General Citizen	Pro Government political party	GC14
15	General Citizen	Anti-Government political party	GC15
16	General Citizen	Blogger	GC16
17	General Citizen	Pro Government political party	GC14
18	General Citizen	University Student	GC18
19	General Citizen	University Student	GC 19
20	General Citizen	University Student	GC 20

In the face-to-face interviews, the semi-structured interviews involved 20 participants as shown above. The interviewees included Government officials coded as (G01, G02, G03, and G04); and democratic institutions (D05, D06, D07 and D08); National IT agencies (N109, N110, NI11) and Finally general citizens GC12, GC13, GC14, GC15, GC16, GC17, GC18, GC19, GC20). The general citizen includes students, social media activist, civil society organisations.

The views of 20 interviewees were elicited regarding some of the aspects and issues of using ICT and social media in Nigeria in terms of the current situation, the main problems and challenges it faces and the potential solution in regards to constructive use of these applications to ensure general participation. In the interviews, the perceptions of interviewees towards the use of the digital media and its need is crucially important in identifying most appropriate way to promote the use of mobile phones and radio services. The other main issue that was explored in the interviews was their readiness towards the use of digital media.

The following research objectives were addressed: “to explore the perception of Nigerians about the concept new ICT and their relevance in strengthening and developing a free society, (objective 1); to assess Nigeria’s current new mass media deployment within the proviso of ICT for developing a means of understanding perspectives on emergence of new ICTs in developing countries, and, finally, (objective 3) to understand factors militating against ICT use for governance, political participation and proffer workable solutions to relative challenges, risk that

may be associated with the use of new ICTs within the set frame

#### **4.6.2 Questionnaire design and pilot**

A questionnaire is utilised in a study when the data is required will be measures and known in advance. However, the questionnaire data in this study are not being employed to determine reasons or meanings or the attributes given by participants to the phenomenon of digital media but they are being utilised to compare between responses and also compare result with qualitative analysis to enhance transparency of findings. The questionnaire in this study will focus on the perception of Nigeria's attitude and perceptions to the new media and the factors that restrict the usage of the media. It will also cover a number (100 Participants) to ask for their responses to the different methods of communication that might affect their use of the digital media in Nigerian context.

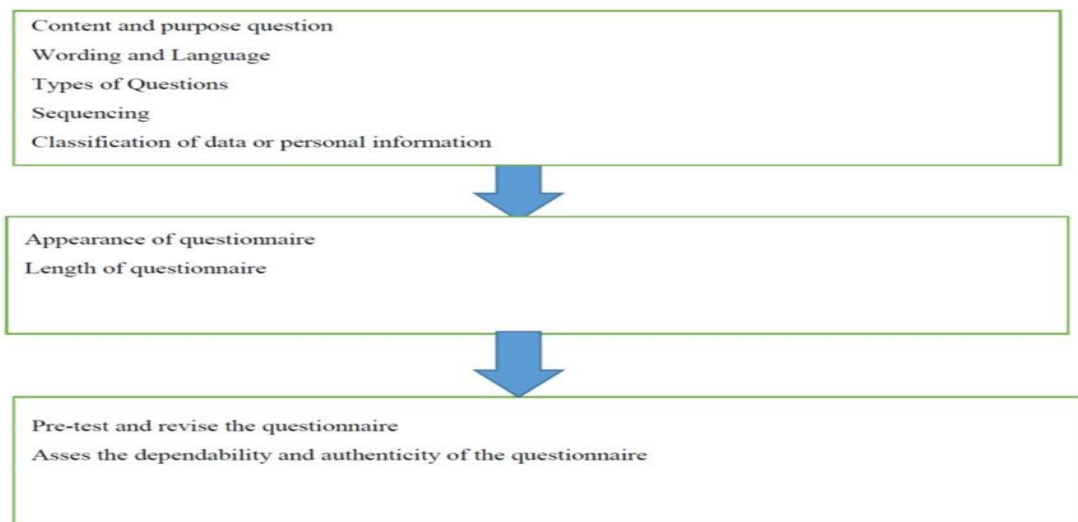
As stated earlier, the questionnaire can be managed in many different ways, either in person, electronically or by mail (Sekeran, 2013 p 147). The researcher used online questionnaires because of the ease of implementing structured responses, adaptive questions, and point-and-click responses (Van Selm and Jankowski, 2006: 444). The questionnaire was designed containing both closed-ended and open-ended question for participants. The reason for selecting this type of questionnaire is an attempt to gather a wide range of views from participants concerning their perceptions towards the use digital media, as well as their views on certain developmental outcome and challenging issues.

Open-ended question provided the opportunity for participants to write their views freely about the issues that were raised in the questionnaire. These issues might be sensitive to some participants such as issue of internet censorship and this type of questionnaire is to offers them different ways of expressing their views freely without being observed within direct communication.

##### **4.6.2.1 Questionnaire Design**

The process for designing the questionnaire that will be used in this research is adopted from Sekena and Bougie, (2013 p 149); and modified by the researcher to reflect critical interpretive perspective. According to (Oates 2006, p.298; Pozzebon, 2004 p 283; Kline and Myers, 2011; Guba and Lincoln, 1989 p 245-251) instead of speaking of research validity as in the positivist research, could be based on the ideas 'fairness' and 'authenticity'. Therefore, it is worth noting that the researcher did not depend on validity; the process consists of three steps as shown in figure below

**Figure 4. 2: Questionnaire design process**



**Source: (Sekeran and Bougie, 2013 p 149) modified by the researcher according to (Oates, 2006, p.294)**

### **Step 1: principles of wording**

The principles guiding the wording in a questionnaire are an important step in conducting a questionnaire design, in that the wording determines the receipt of the required information. Five factors/principles needs to be considered

- Content and purpose of questions

The content and purpose of questions should serve the purpose of the study. According to Sekeran and Bougie, (2013 p 150) the nature of the question should made clear either subjective or objective facts. The questions asked in this questionnaire are subjective in nature (e.g., satisfaction, and involvement), drawn from the research sub questions and the literature to measure belief, perception and attitudes concerning the use of ICT and digital media. Remanyi, (2012 p 102) noted that breaking down research sub question is most suitable for a questionnaire design that yields a valuable outcome.

- Wording and Language

Question wording is important in questionnaire design and has an influence on the response rate (Remanyi, 2012). The questions asked, the language used, and the wording should be appropriate to tap respondents attitudes, perceptions, and feelings. The supervisor reviewed the question wording. Suggestions were made about the questionnaire's wording, as it was found that the questions were structured in a very "positive" way towards the use of digital media. Therefore, it was suggested that it would be worth asking some leading questions – i.e. instead of "internet use

helps reduce incidence of corruption in public sector”. It should be “CITIZEN’s use of the internet is a useful weapon to fight corruption” Leading questions signal and pressurise respondents to say “yes”

- Types of Questions

**Close-ended questions:** The questionnaire includes close-ended questions or pre- coded questions which ask the respondents to make choices among a set of alternatives given by the researcher (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013). Such questions usually have lots of tick boxes for respondents to fill in. The closed-ended questions force the respondent to choose from a range of answers that have been pre-defined (Oates, 2006, p.222).

- Multiple-choice questions give the respondent a choice of answer, to which the most closely suited answer should be ticked (Anderson, 1998; Oppenheim, 1992).
- Example of multiple-choice questions

**Figure 4. 3: Multiple-choice questions**

<b>1</b>	<b>What is your level of education?</b>
(a)	Undergraduate
(b)	Postgraduate (Masters)
(c)	Postgraduate (PhD)

### Scale question

Scale questions involve the researcher offering an informant a scale of feelings against a statement (Anderson, 1998). Likert questions are a commonly used scale in survey research and many researchers agree that the five point “Likert scale” is the most effective, although seven, nine and eleven point scales are possible (Remanyi, 2012). The five point scale was chosen because this gives a smaller distribution of responses, given the relatively small sample of respondents; participants could also make a “neutral” choice – unlike in 4 or 6 scales in which the informant is not able to do so. Example of questions measure whose answers are given on a indicated scale.

**Table 6: Scale questions measure**

No	Opinions	Strongly Agree 1	Slightly Agree 2	Neutral 3	Slightly Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
1	I hardly notice censorship on Nigeria's internet					
2	I am able to be openly critical of local and national figures. I can say what I want to say on internet					
3	Social media helps to keep Nigeria's election process transparent					
4	The use of the internet help citizens to challenge Government and political leaders					

Open-ended questions are questions that allow the respondent to answer in their own words (Sekaran, and Bougie, 2013). According to Oates (2006), open questions give the respondent the liberty to answer in their own style .Example of Open-ended questions

**Figure 4. 4:** Q28

What do you think is the main challenge facing your community in Nigeria in regards to the use of  
ICTs.....

..... Q29

Is there 'informal censorship 'on the Nigerian internet? Are there topics that cannot be openly discussed? What topic if any would you feel uncomfortable discussing on sites such as Facebook or

Twitter.....  
.....  
.....

- **Sequencing**

The order of the questions is important because it helps respondents to progress through the questionnaire with ease and comfort (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013 p153). This is taken into consideration to avoid negative attitudes towards the questionnaire and that is why the personal

questions and open-ended questions were left to the end. The structure and layout of the questionnaire is designed to be simple to encourage respondents to complete it.

- Classification of data or personal information

Classification of data in questionnaire is of considerable importance. It is advisable to gather certain demographic data such as age, sex, and educational level, and the number of years in an institution. Some commentators suggested that even if the theoretical framework does not include these variables it is worth asking because such data help describe and enhance the sample characteristics after analysis (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013 p 154; Remanyi, 2012 p 118). Considering the survey was conducted with Nigerian students at the University of Salford, this questionnaire includes these details to quantify how long the participants have been away from Nigeria, their level of education, geographical location in Nigeria, and their gender and age.

## **Step 2: Planning**

The second principle pertains to the general appearance of the questionnaire. This include

- Appearance of the questionnaire

The layout and order of the questions enables the informants to answer the questions in an easy to read and easy to reply manner (Remanyi, 2012 p 120). This has been considerably taken into account to avoid negative attitudes questionnaire, hence a good introduction, well organised instructions and neat alignment of the questions was designed in an attractive manner. Demographic questions and open ended questions were left to the end.

- Length of the questionnaire

There is a wide range of options available when developing a questionnaire; such options include personally administered questionnaires, mail questionnaires, and telephone or interview questionnaires. Software is available on the web for the development of questionnaires (Remanyi, 2012 p 128). The questionnaire in this study was administered through Survey Monkey and was distributed to participants through email. This was achieved by providing the respondents an introductory note on the first page of the questionnaire setting out the research aims and confidentiality. A questionnaire should contain simple, short questions, as a rule of thumb a question or statement should not exceed 20 words, and the questionnaire should not exceed more than ten computer screens (Sekaran and Bougies, 2013 p 152; Remanyi, 2012). In addition to the number of questions the way the questionnaire is structured is also an important issue. This

research's questionnaire was designed to reduce the time required to complete it to avoid loss of interest . The questionnaire contained 3 sections including 35 questions (6 multiple-choice questions, 16 scale questions and 3 open ended questions).

#### **4.6.2.2 Questionnaire sampling**

The selected students that participated were selected randomly . They comprised; PhD students (4.08%), Master's students (87.76%), and undergraduates 8.16%). .

The researcher was not able to interview them individually due to time restrictions. The overall response rate was 50% (50 out of 100) across all different departments – see breakdown by department in table 7.

### **4.7 Qualitative data analysis techniques**

This section contains a description of the process employed to analyse data collected from the field work. Creswell was used to (2014 p 174) guide the analysis of qualitative data . This section also discusses Guba and Lincoln's (1989) method of evaluating qualitative research and then employed five analytical techniques used for case study analysis (Yin, 2014 p 142).

A significant amount of qualitative data was collected from the interviews and little qualitative data from the open-ended questions within the questionnaire. Therefore, the interview data was analysed using Nvivo software and the questionnaire was analysed through Survey monkey. After the data collection , analysis assists the researcher to examine, and interpret the collected information for the purpose of drawing conclusions.

Commentators maintain there is no single procedure, no clear and acceptable agreement for analysing qualitative data analysis (Yin, 2011; Saunders et al., 2007; Bryman, 2004). However, Yin, (2011 p 176) argues that most qualitative analysis (regardless of the particular qualitative orientation) involves compilation of data, disassembling procedure, reassembling, interpreting and concluding (which means developing schemes to create well- grounded conclusions). On the other hand, Oates (2006, p.267) suggests that qualitative data analysis involves extracting from the research data, the verbal, visual or aural themes and patterns important to the research topic.

#### **4.7.1 Step employed in the analysis**

Creswell, (2014 p 197) clarified and presented a visual model that conceptualises steps in the data analysis process in qualitative research. Summarising three general approaches to analysis provided by leading scholars Huberman and Miles (1994); Madison, (2005) and Wolcott, (1994), Creswell argues that the visual model can be used with any methodology; the researcher followed all the

steps outlined.

- (a) Sketching ideas
- (b) Taking notes i.e. convert all rough field notes into the form of written record.
- (c) Summarising field notes: confirm that any materials collected are properly referenced.
- (d) Working with words: read the data many time in order to become familiar with it.
- (e) Coding process: identifying nodes and undertaking model creation through nodes
- (f) Reducing codes to themes
- (g) Relating categories to analytical framework in the literature: Use the summaries to construct generalisations that confront existing theories or be used to construct a new theory.
- (h) Interpreting the meaning of themes and Creating a point of view :Displaying the data: Continue the process until satisfied that data collected are sufficiently robust to stand the analysis of existing theories or the construct of a new theory

The researcher used the spiral as a conceptualisation to explore and examine data analysis through Nvivo. Nvivo is qualitative research software used to analyse data, manage and shape data, and also analyse qualitative data by displaying codes graphically. The analysis for the interview was done using thematic qualitative approach through the Nvivo software. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes data set in (rich) detail (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In addition, thematic content analysis is a qualitative tool employed to find out themes and recurring patterns of meaning. As stated by Ritchie and Lewis, the common method that is used in TCA to analyse qualitative data is the identification of main themes, concepts or categories. Data from the interviews and questionnaires have theme based content, where repeated patterns and themes can be formed. The analysis included encoding the qualitative information to identify a specific theme containing information that may have some relevance to the area or research. The thematic framework was used in the software to display the codes of the findings graphically.

Furthermore, thematic analysis can be a realist method, which reports experiences, meanings and the reality of participants, or it can be an interpretive method, which examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on, are the effects of a range of discourses operating within society. It can also be a “contextualist” method, sitting between the two poles of essentialism



and constructionism, and characterised by theories such as critical perspective (e.g., Willig, 1999), which acknowledge the ways individuals make meaning of their experience, and, in turn, the ways the broader social context impinges on those meanings, while retaining focus on the material and other limits of “reality”.

#### **4.7.2 Evaluation of the analysis**

According to Yin, (2011) the worth of qualitative data analysis is upon depended on the quality and authenticity of researcher’s interpretation, and the final step in the process of analysing qualitative data is to evaluate the analysis reached. Many perspectives exist regarding the importance of evaluating the quality of analysis. Lincoln and Guba 1985 (cited in Creswell, 2007 p 202) suggested four criteria.

**Credibility:** this means that the researcher must describe and document qualitative research procedures either subjects or documents so that other people can review and understand them. Credibility can be enhanced by the researcher taking part in the study for a prolonged period of time, by persistent observation of subjects being studied for the purpose gaining insights, by triangulation through the use of different sources of evidence, and finally peer debriefing, this means having sessions with peers to explore aspects of inquiry.

To establish credibility of this research based on the techniques discussed above, this study credibility was enhanced from two points of view: by triangulation, and by the data collections coming from different sources of evidence such as interviews and questionnaires and theories to provide corroborating evidence. Also consistent peer and colleagues’ reviews enhanced the credibility; the researcher and the supervisory team meets regularly to iron issues related research methodology and their research.

**Transferability:** this relates to whether finding of the study can be generalised to another situation.

**Dependability:** this is concerned with detailed research processes and the extent to which data is rigorous and well documented.

**Conformability:** this is concerned with assessment or criteria where the study illustrates the research process fully and the possibility to assess whether the outcome flows from the data collected.

#### **4.7.3 Analytical techniques for case study analysis**

According to Yin, (2014 p 142) there are five analytic techniques used for case study analysis, these being: Pattern Matching, Explanation Building, Time-Series Analysis, Logic Models, and

### Cross-Case Synthesis.

- **Pattern Matching:** This is one of the most desirable techniques in case study analysis. Pattern matching logic is employed for comparison of an empirically-based pattern with a prediction from the theory before data collection. If the empirical pattern matches the predicted pattern the case supports a theory as in the same way a successful experiment supports a theory. If the predicted pattern coincides, the results can help a study to strengthen the internal validity of the case (Yin, 2014)
- **Explanation-building:** explanation- building is a special type of pattern matching. The goal of this technique is to analyse the case study data by building explanations about the case. Yin, (2014) suggested that in explanation-building processes, the findings are should reflects some theoretically significant proposition or any statement created.
- **Time-Series:** the time-series technique is an analytical technique concerned with special and more rigorous case of process tracing, Yin, (2014) argued the more intricate and precise the pattern, the more time series analysis lays a firm foundation for the conclusion of case study.
- **Logic Model:** the logic model stipulates and operationalises a chain of events of occurrence over an extended period of time. The events are in a repeated cause-effect-cause-effect pattern, whereby a dependent variable (event) at an earlier stage becomes the independent variable for the next stage. Yin, (2014) stated that as analytical technique of logic model helps to explain the ultimate outcome of case study evaluation.
- **Cross-Case Synthesis:** cross-case synthesis is a technique that only applies to the analysis of multiple case studies. According to Yin, (2014), this technique is relevant to two case studies or more helps in strengthening the finding of further event.

Based on the above description and discussion of different techniques used for qualitative data analysis, the researcher adopted the explanation-building technique as a data analysis method since during the data collection process, unpredicted patterns emerged and needed to be tackled.

Moreover, the questionnaire results are presented using; percentages distribution tables of the comments by the respondents. Analysis of the data was undertaken using the descriptive method; this will allow the participants' perceptions to be identified. Survey monkey software has been used to analyse the data collected from the questionnaire.

As a result of the analysis procedure, the findings from the data analysis were engaged with the other sources that were used during the data collection such as literature and according to the research methodology. Therefore, to reduce the possibility of errors different approaches and

techniques were used for investigation.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter introduced a survey of contemporary information system research and their applicability in this study. Notably, there is a theory practice divide within the mainstream of research paradigms. . The interpretive approach sheds light on complex contextual and subjective human factors often overlooked by positivist methodologies. Researchers do not aim to come up with general abstract theory, but to draw attention to submerged discourses and alternative rationalities (Avegerou and Madon, 2005). However they may not explain why technology actually works because they concentrate on subject to subject relations. Critical IS studies sustain an emancipatory intent for developing countries. A challenge to this type of research may lie in methodological ambiguities and lack of clarity on what it means to be critical (Mc Grath, 2005). The integrated interpretive or the critical have proved the most popular in developing countries with many proposals of empirically developed frameworks. The critical paradigm is a controversial alternative for ICT studies but may help resolve observed theory - practice inconsistencies (Smaith, 2006; Smith, 2005). For these reasons, the critical interpretive approach was chosen as the theoretical foundation for this study.

The chapter describes a single exploratory case study, as the research explores the use and developmental outcomes of ICTs and social media in the Nigerian context. A mixture of methods, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches, was adopted to fulfil the aims and objectives of this research. Interviews and questionnaires were carefully selected as methods and were designed to improve trustworthiness in data collected.

In the following chapter, Sen's capability model is used as a framework for data analysis and the research findings

## **CHAPTER FIVE: INTERVIEW ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter sets out the analytical approaches used in this study. The chapter describes how Nvivo software and Survey Monkey are used to organise, collect, collate, present and visualise both qualitative and quantitative data generated in the course of investigating ICTs and social media use for development in Nigeria. Nvivo software is used to organise and analyse the interview findings to construct an in-depth exploration of the themes and concepts which form and inform the focus of this study. The online survey lends credence to the qualitative data obtained through interviews. Insights into these analytical paradigms is provided in this chapter.

For instance, the initial section on Sen's Capability approach briefly justifies its applicability as the main analytic framework, given the critical perspective of the study. The next section presents core analysis of the interview data, to thematically organise and visualise the data insights. The software was invaluable in coding and efficiently keeping track of, and collating themes, issues and ideas in masses of transcript data, notes and on-going reflections.

Section three contains questionnaire analysis, conducted via the online platform of Survey MonkeyTM. The visual presentation of the quantitative data uses Microsoft Excel, with plotted graphs used to illustrate and support the qualitative findings and also to corroborate the analysis and interpretation of the dataset.

The last section of this chapter provides a brief conclusion and summary of what is discussed in the chapter.

#### **5.1 Applying the capability approach from critical point of view as data analytic model.**

Many studies have been conducted using concepts and principles of the Capability approach as the means and ends of researching ICT for development (Garai and Shadrach 2006), evaluation of ICT projects (Madon 2004), empowerment (Johnstone 2007; Gigler 2004), the global digital divide (Wresch 2009), social inclusion (Zheng and Walsham 2008), and on a theoretical exploration regarding the application of the capability approach on ICT and human development (Zheng 2009; Kleine 2009), and more recently Government's Implementation of Information and Communication Technology in Developing Countries (Pereira, et al 2015). These studies provide the background for assessing the concept of ICT for development, and afford the opportunity of exploring the Capability approach in our evaluation of ICT and social media use in Nigeria. As earlier established, it becomes important to study the Nigerian context judging by the degree of adoption of new ICTs in the country and more importantly, against the backdrop of divided opinions in

scholarship regarding the developmental essence of new technologies especially in developing countries.

Despite the acceptability of Sen's model approach to ICTs for development research, Information Studies (IS) scholars believe that the capability approach [stemming from the critical research paradigm] is under applied in ICT research, particularly in developing countries (Walsham 2013; Zheng and Stahl, 2011; Shana and Marlene, 2015). Avgerou (2010) comments on the paucity of literature in the ICT for development field. He does so from the perspective of disruptive transformation rather than progressive transformation, where ICT-enabled development is considered as "a contested endeavour" "involving action with unequal effects on different categories of population" (p. 8). In this vein, Zheng and Stahl, (2011) note that the capability approach and critical theory approach share some important commonalities: both are concerned with the pursuit of "a good life"; both are normative theories rooted in ethics and meant to make a difference, and both are interested in social change but still lack complementarity.

In the light of these observations, scholars have been urged to conduct empirical research to find out whether these complementary approaches lend themselves to improving practical outcomes, particularly in the use of new ICTs. To answer this call, this study explores insights from critical theory to analytically enrich and strengthen Sen's capability approach in relation to technology and human development.

In a bid to properly explore whether practical outcomes are improved, the study employs a Marxian view of power domination to describe the current state of Nigeria's hegemonic media institutions. The Gramscian concept of civil society and the Foucauldian view of power domination and resistance are used as a philosophical lens to clarify the historical struggles in Nigeria's media sphere and by extension, the use of new ICT for development.

The study employs core elements of power domination theories and resistance, and uses interpretations of these theories to create a framework around Sen's Capability approach to explicate the analytical findings as they relate to ICT and social media use in Nigeria. Apart from theoretical reflections, this research offers new interpretations and a means to gauge the influence and impact of ICTs in shaping governance and promoting participatory initiatives that facilitate true development. Three categories emerge from thematic content analysis;

The first category is the intervention factor which, examines the Nigerian people's knowledge and understanding of the concept of the media sub-categorised into the types of media used.

Conversion factors relate to factors - personal, social and environmental - which enable or restrict citizen's use of ICT and social media. This second category is concerned with issues restricting the use of the media, or qualities which enhance its use. These, in the Foucauldian sense, include

ensorship of the internet, and Government attempts to monitor use of the media, emphasised by pessimist researchers, or digital media offering citizens the capacity to monitor the activities of government. Other challenges relate to environmental, legal and social factors militating against social media/ICT use in the country.

The final category, labelled as Functionings, in Sen's model, refers both to potential and achieved functions of the technology under examination. What has been achieved or could potentially be achieved with the technology? The core elements of Gramsci's concept of civil society, including the autonomy of the individuals from the oppressive domination of the base, are contextualised here. The focus is to find out whether

Nigerian citizens' use of social media platforms empowers them to resist bad leadership, and governance as whole. Other indices of Sen's functioning concept relates to the democratic theories and communication theories discussed in Chapter Two.

Figure 5.1 below, represents the thematic categorisation of Sen's Capability entities.

Figure 5.1 below represents the thematic categorisation of above explained Sen's Capability entities.

**Figure 5. 1: Categorisation of Sens' capability approach as contextualised in the data analysis**

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
Democratic institution	6	132	11/06/2015 19:56	AMS
Conversion Factors	6	48	11/06/2015 19:58	AMS
Functionings	6	76	11/06/2015 19:59	AMS
Intervention	5	8	11/06/2015 19:57	AMS
General Citizens	16	118	11/06/2015 20:33	AMS
Conversion Factors	6	16	12/06/2015 01:00	AMS
Functionings	14	86	11/06/2015 20:36	AMS
Intervention	8	16	11/06/2015 20:34	AMS
Government Ministries	6	23	11/06/2015 20:37	AMS
Conversion Factors	3	6	11/06/2015 20:38	AMS
Functionings	0	0	11/06/2015 20:38	AMS
Intervention	6	17	11/06/2015 20:38	AMS
National IT agencies	4	63	11/06/2015 20:37	AMS
Conversion Factors	4	13	15/08/2015 15:15	AMS
Functionings	4	39	15/08/2015 15:15	AMS
Intervention	4	11	14/08/2015 01:21	AMS

From the above diagram, it can be seen that each participant category has its conversion factors (i.e. factors that restrict media usage), followed by the 'functionings' (what has been achieved) and finally the intervention (knowledge and understanding of ICTs and social media including the type of social media application used). For instance, under the democratic institution which sits at the top of the conversion factors, six sources (meaning six respondents) commented on what could

be described as the conversion factors with 48 references. On the aspect of ‘functionings’, all six sources commented on what has been achieved using social media, with 76 references and then finally five respondents commented on the intervention (i.e. knowledge and understanding of the media) with 8 references. 132 references were recorded from all the respondents in reference to the democratic institution as established in the capability model. This situation is also represented in other case analysis, under the citizens, government officials and IT agencies which forms the hub of our analysis and discussion on ICT and social media use for development in Nigeria.

Research has demonstrated that ICT can, for example, expand the volume and scope of information available to developing countries. This study examines the development outcomes arising from and related to this expanded information and attempts to provide evidence of these outcomes. Eschewing the rhetoric which treats digital media as ends in themselves, (Quresh 2011), the study moves beyond the topic of digital media access, to critically examine the utility of these ICT opportunities, explore how the average citizen has benefited, and measure any concomitant risk. Given this dimension, this study complements the critical approach which focuses on identifying conflicts, contradictions and power relations associated with people empowerment (Oates 2006, p.296). Building upon critical realism’s ontological notion of events and context (Smith 2009; Donald, 2012; Minger, 2013; Eric, 2014), the study argues that Sen’s notion of capabilities is an ontological conception, capable of incorporating individual and social causes in an investigative and analytical exploration of power relations in digital media technologies

## **5.2 Data analysis phase**

In line with the discussion under section 4.7.1 of Chapter Four, which explains the data analytical model outlined by Creswell, (2014 p 197), the study uses Nvivo software. The Human Capability Development Approach data analysis (HCDA Analysis) first sorted the interviews and field notes, and then transcribed data and relevant documents onto the software. In line with the aims of this study, data obtained from Government and IT agencies were used as a case analysis to answer research questions 1 and 2, while the data under General Citizens and Democratic institutions were used as case analysis to answer research question 3. The steps leading to our analysis are given below.

Step one: Figure 5.2 below is a representation of the interview and field notes transcribed and uploaded into Nvivo software. The researcher also typed up field notes, cataloguing the visual materials, sorting and arranging data according to the number of cases interviewed.

**Step one:** Figure 5.2 below is a representation of interview and field notes that were transcribed and uploaded into Nvivo software. The researcher also type up field notes, cataloguing all of the visual materials, sorting and arranging of data according to number of cases interviewed.

**Figure 5. 2: Organisation of Data**

Name	Nodes	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
GC13	31	68	19/08/2015 01:31	AMS	20/08/2015 01:57	AMS
GC14	17	27	19/08/2015 01:31	AMS	20/08/2015 01:57	AMS
GC15	31	67	19/08/2015 01:31	AMS	20/08/2015 01:58	AMS
GC16	31	86	19/08/2015 01:31	AMS	20/08/2015 01:58	AMS
GC17	29	51	19/08/2015 01:31	AMS	20/08/2015 01:58	AMS
GC18	25	47	19/08/2015 01:31	AMS	20/08/2015 01:58	AMS
GC19	33	79	19/08/2015 01:31	AMS	20/08/2015 01:58	AMS
GC20	15	48	19/08/2015 01:31	AMS	20/08/2015 01:58	AMS
Total Citizen	53	474	24/08/2015 16:58	AMS	26/08/2015 01:44	AMS

**Step two:** is concerned with reading and understanding the data, to place emerging themes in a contextual background, and reflect on their overall meaning, identifying and organizing common themes or ideas and unique characteristics (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Stake, 1995). The researcher formed a general impression of the participants' views regarding social media, particularly from the perspective of election monitoring and the freedom digital media offers to citizens to express their views openly. A cluster analysis was undertaken to show how the ideas emerged. The first query searched for the most frequently recurring words, the second searched for the most frequently used text in all the interviews.

Figure 5.3 below presents the outcome; as depicted below, key words such as social media applications, internet, government, mobile phones, corruption, transparency, and accountability are the most recurring, mentioned by all the participants in the interview. This visualisation helped to shed light on various aspects of the participants' views on technology use prior to the commencement of the coding phase.

Figure 5.3 below presents the outcome of using Nvivo to locate the most frequently used words. As depicted below, key words such as social media applications, internet, government, mobile phones, corruption, transparency, accountability are the most recurring words mentioned by all the participants in the interview. This visualisation helped to shed light on the various aspects of the participants' view on technology use prior to the commencement of the coding phase.

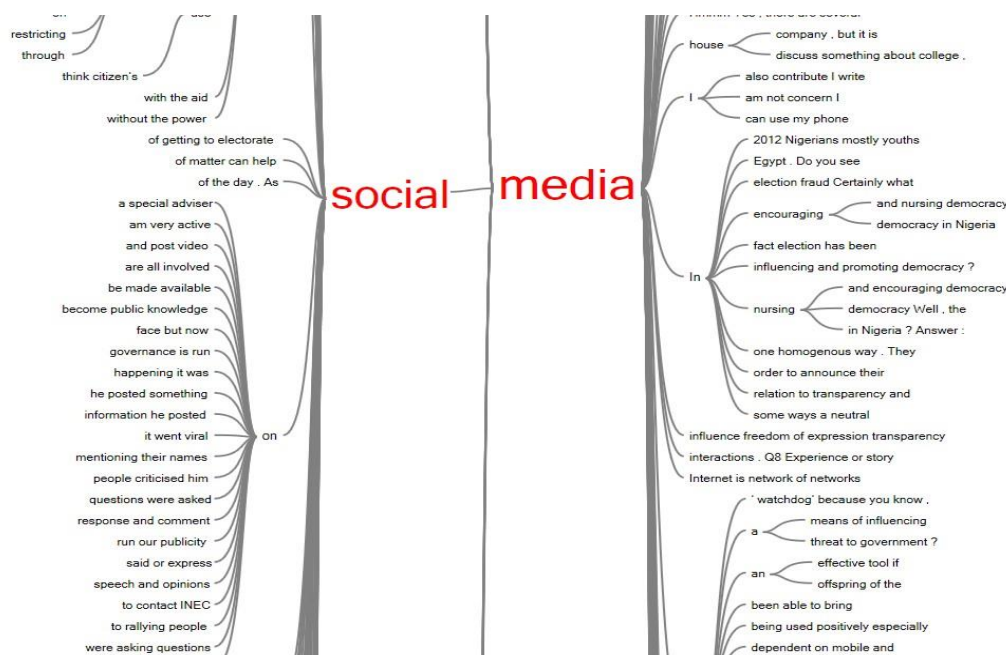


*Figure 5. 3: Word cloud search indicating participants' most frequently used words in the transcript.*



To build thematic relevance and clarity, a query was undertaken to find the most frequently used text. Figure 5.4 below, shows the most frequently recurring text. It also provides insights into how technology has helped shape electoral processes, social interaction and collaboration. This initial insight will assist our analysis by introducing order to an understanding of some of the orientations and meanings which participants apply to the use of digital media.

**Figure 5. 4: Text query word tree search**



**Step three** is concerned with the actual coding exercise. Coding is operationalised in this study as ‘the process of organising the data by bracketing chunks (or text or image segments) and writing a word representing a category in the margins’ (Rossman and Rallis, 2012). According to Saldana, (2013 p 59), this can be conducted following a two part coding cycle. The first coding cycle entails categorisation of data prior to the real coding task (Saldana, 2013). In relation to this study, our first coding cycle was undertaken based on the concepts deduced from Sen’s Capability approach model, and this was used for all participants interviewed.

Figure 5.5 below indicates the three main categories and their nodes as represented in all the four cases explored in this study. Nodes in Nvivo represent the themes and ideas; they are collections of similar statements from interviews that ground empirically the theme, idea or concept being explored in a qualitative study. The figure below presents a schematic overview of the main divisions showing different nodes and categories as informed by Capability approach including the sub nodes of each of the category.

**Figure 5. 5: Detailed nodes of entire capability approach category with references**

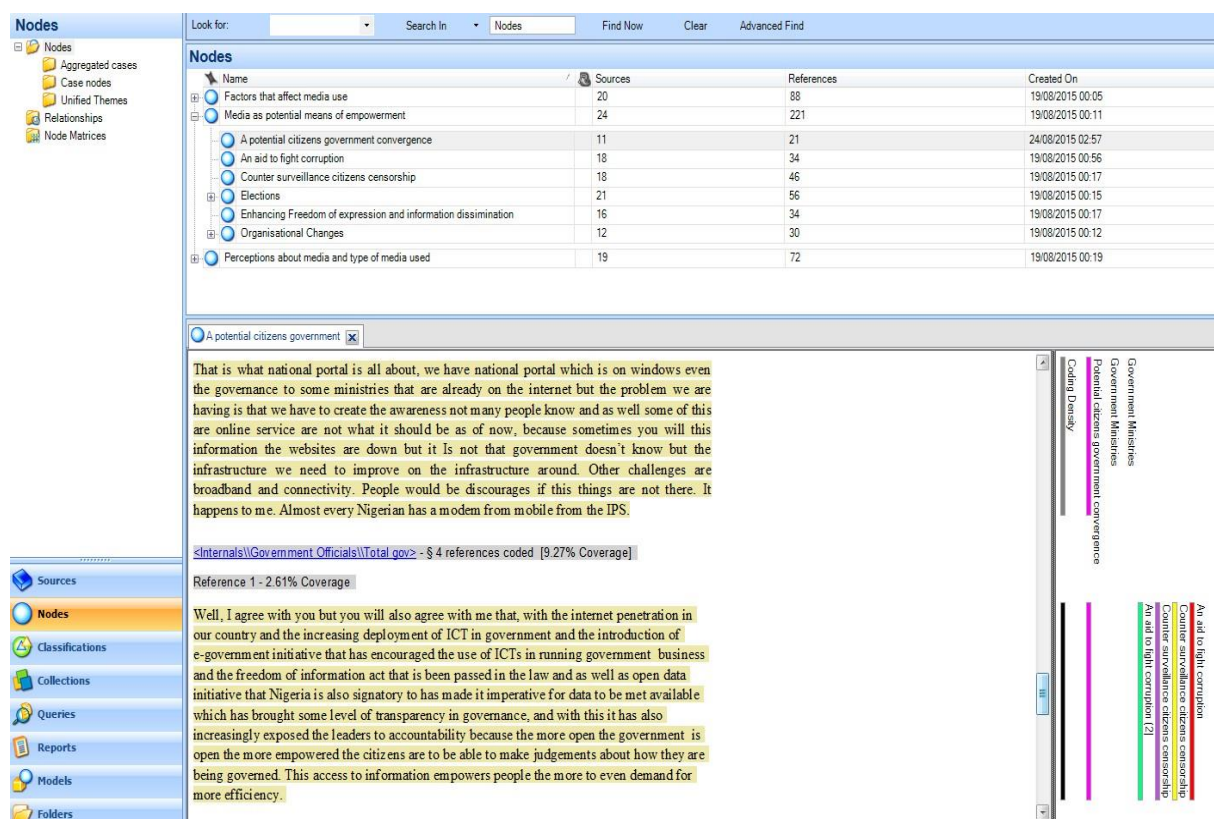
Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Democratic institution	5	132	11/06/2015 19:56	AMS	08/08/2015 00:01	AMS
Conversion Factors	6	40	11/06/2015 19:56	AMS	08/08/2015 00:02	AMS
Environmental factors	6	38	11/06/2015 20:10	AMS	08/08/2015 00:02	AMS
Infrastructure	2	2	11/06/2015 20:12	AMS	25/03/2015 22:47	AMS
Legal	16	12	11/06/2015 20:11	AMS	25/03/2015 22:47	AMS
Openness	4	12	11/06/2015 20:11	AMS	25/03/2015 22:45	AMS
Technological Access	4	12	11/06/2015 20:12	AMS	25/03/2015 22:47	AMS
Integrity	2	2	24/06/2015 00:08	AMS	25/03/2015 22:41	AMS
Personal	4	6	11/06/2015 20:07	AMS	08/08/2015 00:02	AMS
Social Factors	2	2	11/06/2015 20:11	AMS	08/08/2015 00:03	AMS
Functionings	6	76	11/06/2015 19:58	AMS	08/08/2015 00:03	AMS
Act to fight corruption	3	4	15/08/2015 17:03	AMS	25/03/2015 22:47	AMS
Citizens Government convergence	4	6	15/08/2015 17:30	AMS	25/03/2015 22:46	AMS
Counter surveillance	4	6	17/08/2015 03:07	AMS	25/03/2015 22:46	AMS
Freedom of Expression	3	4	15/08/2015 17:31	AMS	25/03/2015 22:45	AMS
Information dissemination	0	0	15/08/2015 17:31	AMS	15/08/2015 17:31	AMS
Restoring elections credibility	6	23	15/08/2015 17:31	AMS	25/03/2015 22:47	AMS
Source of empowerment	6	23	15/08/2015 17:31	AMS	25/03/2015 22:47	AMS
Threat to citizens	4	6	15/08/2015 17:32	AMS	25/03/2015 22:47	AMS
Threat to authority	4	8	15/08/2015 17:32	AMS	25/03/2015 22:47	AMS
Intervention	5	8	11/06/2015 19:57	AMS	08/08/2015 00:04	AMS
Perceptions about Social Media	5	8	11/06/2015 20:01	AMS	25/03/2015 22:47	AMS
General Citizens	16	118	11/06/2015 20:33	AMS	14/08/2015 01:16	AMS
Conversion Factors	6	16	12/08/2015 01:00	AMS	15/08/2015 17:15	AMS
Functionings	14	38	11/06/2015 20:36	AMS	15/08/2015 16:27	AMS
Intervention	8	16	11/06/2015 20:34	AMS	14/08/2015 01:16	AMS
Government Ministries	6	23	11/06/2015 20:37	AMS	14/08/2015 01:33	AMS
Conversion Factors	3	6	11/06/2015 20:38	AMS	15/08/2015 16:54	AMS
Functionings	0	0	11/06/2015 20:38	AMS	21/08/2015 03:33	AMS
Intervention	6	17	11/06/2015 20:38	AMS	14/08/2015 01:32	AMS
National IT agencies	4	63	11/06/2015 20:37	AMS	15/08/2015 16:39	AMS
Conversion Factors	4	13	15/08/2015 15:15	AMS	15/08/2015 16:39	AMS
Functionings	4	39	15/08/2015 15:15	AMS	15/08/2015 16:39	AMS

Following categorisation, we began axial coding. Axial coding, according to Saldana, (2013 p. 3) refers to the procedure of capturing interview excerpts to answer specific research questions.

Figure 5.6 below, shows the coding process used for the response of general citizens in answering research question 3, concerning social media and transparency in the public sector. The coding is highlighted in yellow and the emerging pattern and themes is at the right hand margin. The emerging pattern that appears on the margin highlighted in different colours indicates the media's role in influencing elections, freedom of expression, and as a means of counter surveillance (i.e. citizens monitoring the activities of public affairs).



**Figure 5. 7: Coding for Government officials responses to the use of ICTs and social media**

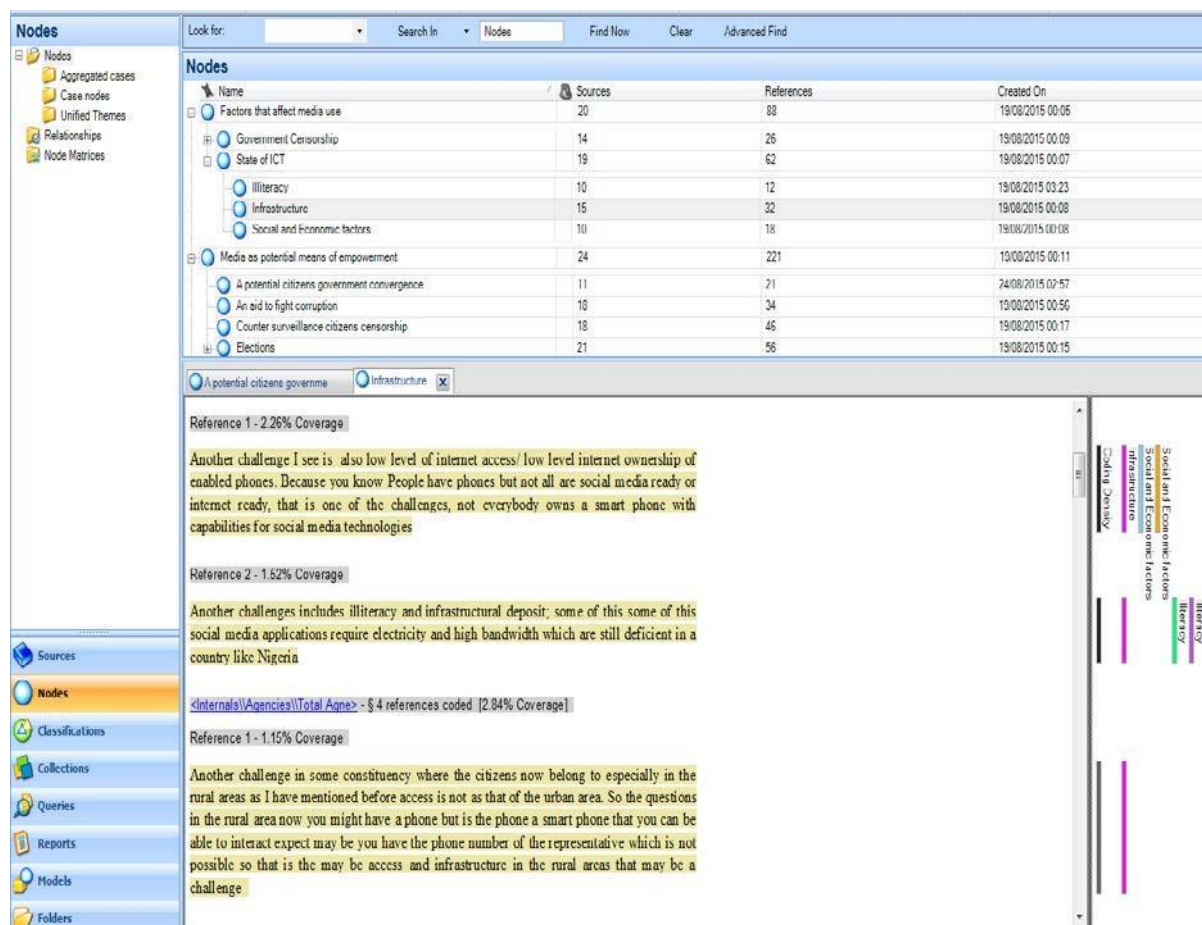


G02 comments on the national portal through which all government ministries and agencies pass information, and indicates a reasonable degree of awareness of the use of social media applications. The participant however noted some challenges affecting the effectiveness of the use of internet social media platforms. This includes infrastructural challenges and the fact that inaccurate or misleading information is sometimes posted on behalf of the Government. The patterns from this interpretation are highlighted in different coding strips - the use of media a mechanism to fight corruption, freedom of expression and potential for citizens' political empowerment.

Figure 5.8 below answers, from the policy maker's perspective, research question 1 regarding possible challenges and risk identified with ICT . Participant NI 2 acknowledges that government attempts at censorship hinder ICT usage Note: as previously coded in other units of analysis, the codes are highlighted in yellow with emerging patterns placed at the margin in different coding strips.



**Figure 5. 8: Coding for National IT agency**



Participants noted infrastructural challenges and also commented on perceived censorship. Although the policy of state censorship of the media has received no legislative backing, they warned television, to win the approval of its State appointed bosses, applies a policy of what government calls the ‘National Interest’ and what its opponents identify as enlightened self-censorship. Newspaper journalists, independent of government ownership and political affiliation, are not so easily swayed by self-interest or the blandishments of power. A more insidious policy of selective intimidation has been applied to them to discourage their exposures of corrupt cliques and rapacious practices., The security force policy of violent intimidation against selected journalists has induced , in all but a courageous few, a policy of anticipatory compliance when reporting the rudiments of government policy. The evidence for this policy of intimidation can be found in a pattern of violent attacks described in Chapter Three . The consequences of the state’s failure to charge and convict offenders ripples beyond the Press to cause independent Nigerian based bloggers to think twice before publishing articles and opinion critical of influential individuals.

Respondents acknowledged that citizens need to self-censor and be careful in the manner they use social media applications to attack Government. Government officials noted in their response some level of concern about citizens' use of social media. Interview responses suggest that from within Government ministries, there is apprehension concerning the manner with which citizens attack officials using the internet and social media. Although according to NI 12, no official claims of arrest regarding citizens social media attacks on public office holders has been made so far. However, government officials made cautionary statements that citizens should be mindful of how they criticise the Government because some instances of citizens' arrest, detention and victimisation have occurred .

Overall, initial coding was open with over 80 free nodes obtained inductively from the interview transcripts.

Figure 5. 9: Matrix query based on individual responses

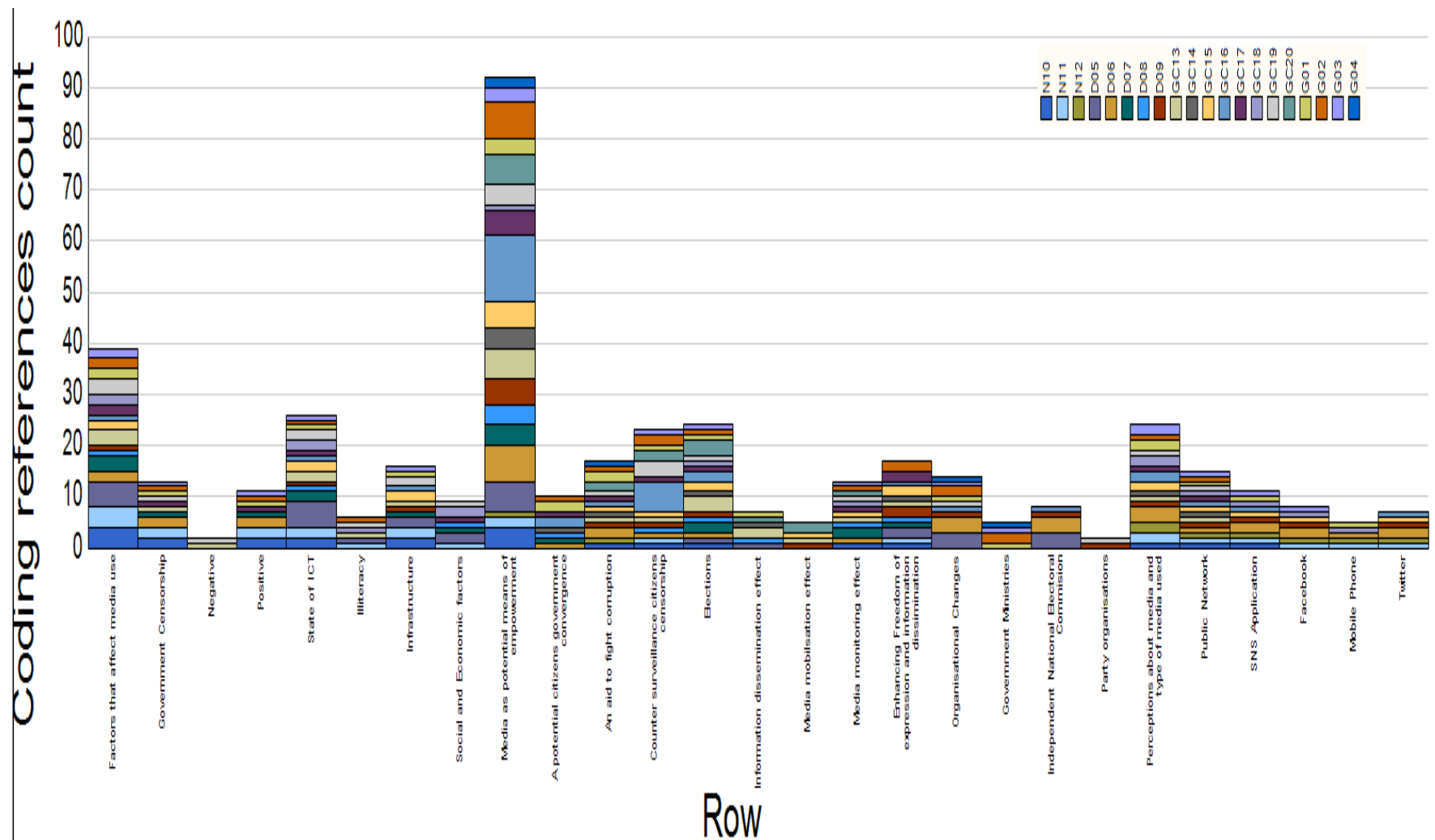
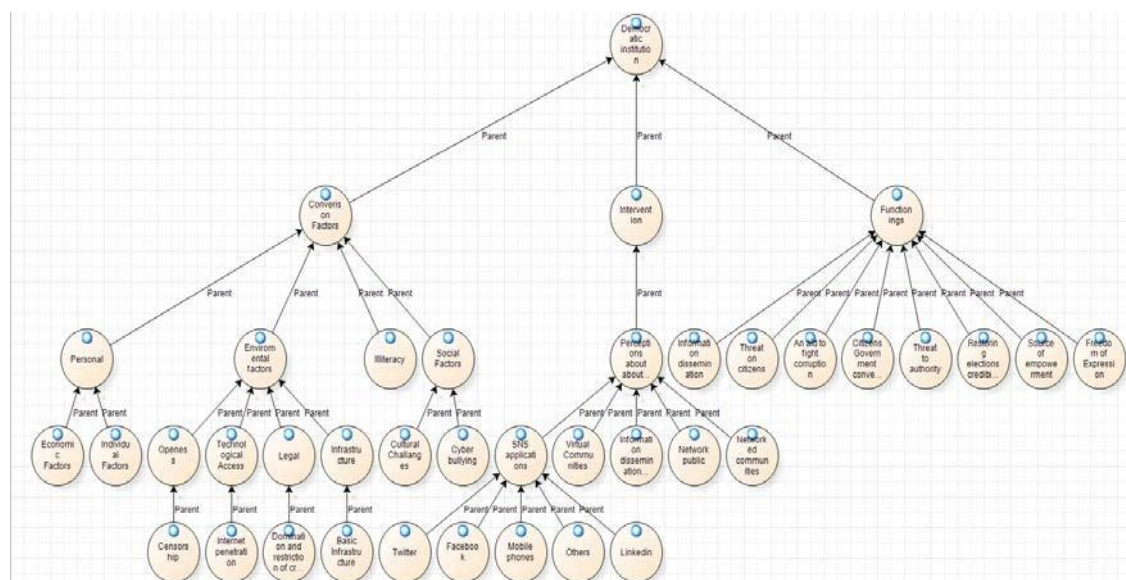




Figure 5.9 above, presents a matrix query of responses categorised as the emerging themes from the interview excerpts. Each participant is given a unique code and colour, whilst their responses were used to indicate the number of times a particular emerging theme was mentioned based on the questions asked. Through this modelling, we see how the various nodes fit together to answer the research questions ..

Figure 5.10 below, shows the connections among different nodes and sub-nodes and the connections between items in the model. In the first hand coding the model gave the sense of the ideas generated in relation to the research questions addressed. Note: the model represents one case analysis, that of the democratic institution participants.

**Figure 5. 10: Case modelling of based on the response of participants**



**Step four** in line with Creswell 2014 model of qualitative data analysis, codes are used to generate a small number of themes – usually five to seven. Saldana, (2013) refers to this stage as the second hand coding style, where the primary goal is to develop a sense of categorical organisation from an array cycle of coding (p207) by reducing the number of redundant hierarchies found in some nodes to create unified themes.

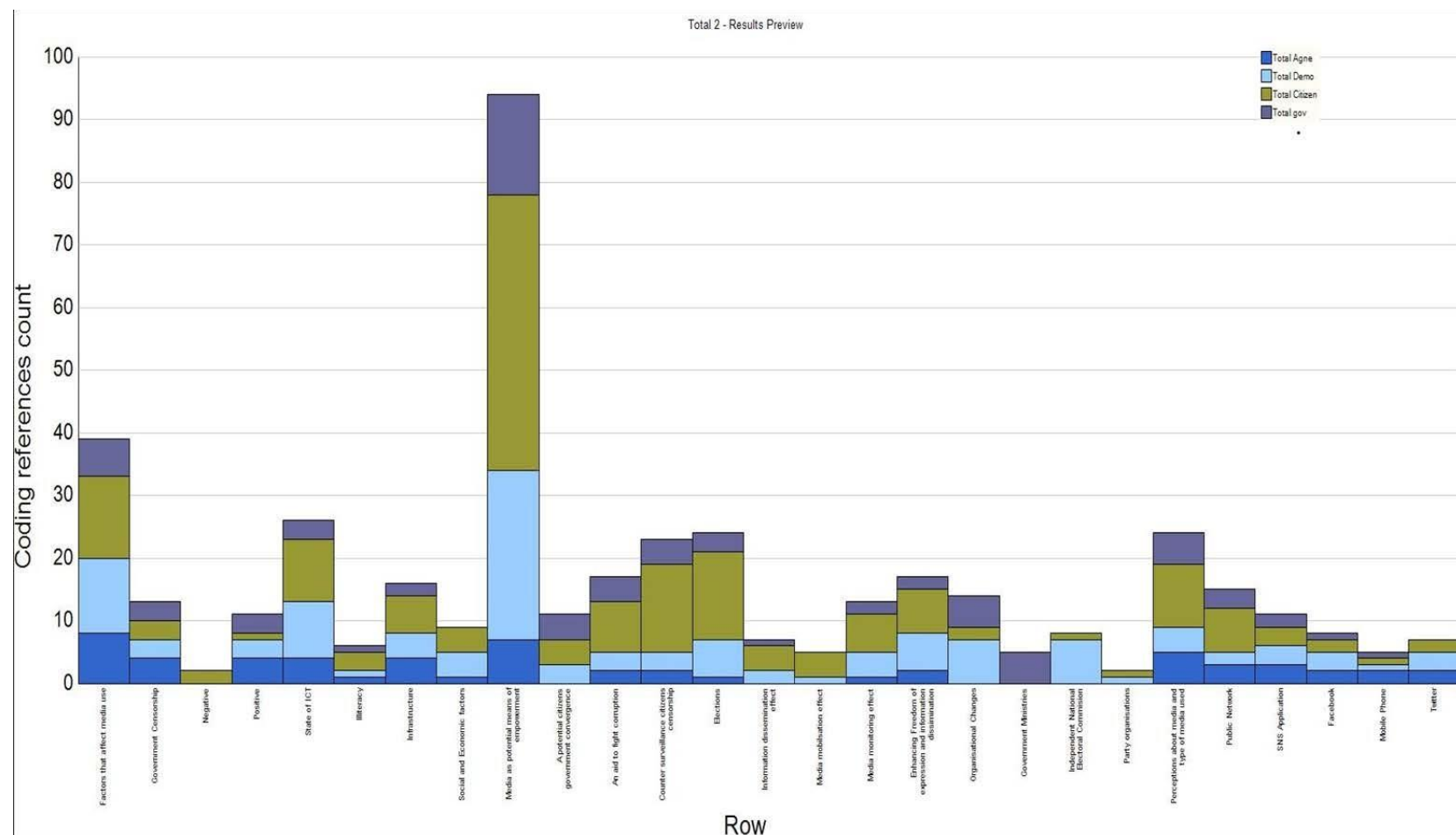
Figure 5.11 below, shows the overall results following second hand coding. The results show a majority of participants agree that use of the media is a means of empowerment which reflects change in various aspects of political development. The process of conducting elections, and use of the media to express opinion and create fresh narratives is changing the landscape of Nigeria’s bad

governance, and in the process, raising a threat to political leaders and power holders.

Finally, the emerging themes have been aggregated according to participant categories in line with the context of Sens's HCDA, ICT and social media intervention, conversion factors and finally ICT and social media capabilities . The study will focus on outcome development according to the views of all participants. The figure below is a thematic representation of the aggregated responses of each case analysis.

Note: general citizens are highlighted in green; the blue colour represents the views of democratic institutions, dark blue colour represents participants working in IT agencies, and finally purple represents government officials. The data values are written on each of the charts.

**Figure 5. 11: Result preview generated by Nvivo according to four case analysis**



After some preliminary analysis and modelling, additional themes and constructs drawn from interviews and chronological frameworks were added... This was considered to be theoretical saturation indicating that the historical account was substantively complete as narrated and documented (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

The main themes for analysis are shown in the table below according to Sen's capability model

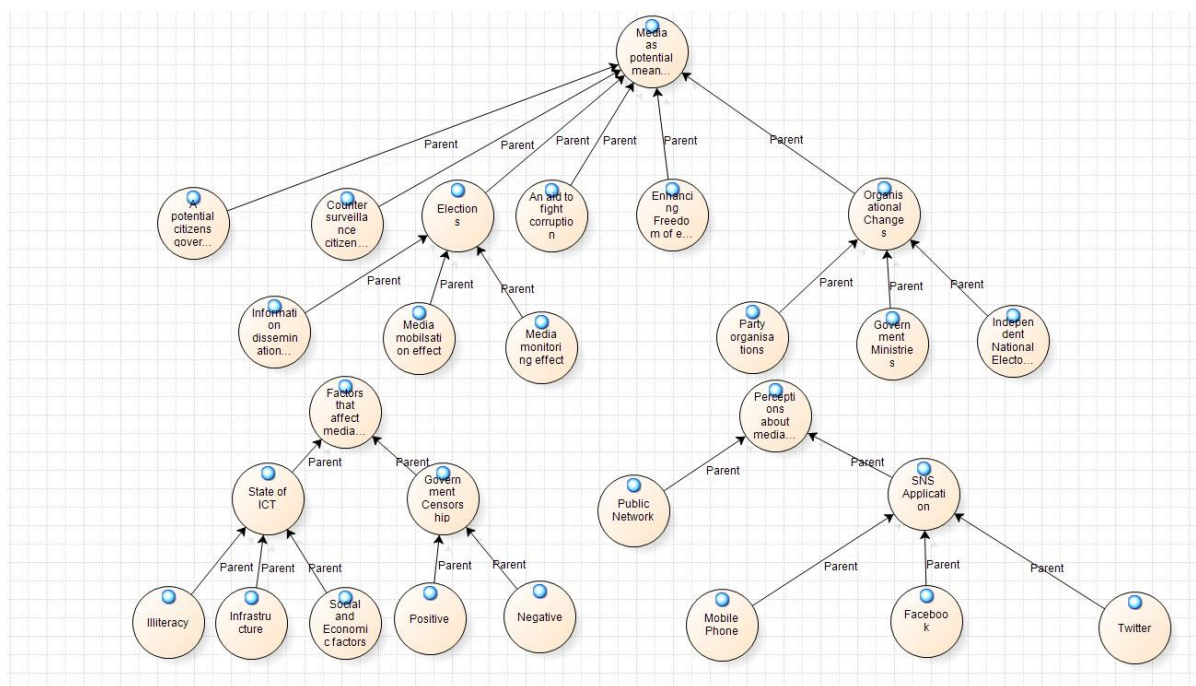
**Table 7: Final themes for discussion**

Nvivo Entity	Main themes for discussion
Intervention	Understanding and awareness of ICTs and Social Media Mobile phones Facebook Twitter
Conversion	Censorship ICT infrastructure Social and economic factors Illiteracy
Functioning	Election process Enhancing freedom of expression An aid to fight corruption Citizen's means of counter surveillance Future Government/citizens interaction Media empowerment

The table lists 9 NVIVO entities and nodes at the conclusion of the analysis, drawn from the Project Log and NVIVO Projects Summary. All were important to on-going theoretical reflection and development of the analytical account in Chapter Six. The initial outputs from this analysis were case study descriptions and the detailed chronological account of the evolution of Nigeria's use of ICTs and social media.

**Step 5** advances how the description and themes are represented in the qualitative narrative. According to Creswell, (2014) qualitative researchers use visuals, figures or tables as adjuncts to discussion, this is also known as process modelling which conveys descriptive information about each participant in a table (as in case studies), (p 200).

**Figure 5. 12: Case modelling for final themes**



**Step 6** A final step in data analysis involves making an interpretation in qualitative research of the findings .The analysis suggests the use of social media to be an empowerment tool, particularly in relation to transparency of electioneering, freedom of speech, government/citizen interaction and also a means by which citizens can hold governance accountable for issues related to corruption. The next section presents Part 2 of the Questionnaire analysis

### 5.3 Quantitative analysis: Questionnaire

The researcher used a questionnaire to complement the findings from the interview questions. This section presents an analysis of the questionnaire responses gathered at the University of Salford, UK, questioning Nigerian students about their experience, perceptions and views of ICT and social media use in Nigeria. The results were generated using Microsoft Excel. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed and

50 were completed, a response rate of 50.0%. The quantitative analysis of the data received via the questionnaire presents a description of Sen's capability approach from intervention to conversion factors and functionings.

First, brief information is provided on the background of the participating students. The questionnaire (described in detail in Chapter 4) involved students at the University of Salford from undergraduates, to Master's students and PhD students. 43 of the respondents were Master's student who have spent a year in the UK (87.76%), while 4 undergraduate student (8.16%) and the

smallest group of respondents were two who have spent more than 3 years in the UK (4.08%).

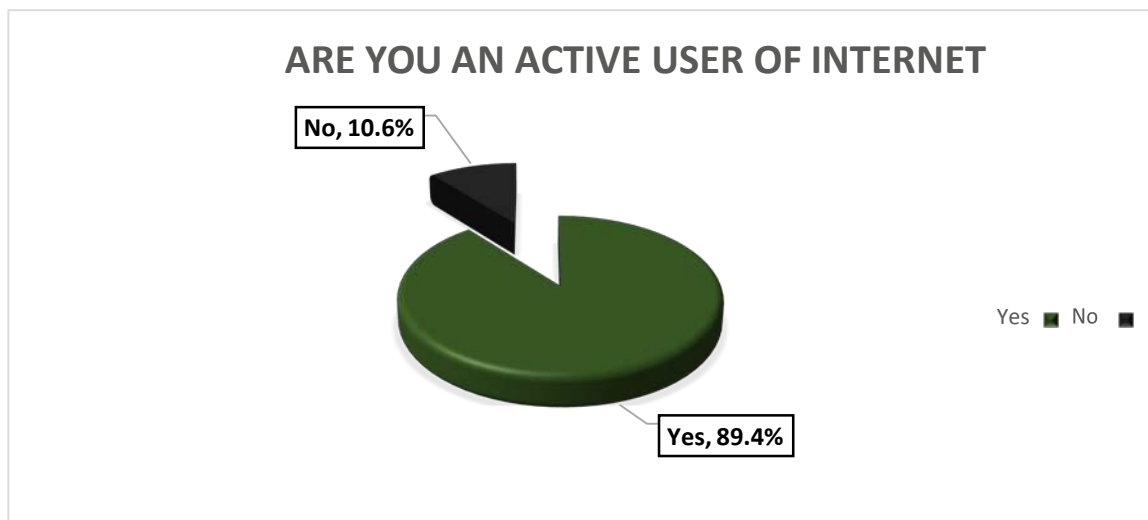
### 5.3.1 Sen's intervention (Perception about ICT and Social Media)

The researcher set out to build a picture of student perceptions of social media by understanding the types of social media applications in use and the purpose applied to using such applications. This information helped the researcher to develop a strategy for a more effective use of ICT and social media, appropriate to the Nigerian context.

Part one of the questionnaire inquired about internet use and the general perceptions of respondents. Questions 1 to 5 establish whether or not respondents are frequent users of the internet both in Nigeria and the UK, to ensure participants are well informed on the topic of internet use and the associated applications they use to access it.

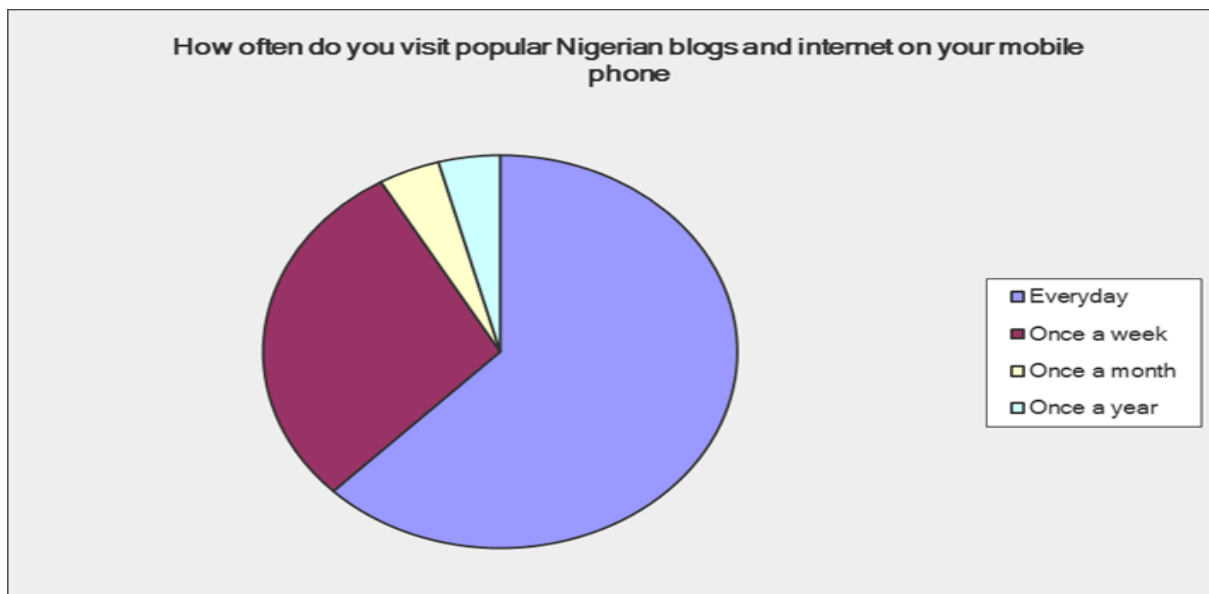
Question 1 asked: are you a regular user of the internet in Nigeria? 89% answered yes, 10% answered No, while 5 answers were invalid (see figure 23: internet use).

**Figure 5. 13: Citizen's Internet use**



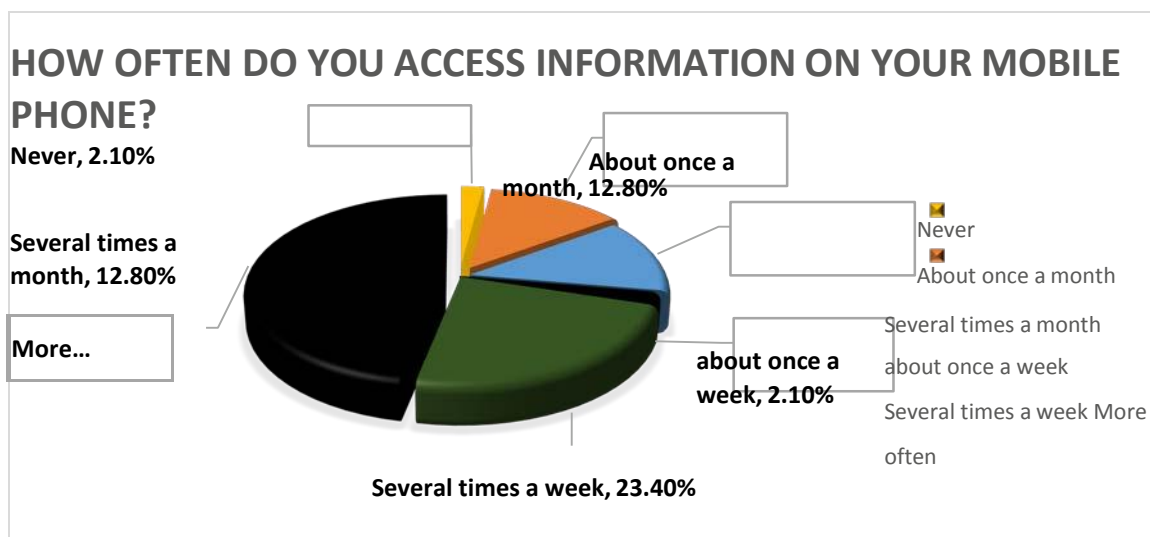
Question 2 was a multiple-choice question, designed to find out if respondents are also active users of the internet in the UK. (42 %) strongly agreed they are active users, 44% slightly agreed, 12% neither agreed nor disagreed, 0% totally disagree. Unsurprisingly, this well-educated group show themselves to be frequent users of the internet..

**Figure 5. 14: Frequency of respondent's internet use in the in Nigeria**



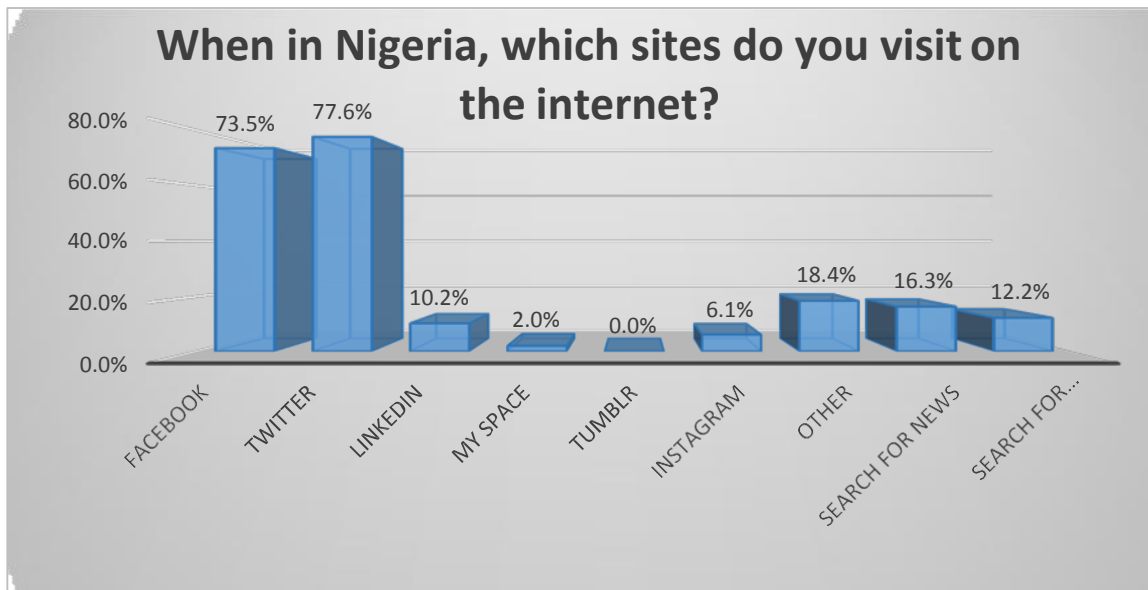
Question three asks how often respondents actively access blogs and the internet on the mobile phone. The findings show 62% use their mobile phone daily to access the internet, 29% once a week, and 4% once a month 4% once a year.

**Figure 5. 15: Frequency of internet access on mobile phone:**



Question six asks how often respondents access information on their mobile phone; 12.% indicated they did so several times a month , 23% did so several time a week. This indicates that mobile phone users frequently access information online.

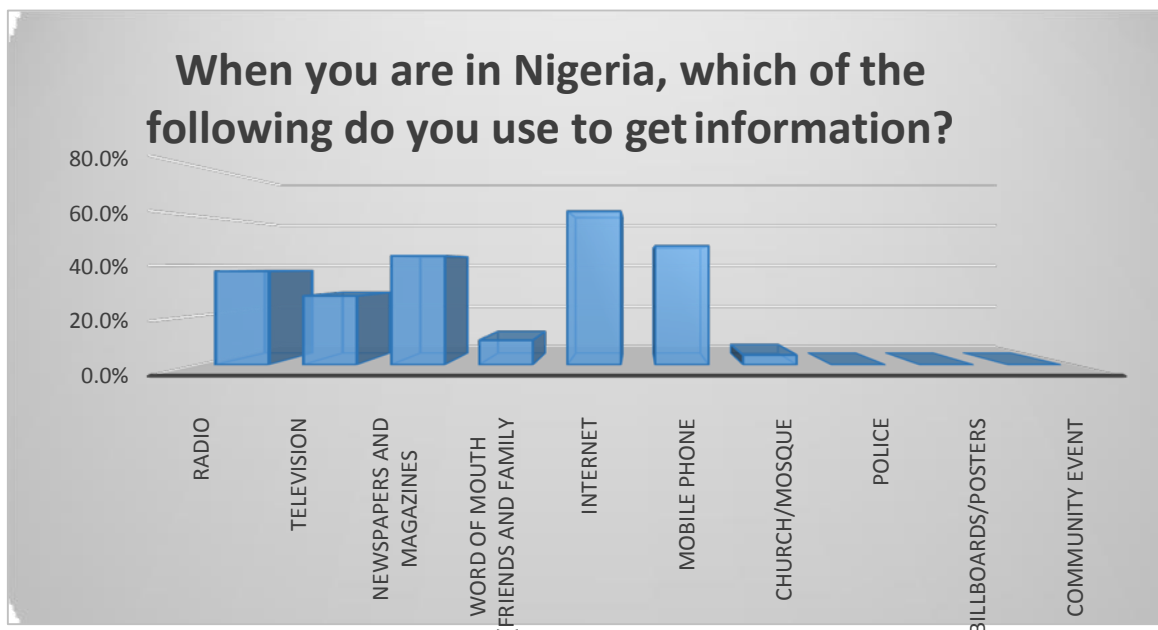
**Figure 5. 16: Type of social media application used**



According to the findings, Twitter is the most widely used social media application 77%, followed by Facebook 73%, and other local applications 18.%. The purpose is mainly to search for news and entertainment in Nigeria.

Question six asks about the means through which citizens use to get information.

**Figure 5. 17: Citizen's source of information in Nigeria**



This question aims to find out technological applications and other means participants use as a



medium to get information. The internet is the most widely medium through which citizens get information, this covers (65%), then via the use of the mobile phone to source information covering (55%), newspaper and magazine 45% and the radio with 40%. This means the use of mobile phone internet, internet on desktop, newspaper and the radio are considered by this sample of respondents as the most widely sources of information.

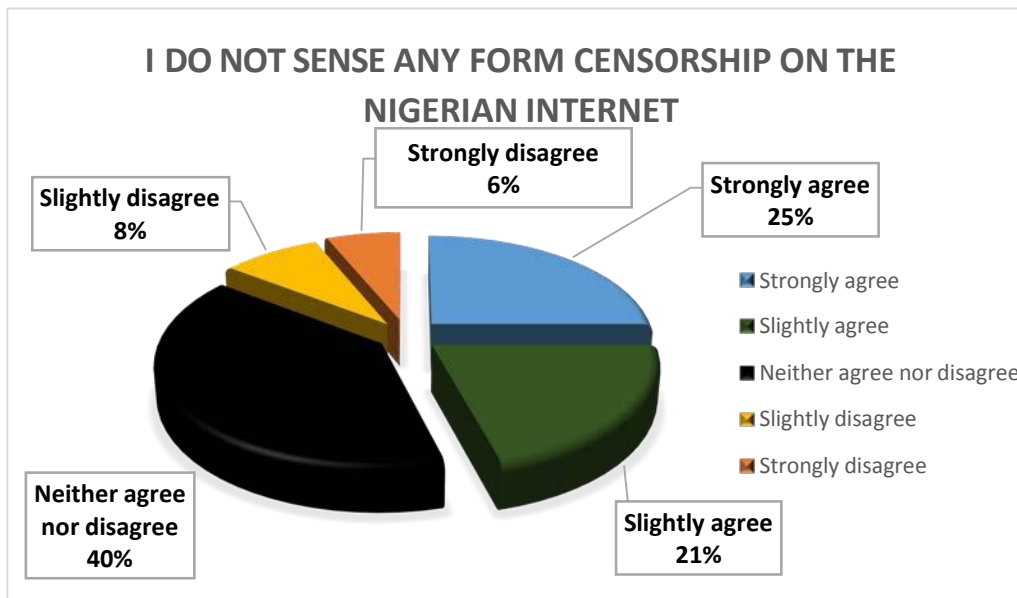
Question six above was the final question on mode of citizens' Communication behaviour through the use of digital technologies and other applications. From the analysis of the interventions so far it could be seen that social media applications such as Twitter, Facebook and mobile phone are the most widely used application through which citizens interact and engaged.

### 5.3.2 Conversion factors

This part of the questionnaire is concerned with factors that affect the use of ICT and social media. Questions asked relate to the experience, views and perception of the respondents that affect or restrict the use of ICT and social media to find out if respondent's views complement the findings of the questionnaire.

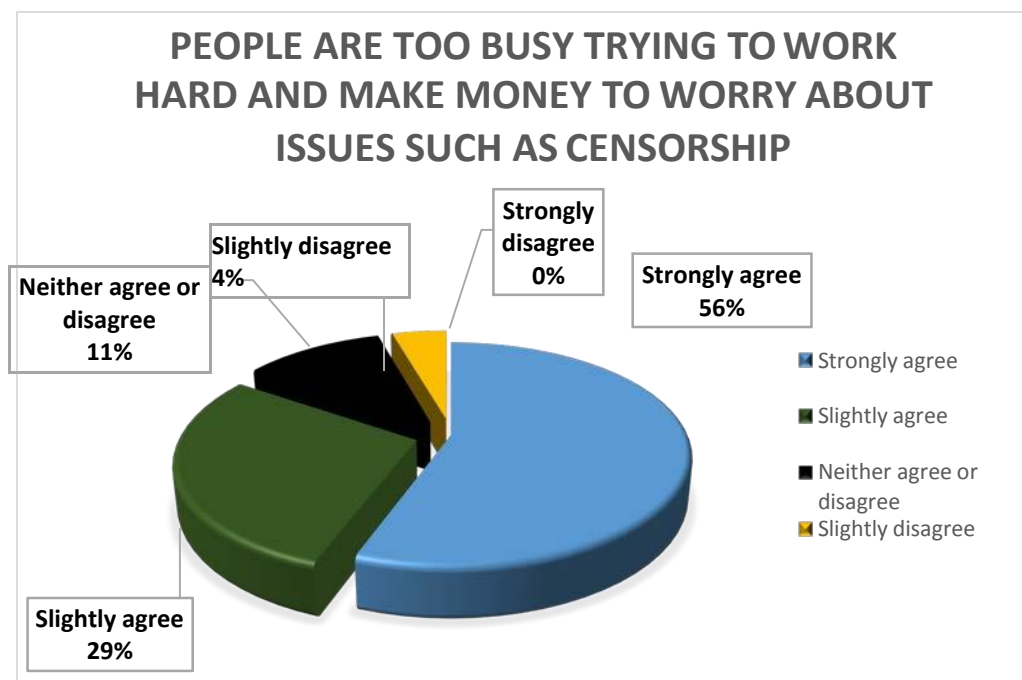
Questionnaire item 1 inquires about internet censorship in Nigeria. 25% strongly agreed that internet censorship is noticeable in Nigeria, 20% slightly agreed. 39% are uncertain about the presence of internet censorship. 6% strongly disagreed, 8% slightly disagreeing to the notion of censorship.

**Figure 5. 18: Citizen's responses on internet censorship in Nigeria**



The researcher established whether other issues could restrict citizens' understanding of internet censorship. Question two, asked whether economic activities, can distract citizens from internet censorship. 55% slightly agree, 28% slightly disagree, 11% were Neutral, 4% slightly disagree and 0% strongly disagree..

**Figure 5. 19: Continuation of citizen's responses on internet censorship**

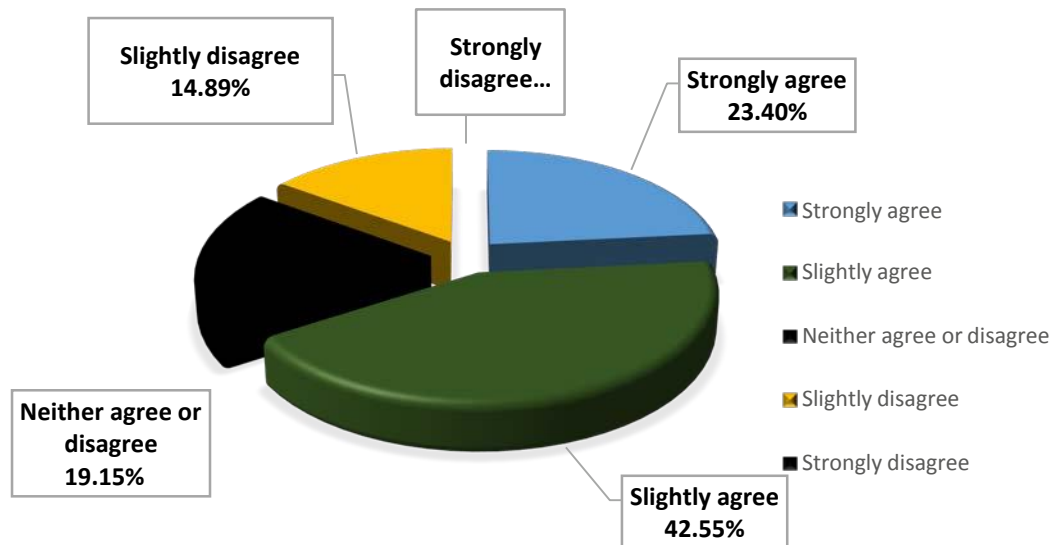


Still on the issue of internet censorship, because of allegations of Government attempts to buy surveillance tools, and legislative proposals to punish citizens who criticise Government on social media, question three asked whether Government censorship on the internet offends citizens. 56% strongly agreed, 29% slightly agreed, 11% were neutral, 4% slightly disagreed, and 0% strongly disagreed.

Question four asked if citizens could be openly critical and say what they want on the internet and social media. 23% strongly agree, 42% slightly agree, 19% were Neutral, 14% slightly disagree, (0%) strongly disagree.

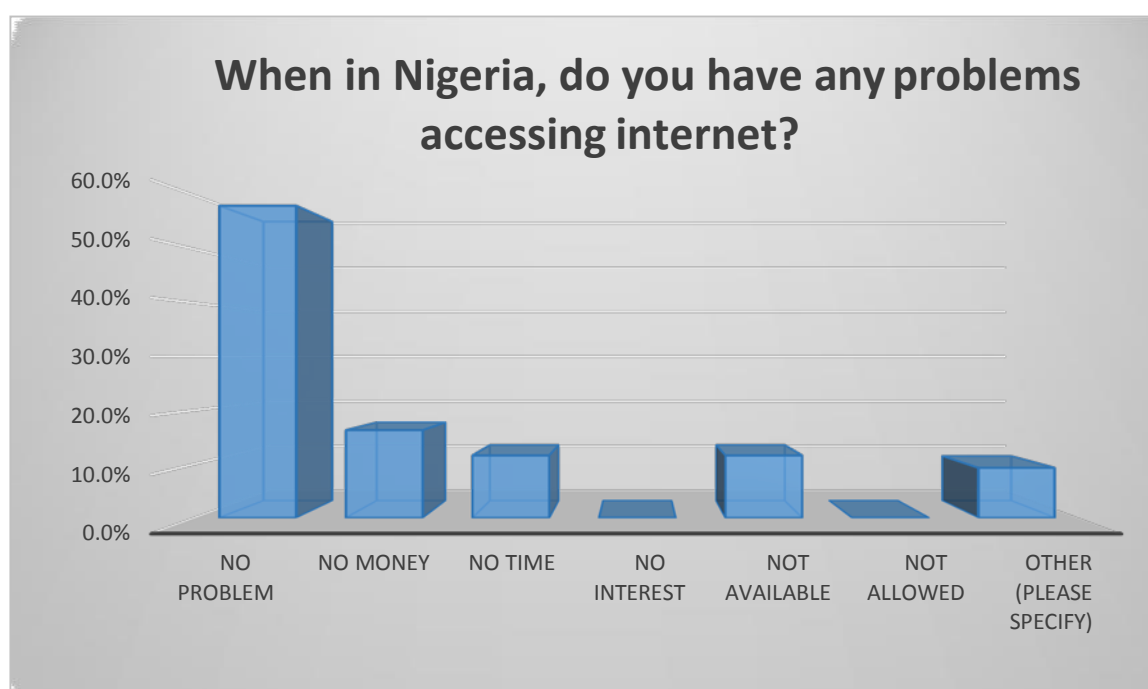
**Figure 5. 20: Response to freedom of expression**

**IT MATTERS TO ME THAT I AM NOT ABLE TO BE  
OPENLY CRITICAL AND SAY WHAT I WANT TO  
SAY ON THE INTERNET**



Question five asks about problems accessing the internet. According to the findings, the majority of respondents (60%) answered that there is no problem, 20% responded that cost factors inhibited their access while others indicated that time is a problem affecting their access to the internet.

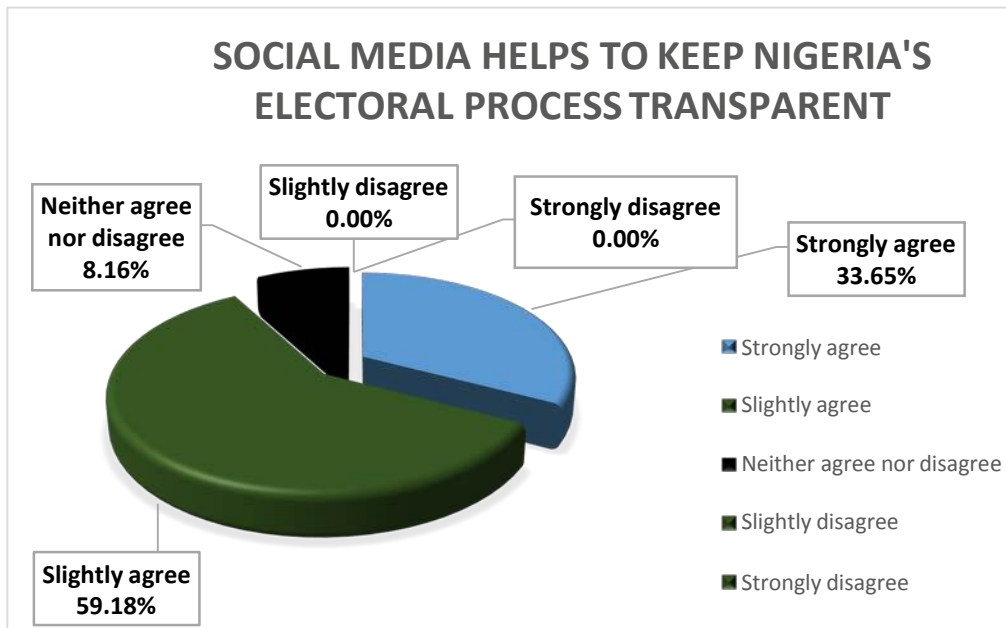
**Figure 5. 21: Problems when accessing the internet**



### **5.3.3 ICT and Social Media capabilities**

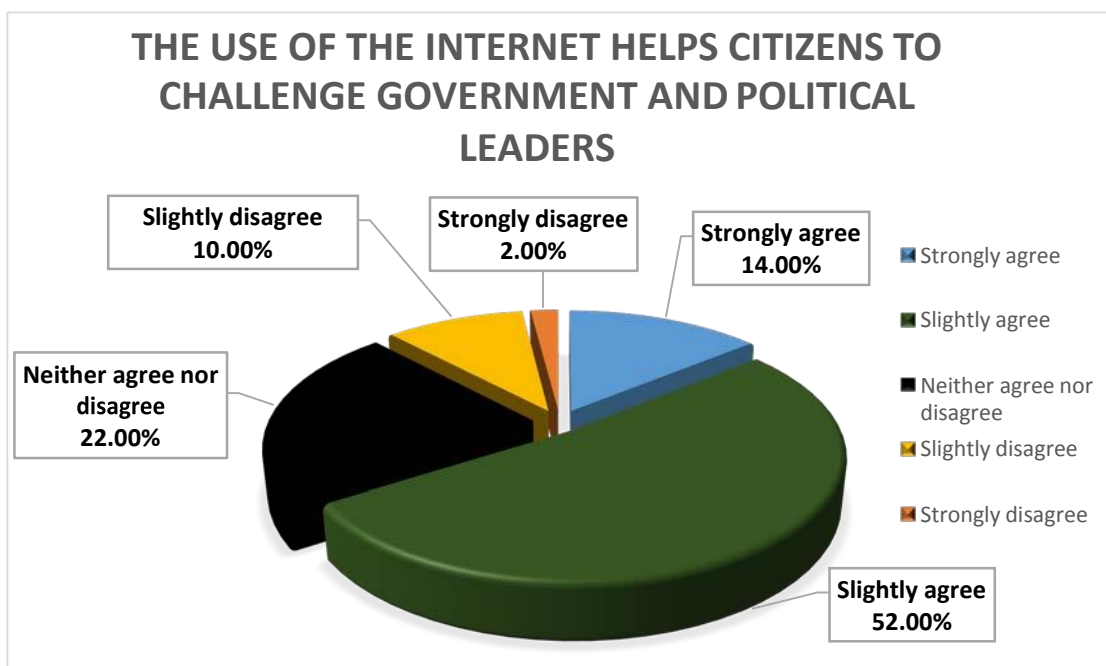
This section asks what positive or potential achievements could, or have been achieved, using the internet and social media in election processes, and whether digital media assist the electoral process. 32% strongly agree, 59% slightly agree, 8% were neutral, 0% slightly disagree and 0% strongly disagree

**Figure 5. 22: Response to electoral processes**



This question asks if the internet, through its various functions (such as information sharing and dissemination) is a means of citizen empowerment, challenging Government and political leaders. 33% strongly agreed, 59% slightly agreed, 8% were neutral, 0% slightly disagreed and 0% disagreed

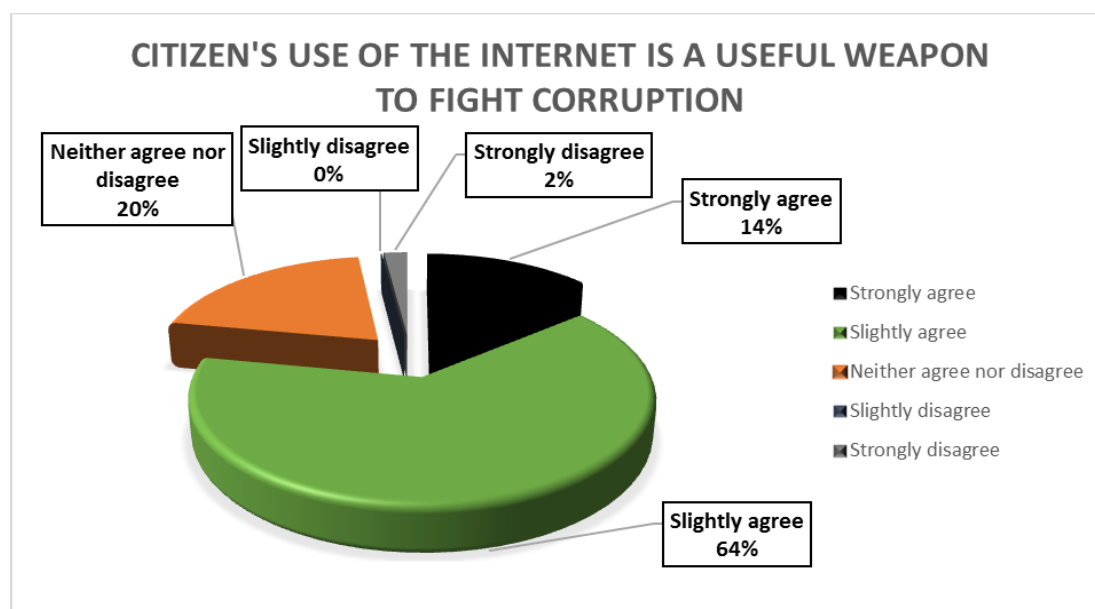
**Figure 5. 23: Use of internet as a challenge to political leaders**



Question 11 addresses corruption, and asks what digital media features, which allow regular information dissemination and communication exchange, help stifle corrupt practices, and what has

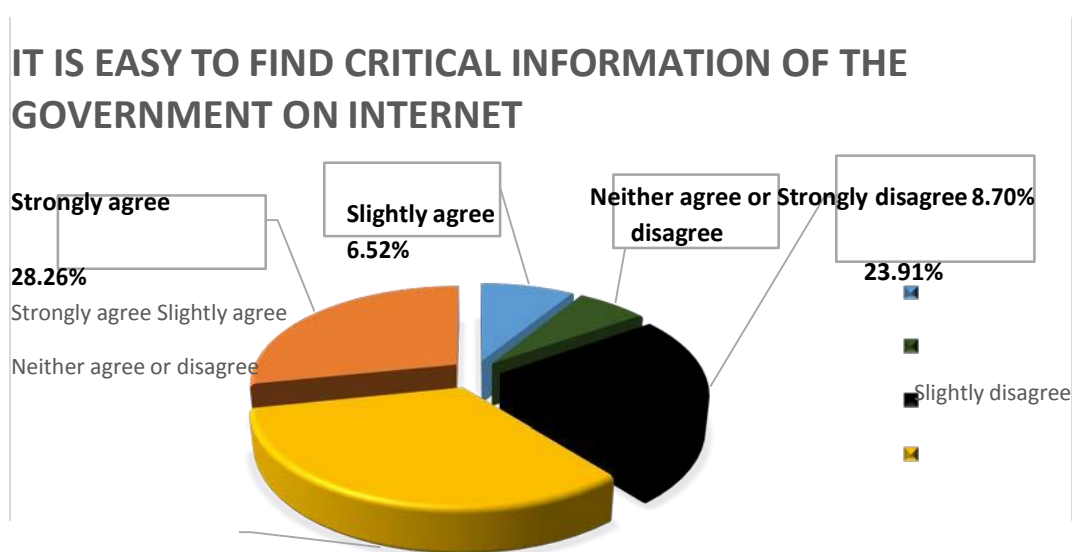
been achieved so far in terms of transparency through the use of social media. Asked if the Media is a useful weapon to fight corruption (14 %) strongly agree 52% slightly agree, 14% strongly agree, 2% strongly disagree, 22% Neutral.

**Figure 5. 24: Media as useful weapon to fight corruption**



Q12 asks if information critical of the government is accessible online. The response was clear; 64% slightly agreed that it was not. 14% strongly agree, 2% strongly disagree, 0% slightly disagree, and 20% were Neutral. The results show that online opinions and information critical of Government is sparse

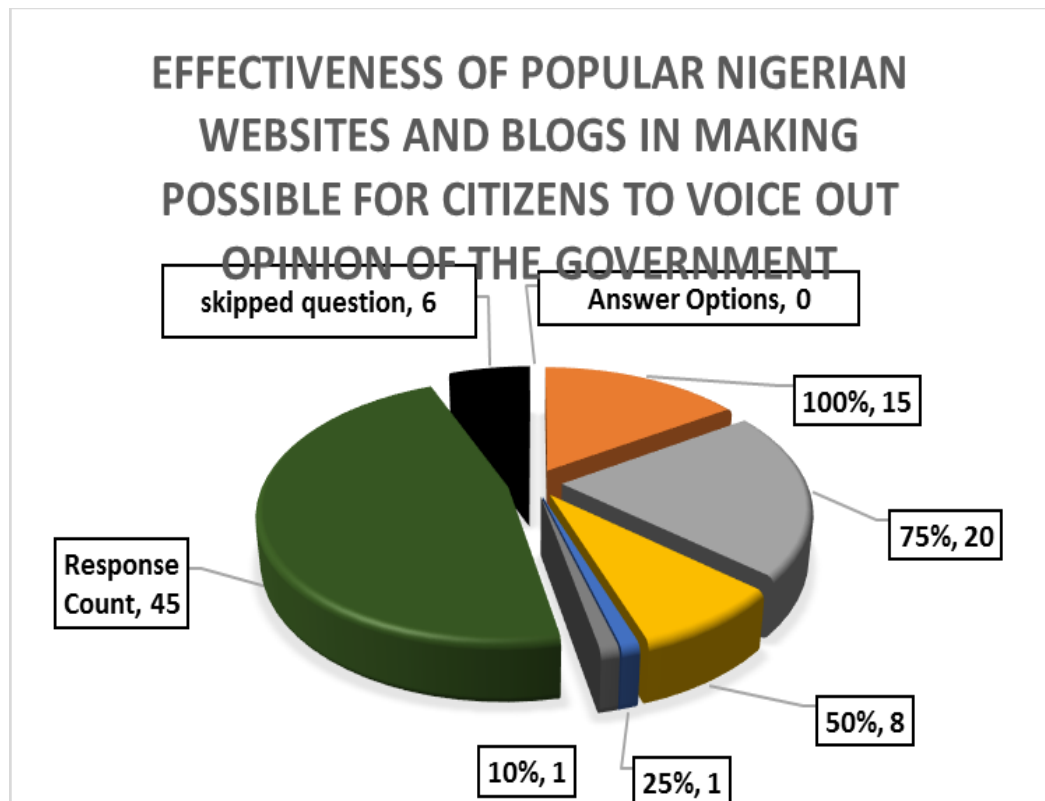
**Figure 5. 25: Response to critical information on the government**



Slightly disagree 32.61%
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The next question rates the effectiveness of popular Nigerian websites and blogs as mouthpieces for citizens to voice their opinion of government. 33% believe they are 100% effective, 44.% rated them 75% Effective, 17% rated them 50% effective and 2.% rated them as10%. effective.

**Figure 5. 26: Effectiveness of popular Nigeria popular websites and blogs as means of voicing out opinion.**



From the analysis of the questionnaire it can be seen that some of the findings tally with analysis in the interviews. This supports the argument of this study on whether the use of ICT and social media is means of empowerment in Nigerian context. With particular attention to elections and the media's role in exposing corruption and encouraging the individual's freedom of expression, the data shows that the use of media applications is changing the political landscape in Nigeria. The next chapter discusses the research findings in detail. Firstly, the interview findings were discussed, cross referencing with literature review, and then the findings of the questionnaire were discussed to complement the findings of the interview.



## **CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **6.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the findings of the research. The intent of the study is to find how Nigerian policy makers and citizens perceive the use and developmental outcome of different communication platforms, the new media. Such media platforms include (internet, handheld devices such mobile phones, PDA's) and Social Media such as (Facebook, Twitter, RSS feed, and YouTube) specifically in terms of how the integration of these media influences and enhances freedom of expression, openness, accountability, political participation and empowerment. The study investigates perceptions about ICT and Social Media technologies and identifies how these applications have broad implications for governance, media freedom, and citizen's access to the media, freedom of expression, transparency, accountability, and political participation.

Nigeria is used as case study; the country ranks as Africa's largest economy, powered by vast oil reserves. Average incomes have doubled since 2010, yet a third of Nigeria's people live on less than one pound a day. In 2014 Nigeria was placed 136th out of 174 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index. Its score of 27 (2014) 25 (2013) and 27(2012) placing it, with six other countries, as the 15th most corrupt in the world. In Freedom House's 2014 Freedom of the Press report, Nigeria is rated partly free. Its score in this report has hovered between a low of 54% in 2010, and a high of 50% in 2012. One can compare this score with those of other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa: Four (8 percent) of the 49 countries in sub-Saharan Africa were rated Free; 22 (45 percent) were rated as partly free. 23 (47 percent) were rated Not Free (Freedom House 2014).

The average score in the region is 58.67%. The lower the number, the higher is the element of press freedom. At a score of 51%, Nigeria has a better than average rating for the region. Freedom House is an independent watchdog organization that supports democratic change, monitors the status of freedom around the world, and advocates for democracy and human rights.

The central research question was formulated as: What role, if any, can ICT and social media play in shaping and empowering grassroots democratic Governance in Nigeria? To answer this question, the study reconceptualises the notion of 'power upon' and 'power towards' (to answer the guiding research question) as a benchmark to discuss the outcome of the study.

### **6.1 'Power upon' and 'Power towards': How Nigerian Political Institutions Neuter Traditional Media, and why citizens use ICT as Medium for Sustaining Local Democracy.**

Obiageli Ezekwesili is Transparency International's co-founder. She has also served with the World Bank – as its vice-president for Africa – and as a Nigerian government minister. She argues that there is nothing cultural about corruption in African societies. She maintains that there is an “alienation of the systems and institutions of governance from the people”. At the heart of the problem”, she said, “is that the entire political system is held hostage by a small group of vested interests.” (Freedom House, 2012)

Neither the media nor ICT, nor vested interests operate in a vacuum. To understand the impact and influence, both real and potential, of ICT in a Nigerian context, and the role of the media, we must first describe the nature of Nigerian democracy, or quasi- democracy, and the institutions which support it, and explain why, in the political infrastructure of Nigeria, some of the gateways to successful inclusive institutions - such as a free press - have been neutered. A brief description of the historical background will aid an understanding of why conventional media has had little impact on the political culture of self-interested elites. Individual citizens enjoy freedom of expression unhindered, but journalists' freedom to investigate and report is limited. This freedom of expression has increasingly resorted to the internet for information and exchanges of opinion

A brief outline of the political and social context, and the historical conditions that gave rise to Nigeria's flawed institutions, will help us understand why systemic problems like corruption remain intractable, why the spotlight of traditional media has failed to illuminate a fix for the problem, and how citizens are using ICT in the belief they can make a difference. How ICTs can influence informal and formal governance institutions will be best understood when the background and nature of those institutions is made clear.

Dr Lamido Sanusi's “radical anti-corruption” campaign was recognised by the Financial Times Banker magazine which nominated him “Central Banker of the Year 2010”. He discovered a US\$20 billion black hole in Nigeria's national finances. He received death threats and frequent warnings that he would be fired after he took on bank CEOs who had stolen billions in deposits and who, he said, had bought political protection. He describes Nigeria as a country where you “can disappear an elephant into the pocket of a shirt” (Miller 2015). He suggests that it is no secret in Nigeria that trickery appears to trump transparency. Despite the view of one government employee interviewed for this study that “social media have a very important role in deepening democracy and governance because all the things that are secret are now open”, the uninformed outsider may wonder how it is that Nigerian elites can exploit the people's and the nation's resources almost in plain sight? Acemoglu and Robinson's (2012) study - What Makes Countries

Rich or Poor –goes some way toward answering this question. They explain the vicious and the virtuous cycles of prosperity, and how these cycles influence entrenched elites to devote themselves either to wealth appropriation or wealth creation. They explain that whenever inclusive institutions are present, the virtuous cycle will create the conditions that prevent elites siphoning off the nation's resources, thereby helping ensure that inclusive institutions expand and persist. However, in the case of Nigeria, the institutions of power have become "extractive institutions" by aiding the elite in the service of its own interest. The outcome has been the domination of the interests of the mass of the population by the interests of the elite.

Acemoglu and Robinson argue that a combination of corrupt regimes, exploitative elites and self-serving institutions within a decentralised federal system, such as operates in Nigeria, is a prescription for national failure. They write that "Nations fail when they have extractive economic institutions, supported by extractive political institutions that impede and even block economic growth" (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012). The following account relies extensively upon Acemoglu and Robinson's attribution of 'national failure' to extractive political and economic institutions.

According to Acemoglu and Robinson's theory, the absence of inclusive institutions has affected Nigerian political values and behaviours. Inclusive economic institutions are those that allow and encourage citizens to participate in economic activities, and make the best use of their talents and skills, which enables individuals to make choices. These inclusive economic institutions arise from "political institutions that distribute power broadly in society" and subject it to constraints. Instead of being "vested in a single individual or a narrow group, inclusive political power rests with a broad coalition or a plurality of groups". (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012) "While economic institutions are critical for determining whether a country is poor or prosperous, it is politics, and political institutions, that determine what economic institutions a country has." (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012). "This initial set of inclusive economic institutions includes secure property rights, rule of law, public services and freedom to contract. It is the role of the state to impose law and order, enforce contracts and prevent theft and fraud" (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012), and the Nigerian state has failed to provide all of these. The state's failure to set up this nexus of beneficent civic institutions has created an extractive state, whose objective is to satisfy a self-sustaining "powerful elite", be they "the ruler of the country, a set of rulers or prevalent interest groups". When, as in Nigeria, the proceeds of corruption are deposited into non-productive inaccessible offshore accounts, this leaves only "crumbs and crumbling institutions" for re-investment in Nigeria, (Joseph, 2008 p 104). According to a 2006 United Nations report, the

Government's vast oil reserves have restricted other productive sectors of the economy, and have also created "avenues for illicit enrichment through corrupt practices" (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010).

Understanding that at the centre of Nigeria's political and economic vicious circle the currency of power is inflated, helps explain why this inflated currency -power - is protected through the monopolising of top-down broadcast communications, and by the stifling of the development of grassroots organisation in the form of bottom-up projects such as community radio. Acemoglu and Robinson (2012 p 366) explain that "extractive political institutions lead to extractive economic institutions, which enrich a few at the expense of the many". The beneficiaries from extractive institutions, therefore, have the resources to build private armies, that is, armies which owe their primary allegiance not to the state, but to their paymasters. To retain power, Nigerian politicians buy their judges, and rig their elections. The public face of this duplicity shows itself in the "contest between personal rule (typified by the "Big Man" syndrome) and institutions based on the rule of law" (Joseph, 2008 p 99). Nigerian rulers do not deny democracy, instead they seek to "outflank it by expanding their personal powers at the expense of institutions" that could restrict those powers (Joseph, 2008 p 102).

The political figures who took the reins of power at the end of the colonial era were capable men who used agricultural and manufacturing resources to set Nigeria on a path of development, building hospitals, schools and infrastructure in the 1960s. Corruption existed but on a tolerable scale. When oil was discovered, the economic boom that followed in the 1970s delivered instant riches. The ruling elite dispensed with the staples that had underpinned the country's economic expansion in the first years of independence, in favour of distributing the bonanza of oil cash. The rot had set in. Successive governments institutionalised corruption and Nigerian society has been corrupted in the process. The short history of Nigerian government exposed the impossibility of suddenly introducing institutions of government and expecting citizens to adopt them and to unlearn their long history of tribal organisation. Ukase and Audu, (2015) link the collapse of most Nigerian institutions, "especially institutions that are charged with the responsibility of checking corruption" to the long years of military adventurism.

Some of the gateways to inclusive institutions, which also act as barriers to the emergence of extractive institutions, are pluralism, a free press and the rule of law. In place of pluralism there is division on religious lines and gross inequalities of wealth; in place of a free press, there exists the illusion of a free press. Assessing the rule of law is an uncertain and difficult process, but when

members of the Nigerian judiciary – the founts of the law - were asked, in a United Nations report, if they “believed that the Government controlled the justice system, the responses raised concerns; 63 per cent in Delta state they believed that the Government did control the justice system, but only 47 per cent in Borno state, and 43 per cent in Lagos state agreed” that the Government was fulfilling its legal obligations under the law (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2006). The same 2006 United Nations report on the Nigerian justice system refers to the vicious circle between “corruption and other forms of socio-economic problems, such as poverty, unemployment and crime”. In common with Acemoglu and Robinson , the Report uses the metaphor of the vicious circle, stating that this “vicious circle makes it difficult to assert whether it is these related problems that are in fact the real causes or rather the symptoms of corruption” (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2006).

The role of a free media should be to “provide information on threats against inclusive institutions” (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012 p 365). A pluralist system creates a more open system and allows independent media to flourish, making it easier for groups with an interest in the continuation of inclusive institutions to become aware of, and organise against threats to these institutions. Inclusive political institutions would encourage rather than prevent the emergence of community led initiatives such as Community Radio. Community Radio would be both the product of, and the guarantor of a flourishing free media, which, in turn, would make it more likely that threats against inclusive economic and political institutions would be exposed, and become widely known and resisted. In the prevailing condition of Nigeria, extractive political institutions make such freedom impossible because they “prevent serious opposition from forming in the first place” (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012 p 366). Under inclusive economic institutions, wealth is not concentrated in the hands of a small group that can then use its economic influence to increase its political power disproportionately. Furthermore, “under inclusive economic institutions there are more limited gains from holding political power”, thus the incentive for every group and every ambitious individual to try to take control of the state “is much weaker” (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012 p 366). Under extractive economic institutions, the politicians and their hangers-on are sucked into and exploit the downward force of the vicious circle to take control of the state apparatus, because the benefits of excessive power create an irresistible corrupting vortex of wealth .

Inclusive economic institutions remove the need for the corrupt extraction of resources, since those in power would “gain little but lose a lot if engaged in the repression and constraining of democracy” (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012 p 366). Wealthy elites and their hangers-on have a

clear economic incentive to defend a corrupt system. In this sense therefore, “extractive economic institutions create the platform for extractive political institutions to persist” (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012 p 366). The currency of power is particularly valuable in regimes with extractive political institutions, because by ensuring that power is unchecked, the elite are able to serve their interests by retaining control of the gateway to economic riches. Extractive political institutions sustain themselves because unchallenged power has no incentive to provide checks against its abuse, and every financial incentive not to. Musila agrees that the corruption phenomenon is a product of the lack of competition in political or economic arenas. The lack of competition creates an environment where the expected costs of corruption are lower than the expected benefits (Musila, 2013 p 163). Nigeria’s repression presents itself, not as a direct and ruthless Government control, or intrusion in the lives of citizens, but as an abdication of responsibility to the people and to their welfare (Ogunlesi, 2015) “Societies with long histories of extreme extractive economic and political institutions, and no checks on the power of rulers” (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012 p 367), prove resistant to the emergence of pluralist interest groups which help diversify society and dilute the centralisation of power. Speaking in 2006, Nigerian Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka said presciently that “the Nigerian people have always approached democracy, and the elites have always pushed them back” (Joseph, 2008 p 99). Absent in Nigeria were new interest groups centred on merchants or businessmen who would support and bankroll the resistance against the existing regime in part to secure more inclusive economic institutions; there were “no broad coalitions introducing constraints against the power of each of their members” (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012 p 367); there were no political institutions inhibiting the intent of new rulers to usurp and exploit power. Consequently, moves toward inclusive institutions such as a free press, and indeed, as we have seen, Community Radio, were much less likely to take root. The absence of institutions that would enforce checks and balances on the unfettered power of those in control of the state makes the role of the information forum provided by ICT more threatening to the state, more important to the people, and, arguably, less likely to thrive. As Committees subject to political influence were publicly tasked with tending to the green shoots of Nigerian Community Radio, they were simultaneously busy poisoning the grounds where it spread its roots

## **6.2 Power towards: why the emergence of ICTs and Social Media offers means of individual participation in Nigerian context**

Nigeria’s recent election in March 2015 was judged to be free, fair and peaceful, and has been taken as evidence of growth in the democratic process in Africa’s largest democracy. And yet the

danger is that the new government will not succeed in building greater transparency and accountability, nor succeed in breaking the cycle of historical practices, such as corruption associated with its extractive institutions. In his inauguration speech on the 29th May 2015, the incoming president (who defeated incumbent) thanked the press and social media for their contribution towards successful elections and urged social bloggers to continue their backing of Nigeria's economic progress.

The many Nigerian citizens in favour of more inclusive institutions will most certainly make use of the free media and new communication technologies such as Web blogs, anonymous chats, Facebook, and Twitter, to provide information and coordinate their demands and actions. Whether the impact of ICT will translate into meaningful change or have an affect only at the margins will depend on whether a broad based movement mobilizes and organizes, not to take control of extractive institutions, but to transform them into more inclusive ones.

The use of mobile phones and new technologies to fight corruption are not easy or instant solutions. The realisation of the potential of mobile phones depends on political, infrastructural, social and economic factors (Hellström and Karefelt, 2012). According to Chêne and Hodess, (2012) Nigeria carries forward the potential to change, because it retains an enabling political environment that promotes and protects free speech which is a fundamental condition for the success of such people powered interventions. Oby Ezekwesili, co-founder of Transparency International, ex-vice-president for Africa of the World Bank and previously a Nigerian Government minister, believes that Nigeria retains the capacity to reform itself. "Give this country about a decade and a half, it won't be the same. You know, when citizens awaken to the power of the office of the citizen, no society remains the same" (Adegbite, 2015).

These anticipated changes have begun to take place and are reflected in Nigeria's society. The findings of this study concerning the first theme of the interviews were about citizen's perceptions and understanding of social media application, the answers given were aligned to construction and maintenance of relationship as defined by Boyd and Ellison, (2007). This also relates to spatial notion of media empowerment. As discussed in the theoretical framework and Chapter Five (where empowerment is seen as a spatial relationship), media empowerment includes the utopia of non-hierarchical space, where equal horizontal and peer-to peer relationships are considered possible (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, mobile app) (Fortunati, 2014). This peer to peer non-hierarchical relationship enables people to share, interact, and collaborate against self-interested leadership and offers a means which potentially, can shape extractive political institution to a more sane society.

The study begins with the assumption that there are different interpretations and understanding of ICTs and social media, according to perspectives and views of different IS scholars. Arguably, the meaning and perceptions of Social Media has been poorly misunderstood and Lovink questioned whether the pervasiveness of SNS may results in flattening definition of the media (Lovink, 2012; Fuchs, 2014 p 6). Within the realm of communication theories, society, power, democracy and participation, Boyd asks if SNS are transforming notions of 'publicness', hence the need to understand the meaning people attribute to social media in general.

Similarly, this problem has been echoed by African media scholars, particularly from a critical point of view, who emphasize that any attempt to investigate the media impact, when addressing the continent's current challenges, should consider the meaning and assumptions citizens attribute to the media, and the way they are used (Wassermann, 2011; Musa 2011; Wendy, 2014). These scholars further noted that studies of this nature should encourage a sustained and open engagement between media theories developed in the North, and theoretical perspectives emerging from encounters with African ways of media use. In an attempt to find out the perceptions and understanding of the participant's awareness of the media and social media in particular (as argued in Chapter Four) the findings reveal that educated Nigerian elites are fully knowledgeable about the concept of social media.

Nigeria's recent election in March 2015 was judged to be free, fair and peaceful and has been taken as evidence of growth in the democratic process in Africa's largest democracy. And yet the danger is that the new government will not succeed in building greater transparency, and accountability, nor succeed in breaking the cycle of historical practices, such as corruption associated with its extractive institutions. In his inauguration speech on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015 the present president (who defeated incumbent president) thanked the press and social media for contribution towards successful elections and urged the use of social bloggers for commitment of Nigeria's economic progress. The many Nigerian citizens in favour of more inclusive institutions will most certainly make use of the free media and new communication technologies such as Web blogs, anonymous chats, Facebook, and Twitter, to provide information and coordinate their demands and actions. Whether the impact of ICT will translate into meaningful change or have an affect only at the margins will depend on whether a broad based movement mobilizes and organizes, not to take control of extractive institutions, but to transform them into more inclusive ones.

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These anticipated changes have begun to take place currently and are reflected in Nigeria’s society. The findings of this study concerning the first theme of the interviews were about citizen’s perceptions and understanding of social media application, the answer given were aligned to construction and maintenance of relationship as defined by Boyd and Ellison, (2007). This also relates to spatial notion of media empowerment. As discussed in the theoretical framework and chapter five (where empowerment is seen as a spatial relationship), media empowerment includes the utopia of non-hierarchical space where equal horizontal and peer-to-peer relationship are considered possible (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, mobile app) (Fortunati, 2014). This peer to peer non-hierarchical relationship enables people to share, interact, and collaborate against bad leadership of the country and a means which potentially can shape extractive political institution to a more sane society.

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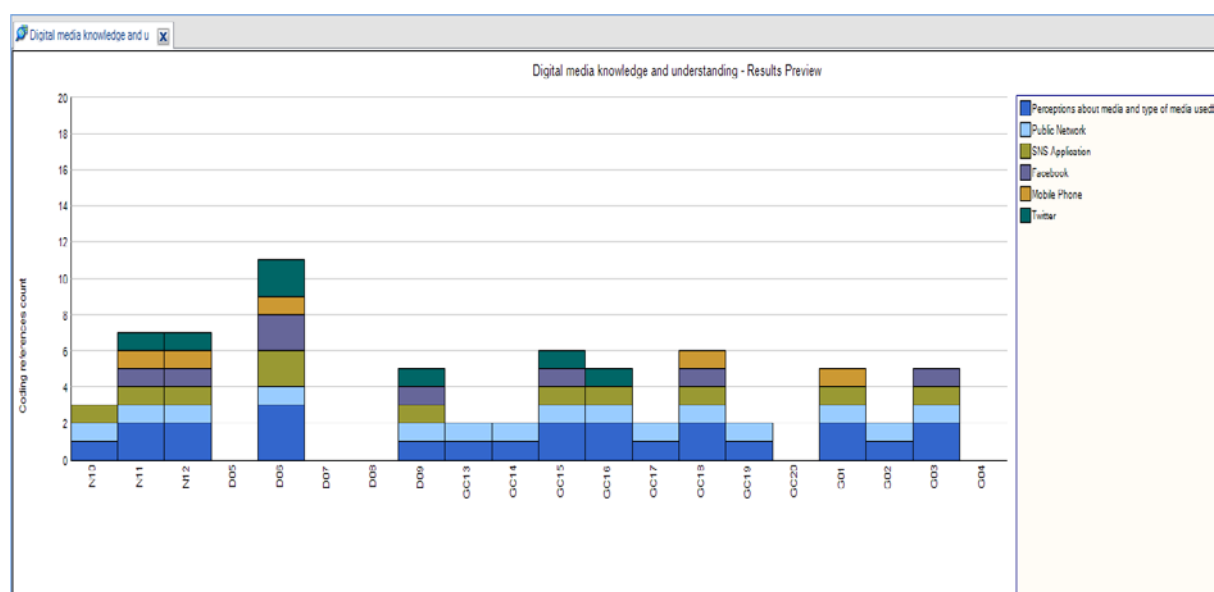
Similarly, this problem has been echoed by African media scholars, particularly from critical point of view, who emphasize that any attempt to investigate the media impact, when addressing the continents currents challenges should put into consideration the meaning and assumptions citizens attributes to the media, type of usage and where and when it intersects with opportunities it can provide (Wassermann, 2011; Musa 2011; Wendy, 2014). These scholars further noted that studies of this nature should encourage a sustained and open engagement between media

theories developed in the North and theoretical perspectives emerging from encounters with African various ways of utilising the media. In an attempt to find out the perceptions and understanding of the participant's awareness of the media and social media in particular (as argued in chapter four) the findings reveals that educated Nigerian elites are fully knowledgeable about the concept of social media.

### 6.3 Discussion of findings for Question 1: Knowledge about ICTs and Social Media use for political engagement.

Research question one asked: How have Nigeria's policy makers and general citizens contextualised ICT innovations and social media use for political engagement in view of freedom of expression and democratic processes in Nigeria?

**Figure 6. 1: Knowledge and understanding of digital media**



As figure 40 shows with regards to answers to question one, the majority of the participants were knowledgeable as concerns social media and perceived social media from different dichotomy viewpoints. The findings are consistent with Boyd and Ellison's definition of Social Networking Sites (SNS), as a public network where the construction and maintenance of relationship take place for a common purpose revealing a passion for an open society as a precursor to the evolution of stable democracy in Nigeria.

The participants' responses help to shape their understanding of the media and what they are used for, which complements the use of the media discussed in the literature review. The responses were

valuable in two ways. Firstly, they complement Boyd and Ellison's (2007) definition of SNS by – adopted in this study – as means to construct and maintain a relationship and the use of the new media by the youth. This is consistent with the techno-optimistic view that assumes that media users have unique needs and purposes for their use (Loader and Mercea, 2012).

From the techno-optimistic point of view, Coleman argued that, for the media to support and enhance social changes and democracy in general, they must enter into a positive relationship with their viewers, readers and listeners as citizens. This interaction involves the relationship with the Government, authorities, or employers. At other times it involves relationships with neighbours or even strangers. Regardless of the realms of the above relationship, the citizens or users need to be sufficiently informed about what is going on in the world, what matters personally and what matters globally; how Governments work, where to access reliable information and how to compare media sources so that rival perspectives can be absorbed, assessed and, if necessary judged (Coleman et al, 2015).

In relation to the above narrative, three of four participants interviewed at Government ministries indicate their knowledge of ICTs and social media use for political engagement particularly relating to freedom of expression and democratic governance. G01 G02 and G03, representing government ministries, understood these applications from the perspective of maintenance and construction of relationships, and that their use has gone beyond socialising and meeting friends. The participants use social media at work to publicise public affairs to raise awareness and disseminate information that affects Nigerian society. G02 lamented that social media has:

*“gone beyond just socialising, just friends, making friends and chatting, serious business issues are discussed on the social media platforms now, including a recent public case here, because we do run our publicity on social media every month. We have press conference apart from the traditional media, we also run on social media like Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, all to pass information to citizens”*

The media's first task is to remind people that they are inhabitants of the world in which they can make a difference. By enabling citizens to create encounters and make sense of events, relationships and cultures of which they have no direct experience, the citizens and public service need to be knowledgeable about the media and what it can offer. In relation to this view, G02 further noted that:

*“Like the Boko Haram, we don’t just report anything as the papers would have you believe, we report what the defence ministry tell us because you cannot be reporting everything, we have to be sure of the source, so that the credibility of information must be intact and genuine”.*

An understanding of social media and what they are used for in the public sector from the Government perspective corresponds with the views and perceptions of those working in the National IT agencies responsible for formulating policies in regards to the use of ICTs in Nigeria. The three participants interviewed all demonstrate an understanding about what social media is, the type of media they used and their perceptions of media use for political engagement, in view of freedom of expression and democratic governance.

The findings indicate that majority of the respondents had positive conceptions of the media as means of communication that enhances the sharing of information and connects users with similar interests (Boyd and Ellison, 2008). SNS, while supporting this kind of relationship construction, are more frequently used by people to maintain existing relationships, and so Boyd and Ellison elect to use the term ‘social network site’ to emphasize their role in maintenance of relationships that in many cases exist in an offline as well as an online context; participants representing National IT agencies perceived social media and its use from this perspective. N05; N06 noted that social media is used to maintain relationships, collaborate and even share ideas. N05 specifically perceived social media as:

*“Platforms that create the opportunity and environment for people to come together mostly over the internet, to exchange information, views and opinions and interact. So it’s a platform that brings people together, that is what is called social media. And usually it is over the internet we use these applications which could be through the new smart phone, iPad, normal laptops, and computers. Some of the social media application include Facebook which is the most popular, Twitter; we have 2go and so many of them now”.*

The usage is not just about exchange of pictures and music; on a serious note social media and ICT in general is part of the agencies agenda. The National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) where the interview was conducted, developed a strategic e- legislature strategy as a policy to engage citizens/government in two way communication through ICT. According to NITDA’s stipulated policy, the ICT policy was designed to enhance legislative duties and ultimately increase legislative output. In an attempt to achieve this task of connecting with the

public, implementing the concept of public participation and improvement to the image of politics in general and parliaments in particular, N05, N06 and N07 stated that in late 2012, the agency organised training for the House of Representatives on how to use information technology to execute their duties and oversight functions. The agency provides training for legislators on how citizens can communicate with them using various internet applications. Furthermore, the agency also educated members of the National Assembly on the advantages of information technology in the legislature and the parliament using its websites. Diplomatically, N05 (as one of the trainees chosen to train the legislators about the use of ICT as a means to communicate and interact with their constituents) stated that they used a tactical method to educate members of the legislature ICT to engage with the citizens. He stated that this:

*“will help them to stay long, [as MP’s], if you spend four years without keeping in touch with the citizens by the time you come back for re-election they might vote against you but when they know that you have a listening ear, they will listen to you, but if you don’t listen they will not vote for you”.*

With regard to the contextualisation of ICT innovation and social media from the perspective of political engagement and freedom of expression, the Government of Nigeria has also set up the National e-Government strategy, which basically deals with issues of standards and regulations for Government to Government (G2G), Government to Citizens (G2C) and Government to Business (G2B) service delivery through ICT. The recent e-Government evaluation released by the United Nations e-Government report in 2014, revealed that the use of mobile applications, particularly social networking sites, has increased Nigeria’s rating on the use of ICTs for good governance. When asked to express his view about use of social media as an aid to interaction between Government and Citizens, N06 stipulated that social media and its information dissemination effect is opening windows of participation with the citizens, thus becoming a way for Government to hear some of their constituent’s problems. In his words, N06 stated that:

*Very important, the role that social media plays or play currently is very important. You can see for yourself, it has opened all the democratic space; it has re-defined the flow of information and has put government on its toes. If you look at the issue of fuel subsidy, you remember the issue of fuel subsidy, look at the role of social media on Facebook, Twitter, blackberry, you know, information was flowing at very rapid speed and that forced the Government to slow down. So you can see that social media has come to re-define the way government is done because so many things are*

*put there without anybody you know... so social media have a very important role in deepening democracy and governance because all the things that are secret, are now open so once I get it, I now forward to other people and kept on circulating.*

The study successfully codified subjective perceptions of social media allowing reliable comparisons to be made between the groups or entities of interest such as the Government and IT agencies, and the democratic institutions and (general Citizens) i.e. (students, journalist, social media activist and different political party members) . This may open up social reality for a kind of plasticity and malleability within a world we are used to in the media (Deuze, 2012), whether by wielding a remote control or by re-arranging hardware, by clicking a mouse or by re-programming software, reality (in the media) is an open source (Deuze, 2012). From general citizens' perspective, social media applications are resemble what British media scholar Roger Silverstone (2007) appropriately labels a 'Mediapolis', a comprehensively mediated public space where media underpin expressions of everyday life. "The Mediapolis..... signals the presence in everyday life, of that mediated space within which, as participants, we confront the world, and where as citizens, we confront each other" (Silverman, 2007). When asked about general citizen's perception of the media, the majority viewed it as a means to confront elites and political power and voice opinions against bad governance. Using digital media to maintain relationships is not different from the other cross cultural usage GC15; GC16; GC17 and GC18 all considered social media as a place for communication and interaction. GC P19 put it succinctly; the use of ICTs and social media:

*"Helps in interaction, people tend to understand the situation and even derive information through those sources or media, for instance Twitter. It is more about interaction relationships - we tend to make friends in general; it is medium through which now people tend to communicate easily".*

Furthermore complementing this view, GC20 was enthusiastic and noted that

*"Social media has come to make the daily life accessible on your system; the social media makes it possible to meet people, interact and other things. It is just a way of replicating what we do, the social activities, and the real life scenario on the internet".*

This finding supports Silverstone's (2007) concept of Mediapolis providing space for confronting each other, and Loader and Mercea's (2012) view that the array of complex media applications are providing space for social networks to exist with the potential to challenge established forms of

power. Online users of social networks are providing space for citizens to voice their opinions and confront government, GC16 simply noted that:

*Naturally when we mentioned social media my mind goes on things like Twitter, Facebook, blogs, social blogs and generally News websites, those are automatically the things that come to mind in the context of Nigeria. These are platforms through which people naturally either voice opinions, thoughts and is now an easier means of criticising the government.*

This participant's view tallies with Ogundimu and Saluwu's (2013) narratives (discussed in Chapter Three, section three) that the use of Facebook and Twitter through mobile phones is changing the way Nigerians discusses issues that affects them regarding the activities of the government. Ogundimu and Salawu further stated that social media provides anonymity for online Nigerian citizens to share their views without intimidation, thus enabling the mobilisation of, and influencing power against authoritative style of governance.

The findings -consistent with deposition media empowerment -gives the capacity to decide, how, to what extent, and for which purpose media can be used . Youths' attraction for participating online was due to its sprawling and relatively unregulated status and autonomous space beyond the control of Government (Bennett, 2004; Castell, 2012). The biggest strength of social media applications is its wide penetration and its provision of space for various social groups to get connected to each other for a purpose. With the proliferation of new media technologies, users have unprecedented capacities to connect with other social groups. By publishing electronically (at low cost and reaching a vast audience) in Nigeria, Social Media applications such as Facebook and Twitter have drastically expanded the range of voices heard. According to GC13This participant's view tallies with Ogundimu and Saluwu, (2013) narratives (discussed in chapter three, section three) that the use of Facebook and Twitter through mobile phones is changing the way Nigerians discusses issues that affects them regarding the activities of the government. Ogundimu and Salawu further stated that social media provides anonymity for online Nigerian citizens to share their views without intimidation, thus enabling the mobilisation of, and influencing power against authoritative style of governance.

The finding are also consistent with deposition media empowerment discussed in the theoretical framework which implies that deposition media empowerment gives people the capacity to decide whether, how to what extent, and for which purpose to use the media. Youths' attraction for participating online was due to its current sprawling and relatively unregulated status and

autonomous space beyond the control of Government (Bennett, 2004; Castell, 2012). The biggest strength of social media applications is its widest penetration and its provision of space for various social groups to get connected to each other for a purpose. With the proliferation of new media technologies, users have unprecedented capacities connect with other social groups. By publishing electronically (at low cost and reaching a vast audience) in Nigeria, Social Media applications such as Facebook and Twitter have drastically expand the range of voices heard. According to GC13

*“Unlike the traditional media, first, I would say it is very effective, because technically no one owns it or regulates or supervises social media, you can’t tell me how to use my Facebook account. I can put whatever I like on Facebook; I can put whatever I like on my Twitter account. Unlike the traditional media where Government has control (for example Government can close down a particular media house company), but it is difficult for government to shut down the internet for instance. So, because the social media operate on the internet it is very difficult for government to clamp down on them. It has given citizens the freedom of expression, and freedom of interaction, freedom to share information”*

Continuing the theme of knowledge and understanding of the media according to the respondent’s view, answers that were provided by the participants that represent democratic institutions tallies with that of the general citizens understanding of media as platforms where individuals interact and communicate for various purposes. This also tallies with the theory set out in Chapter Threewhere unintended media empowerment equates to the fact that the new media has opened the door for the emergence of many unintentional, practices, modalities, and meanings of use, giving rise to a broad range of empowerment. D8 perceived:

*“social media application or technologies as the use of Twitter, Facebook, Pickr, emails and other forms of social communication which has become available as result of the changes in communication systems for various reason and for various purposes”.*

Another perspective coming out of the findings of the study relates to the argument raised in chapter three regarding the question: what makes technology-enabled change transformative and to what extent ICT can, and does ICT transform public sector values? The findings of this study regarding the use of ICTs and social media applications in the public sector are consistent with the issue of whether ICT-enabled efforts have the potential to create a



substantive social change in attitudes toward transparency (Bertot et al, 2010). Transparency ultimately serves to keep government honest and reduces the potential for corrupt behaviours (Bannister and Connolly, 2014). In 2011 there was a bribery scandal at the House of Reps. An honourable member of the parliament was involved in to scandal of collecting money and was caught on tape collecting \$620,000 out of a \$3million bribe while his committee investigated the fuel subsidy scam. He was seen collecting the money from oil mogul, Femi Otedola. So many things were revealed over the video that could have been hidden but it went viral in the hands of so many citizens.

The fear of being exposed in Nigeria's public sector is changing the way in which public officials conduct themselves, with more now using a modicum of honesty. According G02, "whether we like or not, it is a worldwide phenomenon and we don't have to be left behind, and we just have to keep up with them, and have to be careful the way we used it in government, but we have to watch what we see and how we see it". The participant gave an example, a police man that was caught on the phone asking for a bribe. This led to his dismissal from his job. It was citizen, a passenger on a bus, who just caught that action on the phone. G02 further noted that

*"So everybody has to be very careful, more so the civil service, all eyes are on you so you have to strive to do what is right".*

Similarly, the response from national IT agencies supports the view that the media exposes illegal corrupt practice in the public sector. Participants working in the national agencies also acknowledged this capacity of availability and sharing of the media to raise accountability in our activities. NI06 noted that

*" This digital media is becoming a headache for public officials due to criticisms and monitoring the way governance is practiced in Nigeria. But only applied to corrupt officials, of course if you are clean you don't to have be wary about it"*

The policymakers' perspective on ICT's capacity to prevent or expose corruption emphasised E-government in particular which is already demonstrating benefits in anti-corruption issues, particularly by enhancing the effectiveness of internal and managerial control over corrupt behaviours, and by promoting government accountability and transparency (Shim and Eom, 2008). As a result of these capacities, recent years have seen trends toward using e-government for anti-corruption goals. Traditionally, there are three types of anti-corruption approaches (Shim & Eom, 2009). In an attempt to reduce corruption in Nigeria's public administration, in 2012, the Governor

of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Lamido Sanusi, ordered the implementation of an electronic payment system in both private and public sectors which he described as "the biggest blow" on money-laundering and corruption, often perpetrated as a result of the huge size of cash transactions.

The directives by CBN to implement an e-payment system in the public sector has reduced embezzlement and siphoning of public funds. The finding of this study shows that government officials appreciate the impact of ICTs as mean of reducing corrupt practices. A quick example is the e- payment of salaries, according to G02

*“everybody now is paid by e-payment, even for contractors they are on e-payment, so it goes directly to their account, you don t have to come to make a deal with me and say OK, I will not give you this, or expect you to give me that - it goes into your account; there is no deal business and if you say something is 250 Naira (£1) and you are paying online you don’t have to pay 500 Naira (£2). There is a control over the people who handle the money, previously, some people ran parallel accounts to government, if I have to collect money I will open an account with my name, and the money goes in there first before it goes to government. There is nothing like that anymore”.*

Similar views were expressed by G01 and G03. The participants gave an example of e-payment and noted that “definitely it will go a long way to reduce 'you know' corruption, because before we had ghost workers”. The use of e-payment and computerised payment has helped reduce the issue of ghost workers. G01 further noted that the impact of the internet on good governance has also reduced the incidence of corruption. Citizen’s use of digital media empowers them to know more, and when they have access to information it builds their confidence to demand more accountability from their leaders; thus helping the reduction of corruption. The participant gave another example

*“e-payment introduced into this Ministry it has helped in reducing payment of workers that do not exist. Some of our things are run online and centralised now, so it has become harder for things to be manipulated. Not that the ministry is now a saint, but incidences of corruption has reduced”.*

*“If you capture information in the system it will verify it. So IT has really helped or will help in reducing corruption in the near future. Once most of our processes are computerised and digitalised, definitely corruption will be reduced. Our e-tax, e-pension is all digitalised now which will all help in reducing corruption”*

The findings of the study in relation to research question 1 also tally with data from the questionnaire in regard to social media as a weapon to fight corruption and creating an historical indelible audit trail of critical Government information. The survey findings show that the issue of corruption and what has been achieved so far in terms of transparency of using social media. 14% strongly agree, 64% slightly agree, 20% neutral, 0% slightly disagree, and 1 respondents (1%) disagree.

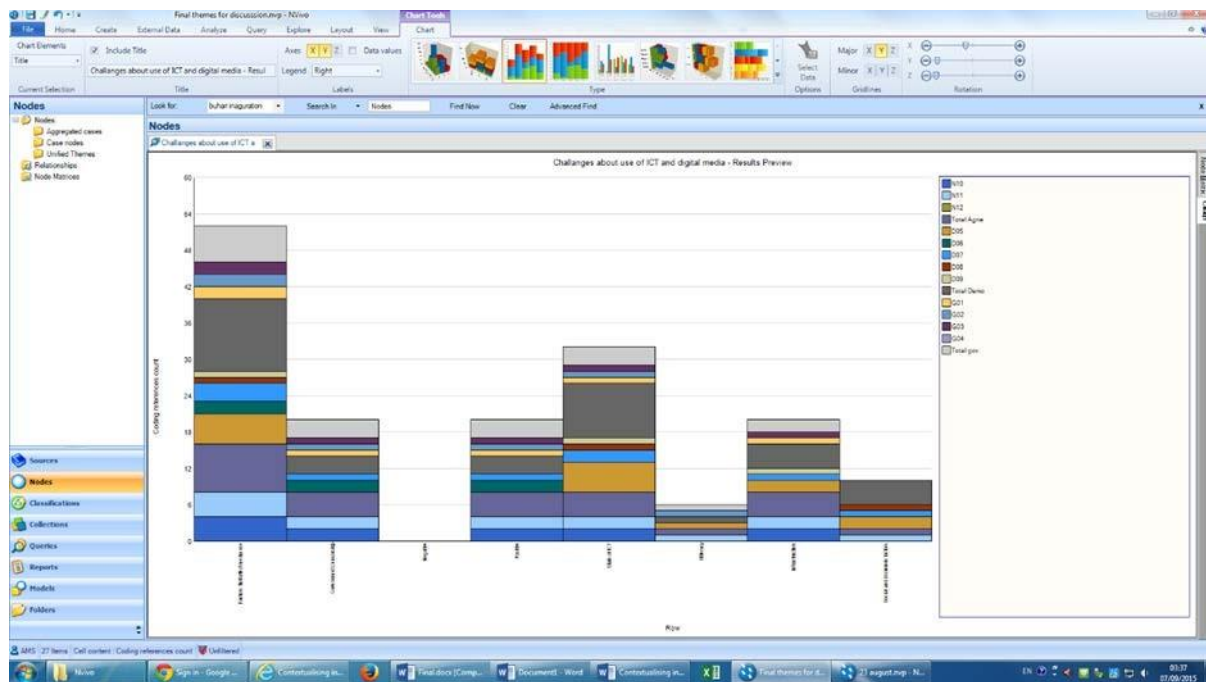
From the results shown concerning access to critical information about Government on the internet, in this regards 8.% strongly agree, 6% slightly agree, 23% neutral, a large number of respondents 36% slightly disagree and 28% strongly disagree. It is clear that respondents were dissatisfied with the availability of important information about the Government is not sufficient on the internet.

In conclusion, findings from the responses to the question are largely consistent with previous research by media scholars. The arguments outlined in the literature review and the findings show that SNS are both global and local. People are using SNSs for a similar reason; they are a powerful symbol of the way communication technologies really are spanning the globe, crossing cultures. Additionally, SNS are also intensely local, emphasising rather than erasing geographical proximity. In the Nigerian context, based on the findings of this study, it can be deduced that social media has gone beyond mere communication, to become a forum where power holders and the general public interact and confront each other. The results reported in this study, however, did not indicate a strong relationship between increased access to the media and deep political knowledge within the society. The findings are largely consistent with previous research by media scholars whose understanding of the connection between media, political learning, and political knowledge is a work in progress (Peteman, 2012).

#### **6.4 Theme two: Factors that affects ICTs and Social Media use**

Theme two attempts to answer research question two, which asks: From the policymakers' and citizens' perspective, what are the challenges and risks identified with deployment of digital ICT for development and what are their strategies approach to capability assessment of ICT use in Nigeria? The issue explored relate to Government attempts to surreptitiously install internet censorship, and environmental factors that affect the use of digital media. As table 6.2 indicates, infrastructural challenges can be a barrier to the use of these technologies. However, there are mixed reactions by the participants from the perspective of internet censorship.

**Figure 6. 2: Conversion factors**



#### 6.4.1 Government censorship:

The suspicion that the government is monitoring citizens' political activities is one of the critical themes that necessitates this study. As explained in Chapter Three, section three, critical perspective academic literature indicates that government (more especially newly democratic and semi autocratic) are faced with the dilemma of citizen's use of the media. Morozov, (2012); Fuchs, (2014) and Shirky, (2013) have been cautionary concerning research that is conducted with regards to Government attempts on internet censorship. As previously discussed, Fuchs, using the example of a Data Inspection Unit (DPI), explained that some countries connive with western companies responsible for designing these monitoring technologies to censor citizens' activities. Using a case study of Syria and Libya, Fuchs noted how citizens were beaten up and maltreated for online criticism of regime leadership. Fuchs called for studies into the broader implications for protest in other societies. With particular attention to developing countries in the African continent, a recent study conducted by Mukuhungo,(2014) in Kenya revealed that the Kenyan government is monitoring the activities of social media users although no arrests have been made.

In Nigeria, while the 1999 constitution guarantees freedom of expression and of the press, the state often uses arbitrary and extra-legal measures to suppress political criticism in the traditional

media, and there is a culture of impunity for crimes against media workers. Libel remains a criminal offense, with the burden of proof resting on the defendant. Journalists covering sensitive issues such as official corruption, the President's health, and communal violence are regularly subjected to criminal prosecution. Online media has been comparatively free from such restrictions, though a blogger was detained for questioning in January 2011. The Nigerian authorities do not carry out any filtering of content, and while access to information technology is still limited for many Nigerians, the number of internet users nearly quadrupled between 2008 and 2011 (Freedom, 2012).

Legislative initiatives introduced in the National Assembly in 2007, which threatened to impinge upon the relative freedom and privacy enjoyed by online journalists, expired when the newly-elected National Assembly convened in June 2011. In May, 2011, there were reports by residents of the capital city, Abuja, that telecommunication services were inaccessible in certain areas. While the incident was not confirmed or reported by the mainstream media, various blogs covered the story, with one blogger reporting quotes from NCC representatives and the Visaphone service provider that confirmed the security reasons behind the isolated telecom shutdown.

In November 2011 the office of the National Security Adviser and other government departments drafted the Cyber Security Bill, a revised version of the earlier Cyber Security and Information Protection Agency Bill, which had provisions that could restrict users' rights to free expression and privacy, because it suggested that security officials could apprehend and prosecute users based on suspicion and without a court order. Taking into account feedback from citizens and stakeholders in the Nigerian ICT sector, the revised version reduced the powers granted to security officers by requiring a court order for the seizure of any equipment and for arrests based on suspicion.

Based on the findings of this study the attitude of policymakers to internet censorship suggests that, so far, no censorship is applied to citizens' use of the internet, but they added a warning message that citizens should be careful of their conduct on social media. G02 G03 and N04; N05; N06 believed that the government monitors individuals associated with violence against the state the activities of those who present a security problem, but that ordinary citizens' freedom has not been tempered in any way. G02 noted that no arrests had been made, that there has been a legislative meeting on the control of social media use but that had not been successful. G02 further noted that citizens should be careful on the way they conduct their online activities. In the participant's word

*"Citizens need to be careful if they would attack or criticise the government"*

G02 further questioned why citizens can post misinformation or provocative stories or items that are not true. He answered his own question by saying this was because the internet is basically a

‘no man’s land’ where anything could be posted.

He did state that internet censorship has not, so far, been implemented in Nigeria. According to the participant:

*“If you post something that is right then the Government will not interfere..... the Government will not interfere with that. Some people do ask genuine questions, some people send mail, in fact, in the monthly press conference you get responses to all kinds of question. The minister responds on the spot”.*

N06 also noted that it depends on the nature of the particular events, some people post items to cause trouble, but if such posts are backed up by facts, he did not believe that the government would harass individuals for such posts. The participant further emphasized that:

*“People are free to express their feelings without any fear that they will be victimised or maybe they will be punished, whether you are in government or not, especially with this freedom of information bill, you can express yourself with freedom of speech”*

Generally speaking, Nigeria is not regarded as a repressive state. Its democracy allows freedom of speech, the internet is not restricted and a plurality of opinion exists in the Nigerian media (Ogunlesi, 2011; 2015). The advent of social media has greatly expanded the opportunity to express opinion. Nigeria’s recent election was not only judged to be free and fair, it successfully voted out an incumbent president who accepted defeat. However, the general feeling of satisfaction with the freedom of expression associated with the internet is accompanied by a wider sense of unease with the traditional media. From the point of view of citizens’ and democratic institutions’, there is no sense of being monitor. Few cases have been reported where there is an attack but, as a general perspective, the responses indicate there is no sense or notice any form of censorship.

D08 noted that, despite “our challenges in Nigeria”, the one thing Nigerians applaud the government for is freedom of speech and opinions on social media. Compared to other African countries facing online censorship, Nigerians are free to air their opinions on the ineffectiveness of the government, and situations arise where social media users get into online altercations with government officials over policies, or lack thereof, and there are no repercussions for the user. This would not be possible in Zimbabwe or Rwanda. D08 further noted that:

*“There have been laws that were almost passed by the House of Assembly attempting to regulate social media usage in regards to addressing government officials, or the government in certain ways, but Nigerians have consistently fought the emergence of*

*such laws whenever a conversation about it springs up”.*

As for journalism, freedom House finds that Nigeria remains a “dangerous place to practice journalism”. Indeed, the murders of seven journalists in Nigeria during the decade covered by this year's Impunity Index (January 1, 2003, to December 31, 2013) remain unsolved. These journalists were Channels TV reporter Enrenche Akogwu in 2012; Zakariya Isa of the state- broadcaster NTA in 2011; Nathan Dabak and Sunday Gyang Bwede of the Light Bearer monthly newspaper in 2010; and Bayo Olu of The Guardian in 2009” (Nkanga 2013). In two unrelated clashes, Nansoh Sallah, editor of Highland FM, and journalist Chuks Ogu, of Independent TV, were murdered by unidentified gunmen in 2012. (Freedom House 2013) (Reporters Without Borders 2012)

The Global Impunity Index compiled by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), spotlights countries where attacks on journalists go unpunished. In 2014, a steady rise in unsolved attacks and murders led, for the second year in a row, to Nigeria's inclusion on the CPJ Impunity Index. The administration's response to the targeted killing of seven Nigerian journalists has been to downplay the message and dismiss the messenger. With regard to the message, Presidential spokesman Reuben Abati stated the report was "referring to journalists caught in the cross fire of the Boko Haram activities in the North". As for the messenger, Abati argued that the CPJ's survey "promotes sensationalism, rather than the truth", and is "not a true reflection of journalists in the country." Journalists in Nigeria practice their profession "with the utmost freedom" and with "no media repression." (Witchel, 2014; Nkanga, 2013). Chuks Ehirim, chairman of the Abuja chapter of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, gave a noticeably different and contradictory account of the difficulties faced by Nigerian journalists, who claim they face repeated intimidation and detention without trial, from government agencies. Attacks by unidentified gunmen and attacks and murders that go unsolved are a noxious combination, and indicate an alarming pattern of failure by the state security apparatus. The uncommitted observer could be forgiven for linking the state's failure to bring offenders to justice, and the security force's perfunctory accounts of the murders with an ulterior motive. One possible motive could be to induce anticipatory compliance among journalists who delve too deeply into the affairs of the powerful. In the light of judicial opinion that the Government does not control the justice system and descriptions of how the inflated currency of power is protected by neutering the gateways to successful inclusive institutions - such as a free press – there are reasonable grounds for accepting this motive of Press intimidation

The suspicion that there are government attempts to censor citizens' political activities is one of the

critical theme that necessitates this study. As explained in chapter three, section three, critical perspective academic literature has indicated that government (more especially newly democratic and semi authoritative countries) are faced with the dilemma of citizen's use of the media. Morozov, (2012); Fuchs, (2014) and Shirky, (2013) have been cautionary concerning research that is conducted with regards to Government attempts on internet censorship. As previously discussed, Fuchs, using an example a Data Inspection Unit (DPI), explained that some countries connive with western companies responsible for designing these monitoring technologies to censor citizens' activities. Using a case study of Syria and Libya, Fuchs noted how citizens were beaten up and maltreated for simply voicing their voice against bad leadership. Fuchs urged for a study to find out the implication this may present to other societies. With a particular attention to developing countries in African continent, a recent study conducted by Mukuhungo, 2014 in Kenyan context and the finding of the study revealed that the government of Kenya is attempting to monitor users of social media activities although no arrest has been made.

In Nigeria, while the 1999 constitution guarantees freedom of expression and of the press, the state often uses arbitrary and extra-legal measures to suppress political criticism in the traditional media, and there is a culture of impunity for crimes against media workers. Libel remains a criminal offense, with the burden of proof resting on the defendant. Journalists covering sensitive issues such as official corruption, the President's health, and communal violence are regularly subjected to criminal prosecution. Online media has been comparatively free from such restrictions, though a blogger was detained for questioning in January 2011. The Nigerian authorities do not carry out any filtering of content, and while access to information technology is still limited for many Nigerians, the number of internet users nearly quadrupled between 2008 and 2011 (Freedom, 2012).

Legislative initiatives introduced in the National Assembly in 2007, which threatened to impinge upon the relative freedom and privacy enjoyed by online journalists, expired when the newly-elected National Assembly convened in June 2011. On May 29, 2011, there were reports by residents of the capital city, Abuja, that telecommunication services were inaccessible in certain areas. While the incident was not confirmed or reported by the mainstream media, various blogs covered the story, with one blogger reporting quotes from NCC representatives and the Visaphone service provider that confirmed the security reasons behind the isolated telecom shutdown.

In November 2011 the office of the National Security Adviser and other government departments drafted the Cybersecurity Bill, a revised version of the earlier Cyber Security and Information



Protection Agency Bill, which had provisions that could restrict users' rights to free expression and privacy because it suggested that security officials could apprehend and prosecute users based on suspicion and without a court order. Taking into account feedback from citizens and stakeholders in the Nigerian ICT sector, the revised version reduced the powers granted to security officers by requiring a court order for the seizure of any equipment and for arrests based on suspicion.

Based on the findings of this study the perspective of policymakers in regards to internet censorship indicated that, so far, no any censorship is applied to citizens' use of the internet but they did, however usher a warning message that citizens should be careful on their conduct through social media G02 G03 and N04; N05; N06 maintained that there was an attempt by the government to monitor the activities of current security problems but that citizens' freedom has not been tempered in any way. G02 noted that the no arrest had been made, that there has been a legislative meeting on the control of social media use but that had not been successful. G02 further noted that citizens need to be careful on the way they conduct their online activities. In the participant's word

*"Citizens needs to be careful if they would attack or criticise the government"*

G02 further questioned why citizens can post misinformation or provocative stories or items that are not true. He answered his own question by saying this was because the internet is basically a 'no man's land' where anything could be posted.

He did state that internet censorship is not yet implemented in Nigerian context. According to the participant:

*"If you post something that is right then the Government will not interfere, the Government will not interfere with that. Some people do ask genuine questions, some people send mail, in fact in the monthly press conference you get response to all question. The minister responds on the spot".*

N06 also noted that it depends on the nature of the particular events, some people post items in order to cause trouble but if such post are backed up by facts he did not believe that the government would harass individuals for such post. The participant further emphasized that:

*"People are free to express their feelings without any fear of that they will be victimised or maybe they will be punished, weather you are in government or not, especially with this freedom of information bill that you can express yourself with*

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Generally speaking, Nigeria is not regarded as a repressive state. Its democracy generally allows freedom of speech, the internet is not restricted and a plurality of opinion exists in the Nigerian media (Ogunlesi, 2011; 2015). The advent of social media has greatly expanded the freedom to express opinion. Nigeria’s recent election was not only judged to be free and fair, it successfully voted out an incumbent president who accepted defeat. As can be seen, the general feeling of satisfaction with the freedom of expression associated with the internet is accompanied by a wider sense of unease with the traditional media. From General Citizens’ and democratic institutions’ point of view there is no any sense of any monitoring despite Citizens and democratic institutions reveals a positive response in regards to Government attempts to censorship. Few cases have been reported where there is an attack but, as a general perspective, the responses indicate there is no any sense or notice any form of censorship.

D08 noted that, despite our challenges in Nigeria, the one thing Nigerians applaud the government for is freedom of speech and opinions on social media. Compared to other African countries that face online censorship, Nigerians are free to air their opinions on the ineffectiveness of the government and situations arise where social media users get into online altercations with government officials over policies, or lack thereof, and there are no repercussions to the user. This will be impossible in Zimbabwe or Rwanda. D08 further noted that:

*“There have been laws that almost got into the House of Assembly attempting to regulate social media usage in regards to addressing government officials or the government in certain ways, but Nigerians have consistently fought the emergence of such laws whenever a conversation about it springs up”.*

As for journalism, freedom House finds that Nigeria remains a “dangerous place to practice journalism. Indeed, the murders of seven journalists in Nigeria during the decade covered by this year's Impunity Index (January 1, 2003, to December 31, 2013) remain unsolved. These journalist were Channels TV reporter Enrenche Akogwu in 2012; Zakariya Isa of the state- broadcaster NTA in 2011; Nathan Dabak and Sunday Gyang Bwede of the Light Bearer monthly newspaper in 2010; and Bayo Ohu of The Guardian in 2009 (Nkanga 2013). ” In two unrelated clashes Nansoh Sallah editor of Highland FM, and journalist Chuks Ogu of Independent TV were murdered by unidentified gunmen in 2012 (Freedom House 2013) (Reporters Without Borders 2012)

The Global Impunity Index compiled by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), spotlights countries where attacks on journalists go unpunished. In 2014, a steady rise in unsolved

attacks and murders led to Nigeria's inclusion on the CPJ Impunity Index for the second year in a row. The administration's response to the targeted killing of seven Nigerian journalists has been to downplay the message and dismiss the messenger. With regard to the message, Presidential spokesman Reuben Abati stated the report was "referring to journalists caught in the cross fire of the Boko Haram activities in the North". As for the messenger, Abati argued that the CPJ's survey "promotes sensationalism, rather than the truth", and is "not a true reflection of journalists in the country." Journalists in Nigeria practice their profession "with the utmost freedom" and with "no media repression." (Witchel, 2014; Nkanga, 2013). Chuks Ehirim, chairman of the Abuja chapter of the Nigeria Union of Journalists gave a noticeably different and contradictory account of the difficulties faced by Nigerian journalists who claimed they face repeated intimidation and detention without trial, from government agencies.

Attacks by unidentified gunmen and attacks and murders that go unsolved are a noxious combination, and indicate an alarming pattern of failure by the state security apparatus. The uncommitted observer could be forgiven for linking the state's failure to bring offenders to justice, and the security force's perfunctory accounts of the murders with an ulterior motive. One possible motive could be to induce anticipatory compliance among journalists who delve too deeply into the affairs of the powerful. In the light of judicial opinion that the Government does not control the justice system and descriptions of how the inflated currency of power is protected by neutering the gateways to successful inclusive institutions - such as a free press - there are reasonable grounds for accepting this motive of Press intimidation.

The findings of this study from online citizens' perspective and the views of the policymakers, is contrary to critical scholar's assumption about internet censorship. The findings of the interview are cognisant with responses collected from the questionnaire, Q5 of the survey asks if citizens notice any censorship on the Nigerian internet 25% strongly agreed, 21% slightly agreed, 40% neither agreed nor disagreed 8% slightly disagreed, and 6% strongly disagreed. The evidence from question five suggests that internet censorship is not considered a problem. 40% of respondents could not decide, either because they did not know, or had not thought about it. The questionnaire is, in many ways, a measurement of opinion, not fact. Quantifying and measuring censorship is a difficult thing to do; unless the censorship is revealed, most of the community will never come to know about it. Freedom House's 2013 report on press freedom in Nigeria chose its words with care when stating that there were "no reports that the government restricted internet access or monitored e-mail during 2013".

To ensure that accusation about internet censorship is well understood, an open ended question was asked - are there topics that cannot be openly discussed on the Nigerian internet, and what topics, if any, would they feel uncomfortable discussing on sites such as Facebook or Twitter? There was a similar parity in their answers. One respondent, participant 3, answered there is no topic that cannot be openly discussed. *“Our constitution allows free electronic media. President Jonathan is the most criticized president ever on social media”*. This answer appears to mistake the power of public criticism for the power to influence or to change, when it is really just the ability to express an opinion in a public space.

Participant 4 maintained that, on some occasions, objective criticism of the Government and some government officials cannot be made. Participant 11 highlighted issues of trust; *“you have to be careful who you relate with on the internet or the kind of information you pass on the net”*.

In addition, respondents were asked whether people are too busy trying to work hard and make money to worry about issues such as censorship. 56% strongly agreed, and 29% slightly agreed that they were too busy trying to work hard to worry about issues such as censorship, 4% slightly disagreed, and nobody strongly disagreed. 11% neither agreed nor disagreed. By linking ‘hard work’ to the “worry of censorship”, question 11 has introduced an emotive term. Agreement with this proposition could indicate self-validation, because most people want to believe they work hard. At any rate, there was a strong response; only 4% slightly disagreed, and nobody strongly disagreed.

#### **6.4.2 State of Technology and Digital Divide**

The state of media infrastructure and technology is related to the status of media use and prospect of media use militating political participation. Digitization, technical capability, broadband technology, and updated broadcasting equipment help active participation in the use of the media. But, the state of infrastructural preparedness that propels participation is inadequate and poses a threat to effective media use in Nigeria. Political participation on digital media is dependent on efficient Internet access, which in turn depends on factors such as the availability of computers, computer literacy, and uninterrupted electricity supply.

According to the view of policy makers a lack of infrastructure is the major factor affecting the usage of the media. Though the privatisation and development of the telecommunication sector in 2000 has changed communication patterns, but internet coverage is still lacking in the rural areas. Mobile penetration has helped in the last three or four years, especially after the liberalisation of the telecom sector; awareness and penetration has increased tremendously, especially the use of mobile

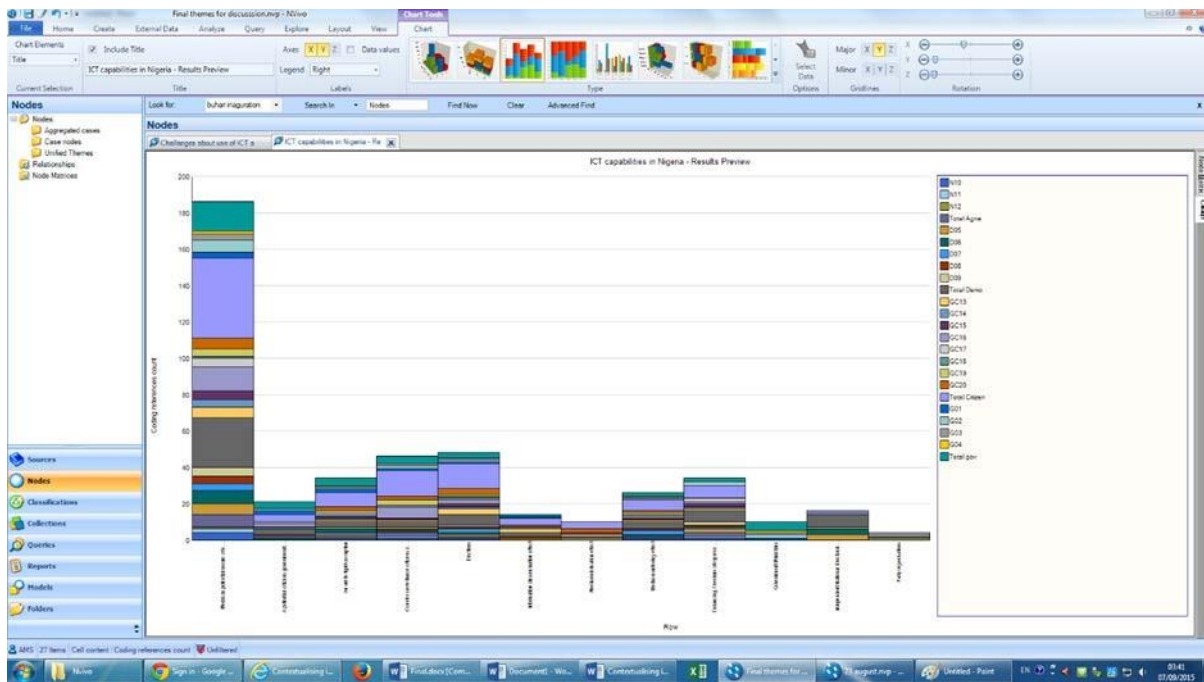
phones and other mobile devices and, the introduction WiMax broad band by the telephone operators has increased awareness of the internet and Smartphone applications to many users. But there are large areas outside cities that await internet connection.

In some rural areas there is no connectivity, in some areas they have total black out. Power is needed to charge phones and browse; power is needed to use systems such as laptops, computers and android phones. Other challenges including digital illiteracy count here, but now the Government is trying to educate through e-education by going into hamlets to establish what is called adult and non-formal education. The government invite Fulani and nomadic people even help for them. Even in the rural areas now one can see Fulani women have phones they can operate, which assists with the e-education policies the government is running. This goes back to the responsibility of the state and big media corporations to place significant amounts of financial resources toward investing in ICT. This is addressed at section 6.5.3.1 of community radio by citing an example of women's health

## **6.5 Theme three: ICT and Social Media Functioning in Nigerian context**

This research theme aims to answer research question three: What drive social media use for political participation in Nigeria and in what ways can the identified factors be used to promote good governance, transparency, accountability and social reform. According to the findings of the study as the figure below indicates citizens' use of the digital media is playing an important role particularly in electioneering, an aid to fight corruption and means of empowerment. The findings in this research questions refer to functionings in Sen's human capability approach i.e. the use of the media to potentially achieve a certain goal through citizens' engagement using digital technology. As stated in chapter five, section 5.2, this study is not only interested in finding out information the media can offer but also in what ways is the information beneficial to the wider society. Each of the findings shown in the figure below was discussed in detail alongside interpretation of participants and the researcher's understanding of their interpretations, and examples of ICTs in other context outside Nigeria as means of sustainability and empowerment. The findings discussed are: media artefacts as an aid to fight corruption, electioneering processes, media as means of empowerment and citizens 'counter surveillance against bad leaders. These findings are shown in the figure below.

***Figure 6. 3: Functionings- potentials of digital media***



### 6.5.1 Media features as an aid to fight corruption

Article 13 of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) explicitly calls for civil society participation in anti-corruption efforts. The law states that: “Each State Party shall take appropriate measures to promote the active participation of individuals and groups outside the public sector, such as civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, in the prevention of and the fight against corruption and to raise public awareness regarding the existence, causes and gravity of and the threat posed by corruption (United Nation, 2001). The forms of corrupt practice which affect Nigeria’s social and economic development has been challenged by civil society organisations and individuals from various regions of the country. Even within the media industry , bribery and corruption present problems , particularly in the form of small cash gifts or bribes that sources give journalists. A 2009 survey found that 61 percent of 184 media professionals in Lagos were regularly gifted brown envelopes in the course of their assignments. However, 74 percent of the respondents held that the gifts did not induce them to alter their coverage, perhaps because the practice is so common (Freedom House 2013).

CPI documented the arrest and temporary imprisonment, by police authorities, of seven journalists to prevent them interviewing the former state governor and current parliamentarian, Bukola Saraki, who was under investigation about his involvement in a multi-million dollar fraud (Witchel, 2014; Nkanga, 2013). Such incidents are why Transparency International Uganda values people’s

empowerment and their engagement in using technology for sustainable development. TI use ICT to impact on people's lives in developing regions.

According to the World Bank's 2012 Information and Communications for Development - Maximising Mobile Report, the percentage of households in Kenya with a mobile phone increased from 21 per cent in 2005 to 65 per cent of households in 2010. The report does not state how many of the mobile phone users are female, or the divide between users in urban and rural areas. Experience in Uganda suggests that whoever has access (ownership is not quite the same as control) to a mobile phone can influence its use to campaign against incidents of low level corruption of service delivery that impact their day-to-day lives. It is worth relating the view of a young woman who attended the Hacks against Corruption event in Nairobi because her views set out the role technology can play to help Kenyan women fight against corruption.

She was new to the tech scene in Kenya, but she attended because it was a fun learning experience in a good cause. Joyce Echessa spoke via podcast when it comes to violence against journalists, and it is the impunity of the killers that represents the real threat, because of the intimidation in the minds of journalists who know that the killers are free to repeat their actions. Joyce Echessa thinks the reason "corruption is so rampant is because of the silence – in that, these cases go unreported". The fear associated with corruption is the fear that offenders have the financial power to act with impunity. Echessa stated "and the biggest reason why they aren't reported is because of fear – fear of losing your job -if you reported someone at work - fear of being ostracised, or of any other consequence that might arise as a result. Also people feel that even if they report a wrongdoing, nothing much will be done and so they don't bother. Technology can help if it provides a way to report these incidents anonymously and if follow-up is provided to the 'reporter' so they know action was taken and they made a difference."

"In the case of anonymously reporting corruption cases and getting feedback, I think technology does help women and men in the same way. Even if it is for issues that usually only affect women – like for example sexual harassment – I still see that technology could be helpful here if it enables women to make reports and have them acted upon." There is a record of print and broadcast media journalists being sanctioned by regulatory agencies for their coverage of controversial issues relating to public corruption or criticism of government policy.

In April 2014, a government agency -the National Film and Video Censors Board - staffed by presidential appointments ,banned the documentary entitled Fuelling Poverty, which reports the misappropriation of oil revenues by the Nigerian government, on the grounds that it could incite public disorder and undermine national security." The documentary 'Critical News Websites' also faced occasional interference and restrictions on access in 2013. In 2013, Premium Times

discovered that the links to its Facebook pages were disabled after reports that the links were “abusive”.

Premium Times could not respond to the allegations because it was not contacted before the links were disabled—in violation of Facebook’s own policy. The restriction lasted for two months, despite numerous petitions by Premium Times editors to Facebook moderators. Facebook is Nigeria’s third-most visited website. The consequence was that visitors to the newspaper’s Facebook page dropped from 221,981 visitors in October 2013 to 23,784 to December 2013. Premium Times editors suspect those who reported the links as abusive were hired to do so by government authorities in retaliation for the site’s critical reporting on corruption and security issues.

As we have seen, state and non-state actors have engaged in acts of obstruction and intimidation against journalists over recent years. In July 2013, the chairman of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) was beaten in front of a government building by a state security agent. Even though he was on an official visit to the Benue State Government House, he was prevented from entering and beaten by the security agent. In 2014 senior Africa Independent Television correspondent Amaechi Anakwe was detained on the orders of Abuja’s assistant inspector-general of police, Joseph Mbu, for describing him as ‘controversial’ during a programme aired by the station (Gbadebo 2014).

New technologies and innovative tools; there are examples of how projects and tools can be set up by a variety of stakeholders to tackle petty corruption. Technology can be used to help fight petty corruption in various ways. Firstly, as petty corruption often occurs in face-to-face settings, technology can restrict face-to-face interactions between service users and providers and, therefore be used to reduce the likelihood of requests for payment. (Chêne, Hodess and Zinnbauer 2014 p 6). Transactions that are performed online are less susceptible to corruption. New technologies can also be used to report corruption and collect information about trends in petty bribery. Public officials, journalists and non-governmental organisations can then use this information to engage new audiences and advocate for change (Chêne, Hodess and Zinnbauer , 2014 p7).

Smart-phone applications have been used “in Mexico as an innovative technological solution to counter widespread police corruption” (Chêne, Hodess and Zinnbauer 2014). These Apps advise drivers about their choices when confronted with bribery requests from the Mexico City police (Chêne, Hodess and Zinnbauer 2014 p 6). They provide “all necessary information” including methods for calculating traffic fines to avoid overpayment to an interactive map showing where vehicles are impounded. This “anti-bribe application is sold at US\$1.50 and reportedly had more than 11,000 downloads in the first three months following its launch” (Chêne, Hodess and



Zinnbauer 2014).

In India, a website called 'I paid a bribe' enables public service users to anonymously report instances where they are forced to bribe officials, as a crowd-sourcing technological solution to hold public officials accountable. More than 400,000 reports have been recorded on the site. This data collection tool builds evidence to identify sectors and departments particularly vulnerable to corruption and lobby government for change. For example, after the site exposed rampant corruption in the transport department in Bangalore, the procedure for issuing driving licences was changed (Varughese, 2013).

Similar initiatives have been attempted in Kenya and Nigeria (IACC, 2012). Bribespot, for example, which was launched in April 2011 by six social media entrepreneurs in Estonia, has had 854 reports from three continents to date. To be successful, such initiatives require investment in adequate technology as well as strong marketing campaigns and partnerships with organisations that fight corruption.

In India, where petty corruption is pervasive, the '5th Pillar', a civil society organisation dedicated to fighting corruption, launched an innovative initiative to mobilise citizens and empower them to resist acts of petty bribery. '5th Pillar' prints and distributes zero-rupee notes as a means to protest against demands for bribes by public officials (Chêne, Hodess and Zinnbauer, 2014 p 6). The first batch of 25,000 notes was met with such demand that by December 2009 the organisation had distributed a million zero-rupee notes and collected many stories from people who successfully used them to resist bribery demands. 5th Pillar says that the success of the initiative lies in the sense of empowerment it gives people, as they know they are backed up by an organisation and are not alone in their fight. Indications suggest that the concept has had some effect on changing behaviours among corrupt public and private officials (World Bank 2009).

45 per cent of African residents have a mobile subscription, more than four times the penetration of the internet. Nigeria's mobile phone penetration approaches 50% (Benner, 2014). Spending on ICT within Africa is roughly in line with the global average, although there is a considerable variation between countries. For example, Morocco spends 3.5 times its GDP on ICT than Nigeria (p 7). The findings of this study reveal that the use of digital media is an important aid to reduce the rate of petty corruption. The findings also tally with results from the questionnaire, only 2% of questionnaire respondents disagreed, and 78% of respondents agreed that citizen's use of the internet is a useful weapon to fight corruption. Q16 stated that citizen's use of the internet is a useful weapon to fight corruption; 14% strongly agreed 64% slightly agreed, nobody slightly disagreed, 02% strongly disagreed. 20% neither agreed nor disagreed. But technology alone cannot impact on communities.

### **6.5.2 Media perfecting Nigeria election processes**

With regard to electoral corruption, extensive evidence of electoral corruption in Nigeria has been widely documented both academically and by international reporting agencies. According to these reports election processes have been flooded with irregularities ever since Nigeria became a democracy. The 2007 elections for example, were marred by corruption and fraud. Throughout the country observers noted instances of vote-buying, stuffing of ballot boxes, intimidation of voters, and irregularities in the administration of the election, such as inadequate supplies of voting materials and ballot papers that did not include all the candidates (NDI 2008).

One of the debates regularly featured in the literature on Web campaigns has been within the normalization versus equalization argument. These terms refer to how the use of new media increases the power of minor players and strengthens the role of the grassroots, as opposed to simply reinforcing the power of the major parties and existing elites (Gibson et al, 1998; Schneider et al, 2004; Bimber, 2014). As parties, candidates, and citizens all expand their use of publicity in social media, the effect of the media is yielding positive development in African countries. It is noted that while digital media in some quarters of the world can serve as a public space for divisive hate speech, African citizens are beginning to use the platform to advocate for democratic values and engage in deliberative democracy (Mudhai, 2013)

Nigeria's electoral process updates the understanding of perennial questions of diffusion, democratization, normalization, and mobilization through the use of media. Nigeria saw marked progress in its information and communications technology (ICT) sector in 2011 with the pronounced use of ICTs during the April 2011 elections. As a result, authorities, citizens and international organisations considered the elections in 2011 to be an improvement over the previous elections (Freedom House, 2013; European Union 2011). Data from the 2013 Afro-barometer shows that 65% of Nigerians believed the 2011 elections were an improvement on the 2007 elections (Collier and Vicente, 2014). In addition, Nigeria's recent election in 2015, which involved the use of technology, (card reader) was judged to be free, fair and peaceful, and has been taken as evidence of growth in the democratic process in Africa's largest democracy. In his inauguration speech, the newly sworn in president applauded citizen's use of Social Media to monitor election fraud, and thanked citizens and journalists who kept the public informed about vote counting.

Findings of the report (Nigeria: Evidence of Corruption and the Influence of Social Norms) correlate with the findings of this study. The study's main question is related to the effects of different media uses to restore the credibility of elections in the Nigerian context. Dimitrova et al,

(2011) argued that a combination of site characteristics and personal motivations among the users shaped the mobilizing potential of different websites. They argued that ‘the primary function of social media is to connect and as well as involve and facilitate voter mobilization. Online citizen activism in Nigeria was particularly evident during the 2011 and 2015 elections, with social media enhancing the flow of information for mobilization and reporting.

Chadwick and Galley, (2014) call for empirical evidence that assesses the use of social media and digital technologies in general and their impact on changing organisational patterns of democratic institutions and political party campaigns. Findings from the information given by the respondents, specifically from democratic institutions emphatically noted that the adoption of social media within the electoral institutions has made changes in relation to their commitment and the way they conduct organisation activities.

Just prior to the Nigerian elections of April 2011, the social media Tracking Centre, using software developed in the U.S., monitored the use of social media to measure its impact and identify trends in communication. Basic statistics were compiled regarding source, destination and keywords found in Tweets and SMS. Although Facebook is much less easily monitored, civil society groups continually checked its content, and this allowed appropriate authorities to respond to reports of post-election violence and election fraud (Akoh, 2011 p 52).

In addition to interested citizens, those using social media in the pre-election period included, representatives of political parties, journalists, and civil society organisations. They generally used SMS to pass factual information such as whether polling stations were open. Twitter was generally used to express opinions and comment on events. The volume of social media traffic increased for each of the four elections, and, ultimately, more messages were sent via social media during this period, which were related to the Nigeria elections, than for any other African election (Akoh, 2011 p 52).

Not only did these social media give citizens a voice but, more significantly, citizens believed that they were being heard. The high visibility acted as a deterrent to illegal activity such as vote rigging. The ability of the man in the street to participate by reporting and commenting on the election and on related incidents increased interest and this is believed to have increased the percentage of eligible voters who did, in fact, vote. Although the system is open to abuse, and some used it to send false information, and stoke malicious rumours, the large number of those listening to the reports meant these attempts were unsuccessful (Akoh, 2011).

The independent National Electoral Commission (considered as the first agent of democracy in Nigeria) set up an election situation room, where staff monitored in real time, what was going on in

the field, offering opportunity to report infractions in the field by engaged online citizens through Twitter, Facebook and SMS. Through the short message system and telephone calls, the situation room was able to source information in real time to monitor reports in the field and try to intervene and to deal with issues as they arose. Thus the positives wholly compensated for the negatives. Addressing the role of ICT and social media and changes in organisational context, participants D8 and D9 stated there has been a positive force in the organisations in creating accessibility and quality of information. Consequently, respondent D8 specifically stated that the use of ICT and social media:

*“Has become a regular picture of election management as far as the commission is concerned, so every election that we have held since 2011 has benefited from the situation because it is useful to the process”.*

Complementing this view on the use of ICT and social media applications to interact with voters during elections, on the average, using INEC’s social media platforms, there are over 135,000 followers on Twitter and over 90,000 likes on Facebook. Additionally, the independent national electoral commission (INEC) reaches close to one million social media user’s weekly disseminating voter education messages. This has led to change in the organisational activities, providing space for citizens and staff to interact and communicate over digital technology platforms. In regards to citizens’ and electoral engagement on the media, D09 noted that

*“my job which is to manage the INEC Citizens Contact Centre (ICCC) which provides a two way communication between voters and the Commission and stimulates conversation with the public. It enhances a contribution to increased voter participation by sustaining voter interest; it helps to build brand awareness about INEC’s resolve and quest to drive transparency and credibility, and aids in disseminating civic and voter education”.*

It was clear from D09’s point of view, independent national electoral commission (INEC)’s use of ICT and social media application has a positive outlook concerning how they keep record of information and monitoring activities that took place in the field and intervene where assistance is required.

Another form of electoral corruption is related to vote counts and results’ manipulation which badly affects the legitimacy of elections. Blatant rigging has long been a characteristic of Nigerian elections. But, in 2011, it was less obvious. Polling was better than it had ever been, with more

polling stations open on time and stocked with ballots than ever before. However, ballot box stuffing remains . By its very nature electoral fraud is covert, and countries such as Nigeria take special measures (for example, media censorship, repressing civil society, and intimidation) to ensure that information about fraud does not reach the public. The spread of information about electoral fraud requires, firstly, that someone (election observers, journalists, or ordinary citizens) take note of abuses. And secondly, it requires that first-hand accounts are passed on to others, for example by civil society groups (such as vote monitoring organizations) or journalists. These second-hand accounts of electoral fraud may then spread via traditional media or spread horizontally via new media, such as social networking sites. Similarly, first-hand witnesses of fraud may share their experiences through word of mouth or new media. Indeed, for many scholars, Nigeria is not considered a full democracy as election outcomes are often a product of electoral fraud, violence, and elite negotiation (Moller and Skaaning, 2013).

Rigging primarily happened at collating stations which often operated after dark without international election observers present. In regards to the use of ICT and social media to monitor and mobilise online users, ICT is playing an important role. In the last elections held in March 2015, Nigeria employed the use card reader technology as voter's card throughout the nation. Participants were asked about the monitoring effect of mobile phones and digital media and this study found that the effect of Facebook/Twitter usage on awareness of fraud is greater in regions with relatively high levels of press freedom. The ability of activists to politicize social networks depends on the availability of 'inputs', or information that can be fed into online social networks. In regions with relatively high levels of press freedom, more such information was available in the media, which could then be used to prime social networks. Finally, the study findings reveal the effect of Facebook/Twitter usage on fraud awareness is stronger among erstwhile supporters of the regime. When asked about the use of social networking sites for election fraud detection, GC 17 noted that

*“To a large extent I will say yes I will base my belief on two thoughts. I am from Osun state. After the election of 2007 won by now former Governor Illola, there was evidence given in a court case which was largely a product of telephone and video recording as well as Webcams put in place at election centres or voting by the then ACN (Political Party) candidate now the present government of the state. Some of the evidence though was disputed by the ruling party i.e. People's Democratic Party (PDP), and was ruled as inadmissible in court as evidence against the candidate that illegal won elections. But at the end of the day justice was done in the court”.*

That social media is influential in Nigeria's electoral process was supported by the findings of the questionnaire. When asked about the use of ICT and social media in election processes in Nigeria and whether they assisted the electoral process, 16 respondents (32.65%) strongly agree, 29 respondents (59.18%) slightly agree, 4 respondents (8.16%) neutral, 0 respondents (0.00%) slightly disagree and 0 respondents (0.00%) strongly disagree).

### **6.5.3 Freedom of Expression and political participation**

There is no straightforward or simple answer to the question of freedom of expression, journalistic freedom and the existence and impact of censorship in Nigeria. The freedom of expression associated with social media can leave individuals feeling empowered. But the use of innovative combinations of ICT mediums by citizens wanting to improve local services, often with some administrative assistance from outside agencies, offers feelings of achievement and forward momentum as an alternative to petty corruption.

From the viewpoint of the rural population, subject to intermittent power shortages, the use of ICTs may be viewed as a "luxury reserved for the educated and wealthy" (Ogwang, 2012). But a variety of urban and rural groups in Africa are already using different combinations of ICTs to strengthen civil society groups to support sustainable local development (Ukase and Audu 2015). Most "good governance" programmes have stressed the role of citizen participation as a way to make public institutions more responsive (Rocha et al, 2008). Citizens may be encouraged to take more active and creative roles to access public services and goods and influence political actions. Spaces for participation are not neutral; power relations shape them.

"It has argued elsewhere that efforts should be made to ensure that the spaces available for participation are taken, owned and utilized by the community and civil society for their own development. For this to happen, communities should be involved in projects that have an impact on their lives. Community Based Organisations, Town Development Unions and Faith Based Organisations should be involved in the implementation of government projects that impact on livelihoods. Communities, labour and relevant civil society organizations should be involved in committees, panels and commissions set up by government. Civil society representatives must participate openly and transparently in a systematic manner (Igbuzor, 2008).

Technological blending is a way of discovering local fits for new combinations of tools which build on local knowledge and habits, and allow users to progressively shape and master innovation, rather than be forced into new programmes from above (Gagliardone 2010). Public participation is

an important component of the evolution of grass roots democracy and development in general. People feel motivated when they become passionate about an issue that directly affects their lives and the lives of their community. As we have seen in the questionnaire findings, the most popular and trusted mediums in Nigeria are local radio stations and the internet. Combining these mediums in community driven participation can empower citizens.

#### **6.5.4 Addressing digital illiteracy through community radio: Women and Project Sustainability.**

People's dissatisfaction with the poor quality of social amenities such as health care and generally speaking, ineffectual service delivery, has acted as a spring board for political participation at a local level. Social amenities, designed to improve their welfare, are more likely to be successful when citizens participate in the administration planning and policy execution (Igbuzor 2008). An important dimension of public participation, which reinforces the likely success of public service delivery, is the use of strategies to involve women, who make up half of the population. It has become a truism of sustainable development that when women are engaged, development is speeded up. Women's participation makes political, demographic and economic sense (Igbuzor, 2008).

Perhaps the legacy in Igbo history, of the "Women's War", (also known, in British colonial history, as the "Aba Women's Riots of 1929", when thousands of Igbo women organised a revolt against policies imposed by British colonial administrators in south-eastern Nigeria) still resonates as an example of female protest (Ukase and Audu 2015 p176). Transparency International believes that working together with women in community development activities is a good thing because women are "active and passionate in implementing community programs" (Ogwang, 2012); they are motivated to improve health care service delivery because they are closely and regularly involved with them.

Transparency International's ICT for Health Services Delivery Project in northern Uganda, which mainly focuses on improving health services, is an example and inspiration to disempowered Nigerians. It shows how individuals and communities can use increasingly available new technologies to overcome barriers associated with gender, poverty and geography, to hold local power brokers accountable and achieve improvements in service delivery. It provides an 0800 free phone number to encourage communities to monitor health services. Telephone calls are recorded and replayed to provide the material for reports which are then distributed among participating partners and the district health office, to improve health service delivery. While women tend to be the main clients of the health services, they do not have controlling ownership of

mobile phones in the way that men and, therefore often rely upon others to gain access to the monitoring hotline. Often, they gather in women's groups and make joint complaints (Ogwang, 2012).

This example of how communities can use a combination of local radio and mobile phones to hold those in power accountable and drive improvements in service delivery uses a combination of Facebook ([www.facebook.com/StopAbsenteeism](http://www.facebook.com/StopAbsenteeism)) and local radio for people empowerment. ICT in the form of social media and FM radio is used to inform, educate and engage both local communities - and global internet users – to share both knowledge and ideas to improve health service delivery (Ogwang, 2012).

An initial issue regarding the use of FM radio stations to inform the community raised questions about technology's adaptability, and improved the public's perception about community radio's role to entertain and inform. Over time, the fixed idea in the minds of listeners that FM radio stations are intended for people's entertainment, not their empowerment was overcome. Morozov is sceptical about what new technology should or can do when faced with what the majority the world over actually tend to use it for, namely, entertainment and personal validation (Morozov, 2012). This hurdle of the public's conception of radio as a medium for entertainment rather than a medium to drive improvements in service delivery made it initially difficult to attract listenership.

However, through a daily promotion of the radio programmes and an 0800 style free phone line, the community became attracted to learn and share with presenters, the health challenges at their respective health centres. Community participation improved after several radio programmes which resulted in a growing listenership calling in to share their views and suggestions, so that the community enjoyed its interaction with ICT through radio and mobiles (Ogwang, 2012). According to Ukase and Audu, (2015 p 189) civil society's anti- graft crusade can be weak at the grass root level, because many of their campaigns use 'foreign languages'(English) in their seminars and workshops and are held mainly in townships and cities. It is possible that their activities appear elitist because they fail to reach the most in- need populations based in rural areas.

However, such projects sustainability is a matter of concern for humanitarian agencies. Transparency International used local radio programmes to empower the community to improve service delivery in Uganda's Health Service. They organised the signing of a development pact to consolidate the continued participation and involvement of different stakeholders to extend the project beyond its intended lifetime (Ogwang, 2012). When a variety of local leaders and workers involved in the health community pledged a commitment to improve health service delivery, the act of signing their commitment on paper was described as "an eye-opening moment for community members" (Ogwang, 2012). The activity mixed entertainment and education , using drama and self-



advocacy to encourage ordinary members of the community, local leaders and health workers to act in unison on issues affecting their day-to-day lives in a way that left them feeling “united and empowered”. Anti-corruption, staff absenteeism, drug theft, mistreatment of patients were issues covered.

Subsequently, community members reported they felt Nigeria is not an exception to the view that women’s role has traditionally been marginalised in Africa. The view that ICTs are a middle class urban luxury is especially true for women who are often restricted to remaining in the domestic household. One of Transparency International’s partners, Women of Uganda Network , ran awareness-raising workshops on good governance and effective services delivery, as well as ICT capacity-building workshops in the Kole and Apac districts in December 2011, to equip rural women and men to use computers, the internet, mobile phones, radios, digital cameras, and print media to amplify their voices on issues of bad governance and poor service delivery so that the duty bearers are forced to respond appropriately (Transparency International, 2012).

## **6.6 Media artefacts as means of empowerment in Nigerian context**

As discussed in Chapter Two and Chapter Five, the concept of empowerment is very much related to the concept of power. As power is complex, similarly empowerment is also complex. The two concepts, power and empowerment, in relation to media is more complex than the general explanations of the two. ‘Power upon’ is the term used by Mac Clean to explain state control over media institutions, while ‘power towards’ is the notion of power applicable for empowerment. The dichotomy of power towards is used as benchmark as discussed in Chapter Five and is used to discuss the findings of the study how media is becoming potential means of citizen’s empowerment in so many realms of Nigerian society. Overall six forms of media empowerment will be looked into the data collected in order to understand what sort of media artefacts help to empower Nigerian citizens in regards to their use of the media. A deposition notion of empowerment which is very much related to power denotes the most important resources of power are the ownership of means of production and the control and command over labour (Marx, 1969). Relating this to the media, the core argument is related to control of the media. Cast in this light social media can be seen as a step in increasing the control of afforded by information technology. It is this study’s position that there are, no doubt, media companies such as Google, apple, Facebook and Twitter belongs to private corporations which is used to maximise profit. There is no doubt about this fact.

However, as the saying goes ‘wherever there is power there is resistance to it’. From the perspective of empowerment, scholars have argued that empowerment also entails that disposition

over commodities, tools, and technologies are important for empowered people (Fourtunati, 2014). The power to control the media ,within certain limits, , gives people the capacity to decide whether, how, to what extent , and for which purpose to use them. Media can convey power upon or power toward because they play multiple roles according to the moment and the context. Which role media will play in various situations will depend on the particular relationship that users, understood as the independent variable in the context, will be able to develop with technology. However, it remains a problem to be solved. It is in the context in which the media seems to be applicable as means of empowerment where subject's use of the media is used to attain or change their social wellbeing at Global, national or community level.

Rather than construing social media as radical technology that is changing society, this study is looks at social media from different angles to examine ways that its use is changing Nigeria's society as well as responding to, and reflecting changes, in society. This is a dialectical back and forth discussions that may ultimately help in understanding what social media are and what the future might hold. A brief history of Nigeria's hegemonic media control has helped to shed light on how the new media can be seen as form of empowerment.

Based on the data collected and analysed, ICT can play a transformative role in the process of empowerment: a pre-condition of the empowerment of society is access to a broad range of information so that informed debate can take place on economic and political abuses by those in power. Digital media can also play a key role in channelling the empowerment of a broad segment of society toward local small scale campaigning issues capable of achieving durable political reforms. Free and open access to public forums is the most effective means of educating and informing the people. Through their use of mobile phones or other digital technology Nigerians are creating and extending access to forums for critical discussion. These forums for open critical discourse can help build the tools that would enable them to challenge the status quo through informed debate, and open discussion. Joseph observed in 2011 that Nigerians were becoming increasingly empowered because they are "armed with innumerable cell phones, conventional and social media, and access to abundant civil society groups," (Joseph 2011). The response to this challenge has been a sidestepping of the conventional media to reclaim democracy using, anonymous chats, Facebook, and Twitter to provide information and articulate the demands and actions of those seeking more inclusive institutions.

## **6.7 Citizen counters surveillance: ICTs changing public values and transformative government:**

There is the question as to what makes technology-enabled change transformative and to what extent ICT can, and does transform public sector values? For the purpose of this study therefore, a value will be defined as a mode of behaviour, a way of doing things that is held to be right. The approach used in this study is to consider how public servants or, more broadly, public administrations should behave. To be meaningful in the context of ICT, values must therefore be convertible into some behavioural form that ICT has the potential to modify or transform.

Government officials cried out that there is nothing they can do to restrict citizens' use of digital media. In literature it is argued that the use of social media changes the behaviour of public servants. Banister and Collony (2014) urge researchers to establish how media has changed the organisational context of the public sector. According to the findings of this study, the public servant has referred to collaborative features of social media allow them to pass information through these applications so that citizens get reliable information about the nation's current affairs .

Government officials have also expressed fear about the usage of citizens' media. They mentioned media artefacts such as camera phones used by citizens to expose them. All the participants noted that if people are upright and honest they do not need to worry about mobile phone camera footage.

In support of this view regarding the use of the media to expose illegal corrupt practice in the public sector, participants working in the national agencies acknowledge that citizens who share media functionalities are changing the way they conduct their affairs. NI5 and NI06 noted that:

*“You may be doing business in the dark but before morning it will appear all over the world before you know it you would be exposed”*

This participant's view unconsciously complemented the notion of unexpected power, where Foucault argues that power produces unexpected or unintended effects. In the case of new media, with their openness and affordances, the possibility of empowerment for users is higher compared to the system of traditional mass media, which is fundamentally closed. This has opened the door for the emergence of many unintentional practices, purposes, modalities and meanings of use, giving rise to a broad process of empowerment. In regard to this, in one of the interview questions, the researcher asked whether the use of these applications is becoming a threat to governance in Nigeria.

Previously, the senate president had warned in a national daily newspaper, that the use of social media is becoming a threat to governance and media ethics.. From the general citizen's perspective, such opportunistic practices offer a satisfying opening to criticise and embarrass the power holders whose greed makes them worthy victims of citizen vigilance . The majority of the participants noted that the use of the media is changing the way governance is conducted in contrast with citizens' previous passive engagement with public affairs . This has now changed using the January 2012 incident as an example. This was the protest against the hike in oil price, whereby government and economic activities were shut down.

Such facts are also confirmed by the questionnaire response, a significant proportion of respondents believed that the internet helps citizens to challenge Government and political leaders. Q15; 14% strongly agreed, and 52% slightly agreed, that the use of the internet helps citizens to challenge Government and political leaders. 10% slightly disagreed and only 2% strongly disagreed. It is concluded that social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube were widely used alternative sources of news, information, and comment during nationwide protests sparked by the 2012 announcement that the Government was withdrawing a key fuel subsidy. Civil society activists used social media and text messaging to counter government propaganda about the fuel subsidy. The protesters also used social media to orchestrate the occupation of state-owned television outlets, forcing the stations to broadcast the demands of the protesters live (Freedom House, 2013).

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

#### 7.0 Introduction:

This study sets out to explore how information and communication technology and digital media systems in particular relate to discourses of African democracy and governance to aid an understanding of its role in popular grassroots development. In its initial chapters, discussions in so doing, grounded the research in theories and studies on power relations and media use from where new social media with new dimensions of citizen empowerment was established as the research agenda. For instance, in Chapter One provides a general background of the study by opening with a discussion on the failure of contemporary media systems and debates on ICTs as potential shapers of Africa's democratic governance, capable of influencing social development in the continent. Hence, an overview of technological determinism and the counter-debates in social constructivism and social construction of technology was presented, whilst the context of the study – Nigeria - was established in relation to ICTs use for development. Chapter One posed the central question of the study, that is: what role, if any, can ICTs play in shaping and empowering grassroots democratic governance in Nigeria. The aim is to use the established gap in the debates on ICT for development to explore the potential of its impact in Nigeria's society and suggest possible solutions in regards to the usage. Three objectives were set :

- i. To carry out detailed literature review of the concept of new ICTs and social media and their relevance in strengthening and developing free democratic society.
- ii. To assess Nigeria's current new mass media deployment within the context of ICT for development, as a means of understanding the perspectives of emergence of new ICTs and social media in developing countries.
- iii. To understand factors militating against ICT use for governance, and for political participation and proffer workable solutions to relative challenges, and risks that may be associated with the use of new ICTs and social media within the set frame.

Hence, through a theoretical discussion of traditional media, technological determinism, and social constructivism theories, the study shows how the development of ICT narrative fits into political communication in the African perspective, thus initiating room for development in Africa's controlled democracies by leaders (Mudhai, 2013; Wasserman, 2012; Osita, 1999). With reference to recent debates about the use and development of digital media in contemporary society, this study demonstrates current debates between IS scholars and the growing importance of their

arguments in exploring the role of digital media in shaping governance and influencing democratic participation (Fuchs, 2014; Fourtunati, 2014; Castell, 2012; Loader and Mercea, 2012).

Within the dichotomy of these debates, the study has shown how understanding of power, democratic and communication theories from Marx's perspective of depositional power, Gramsci's concept of civil society and Foucault's theory of surveillance served as theoretical explanations to illustrate Nigeria's hegemonic media institutions and poor governance, and how and why the citizens use social media applications at their disposal to make their voices heard.

By adopting critical paradigm in interpretive style and evaluating the ontological orientation of critical realism following the principles suggested by Klein and Myers (1999; 2011), the study shows Sen's capability model for data analysis can contribute to critical theory, and improve understanding about critical realism in case study research.

An important aspect of interpretive assumption is the subjective explanation of phenomena according to the views and experience of participants investigated. The use of an interpretive style helps to generate verbatim narratives of the participants interviewed. The interpretation of participant interviews provides clarity on the potential functionalities of digital media as an aid for political participation.

On the other hand, the position of critical realism is that subjective interpretations are acknowledged but critical realism specifically aims to find out why and how the existence of independent structures either constrained or enabled actors to pursue certain actions in a particular setting (Wynn and Williams, 2012; Mingers 2014). This critical realist assumption helps the researcher to provide explanations about contextual factors such as hegemonic media domination, e.g. restriction of community radio license, and lack of focused government administration e.g. corruption cases, electoral manipulation, and jungle justice inflicted on journalists in public affairs which affect the social wellbeing of citizens. And in return, citizens are free, by whatever means available to voice their grievances.

Notably, scholars applying critical realism provide detailed causal explanations of given sets of phenomena or events in terms of the structures and mechanisms that interact to produce the outcomes in question (Mingers, 2014). This study has answered the question in Chapter Six section 6.2, as to how Nigerian government neuters citizens' rights (described as 'Power upon') and why ICT and digital media is serve as a potential means of social resistance (described as 'Power towards'). The critical perspective takes the analysis and discussion from individual interpretations, and places it into the context of wider social arrangements.

In the light of these reflections and based on the beliefs, reasoning and findings from the data, the thesis argues that social media is more closely aligned to the techno-optimist notion of digital

media use. The researcher proffers the use of mobile phones and radio for effective participation and ICT development.

### **7.1 Techno-optimistic, techno-pessimist and social shaping of technology and their relationship in this study**

Having identified the above three school of thoughts' arguments that gave rise to debates and studies of social media within IS domain research, the thesis takes into account assumptions of (Techno-optimist, techno-pessimist and social shaping of technology, and explored for empirical evidence. From techno-optimistic point of view, the empirical inquiry set out was to capture where, when, how and under what circumstance use of digital shaping can empower grassroots' governance (Loader and Mercea, 2012; Castell, 2012).

The ability to use technology has historically presented two options– either society will embrace technological change, or seek to inhibit its development through the mechanism of the state. This study aims to find out whether Nigeria is embracing technological change or inhibiting it. From the techno-pessimist view point , the study investigates allegations of government attempts to monitor citizen engagement on the internet, and other factors that restrict the use of the internet and social media. Scholars in this research agenda noted the use of ICTs and social media could be empowering in contemporary society but yet criticised techno-optimist for their tentative definitions of social media. They also criticised the government and media corporations responsible for design of digital technologies for limiting the potential of technologies for empowerment. Techno-pessimist scholars further accused business media organisations and Government of willingly or unwillingly sharing user's data for advertisement or internet censorship (Fuchs, 2014; Morozov, 2013; Lovink, 2012). In this respect, the study investigates whether the usage of social media poses a threat to it its users. The findings reveal that the ordinary citizen or even the online blogger feels no threats are attached to the use of digital media technology. However, the committed and intrepid investigative journalist, a tiny but influential minority, will not share this viewpoint. The data reveals that there is no widespread form of internet censorship on citizen's engagement.

From the point of view of social shaping of technology, the strengths and limitations of digital media use in society were investigated. As discussed in Chapter Two, section two, Fourtunati, (2014) called for a reconciliation, not to approve or disapprove of the notions of these scholars, as digital media has both empowerment and disempowerment features. Fourtunati urged scholars to conduct empirical studies to suggest how to make best use of digital media in contemporary society. In relation to this study, the findings from the literature review presented and discussed in Chapter Three, section one shows the government failure to fully explore the benefits of ICTs for

development, for instance by systematically regulating the media, and, by extension, ICT use, through such actions as politicisation and commercialisation of the media and by stiffening the existence of community radio. This study suggested integration of mobile phones and radio as solutions identified in the use of digital media.

The next section addresses how the aim and objectives were achieved and the subsequent section shows how the research questions were answered in line with the debates briefly discussed above.

## **7.2 Achieving aims and objectives of the research.**

The aim was “to study ongoing debates about the use of ICTs and social media to explore its impact in Nigeria’s society and suggest possible solutions in regards to the usage”. In achieving the aim the first objective was to: *“Carry out a detailed literature review of the concept of new ICTs and their relevance in strengthening and developing a free democratic society”*.

This first objective was discussed in detail in our Chapter Two. The chapter explored both old and new media theories developed in the West. The role of this exploration underscores the role of journalists and of the press as a profession, hence the term, the Fourth Estate of the Realm. This symbolic relationship was philosophically theorized in 1956 by Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schram, in what is generally known as Four Theories of the Press. The first theory is the ‘normative’ theory of media; the second theory, the ‘libertarian model’, also grew from Europe as a result of the wave of liberalism that evolved between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the social responsibility model is the third of the four theories of the press discussed by Siebert et al (1956) and finally there is the Soviet Communist theory of the press by Marx ideology. This theoretical understanding helped the researcher to understand deeply about debates on, and assumption of traditional media prior to emergence of the internet.

Having set out the theoretical aspect of the fourth media estate, ICT use for development within the ambit of media technologies was discussed according to two critiques of popular theoretical perspectives, namely, technological determinism and social constructivism. Discussions of both new and old media theories were conceptualised and explained in the context of Media, Technologies and the Democratisation of Political Communications in Africa. The discussion revealed that combinations of new and old media can be incorporated into notions such as community radio. This realisation highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the fourth estate media, and its theoretical orientations, setting out



technological debates from the perspective of technological determinism and socio constructivism. The first section of chapter two therefore not only answered the first objective, but also helped to achieve the second objective in the first section of Chapter Three that discussed the current status of Nigeria's traditional media, pointing out restrictions on the implementation of community radio.

Chapter Two, section two extended the views of technological determinism and social constructivism to current debates about social media and its incorporation into power and democratic theories, and how the theoretical assumptions of Gramsci, Foucault and Marx are reflected in this study of Nigeria, especially in the use of the new media. This section was used as a benchmark to formulate interview questions which situated ICT use in a Nigerian context. The Marxist depositional notion of power, that history is shaped by those who control the means of production, is used to summarise salient events in Nigerian history and struggles shaped by those who control the means of communication.

Foucault's theory of power and surveillance was discussed, linking it to ICTs and social media and its potential threat to users, and, finally, Gramsci's conception of civil society (though not all his interpretation) supplemented by other theorists, was used to reveal that, despite the base domination in society, the superstructure earned a level of autonomy relying on individual and collective effort.

Objective two: *The second objective was "to assess Nigeria's current news mass media against a background of ICT for development to contextualise the emergence of new ICTs in developing countries".*

This was achieved in section one and two of Chapter Three. Nigeria's hegemonic media institutions were examined in the light of Marxist theories of power and control. . This chapter discusses the absolute control of Nigeria's media by the Government and private business. It showed how journalists are restricted from carrying out their role professionally, and that Nigerian elites employ violence and corruption to retain power. The first section discussed the status of the Nigerian media, its monetisation and restrictions on information in Nigeria.

In understanding the emergence of ICT and its potential in addressing issues relating to governance, the second section of chapter three looks at techno-optimistic views of new digital media and discussed it under the lens of e-Government as one of the areas where the use of technology is widely acknowledged. The e-Government services have been conceptualised through social media. Specific attention was drawn to the use of social media to complement traditional orientation of e-Government services about whether policymakers' understanding

and use of the digital media is shaping governance and the consideration of elections in Nigerian context.

Objective three: *The third objective is to understand factors militating against ICT use for governance and political participation and proffer workable solutions that avoid the risk associated with the use of new ICTs.* The third objective was achieved in the last section of chapter three. The assumption of techno-pessimist researchers was discussed. Foucault's theory of surveillance was also discussed in this section supplemented by Fuchs' criticisms of Government internet censorship. Academic criticisms and questions posed by critical internet researchers were conceptualised in the Nigerian context with attention to Government attempts at internet censorship and the capabilities of digital media as a means of empowerment for citizens to voice opinions against bad governance. The next section presents the research questions and how they were answered.

### **7.3 Answering research questions**

In answering the research questions, the study's core theoretical aspect of ontological orientation of critical realism were employed to describe events, context and mechanism which provide the basic of 'power upon' and 'power towards' in Nigerian context discussed in section 6.2 of the discussion chapter. An assumption of critical realism is an 'event' referring to external and visible behaviour of people, system or things as they occur or happened (Easton, 2010). This dichotomy was used to describe how Nigerian elite' neuters with traditional media, threatening journalism as profession and also covered corruption issues termed as 'power upon' that was widely discussed in chapter six, section 6.2. Another critical realism ontological orientation used was 'context' this refers to relevant circumstances and ways in which external contingency affects the event that have occurred. This means interpretation of these events that have occurred. The interpretation of entities studied were conceptualised in Sens model. Three categories were made; the first is intervention, (that is the knowledge and understanding of participant of the media), the second category is conversion factors (referring to factors that limit the use of the internet) and third category capabilities, namely what has been achieved or could be potentially achieved. The central research question guiding the study aske: *what role, if any, can ICTs play in shaping and empowering grassroots democratic governance in Nigeria?* Sen's model helped the researcher to identify what could be potentially achieved through the use of the media, according to interpretation of participant as discussed in chapter six. Freedom of expression, electioneering, government/citizens interaction, media as a means to fight corruption and

potential of the media as means of empowerment are some of the things media can offer. This, in the Gramscian sense in this study, refers to the level of autonomy from the base hegemonic control of the media. Foucault who investigated resistance to power in his writings noted power is impalpable, neither here or there, it has different sources and forms, much like Tweets of concerned citizens, who compose messages serves which they display their disappointments concerning the way they are governed.

This central research question was answered via power and democratic theories discussed in chapter two. The concept of power upon and power towards was used to describe media dominance and the use of technology in whatever manifestation as a potential means of resistance. This also connects with many political uses of digital media identified in the literature (Chapter 3). The outcome of these empirical investigations revealed many empowerment related optimist view of political use of SNS (Chapter 5 and 6).

The central question was further broken down into three sub questions and this question was according to Sen (1991) capability approach. As noted in the analysis chapter Sen's capability model was divided into three categories. The first category answered research question 1 which aimed to find out how policymakers' and citizens' contextualises ICT and social media, and what they are used for in political engagement. The second category, known as conversion factors has answered research question 2 which aimed to find out factors that affects use of the internet and social media, and the final third category known as the functioning, referred to what has been achieved or could be potentially achieved through the use digital media. The final category aims to answer research questions three. This study has answered all the research questions in line with data collected and the argument in the literature review.

Q1 How have Nigeria's policymakers and citizens contextualised ICT innovation and Social Media use for political engagement in view of freedom of expression and democratic processes in Nigeria?, The findings indicated that policymakers understanding and usage of digital media complemented the chosen definition that guided this study. According to the responses, their understanding is aligned with Boyd and Ellison's (2008) definition of SNS which involves the construction and maintenance of relationship among users, further complementing Fourtunati, (2014) notion of relational media empowerment where agencies, dynamics, movements, social/or activist put themselves in a relationship with the media. The respondents' evidence further answered Fuchs' (2014) and Lovink, (2012) criticism on techno-optimist researchers for failing to provide meaningful definition of social media application.

The responses of policymakers also showed that the proliferation of digital media has enhanced citizen's freedom of expression and involvement in public affairs with a slight change in behaviour in which official activities are conducted. The response of policymakers regarding public sector change of behaviour has also answered Bannister and Connolly, (2014) call for investigating public official's change of behaviour due to the citizens' use of the media. As discussed in chapter Six section 6.3 some of the policymakers have noted situations where the public officials are exposed through the use of the digital media.

Q2 From the policymakers perspectives what are the possible challenges and risk identified with the deployment of ICT innovations for development in Nigeria and what are the strategic approach to capability assessment of ICT use in Nigeria? Prior to the research internet censorship was assumed to be a major factor that could affect the use and developmental outcomes of ICTs and social media. However, the findings of the study revealed that internet censorship is not yet in place in Nigerian context. In a recent Freedom House, (2014) internet censorship report, Nigeria is regarded as non-repressive country in terms of internet censorship. This view tallies with the findings of this study from the perspective of both citizens and policymakers. With respect to Fuchs (2014) allegation of Government attempt to curtail the use of the internet, the respondents acknowledged that there was an attempt to curtail the use of technology and social media but this could not be achieved.

Q3 What drive social media use for political participation in Nigeria and in what ways can the identified factors be used to promote good governance, transparency, accountability and social reform? Section three of chapter three which discussed the literature review has showed that the use and presence of digital media has changed the way campaign and elections are conducted. According to Bimber, (2014) digital media has changed the American politics. In line with what has been achieved or could potentially be achieved; the use of digital media in electioneering is perfecting and restoring the credibility of election process in Nigeria. From democratic institution's responses, specifically Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) point of view, the presence of digital media and introduction of citizen communication centres has drastically reduced the rate of rigging and electoral manipulations used to tarnish the image of Nigeria's electoral processes. Other findings in relation to potential achievement of the digital media relates to Fourtunati, (2014) conceptualisation of digital media empowerment discussed in section two of chapter two. With regards to deposition media empowerment, the power to control has shifted given the capacity for new breed of tech- savvy Nigerians to utilise the new media as platforms for checks and balances, most importantly in the battle against corrupt practices

in public offices.

#### **7.4 Contribution to Knowledge**

From the onset of the research, debates around the use of ICT and social media revealed a complex picture. The debates examined in this study are not sure whether ICTs and social media can potentially be an empowerment in enhancing social change in a democratic setting. This study is not dismissing the states and corporations' influence particularly from principles of power as discussed in chapter two where principles of power in relation to technology, power upon, revealed states' influence in modifying behaviour of users of technology without disturbing their state powers, thus retaining their position as the base, or 'power towards' closely associated with empowerment where technologies offers it users the ability to exercise power at their own discretion. The 'power towards' within the realm of ICT enables users to construct and maintain relationship with non –hierarchical structures ranging from peers to the base, thus providing spaces for taking actions and shaping myriads use of power in a context. As widely discussed in chapter two, (where it was shown that Fourtunati has pointed out unintended media empowerment) the findings of this study, through 'capability approach' revealed that new digital media provide the opportunity to voice opinion against Nigeria's exploitative political institutions, and help citizens to make decision makers accountable and drive improvements in service delivery. The contribution supports techno-optimistic theories that use, choice and adoption of technologies potentially reflect in political development and effective service delivery.

#### **7.5 Contribution to methodology:**

The application of the HCDA in IS research is at an early stage and is in need of further exploration and development (Kleine 2009; Zheng and Stahl, 2011). There are numerous attempts to operationalise which has led to the development of a considerable literature. However, there are criticisms about restriction of Human capability development approach (HCDA) to wellbeing individual agency without looking into broader social cultural and political context. For this reason Robeyns (2008) points out that one could use the capability approach with theories of choice and personal responsibility that do not acknowledge societal structures and constraints, which will have ultimately far reaching consequences for evaluative exercises.

Complimentary to the "weakness" of the capability approach, critical theory is sensitive to power and political constraints. These characteristics of critical study have helped to explore how Nigeria's political and media institutions have constrained the use of media . Without employment of critical perspective in this study, the analysis will only be restricted individual interpretation

without putting into context the wider social arrangements. A contribution made in this study is the first of its kind that reveals critical theory can support a human capital development approach to evaluate social media use as a means of empowering and shaping democratic governance in a developing country. Likewise, HCDA has contributed to critical theory by informing issues relating to internet censorship. Through interpretation of participants and the survey results complemented by literature in a Nigerian context censorship is not carried out on citizen's use of the internet but possess a threat to power holders. Both capability model and critical theory complements each other as they are both trying to enhance the wellbeing of individuals in the society.

In addition capability approach (CA) has proved to be a viable method of analysis that increases understanding of the perspective of critical realism in case study research. Most studies conducted in critical realism case studies are in the marketing sector with few in the field of information systems. Three categories of framework were used for the intervention – ICT applications used and their understanding. Conversion factors concerned with factors that restrict the use of the applications. Capabilities what could be potentially achieved. The study proposed one more category which solutions. This will help in addressing the problems identified and how they can solved within the framework.

## **7.5 Contribution to practice**

Understanding the role digital media can play in shaping democratic governance can help academicians and policy makers develop an effective approach to current understanding to ICT and social media initiatives. Investigation of factors will help that affects the media usage in governance and from citizens practices and offer solution to constructive way of engaging Government/citizens practices on ICT and digital media. The results of this study can also be used by Government to implement ICTs and social media policy and thus obtain the necessary resources to attain successful adoption of ICTs and social media in developing nations. In addition, the list of factors identified in this research can be used as important guide to Government agencies to inform their development of ICTs and digital media policy implementations. Regarding Nigeria's context, this research could be of help in informing them of the significance ICTs and digital media advantages and of the need to develop a policy for the improvement of future performance in the country.

## **7.6 Reflection on both methodology and critical interpretive perspective**

Contemporary ICT4D and E-Government research has explored context and contextual difference with developed countries as important themes in understanding and framing IS innovation in

developing countries (Avgerou, 2001; Walsham and Sahay, 2006). Interpretive and critical approaches have proved the most popular and productive in developing country research rather than positivist methodologies as in the west. This study was in the same tradition but what made this study unique is that no study has evaluated ICT using a critical realist methodology to explore ICT and social media change and transformation in Nigeria as a developing postcolonial country.

This section describes the evaluation of this study using the seven principles for high quality interpretive and critical field studies proposed by Klein and Myers (2011; 1999). It is necessary because the researcher wants to reflect, evaluate and ensure that the research is credible and convincing. All seven principles should be considered, although Klein and Myers do not specify the degree of intensity; instead they encourage researchers to apply their own judgement in view of the specific research effort.

Klein and Myers principles for critical field research	Researcher's understanding of the principle and reflection on its application in this study	Klein and Myers principle for interpretive research	Researcher's understanding of the principle and reflection on its applicability in this study
1. The elements of insight: concerned with interpretation and gaining insight. Seven tenets of critical systems theory (CST) articulated in Klein and Myers, 1999	(1) The Hermeneutic circle; (2) contextualization; (3) interaction between researchers and subjects (4) abstraction and generalization; (5) dialogical reasoning; (6) multiple interpretations, and; (7) suspicion of biases and systematic distortions. This is answered in interpretive reflection	1. The fundamental principle of the hermeneutic circle	<b>This principle suggests that all human understanding is achieved by iterating between considering the interdependent meaning of parts and the whole that they form. This principle of human understanding is fundamental to all the other principles.</b> In the study this principle was, for example, used by starting from an overview of the perception of government officials, democratic institutions, national IT agencies and general citizens towards ICT and social media and to uncover the factors that empowers and those that affect digital media usage in Nigerian context. This is to increase understanding of this concept by looking at the possible contextual factors that allowed the researcher to understand the use and impact digital media may offer that was suggested by techno-optimist researchers. HCDA was used as a holistic base and individual factors were identified and related to this, based on the exploratory case study findings, both the qualitative and quantitative results.
2. Using core concepts from social critical theorist	<b>This principle requires organize data collection and analysis around core concepts and ideas from one or more critical theorists.</b> The core elements this study investigated were from the Marxian perspective of depositional power in relation to technology. Foucault's theory of power (the panopticon) was used as benchmark to investigate Government attempt to censor citizens' engagement using the internet. Also Gramscian sense of hegemony	2. The principle of contextualisation	<b>Requires critical reflection of the social and historical background of the research setting, so that the intended audience can see how the current situation under investigation emerged.</b> The context of Nigerian culture in relation to both old and new media is considered in the literature review because it was felt by the researcher that readers who are not used to Nigerian oral culture and religious and ethnicity issues would find this information valuable for their understanding of the research setting. A whole chapter is dedicated to the Nigeria's hegemonic media



	<p>was used to contextualised where the elites of the Nigeria retain their position as the base and also where citizen are using the mediums at their disposal to make their voices heard. As mention in chapter two section 2.12 Marx, Gramsci and Foucault's theoretical contribution are not always pure reproductions of their work; instead the study treat the conception of hegemony flexibly and critically through combining their work with other theorists.</p>		institutions
<p><b>3. Taking a value position</b></p>	<p><b>This principle requires advocate values such as open democracy, equal opportunity or discursive ethics – drives for principle</b>  This study recognises the importance of taking value position in relation to human right, freedom, justice, and fairness hence the consideration of elections and citizens freedom. A general election time provides the ultimate conditions for democratic practice (Adar, 1999; Dunleavy, 1987; Coleman, 2013). Elections time is the type of period of high excitement when it is perhaps the right to time to investigate political system through channels of political communications. For instance, in Nigeria since after independence, the most important area of political participation (attending rallies, joining party working for a candidate) has been election- related, while others (such as following the news, talking politics, making contacts with high placed person) were to do with acquiring information and presenting views and demands to the elite.</p>	<p><b>3 The principle of interaction between the researcher and the subject</b></p>	<p><b>Requires critical reflection on how the research materials (or “data”) were socially constructed through the interaction between the researchers and participants.</b>  The interaction between the researcher and the participants was discussed as part of research requirement (Methodology Chapter). This focused on the data types, sources and data analysis</p>

<p><b>4. Revealing and challenging prevailing belief and social practice</b></p>	<p><b>The principle requires critical researchers should identify important belief and social practices and balance them dialectically</b></p>	<p><b>4.The principle of abstraction and generalisation</b></p>	<p><b>Requires relating the ideographic details revealed by the data interpretation through the application of principles one and two to theoretical, general concepts that describe the nature of human understanding and social action.</b></p> <p>The research was conducted with attention to the unique setting of the study in Nigeria and in government agencies, democratic institutions, national IT institutions and general citizens, as much of the existing literature reported findings from studies with different perspectives.</p> <p>Therefore, no claims are made in this study that the findings can be transferred to settings with significantly different cultural settings. It is also recognised that agreement between the study's findings and the extant literature does not necessarily suggest that the basic explanations, e.g. environmental factors, are the same.</p>
<p><b>5. individual emancipation</b></p>	<p><b>This principle requires all critical theory is "...oriented towards facilitating the realization of human needs and potential, critical self-reflection and self- transformation.</b></p> <p>This study intends to investigate how individuals would be able to benefit the ICT usage to improve the standard of living, of what importance is the use of this digital media to their lives and what has been achieved or could be potentially achieved. Principle four suggests that improvement goes beyond individual level to societal level. The critical inquiry here investigated is concerned with overall improvements of ICT in the context of the study and with the recommendations can be made to deal with the challenges, the</p>	<p><b>5.The principle of dialogical reasoning</b></p>	<p><b>Requires sensitivity to possible contradictions between the theoretical preconceptions guiding the research design and actual findings ("the story which the data tell") with subsequent cycles of revision.</b></p> <p>This case study has been made transparent to the reader and the process has enabled the researcher to confront some of his own presumptions about the perceptions of policymakers, democratic institutions and general citizens</p>

	restrictions that could hinder effectiveness of ICT and its applications in democratic setting. This study aims to suggest appropriate way of citizen's communication with the Government in more constructive way.		
<b>6. improvements in society</b>	<b>This principle requires improvements in society are believed possible; hence the goal of CST research is not just critique but propositions for overcoming unwarranted power abuse</b>	<b>6. The principle of multiple interpretation</b>	<p><b>Requires sensitivity to possible differences in interpretations among the participants as are typically expressed in multiple narratives or stories of the same sequence of events under study. Similar to multiple witness accounts even if all tell it as they saw it.</b></p> <p>The researcher considered distinctive points of view from the different participants in the study. This provided a variety of views and perspectives, and it has been a main concern of this research to report agreements as well as differences in a clear and transparent manner. Exact quotes were used to show the data to readers so that they can formulate their own interpretations and follow the reasoning used in this process.</p>
<b>7. improvements in social theories</b>	<p><b>This principle requires all CST researchers understand that theories are fallible and improvements in theories are possible; that there are always competing truth claims to guide analysis, understanding and interventions.</b></p> <p>This study takes a critical look at theories and concepts such as Marx, Gramsci and Foucault notion of power theories and their relationships to potential possibilities for degrees of genuine emancipatory democracy. Such concepts are helpful in explaining processes of socio- political change in Nigeria, but their limitations may be also helpful in process of</p>	<b>7. The principle of suspicion</b>	<p><b>Requires sensitivity to possible “biases” and systematic “distortions” in the narratives collected from the participants.</b></p> <p>In this study the possibility that participants might provide responses that are subject to bias resulting from conversion factors is recognised. For example, it is likely that Government officials will give the answers they believe necessary during interviews if they expect this information to be revealed outside academic environment. To ensure against this possibility the respondents were made aware that all data collection methods in the study were carried out in strict confidentiality. Participants were also able to decline participation in any research-connected</p>

	<p>democratisation, which, though real, has been partial, and why the new digital media have only partially fulfilled the aspirations that their strongest proponents have held for specific contexts studied. To this extent, the empirical findings especially from the point of view citizen's and policymakers use of the new media enhanced efficiency transition and help hasten democratic processes thus further understanding of these concepts..</p> <p>It is a fascinating tour through communications, media and journalism, STS, IS, ICT4D, and the theories of power of Marx, Gramsci and Foucault, situated in the live development of the unique west African context.</p>		<p>methods. Biases were also addressed with several data collection sources and several data analysis phases. A rich description of data was used to allow the reader to follow the interviews.</p>
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**Table 8: Evaluation of critical and interpretive paradigm**

## **7.7 Personal reflection on the research and understanding of ICTs use and developmental outcome in Nigeria**

The researcher used a mixed-methods approach, in which the qualitative method was the in- depth investigation adopted in the case study and the quantitative method was gathering basic data to complement the qualitative data. This approach helped to achieve the research results and to provide data for analysis. A multitude of factors from a cross-section of Government officials, Democratic institutions, National IT agencies and General Citizens) at various administrative level and across citizens provided an in-depth understanding

## **7.8 Conclusion and Recommendation for further research and conclusion**

As discussed in chapter two, three major arguments exist between three schools of thoughts in information systems. Simply, the techno-optimist scholars who argue that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and social media particularly have emerged as powerful tools for reaching the ever-increasing information demands of the society, but critically questioned for of lack theoretical engagement to enhance their argument. The second body of debate coined as techno- pessimist, theoretically engaged with social theories, thus dismissing techno-optimist assumptions arguing that ICT use may likely pose political threat especially when viewed from the perspective of social theory and philosophy.

And finally the last research strand known as social shaping of technology that call for an empirical investigations urging scholars and researchers to take both perspectives and assumptions of pessimist and techno-pessimist views in order to find out whether the use of the media is a tool of empowerment or repression and offer suggestions on constructive use of ICT and social media to improve the wellbeing of society at large.

In relation to these debates, this study proposes the concept of community radio. Community radio is more than a forum for discussion and a reliable source of information; it is a part of the community. Owned and managed by communities, they transmit community-oriented programming and pursue a social development agenda. They base themselves on a philosophy of social gain and community benefit, not financial gain. They encourage the community to participate as planners, producers and performers in program production and in management (Nassanga et al, 2013). Community radio would rewrite notions of media ownership and public participation and raise notions of accountability as understood in Nigeria. According to Freedom House, (2014) radio tends to be the main source of

Information for Nigerians, while television is used mostly in urban areas and by more affluent citizens”. The ownership pattern of Community radio contrasts with the vast majority of ownership of the media in Nigeria. The state’s history of monopolising broadcast communications has blocked the emergence of community radio. Entry barriers to participation in publicly sharing information are created by high broadcast media licensing fees and taxes. The only two nationwide broadcast networks are state-owned: the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria and the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) (Freedom House 2013). The gatekeepers controlling the licensing and regulation of media are government appointed public agencies. Neither the Committee to Protect Journalists nor the Nigerian public believe their adjudications are fair minded or independent. (CPJ), Freedom House believes their processes and decisions are “opaque and politically biased”.

## **7.9 Further research**

Further research should look at the integration of social media applications through the use of mobile phone to facilitate community radio in the Nigerian context. Theoretically, the study should draw upon theoretical literature of Gramsci on popular culture and hegemony in constituting community radio within the public sphere. Scholars have looked at the role of popular forms of culture and media as a potential means of mediation without empirical evidences (Wasserman, 2012). The study provide Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation a framework for proper utilisation of social media application to realise the dream of community radio as constructive means to citizen-government relationship and participatory system of governance which is void of obstructive manipulations of public opinion through the media.

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