

**ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON LEGISLATIVE
TRANSPARENCY (2023-2025)**

BY

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**BEING A RESEARCH DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation title “Assessing the Impact of Social Media on Legislative Transparency (2023-2025)”. It is an original work and no part of it has been presented for the award of any degree anywhere. All sources of information have been duly acknowledged and referenced.

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CERTIFICATION

The dissertation titled “Assessing the Impact of Social Media on Legislative Transparency (2023-2025)” carried out by Okefie William OCHONU has satisfied the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Masters in Legislative Studies, National Institute for Legislative Studies/ University of Benin (NILDS/UNIBEN) and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that this dissertation “Assessing the Impact of Social Media on Legislative Transparency (2023 - 2025)” has been carried carefully supervised, read, assessed and approved as having met the necessary conditions for the award of Master Degree in Legislative Studies (MLS) in the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies/University of Benin (NILDS/UNIBEN) and is therefore approved for its contribution for knowledge.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the God Almighty for his enablement to accomplish this great feat, my darling wife, Mrs Elizabeth Ene Ochonu/my lovely children and to Hon. Philip Agbese for his immense contribution to this academic achievement.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	-	-	i
Certification	-	-	ii
Approval	-	-	iii
Dedication	-	-	iv
Acknowledgements	-	-	v
Table of Contents	-	-	vi
Abstract	-	-	viii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1	Background to the Study	-	-	1
1.2	Statement of Problem	-	-	7
1.3	Research Questions	-	-	8
1.4	Objectives of Study	-	-	8
1.5	Scope of Study	-	-	8
1.6	Significance of study	-	-	9

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1	Literature Review	-	-	11
2.1.1	Conceptual Review	-	-	26
2.1.2	Theoretical Review	-	-	31
2.1.3	Methodological Review	-	-	33
2.1.4	Empirical Review	-	-	34
2.1.5	Gap in Knowledge	-	-	45
2.2	Theoretical Framework	-	-	45

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1	Research Design	-	-	50
3.2	Population and Sampling Technique	-	-	51
3.3	Sample Size	-	-	52

3.4	Research Instruction	-	53
3.5	Validation and Reliability of Instrument	-	54
3.6	Method of Data Design	-	54
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS			
4.1	Data Presentation	-	55
4.2	Data Analysis and Results	-	55
4.2.1	Data Analysis and Result and In-depth Interview	-	63
4.3	Discussion of Findings	-	66
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS			
5.1	Summary of Findings	-	69
5.2	Recommendation	-	70
5.3	Conclusion	-	71
5.4	Contribution to Knowledge	-	71
	References	-	72
	Appendix	-	a

ABSTRACT

In Nigeria today, there is public outcry among citizens regarding lack of transparency in the activities of their representatives. Despite public outcry, much has not been done to address this problem. The objective of the study assessed the role of social media in enhancing legislative transparency in Nigeria, and to identify the challenges of using social media for legislative transparency. The justification for the study is to address the issue of public outcry among citizens regarding lack of transparency in the activities of their representatives using social media.

The research or study adopted a mixed method design with questionnaire and in-depth interview as instruments for data collection on a sample size of 357 respondents drawn from the study population while twelve (12) participants were used for in-depth interview. The study adopted transparency theory supported by democratic participant's theory.

Results from the study revealed that social media serves as a powerful bridge between lawmakers and citizens, breaking down barriers to information as well as facilitates real-time dissemination of legislative processes, voting records, and policy discussions, empowering constituents to stay informed and hold public officials accountable. Findings also showed that the Nigerian lawmakers use social media transparency to a large extent to enhance legislative transparency. Furthermore, the study revealed that the impact of social media on legislative transparency is to monitor legislative processes as well as to make governance accessible and engage with constituents. Finally, the study found that their numerous challenges of using social media for legislative transparency such as misinformation and disinformation, digital divide, data privacy and security limited internet access in rural areas among others. The study concluded that social media has contributed in revolutionizing legislative transparency in Nigeria by making governance more accessible, inclusive as well as empowered citizens to engage directly with lawmakers, monitor legislative activities, and contribute to policy discussions.

The study recommended that social media should be regulated to address and correct false information to maintain public credibility and trust, as misinformation can undermine transparency efforts. Policy makers should create an environment where citizens can use social media to question government actions, highlight irregularities, and mobilize for collective action, holding lawmakers accountable. Network providers should improve on their services with a view

to addressing the problem of digital divide especially constituents in rural areas whom are sometimes disconnected due to poor network service and constituents in rural areas should also be trained on the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social media for effective engagement with legislators.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Since the advent of social media in Nigeria, many aspects of political activities, social activities, culture as well as religious activities have become popular as a result of constant reportage on social media, which help to shape transparency issue or otherwise in legislative activities among lawmakers in the society. This is because social media allows for user generated content as everyone with android enabled device is able to generate content for public consumption. Elgar (2017) argued that the rapid penetration of social media in society has increased the possibilities for citizens to raise their voices, and to gain political attention.

On the other hand, Papacharissi (2009) argued that the advent of social media as virtual sphere, in which citizen consumers participate and express dissent with a public agenda by expressing political opinion on the various social media platforms. To enhance this view, Nnanyelugo and Adibe (2013) observed that the arrival of social media has greatly enhanced all aspects of human communication. Given the participatory, interactive and cost-effective nature of social media, it has made all users mass communicators. Social media has provided a platform for government agencies, politicians and policymakers to sample public opinions without much effort as well as instantaneous reactions/responses on their various moves.

In Nigeria, social media users sample public opinions using twitter polls technique as well as disseminate messages which often go viral through re-tweets, comments and likes respectively. Similarly, Fakeye (2013) opined that recently, the focuses of governments, multinationals, bodies and agencies have shifted to social media as either wild beast to tame, or mascot to leverage.

One of the fundamental problems in a democratic society before the advent of social media is lack of transparency in legislative processes. This usually created a gap between the legislators and their constituents leading to rumors, assumptions and misinformation in most cases. Beetseh (2012) argued that legislators are elected to perform a variety of functions in a democratic dispensation to earn public trust from the constituents.

Legislative transparency remains an integral part of democratic governance which promotes accountability, public trust, and citizen engagement. This implies that transparency is a crucial element of democratic governance, ensuring accountability and public access to information about government action.

In his view, Neuman (2024) argued that transparency is widely regarded as a fundamental pillar of democratic governance, and essential for holding legislators accountable. Although transparency is insufficient to reach the ideals of better legislative behavior, more citizen engagement, increased trust, and improved policy. Furthermore, research evidence revealed that citizens desire more transparency and accountability. Citizens want transparency from their legislators and are more willing to support the decisions when seen to be procedurally fair and transparent:

On this note, Ferdous (2024) opined that public trust in public institutions is one important consideration for evaluating the state of democracy in every country. This implies that state legitimacy is primarily dependent on the trust that people have on their representatives (Charron & Rothstein, 2016) without trust, citizens and the government cannot work together to accomplish mutual goals.

Similarly, Ojo (2022) established that legislators, function transparently, sharing details about their decisions, activities, and policies, promote confidence and accountability. Bruno (2017)

opined that transparency fosters an atmosphere in which people can examine legislative procedures to make sure they reflect the interests and values of the general public. Alessandro et al. (2021) further averred that open parliamentary procedures are essential for strengthening democratic accountability. These include allowing the public to observe legislative debates, disclosing the financial interests of legislators, and promptly disseminating policy decisions to the public. Hence, when institutions become more transparent, they normally earn increased public support toward their governmental operations.

In the same vein, Oghale (2025) rightly observed that legislative transparency is a critical factor in enhancing public trust in governance, particularly in emerging democracies like Nigeria. Transparency mechanisms, such as open legislative processes, public access to parliamentary records, and citizen participation in law-making, contribute to greater accountability, reduced corruption, and increased public confidence in democratic institutions.

The representative function presupposes that legislators are ambassadors of their various constituencies and they act as intermediaries between the citizens and the government. They are supposed to be the barometer for measuring society's political climate. This underscores the importance of legislative transparency to keep constituents informed about legislative activities in the most transparency way.

In his submission, Beetseeh (2012) argued that legislative transparency requires that the process of rule-making, rule-execution and rule-adjudication must be reasonably open. The extent of openness must be such that private citizens and groups should be able to know the justification for such public actions. In other words, governmental activities should be subjected to open, public knowledge as may be necessary.

To this extent, decisions of public authorities are expected to follow rules and regulations, which forms the standard against such actions. The right to information is increasingly recognised as a fundamental democratic right as captured in Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Fox 2010, in Cornwall & Eade 2010).

Scholars like Bertot et al. (2010, p.264) argued that:

Transparency and the right to access government information are now internationally regarded as essential to democratic participation, trust in government, prevention of corruption, informed decision-making, accuracy of government information, and provision of information to the public, companies, and journalists, among other essential functions in society

In the same vein, Murat and Pepaj (2018) argued that transparency symbolizes a mechanism of promoting good governance and public trust in a democratic society since it serves as a controlling element against maladministration and corruption and the promoter of good governance and accountability toward protection of public interest and citizens' rights.

Furthermore, transparency is a fundamental requirement for the reliability and integrity of public institutions in order to promote public trust and public support. It is important to note that deficiency of transparency in the decision-making process has a direct impact to dim the confidence in public administration and participation of citizens. Lack of transparency and accountability in public administration *inter alia* diminishes the value of democracy and rule of law.

A standard of transparency and accountability improves the performance of public administration, as citizens anticipate from the public official's adequate services which are of public interest, and served on the grounds of justice. This occurs when public administration regularly publishes its report over given decisions and answers citizens' requests *vis-à-vis* their administrative decision-making process. Transparency is the openness and accountability of government operations,

ensuring that information is accessible to the public and that decisions are made in a clear and understandable manner.

Social media have enabled new kinds of citizen activism and shown the need for more open decision-making processes as well as political scorecard within a given period of time. This scenario has enhanced relationships between leaders and the governed allowing for citizen tracking of activities, and by monitoring and controlling behaviors of political leaders in many societies (Shim & Eom 2008, Akrivopoulou & Garipidis, 2014).

Social media refers to a set of interactive Internet applications that facilitate (collaborative or individual) creation, curation, and sharing of user-generated content. They are an increasingly pervasive aspect of everyday life. One can view social media not as something separate from physical reality, but as an integral part of an interwoven social landscape. The prevalence of social media affects and is affected by numerous realms of personal and public life, including processes of identity, interpersonal relationships, and the political economy.

Social media is collaborative and participatory by its very nature as it is defined by social interaction (Bertot et al. 2010). It provides ability for users to connect with each other and form communities to socialize, share information, or to achieve a common goal or interest. Social media can be empowering as it gives users a platform to speak. It allows anyone with access to the internet the ability to publish or broadcast information. Same applies to government officials. In terms of time, social media technologies allow users to immediately publish information in real time.

Scholars like Aizhan (2017) noted that governments all over the world now harness the Internet and related Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) in an effort to address citizens' desire for greater information access, institutional transparency, participative decision-making

and access to public services. One channel through which these objectives are being pursued is social media, which include off-the-shelf networking sites, such as Facebook, microblogging services, such as Twitter, and information dissemination platforms, such as YouTube (Porumbescu, 2016). The implication is that social media has become the most effective channel use for the purpose of enhancing transparency in political activities.

As part of efforts to enhance legislative transparency, Abbo et al. (2020) averred that social media is capable of promoting political transparency. Social media is described as computer mediated technology which facilitate the growth and sharing of ideas, awareness, career interests, information as well as other methods of expression through social networks and virtual communities (Nielsen, 2017). Social media are internet-based applications and platforms that empower the creation and sharing of user-generated information and allow for interactive communication. It is an exchange of ideas, opinions, and data between individuals and groups. Likewise, Junco et al., (2010) defines social media as a collection of online platforms, services, and activities that encourage participation, community building, sharing, and collaboration.

As at 2023, an estimated 60% of the world's population uses social media (Statista, 2023 , Chan & Yi, 2024). For citizens in many democracies, social media platforms have become sources of information that shape their political attitudes and decisions. Social media made its way in Nigerian politics and it has attracted the majority of Nigerians including elected officials to engage the electorates.

The wide spread of social media in Nigeria has created new ways of politicking and with millions of users actively engaging on various platforms. Statistics from Business New Nigeria showed that there were 36.76 million social media users in Nigeria as at 2024. Also, data from Statista, revealed that Nigeria have 38.7 million active social media users as at January 2025, representing

16.4% of the total population. This figure reflects a rise from 36.75 million users in January 2024. A significant portion of the population, around 54.5%, still remains offline, indicating potential for further growth in social media adoption. This study therefore set out to assess the impact of social media on legislative transparency among Legislators in the 10th national assembly.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Legislative activities in Nigeria are faced with significant barriers to legislative openness, including weak enforcement of the Freedom of Information Act (2011), opaque voting processes, and limited public participation in legislative affairs (Oghale, 2025). Such gaps have contributed to declining public confidence in governance and increasing perceptions of legislative corruption and inefficiency.

Thus, legislative transparency remains an integral part of democratic government that promotes accountability, public trust and citizen engagements. Impliedly, transparency remains a fundamental element of democratic governance to hold legislators accountable. In Nigeria today, there is public outcry among citizens regarding lack of transparency in the activities of their representatives. Despite the public outcry on lack of legislative transparency among Nigerian lawmakers, much has not been done to address this problem. Arising from this negligence, many lawmakers have continued to lose elections for another term in office as the people feel disconnected with the activities of their representatives. For instance, notable lawmakers lost elections to return to the national assembly in the 2019 general elections. Today, social media has created a platform to enhance legislative transparency among lawmakers in Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that the study set to assess the impact of social media on legislative transparency among Nigerian Lawmakers and to what extent do legislators use social media to communicate with their constituents?

1.3 Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

- i. what is the role of social media for enhancing legislative transparency?
- ii. To what extent do legislators use social media to communicate their activities to constituents
- iii. What is the impact of social media on legislative transparency in Nigeria?
- iv. What are the challenges of using social media for legislative transparency?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to assess the impact of social media on legislative transparency in Nigeria. Specifically, the study aims to:

- i. Assess the role of social media for enhancing legislative transparency
- ii. Establish the extent to which Legislators use social media to communicate their legislative activities to constituents
- iii. Assess the impact of social media on legislative transparency in Nigeria
- iv. Identify the challenges of using social media for legislative transparency

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on assessing the impact of social media on legislative transparency. The scope of the study is delineated to assessing the impact of social media on legislative transparency among Nigerian Lawmakers in the 10th national assembly with emphasis on the House of Representatives between May 2023, to May, 2025...

The House of Representatives (also called Green Chamber) is the lower chamber of Nigeria's bicameral National Assembly. The geographic scope is limited to Abuja Municipal Area

Council (AMAC). According to the World population review 2023, the population of AMAC is 1.200,000.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute valuable insights on the impact of social media on legislative transparency. This would enhance the plausible impact of social media in legislative transparency among lawmakers in Nigeria.

The study would also provide a clear picture on how social media has enhanced legislative proceedings in Nigeria.

To Civil Society Organization (CSOs), the study would enable them understand the role effectiveness of social media in legislative transparency. This would also encourage speed adoption and application of social media platform in their activities.

The study would help in enhancing accountability and transparency in legislative activities through increase understanding on how social media affects transparency, legislatures can be held more accountable for their actions.

The study is also significant as it is expected to further enhance citizen engagement: The study could reveal ways to increase citizen participation in the legislative process through social media. Furthermore, the findings will help legislators and governments communicate more effectively with citizens, fostering trust and openness.

To policymakers, the study's results will help to inform policies on transparency, social media use, and citizen engagement in governance.

The study would also help to promote democratic values by examining the role of social media in legislative transparency, the study could contribute to strengthening democratic institutions and processes.

Finally, the study will contribute to the exiting literature on the impact of social media on legislative transparency and form the basis for further researches on the topic. It will spur other researchers to delve into further researches using different methodological approaches in research with a view to enhancing the frontiers of knowledge.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter is concerned with the review of related literature. The literature is segmented into the review of concepts, review of historical evolution of social media, theoretical review, methodological review, review of related empirical studies, theoretical framework and the summary of review.

2.1 Literature Review

In this section of the study, the general literature related to the study were reviewed:

Historical (Evolution) Review of Social Media

In this section of the study, the general literature related to the study were reviewed:

Social media has a long history, with roots in Morse code and the emergence of ARPANET in the late 1960s. The first social media platform commonly referred to as Six Degrees, was launched in 1997, followed by influential platforms like Friendster and My Space in the early 2000s. As Edosomwan (2011) notes, the history of social media has evolved over the years to the modern-day digital media.

In the 1960s, people saw the advent of email (Borders, 2010). However, the internet was not available to the public until 1991. Email was originally a method to exchange messages from one computer to another, but both computers were required to be online.

Similarly, Egbemode (2021), social network was born in the late 1990s with Web 2.0, which introduced features such as blogging and posting with the website 'six degrees. com,' which billed itself as a tool to let people communicate with each other and provide E- messaging. It lasted from 1997 to 2001 and was called after the 'Six Degrees of Separation' idea.

The concept is founded on the concept that people are separated by no more than six degrees. Users can build profiles, form groups, search for friends, and invite them. They did, however, push members to invite additional people to the site and had an excessive number of membership drives. Many people claimed that the membership invitations were spam, and that they were clogging up their websites. It was sold for \$125 million in 2001, but it was shut down the following year. Asian Avenue, founded in 1997, is another niche-driven portal.

In 1994, it was estimated that the number of internet users was increasing at a rate of 101 percent every month. By the turn of the century, it was predicted that there will be one million networks, a hundred million computers, and one billion internet users. Smith and Gibbs (Gibbs and Smith, 1994). According to Gibbs and Smith in 1998, the number of internet users in the United States is increasing at a 70 percent yearly rate and will surpass users in the United States by 2002.

In July 1999, 205 countries have at least one internet connection. The number of persons using the internet is estimated to be between 50 and 80 million people worldwide. It had been The Advanced Research Project Agency (ARPA) was created by the United States military in 1969. (ARPA).

Black Planet was founded in 1999, while MiGente.com for Hispanic servers was launched in 2000. In the mid-nineties. Amazon had begun selling books and Yahoo! Had launched. The World Wide Web does not appear to be slowing down. According to Weinreith (2007), despite attracting millions of people, it failed to become a sustainable business.

Sixdegrees.com, according to its organizer, was simply ahead of its time. According to Wasow (2007), from 1997 to 2001, a growing number of social networking websites emerged to support a variety of profiles and publicly announced friends. Users could build personal, professional, and dating accounts on Asian Avenue, Black Planet, and Mi-Gente, and they could identify friends

on their personal profiles without asking clearance for such connections. By the late 2000s, social media had become widely accepted, with some services attracting large numbers of users.

Later, in the year 2003, it came up with new features, giving social networks a fresh look. <http://www.linkedin.com/> (a professional networking platform with a lot of potential contacts, members use the site to keep in touch with business associates, clients and co-workers) In the year 2003, facebook.com (a social website that allows users to interact with friends, work colleagues, or people they don't know online) surpassed myspace.com (a major social networking site originally developed as a forum for budding artists and bands to exchange and study music). It alters the definition of social networks and changes the overall concept of social networks in the history of social media and web sciences.

The review clearly indicate that the history of social media is chronicled based the evolution of this medium of communication. This explains why social media is useful in every aspect of human endeavor and politics is not an exception. Based on this submission, this study set out to assess the influence of social media on legislative transparency

Social Media and Political Communication

Political communication is described as the study of how information flows between political actors, the media, and the public, and how this interaction shape's public opinion, policy, and political behavior. Social media platforms have become a veritable tool used by governments to involve citizens in decision making, and by civil society to engage people on specific issues. Social media is known to have been used widely by politicians to either create awareness or to make people see them as accessible and credible (Gibson & McAllister, 2018). Usage of social media is one of the most dominant forms of communication between politicians and the electorate, and it is the duty of politicians to achieve their targeted goals as regard projecting

positive images, retaining offices and maintaining relationships with their publics. Munir (2018) opined that the social media tools can effectively increase political literacy and engagement and a more informed and critical citizenry can be created who are supposed to be sharp and active in their social media interactions

Quoting Okoro and Kenneth (2013), Agaku and Kwen (2023), they averred that the use of social media in politics has continued to grow in recent times since Barack Obama broke the world record in the history of social media use for political purpose during the 2008 US presidential elections, many nations and politicians across the globe have continued to embrace the platform to mobilize their citizens and candidates towards active participation in the political process.

The 2011 general elections in Nigeria was a significant opportunity to examine the use of social media in politics, especially the usefulness and applicability of social media in the electoral environment. Eshemokha (2017) argued that nothing demonstrates the power of the social media better than the 2015 presidential election in Nigeria. Many movements sprang up in the social and online media, some independent some put together by politicians to pursue their political ambition and election into office. The two frontline candidates of the PDP and the APC were most aggressive in their social media campaigns.

It was a no hold barred game of information, disinformation, misinformation, fake news, red herring, propaganda all carefully designed to hoodwink the unsuspecting electorate. The idea was to dominate and control the conversation. Every dubious trick in the books was employed, and caution was thrown to the wind. Bogus social media accounts were created, smear campaigns were launched, doubtful information and propaganda were freely unleashed on the gullible public. Etido et al. (2025) argued that, the 2023 General Elections in Nigeria marked a significant turning point in the role of social media in political campaigns. With the proliferation of social

media platforms, political parties and candidates recognized the power of these digital spaces in influencing public opinion, mobilizing voters, and shaping the political landscape (Nabiebu, 2022).

In the 2023 elections in Nigeria, the use of social media helped reach out to the masses and influence the voters. With millions of Nigerians using social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, candidates and political parties have consistently utilized these sites to connect with potential voters. It facilitated the direct exchange of campaign messages, current information, and participation in political dialogue. Social media platforms provided a common platform for people to share their ideas, worries, and dreams about their nation, thereby creating the kind of participation and interaction that were associated with citizenship (Adebayo et al., 2023). Social media and new media, the Internet allow faster feedback and the unlimited exchange of messages. They convert the one-way political communication into two-way communication, giving the possibility of a rapid response to the citizens and recipients of the political messages (Podkawska, 2018). Digital technologies and social media require that we increasingly think of all political communication in terms of interpersonal communication (Holbert & Geidner, 2009; Shah et al., 2017). Because of political communication's roots in rhetoric and top-down propaganda research, and because of the challenge of studying informal interpersonal communication, most historical considerations of political communication have not included examinations of discourse between and among regular people (McNair, 2011).

The potentials of social media appear to be most promising in political context as they can be an enabler for more participation and democracy. Creighton (2005) defines public participation as the process by which public concerns, needs and values are incorporated into governmental and corporate decision making. The so-called e-participation focuses not only on this process but also

on using the Internet as an additional or exclusive instrument to create dialogs between the elected and the electorate. Related to that, Karpf (2009) introduces the notion of politics 2.0,' which can be understood as the harnessing of the Internet's lowered transaction costs and its condition of information abundance, toward the goal of building more participatory, interactive political institutions. The review established that social media is fundamental in political communication.

Social Media and the Oversight Functions of the Legislature

It is important to note that legislation and public policy making are fundamental aspects of the political process affected by various social and economic factors, including the media which play key roles in shaping the social context in which legislations and policies are fashioned (AALEP, 2013)

In view of the above submission, Oyewo (2007) opined that oversight is the exercise of constitutional rights by the legislature to verify or control the exercise of constitutional rights by other branches of government, and more specifically, to verify or control the exercise of executive powers or to make executive accountable to the electorate.

Heywood, (2007) referred to legislative oversight function as scrutiny. While Cosmeus (2016), opined that the primary role of every parliament is that they are responsible for holding governments accountable in their decisions and they scrutinize the actions of government. Lately, the lawmakers have become progressively a scrutinizing institution of the executive in a bid to engender responsible and accountable government (Nwogwugwu and Ishola, 2019). It was arguing that "oversight can be done before, during the design and implementation of a program or policy, as well as after implementation". Hence, Madue (2012) in defining oversight stated that oversight entails the informal and formal, watchful, strategic and structured scrutiny exercised by

legislatures in respect of the implementation of laws, the application of the budget, the strict observance of statutes and the constitution.

Similarly, Madue (2012) looked at legislative oversight as a process of overseeing the activities of government agencies, particularly the executive branch, on behalf of the Nigerian people, draws public attention to what the executive branch is doing and provides an opportunity for voters to determine whether civil servants are truly serving their collective interests (PLAC, 2016).

In most democracies Nigeria not an exception, legislators derive their legislative oversight function from the constitution as this legal backing enables parliaments to monitor the activities of the executive branch and its agencies to determine if public policies, projects or programmes are being adequately executed in the interest of the public (Nwogwugwu & Ishola, 2019). It was argued that the oversight function of the legislature has to do with making ensuring that laws, legislation and government policies are implemented effectively for the good of the citizens or constituents represented by legislators.

The use of social media usually contributes to the oversight functions of legislators by increasing transparency, holding officials accountable, and fostering a more engaged and informed citizenry. Furthermore, social media provides a platform for citizens to question government decisions, share information about wrongdoing, and organize protests, while also allowing governments to disseminate information and engage in two-way communication with the public. Social media provide an avenue for prompt instant feedback on legislative oversight, and apart from raising awareness, public engagement and support mobilization can be achieved via the use of social media among law makers in legislative oversight

Social Media and Political Landscape in Nigeria

Social media plays very important role in shaping political communication in the US and around the world (Aday et al. 2010). The potentials of social media appear to be most promising in political context as they can be an enabler for more participation and democracy. Public participation is the process by which public concerns, needs and values are incorporated into governmental and corporate decision making.

In Nigeria today, social media has generated new trends for political participation and changed the patterns of political communication. To this end, Tortorella (2016) rightly observed that social media is an instrument of communication where large range of websites enables people to interact with one another. It has equally provided opportunity to reach a community, target specific audience and given chances to interact with users. Tutel (2015) averred that social media play a vital role as it enables politicians, and citizens to reach out one another and to provide them with the information that they need in a very accessible way

Similarly, Stieglitz et al. (2012) analyzed the usage of social media for political communication as one of the impacts of political development and found a strong relationship among politicians and social media user's social media has played a pivotal role in the dissemination of information within modern societies. Its significance extends to fostering interactive dialogues for consensus-building in governance processes (Luttrell, & Wallace, 2021). The influence of social media, including news platforms, has evolved into a potent check on governmental authority.

The so-called e-participation focuses not only on this process but also on using the Internet as an additional or exclusive instrument to create dialogue between the elected and the electorate. Related to that, Karpf (2009) introduces the notion of "politics 2.0," which can be understood as

the harnessing of the Internet's lowered transaction costs and its condition of information abundance, toward the goal of building more participatory, interactive political institutions.

In *The Myth of Digital Democracy* Hindman (2009) reveals that, contrary to the belief, online media has done little to broaden political discourse but in fact empowers a small set of elites. Contradictory Panagapoulos (2009) claims positive effects of modern technology campaigning in the political system when adapted successfully.

The review has established that social media has the capacity to revolutionized democracy by enhancing legislative transparency and interaction, hence might be the new transition in the political landscape.

Uses of Social Media among Lawmakers in Nigeria for Legislative Transparency

The use of social media is crucial in fostering and advancing governance by enhancing accountability, transparency, responsiveness, and equality within the governance framework (Sari, 2023). Social media has evolved into a vigilant observer of governmental activities, as it facilitates easy access to a wealth of government- related information, fostering citizen consent and consensus. Information regarding legislative proceedings, executive decisions, court rulings, governmental policies, budgets, recruitment processes, and services is now more readily available to the public, thereby promoting transparency and accountability in governance.

In Nigeria, legislative activities are characterized by opaque decision-making, restricted public access to legislative proceedings, and limited publication of parliamentary records (Ojo, 2022). The Freedom of Information Act (2011) was a major step towards transparency, but enforcement remains weak due to resistance from government agencies and legislative bodies (Osawe, 2022),

Social media has become a critical tool for promoting transparency and holding government officials accountable in Nigeria. Platforms such as Twitter and Facebook are used by citizens and journalists to expose corruption, inefficiencies, and misconduct. For example, the hashtag #OpenNASS was launched to demand transparency in the financial operations of the National Assembly. The campaign pressured the legislators to disclose its budget publicly, leading to increased scrutiny and calls for fiscal responsibility. Similarly, the #EndSARS movement, which started as a social media campaign against police brutality. The movement gained international attention and forced the Nigerian government to disband the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). This movement demonstrated the power of social media in mobilizing citizens, documenting abuses, and pushing for governmental reforms.

This deficiency is exemplified by the National Assembly's frequent closed-door sessions and the opaque handling of budgetary allocations, which hinder public oversight. Thus, public participation in Nigeria's legislative process is limited due to restricted access to parliamentary debates, closed-door decision-making, and inadequate public hearings (Obidimma & Obidimma, 2019).

Social media has emerged as a potent tool for citizen engagement, political mobilization, and information dissemination in Nigeria. It has enabled citizens to voice their opinions, hold leaders accountable, and participate in democratic processes more actively including legislative activities. Although social media have the potentials for increased legislative transparency, certain challenges tend to hinder this all-important role in most cases. The challenges include: the spread of misinformation, privacy concerns, and the potential for manipulation and misuse of information. Additionally, there are issues related to digital literacy, access to technology, and the ability to effectively engage with diverse populations online.

Misinformation and Disinformation: Social media can be a breeding ground for false or misleading information, potentially undermining trust in government and creating confusion about legislative processes. The speed and reach of social media can amplify the spread of misinformation, making it difficult to contain and correct.

Privacy Concerns: Social media platforms collect vast amounts of user data, raising concerns about the potential for government surveillance and misuse of personal information. There are also challenges related to protecting the privacy of individuals participating in online discussions about legislative matters.

Manipulation and Misuse: Social media can be used to manipulate public opinion through targeted advertising, propaganda, and the spread of emotionally charged content. Legislators and government agencies need to be aware of these risks and take steps to mitigate them.

Digital Divide and Access: Not everyone has equal access to social media or the digital literacy skills necessary to navigate these platforms effectively. This can lead to a situation where certain groups are excluded from online discussions about legislation, further exacerbating existing inequalities.

Engagement and Participation: While social media can facilitate citizen engagement, it can also be difficult to ensure meaningful participation, especially when dealing with complex legislative issues. There is a risk that online discussions can become dominated by specific viewpoints or become overly emotional, hindering productive dialogue.

Lack of Regulation and Accountability: The rapid evolution of social media platforms can make it challenging to develop and enforce appropriate regulations and accountability mechanisms. This lack of clarity can create uncertainty about the legal and ethical implications of using social media for legislative transparency.

Defining Transparency: Social media can be used to share information, but the definition of transparency itself can be contested. What one person considers transparent, another may not. There needs to be a clear understanding of what constitutes transparency in the context of social media and how it aligns with broader goals of accountability and public participation

It is pertinent from the review that social media platforms are useful for increased legislative transparency, certain challenges such as the spread of misinformation, privacy concerns, and the potential for manipulation and misuse of information. digital literacy, access to technology, and the ability to effectively engage with diverse populations online sometimes stand as impediment.

National Assembly Collaboration on Transparency and Accountability in Legislative Agenda

Transparency and accountability are fundamental elements in legislative agenda. To enhance this view, the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) moved to collaborate with the National Assembly, particularly the House of Representatives, to promote transparency, open governance, and accountability in Nigeria's legislative processes. The idea is viewed as welcome development for sustainable legislative activities.

The Chairman of the ICPC, Dr. Musa Adamu Aliyu, revealed this during the inaugural National Policy Dialogue on the Legislative Agenda of the House of Representatives. Further, he stated that the ICPC, as an anti-corruption agency, is pleased to align with the House on initiatives that foster open governance and transparency, stressing,

Mr. Speaker, we want to assure you that, on our part, we are open to working with the National Assembly, especially the House of Representatives, to deepen transparency and accountability in your legislative agenda. Our doors are open to policies that promote transparency and ensure that the masses receive the dividends of democracy.

The Hon. Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Abbas Tajudeen, emphasized that the Policy Dialogue reflects a shared commitment to fostering parliamentary transparency, accountability, and a citizen-driven legislature. He pledged to regularly engage with Nigerians, report on our performance, and adjust our direction based on public feedback. He further explained that the 10th House's legislative agenda was developed through extensive consultations with key stakeholders, including Ministries, Departments, Agencies, civil society organizations, and development partners.

The review has clearly pointed out that legislative transparency is a very serious activity and the National assembly is working consciously to collaborate with agencies to enhance transparency and accountability in legislative agenda.

Challenges and Barriers to Legislative Transparency

In Nigeria, while efforts have been made to promote openness in legislative processes, however, significant barriers persist, affecting public trust, accountability, and effective governance (Adelani & Ukwani, 2024). Scholars like Bradshaw and Howard (2019); Sartor (2020); Fukuyama, (2021) highlighted some issues affecting the influence of social media on political development as follows:

Loss of Privacy and autonomy: Bradshaw and Howard (2019); Fukuyama, (2021) postulated that users' ability to form and express political opinions may be hampered by the huge data collection practices used by social media (loss of privacy and autonomy). In an effort to boost interaction, social media platforms adopt an attention capture strategy that simultaneously undermines individual autonomy and aims to capitalize on human needs and biases. Even if social media is

not directly to blame for this (political disengagement), it may nonetheless contribute to voters' declining levels of interest in politics.

Distortion of political views and preferences: The ability of citizens to create and express political opinions might be undermined by the dissemination of incorrect information on social media (distortion of political views and preferences). Despite mounting evidence that people are regularly exposed to political misinformation online, it is challenging to determine how misinformation actually affects people's opinions and preferences (Büchi, et. al. 2020; Fukuyama, 2021). Although it appears that disinformation's reach and impact have been overstated, there is evidence that it has harmful impacts in particular situations and on particular populations. Disinformation can be used to persuade or mislead voters and to mobilize or demobilize persons to cast a ballot, which, under some circumstances, may determine the results of elections (distort electoral outcomes).

Political manipulation: Social media employ a range of user data to profile users and market to them with relevant content (microtargeting). Political microtargeting can help to re-engage people in politics, but it can also be used to sway people's opinions and expectations (political manipulation). Because microtargeting is secretive or clandestine, there is a greater chance of manipulation, which reduces the ability of citizens to form opinions and make political decisions. One of the key challenges in Nigeria is the inconsistency in the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (2011) (Osawe, 2022). Despite its enactment, many public institutions, including the National Assembly, frequently refuse to disclose requested information, citing bureaucratic constraints or national security concerns (Okonjo, 2020).

Additionally, many Nigerian states have not domesticated the FOIA, limiting its reach and creating disparities in access to legislative information (Adebayo & Ojo, 2019). It is important to

note that the judiciary's conflicting rulings on FOIA requests further complicate enforcement, leading to a lack of legal clarity on the Act's applicability to legislative bodies (Eze, 2022).

Another challenge is the political culture of corruption, Lawmakers frequently prioritise their personal financial benefit over upholding good governance when performing their responsibilities (Olaogun et al., 2025). Nigeria's legislative process is the entrenched culture of secrecy among lawmakers, particularly in budgetary allocations and legislative decision-making (Ibrahim & Yusuf, 2021).

Whereas personal interest overrides collective interest, as occasionally seen in the national assembly, the system will be undermined and legislative efficiency will be compromised (Fagbadebo, 2019). This implies that as long as the concerned ministries and divisions of government know how to "settle", enquiries into any issue pertaining to governance cannot be thoroughly examined in the best interests of Nigerians.

Another barrier to legislative openness is limited public participation in legislative processes (Adelani & Ukwani, 2024). As emphasised by Olaogun et al. (2025), public engagement is a crucial element of legislative transparency, yet there remain challenges in ensuring meaningful citizen participation.

In Nigeria, legislative public hearings are infrequent, poorly advertised, and often conducted in ways that exclude marginalized groups (Ogunyemi, 2020). Studies indicate that most Nigerians remain unaware of how to access legislative proceedings, highlighting a disconnect between lawmakers and the public (Daudu & Fagbadebo, 2018).

Furthermore, the digitalisation of legislative records and real-time access to parliamentary proceedings are essential for legislative openness. While South Africa has made strides in digitising legislative documents, Nigeria lags in this regard. The National Assembly's website is

often outdated, with critical legislative records either missing or difficult to access (Chima, 2023). Similarly, live-streaming of parliamentary debates is inconsistent, limiting real-time public engagement. The review suggests that although social media is useful in legislative transparency, there are various challenges that tend to hinder the effectiveness of social media in achieving this goal.

2.1.1 Conceptual Review

In this section of the study, the concepts of social media and legislative transparency were reviewed.

Social Media

Social media is conceptualized as interactive technologies that facilitate the creation, sharing and aggregation of content amongst virtual communities and networks. Common features include: Online platforms enable users to create and share content and participate in social networking. Social media is described as a group of Internet-based applications built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

In the same vein, Abubakar et al. (2021) defined social media as a conglomeration of online based applications that aid ideological and technological foundations of web 2.0 as well as foster the creation and exchange of user generated content. This means that social media fosters the human relationship through technology as well as allow for better, faster and more constant interaction among users globally.

Social media has been defined as websites which allow profile creation and visibility of relationships between users (Boyd & Ellison, 2008); web-based applications which provide functionality for sharing, relationships, group, conversation and profiles (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Social media has been referred to as “social media sites (Diga & Kelleher, 2009). Social media is

also conceptualised as a set of information technologies which facilitate interactions and networking (Kapoor et al., 2017).

Social media refers to a collection of online platforms and applications that facilitate the creation, sharing, and interaction of content by individuals, communities, and organizations. These platforms are distinguished by their ability to foster communication and interaction in real-time, allowing users to connect across geographic boundaries. Social media is not limited to mere communication; it enables users to engage in a variety of activities, such as content creation, collaboration, networking, and information dissemination.

Uwalaka, (2024) vividly explained some of the common social media platforms used in Nigeria such as:

WhatsApp: WhatsApp is widely used in Nigeria for messaging, voice calls, and sharing media.

Facebook: Facebook remains popular in Nigeria for connecting with friends, sharing updates, and joining groups.

X (Formerly Twitter): X has a significant user base in Nigeria for sharing news, opinions, and engaging in discussions.

Instagram: Instagram is popular for sharing photos, videos, and stories among Nigerian users.

LinkedIn: LinkedIn is used for professional networking and job searching in Nigeria.

YouTube: YouTube is widely accessed in Nigeria for watching videos and following content creator

Telegram: Telegram is used for messaging, group chats, and sharing media files.

These social media platforms are commonly used across various demographics in Nigeria for different purposes ranging from social networking to professional networking and information sharing. However, the popularity of social media platforms can change over time. Similarly, as at

February 2024, Nigeria has over 40 million social media users, with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp being quite popular integrated into both personal and professional life.



Source: Uwalaka, (2024)

Social media platforms enable a two-way communication between parties or engage in two-way interactions, and respond to real-time feedback. This has shifted traditional communication models for enhanced personalized, interactive, and dynamic messaging. One of the major strengths of social media is its ability to provide extensive reach and scalability. Kietzmann et al. (2011) explain that social media platforms enable users to communicate with large audiences quickly and efficiently, which has made them indispensable for organizations looking to enhance their communication strategies. In a globalized, fast-paced digital world, businesses leverage

social media to build brand awareness, foster customer loyalty, and even mitigate crises by responding to issues in real-time (Waters et al., 2019).

This review established that social media is a phenomenon that has transformed the interaction and communication of individuals throughout the world. However, social media is not a new concept - it has been evolving since the dawn of human interaction.

Legislative Transparency

Legislative transparency is described as the openness and accessibility of legislative procedures, which guarantees that stakeholders, the media, and public can follow, comprehend, and participate in the process of enacting laws or policies for the good of the society (Stapenhurst et al., 2019). Legislative transparency is often achieved through public access to legislative decisions, voting records, policy creation procedures and parliamentary debates which create accountability and public trust (Voermans et al., 2015). The idea is to strengthen democratic institutions, improve public trust, and ensure that laws are made in the best interests of their citizens.

The argument behind public trust is that those in positions of authority, whether in government or other organizations, hold a responsibility to act in the best interests of the public they serve. It is based on the idea that the public's trust is essential for the legitimacy and effectiveness of these institutions. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2021) vividly captured that legislative transparency through three major features which consist of open parliamentary debates, proactive draft bill release, and citizen participation in law-making. This openness enhances democratic legitimacy by enabling informed public engagement and reducing corruption risks.

Legislative transparency makes it possible to strengthen and improve democratic systems, opening their spheres of action to the public space. This is achieved by making public information available to the public for consultation in an open, accessible, and reusable way, promoting public participation in the country's legislative process, as well as implementing accountability mechanisms as instruments for evaluating public policies, representatives, and the implementation of the global 2030 Agenda.

Transparency and access to information are fundamental principles in democratic systems. They guide the management of public institutions, allow citizen empowerment and vigilance with regard to public affairs, reduce the risk of corruption within the State, and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 16, which is focused on promoting

Peace, Justice and Solid Institutions. Inter-institutional and multi-level collaboration within each country, as well as cooperation between regional and international networks and organizations, are crucial to promoting these principles.

The right to information is increasingly recognised as a fundamental democratic right and it has been stated in Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Fox 2010 in Cornwall & Eade, 2010). Transparency and the right to access government information are now internationally regarded as essential to democratic participation, trust in government, prevention of corruption, informed decision-making, accuracy of government information, and provision of information to the public, companies, and journalists, among other essential functions in society (Bertot et al. 2010).

It is pertinent from the review that legislative transparency focuses on the openness and accessibility of the legislative process to the public. It involves making information about

proposed laws, debates, votes, and other parliamentary activities available to citizens. This promotes accountability, public participation, and strengthens democratic governance.

2.1.2 Theoretical Review

In this section of the study, several theories were reviewed. The idea is to show that apart from the theoretical framework adopted for the study, there are other relevant theories that also be adopted for the study.

Agenda-setting theory was formulated by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972. The theory described the mass media as instrument that influences public opinion by setting the agenda on issues of public importance. The theory further state that the media does not tell the audience members what to think about but it does determine what issues and debates are worthy of their attention.

In the words of Baran and Davies (2012), the major assumption of the theory is that the media do not tell people what to think but determines what to think about. Edogoh and Nze (2018) argued that the theory emphasized that the media images we store in our heads, the things we think or worry about, the issues we discuss are based on what we have consumed from different forms of the mass media. Generally, the media usually make us consider certain issues in such a way that such issues are more important than others in the society.

Agenda setting theory does not empower the media to determine what the audience think however, the theory ascribed to the media the power to determine what media consumers are thinking about. Brooks (2003) cited in Ango (2022) argue that agenda setting theory presupposes that the news media largely influence the audience in terms of what stories to consider newsworthy and the prominence and space allotted to such stories in the media. .

Public Sphere Theory

The public sphere theory is rooted in the Enlightenment era, particularly the 17th and 18th centuries, with German sociologist Jürgen Habermas providing the seminal analysis in his 1962 book. (Agaku, 2023). The public sphere is seen as a domain of social life where public opinion can be formed. (Habermas, 1991, p. 398).

Historically, the idea of a public sphere originated from the salon and coffee house culture of 17th and 18th-century Europe, where citizens engaged in critical discussion to form public opinion, influencing policy and state authority (Walters et al., 2019). The theory posits that a healthy public sphere, whether online or offline, allows for rational discourse and the potential to influence public policy.

Public sphere theory describes the social space where citizens can discuss and debate matters of public concern to form public opinion and hold their government accountable. It is a space for free exchange of ideas and deliberation that is crucial for democratic governance, serving as a bridge between the state and society.

Knowledge Gap Theory

This theory was first proposed in 1970 by Philip J Tichenor. The theorist emphasized that knowledge Gap theory is the infusion of mass media information into a social system increases higher socioeconomic status segments tend to acquire this information faster than lower socioeconomic status population segments. Hence the gap in knowledge between the two tends to increase rather than decrease.

The implication is that as the access to mass media increases those particular segments of population inevitable gain information faster and hence the wide gap increases with the lower economic status of the population.

Furthermore, the knowledge gap theory represents the disparity between what individuals know and what they need to know. It can hinder personal growth, workplace performance and an organization's ability to reach their goals.

2.1.3 Methodological Review

This section of the study focused on methodological review. In a related study, Fakeye (2023) researched on the Impact of Social media on Political Awareness: A Case Study of Ilaro Youths. The descriptive survey was utilized to sample 396 respondents drawn from the study population. Data gathered from the study showed that the youths in the town are active political commentators on social media and are informed about the politics of the land and nation on major topics online and offline.

In a similar study, Chuks et al. (2024) carried out a study on the Impact of Media Exposure on Legislative Output of the 10th National Assembly Members of South-West Nigeria Extraction. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The total population of the study was 61. Each of the six states of the zone has three senators (18), and 51 members of the House of Representatives in varying numbers, amounting to 61. Using both purposive and accidental sampling techniques, 12 of the legislators were randomly selected for the study.

In another related study, Idepedfo (2023) conducted a study on an assessment of the role of media in lawmaking process in the national assembly: A study of the ninth house of representatives, 2019-2023. The survey research design with questionnaire as instrument for data collection on 36

respondents using purposive sampling. Data analysis primarily relied on descriptive statistics, encompassing frequency and percentage.

Based on gap observed in the methodological review, this study bridged the methodological gap by adopting a mixed method design with questionnaire and in-depth interview as instruments for data collection on a sample size of 357 respondents drawn from the study population while twelve (12) participants were used for in-depth interview to complement the data obtained from the instrument of questionnaire.

2.1.4 Empirical Review

In this section, empirical studies related to the study have been reviewed.

In this study, Noman et al. (2024) researched on the role of social media in enhancing transparency, accountability, and civic engagement: insights from Pakistan's governance framework. The objective of the study was to explore the critical role of social media in advancing transparency, accountability, and civic engagement within Pakistan's governance framework. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative surveys with case study analyses, the research investigates how digital platforms impact government accountability and public participation. Data from 50 respondents across Pakistan and several case studies of key governance-related events are analyzed.

The findings highlight social media as an essential tool for strengthening democratic processes, fostering public discourse, and enhancing government transparency. These insights offer valuable guidance for policymakers and civil society organizations dedicated to improving democratic governance through digital platforms.

The study concluded that social media has provided valuable insights into the role of social media in enhancing transparency, accountability, and civic engagement within Pakistan's governance

framework. Social media has demonstrated significant potential for enhancing governance in Pakistan, realizing this potential requires addressing several key challenges. Success depends not just on technological accessibility but on a combination of digital literacy, trust-building measures, and structured engagement opportunities.

The study therefore recommended that government institutions should prioritize developing comprehensive digital literacy programs that target various age groups and social segments. These programs should not only focus on technical skills but also include critical thinking and information verification capabilities. Additionally, there is a pressing need for establishing verified government social media accounts with consistent branding and transparent communication protocols to build public trust,

The study is relevant to the current study because both studies focus on social media and transparency. The difference however lies in the period of research and location. While the previous study was conducted in Pakistan in 2024, the current study is being carried out in Nigeria

In a related study, Fakeye (2023) researched on the Impact of Social Media on Political Awareness: A Case Study of Ilaro Youths. The objective of the study was to examine how the social media is impacting the level of political enlightenment in terms of political awareness of youths, using Ilaro, a border town in Ogun,

The spiral of silence theory was adopted for the study while the descriptive survey was utilized to sample 396 respondents drawn from the study population. Data gathered from the study showed that the youths in the town are active political commentators on social media and are informed about the politics of the land and nation on major topics online and offline.

The study concluded that emergence of social media in the mass communication business has ushered in many feats that were hitherto unachievable. The instantaneous feedback mechanism and the power now borne by the audience to dictate the agendas, not just for the media, but for policymakers and the governance across international body has earned social media more respect by all and sundry.

The study recommended responsible use of social media by the youth so as to engender dissentient views that may serve as a checkmate against unprofitable or complacent popular opinions, which is necessary for every democracy.

In a similar study, Chuks et al. (2024) carried out a study on the Impact of Media Exposure on Legislative Output of the 10th National Assembly Members of South-West Nigeria Extraction. The objective of the study was to investigate the impact of media exposure on legislative output of the 10th National Assembly members of South-West Nigeria extraction.

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The total population of the study was 61. Each of the six states of the zone has three senators (18), and 51 members of the House of Representatives in varying numbers, amounting to 61. Using both purposive and accidental sampling techniques, 12 of the legislators were randomly selected for the study.

The study found that though the majority of the legislators are heavy media users, there was however, no strong relationship between their consumption of media and their legislative function.

The study concludes that Southwest legislators in the 10th Assembly were heavy media users but their main purpose of use was primarily to get more informed especially on the path of their functions as legislators.

The study therefore recommended that Legislators need to focus effort on media contents that address matters of relevance to their primary duties to enable them improve their knowledge and experience in the areas of their functions; they should strategically engage with the media with the aim of making their views known at all times and also understanding with they are expected to do from their constituents through the media; The legislators should create and maintain a mutually rewarding relationship with the media through a strategic method of engagement with the media that will guarantee mutually rewarding outcomes.

In another related study, Idepdfo (2023) conducted a study on an assessment of the role of media in lawmaking process in the national assembly: A study of the ninth house of representatives, 2019-2023. The study delves into the media's influence on the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly.

The study adopted the agenda setting theory while the survey research design with questionnaire as instrument for data collection on 36 respondents using purposive sampling. Data analysis primarily relied on descriptive statistics, encompassing frequency and percentage. The study's major findings revealed a substantial impact of the media on the legislative process in the 9th National Assembly. Media coverage emerged as a prominent influencer in this regard.

Nonetheless, certain legislative activities, such as bill submissions, investigative journalism, constituency meetings, final bill passage, and oversight functions, were found to be less influenced by the media.

The study recommended that media experts, such as journalists and editors, should undergo specialized training in parliamentary reporting to bolster their comprehension of the nuances and importance of parliamentary proceedings. Moreover, to heighten public awareness of the legislative process, the Nigerian media should prioritize thorough media coverage. It is imperative to make concerted efforts to bolster the media's involvement in parliamentary activities, especially in constituency outreach initiatives. Media coverage serves as a persuasive instrument in legislative debates, steering the direction of discussions and substantiating arguments.

In a related study, Arshad and Khurram (2020) evaluated government's presence on social media stimulate citizens' online political participation? Investigating the influence of transparency, trust, and responsiveness. The study empirically investigates the association of quality information provided by a government agency on social media and citizen's online political participation as well as the why and how questions regarding the existence of this relationship by examining the mediating influence of transparency, trust, and responsiveness.

The data was collected from 388 followers of the social media platforms of a government agency i.e. Punjab Food Authority and the findings of the analysis were obtained using structural equation modeling technique. The results reveal that the agency's provision of quality information on social media was significantly related to perceived transparency, trust in agency, perceived responsiveness, and citizens' online political participation.

Moreover, the results show that perceived transparency mediates the relationship between agency's provision of quality information on social media and citizens' trust in agency. Additionally, trust in agency was an insignificant predictor and perceived responsiveness was a negative predictor of citizens online political participation, Also, trust in agency and perceived

responsiveness suppressed the relationship between agency's provision of quality information on social media and citizens' online political participation.

This study aims to bring awareness and contribution to the body of knowledge about the governmental use of social media and its resulting benefits since in developing countries like Pakistan the research in this area is sparse. Further, it provides strategic and practical suggestions to agencies regarding advantages of utilizing social media in their communication with citizens.

In a related study, Oghale (2025) researched on the nexus between legislative transparency and public trust in emerging democracies: Comparative analysis of Nigeria and South Africa

This study examined the relationship between legislative transparency and public trust by drawing comparison between Nigeria and South Africa.

Based on available data, the comparative analysis revealed that South Africa has stronger institutional frameworks supporting legislative transparency, notably through the Promotion of Access to Information Act (2000), structured citizen engagement platforms, and regular publication of parliamentary proceedings. These mechanisms foster higher levels of public trust and engagement in the democratic process.

Conversely, Nigeria faces significant barriers to legislative openness, including weak enforcement of the Freedom of Information Act (2011), opaque voting processes, and limited public participation in legislative affairs. These gaps contribute to declining public confidence in governance, political disengagement, and increasing perceptions of legislative corruption and inefficiency. For Nigeria to bridge the transparency gap and rebuild public trust, it must implement stronger legislative accountability measures, enhance public access to parliamentary transactions, and institutionalize citizen engagement mechanisms, as evident in the South African context.

In a related study Akindoyin (2024) researched on a critique of the impact of social media on governance in Nigeria. The study explores the pros and cons of social media on governance in Nigeria and investigate the nexus between governance and social media in Nigeria with the aid of Technological Determinism as a theoretical framework.

Adopting a qualitative approach with the use of secondary data sources such as academic journals, government reports, and media reports, the study critically analyses the impact of social media on governance in Nigeria. The study finds that social media has democratized access to information in Nigeria. The study recommends the implementation of specific laws and regulations that govern social media usage to ensure accountability and responsible behaviour online. Meanwhile, on the part of the Nigerian authorities, the study recommends collaborating with social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to develop and enforce community guidelines that can help mitigate the spread of harmful content.

The study is relevant to the current study because both studies focus on the use of social media for political communication. The difference between both studies is observed in the period of research, while the previous study was conducted in 2024, the current study is being carried in 2025.

In a similar study, Mbamalu et al. (2021) researched on integrity, transparency and accountability in governance integrity, transparency and accountability in governance pathway to sustainable growth and development in Nigeria. This study examined integrity, transparency, and accountability in governance as the pathway to sustainable growth and development in Nigeria. The main objective of the study is to demonstrate and establish the fact that the current spate of corruption by public office holders which has made it very difficult for sustainable growth and

development in Nigeria could be curbed through the institutionalization of the culture of integrity, transparency and accountability in public governance in the country.

The study adopted as its theoretical framework of analysis the dynamic theory of corruption. The findings of the study reveals that public office holders in Nigeria accepts bribes, tips, kickbacks, questionable gifts and other valuable items amongst many other behaviors which tends to institutionalize corruption in public governance in the country.

The study concludes that for integrity, transparency and accountability in governance to serve as a pathway to sustainable growth and development in Nigeria, there should be a positive change in the country resulting in improvement in the living conditions of the people. In Nigeria there is wide spread poverty as most of the people are unable to provide for themselves the basic necessities of life. Majority of the people are poor because they have no money, no power, no self-pride and no influence.

Consequently, the need to enthrone and institutionalize the culture of integrity, transparency and accountability as the pathway to sustainable growth and development in Nigeria becomes an imperative and desideratum in the country. The reviewed study is relevant to the current study because both studies focus on transparency and accountability in Nigeria while the research gap is observable in the period of research. The previous study was conducted in 2021 while the current study is being carried out in 2025.

Furthermore, Nafosatkhon, (2024) researched on the impact of social media on transparency and citizen engagement of government organizations in Uzbekistan. The objective of this study is to evaluate the impact of social media on transparency and citizen engagement of government organizations in Uzbekistan.

The mixed-method approach was used to understand the kinds of strategies that the Uzbek government is using for social media communication with its citizens, finding out the typology of information that is made available online by the government in Uzbekistan to its citizens and the impact that the government use of social media has on the citizen trust, engagement and perceived responsiveness.

The findings of the study revealed that the content mainly published by the government is informational. The major strategies being implemented are relating to engagement, networking and representation of information and the government. Also, significant associations between citizen engagement and the perceived responsiveness of the government were indicated.

The study is similar to current study because both studies evaluated the impact of social media on transparency and citizen engagement of government organizations or institutions. Although the research gap is observed in the location of the study. The previous study was carried out in Uzbekistan while the current study is being carried in Nigeria.

In a similar study, Ekemode (2012) researched on the influence of social media on the use of mass media among Nigerian youths. The study aims to explore the impact of social media on Nigeria Youths, the specific objectives of the study was to assess the effect of social media on youths in Nigeria, to study the accruable benefits that could accompany the use of these media, and to recommend ways to minimize the identified negative effects.

The methodology employed by the researcher was descriptive survey method and exploratory survey method of research as is most suitable for the study. Data was collected online through the use of google forms and it was tabulated and analyzed using simple percentage for easy interpretation and understanding.

The findings from the study revealed that a great number of students from Caleb University are aware of Social Media and make use of it, students also spend a lot of time on Social Media for academic activities and due to the amount of time spent on social media, academic performance of students suffer setbacks which could lead to poor performance. The study therefore recommended that: social media should be expanded with new pages for students' educational activities, students should distinguish between academic activities and chitchatting on social media, more time should be dedicated to research, the impact of social media on Nigeria youths should focus more on the positive side than the negative to encourage those who use it for educational activities to do more and also encourage others to follow in the same vein.

In a similar study, Rajainmäki (2015) researched on social media policy for transparency a case study of the ministry of Finance of Finland. The objective of the study is to explore the transparency proposals of the Finnish government by studying the process of a new social media policy using the Ministry of Finance in Finland as a case study.

A mixed method research design was adopted for the study with questionnaire and in-depth interview as instrument of data collection. Out of the 400 employees 114 took part in the questionnaire.

Findings from the study shows how the policy-making process starts from international level.

Second, the attitudes of civil servants towards social media are being explored by sending out a questionnaire to civil servants of the Ministry of Finance. The study further shows what kind of policy the Finnish authority has on the use of social media and open governance and whether individual civil servants are in support of this development.

The most significant findings of the study Sare that transparency is much more than advertising the activity of the officials, but the Finnish government does not have a clear strategy for it. In

year 2015 the government is only about to launch the first social media plan for governmental use.

The study concludes that despite recent criticism on transparency hype the research highlights the urge for open governance and an overall change in attitudes towards social media. The study recommended that true open governance would offer insight into the decision-making processes and furnish opportunities for the public to participate. The study is similar with the current study because both studies focus on social media and transparency policy.

Lastly, Agaku and Kwen (2023) conducted a study on the empirical analysis of social media influence on the 2023 gubernatorial elections in Benue state. The objective of the study was to analyze the influence of social media on the 2023 gubernatorial elections in Benue state. The study is situated on technological determinism theory while the descriptive survey design was adopted with questionnaire as instrument for data collection on a sample size of 357 respondents. The data collected and analyzed revealed that social media provided information on political activities during the 2023 Governorship elections in Benue state. Further findings revealed that Facebook deployed in the 2023 Governorship election in Benue electorates perceived political campaign messages on social media during the 2023 Governorship elections in Benue state as credible information.

The study also revealed that the influence of Social Media on the outcome of the 2023 Governorship election in Benue state centered on persuasive messages, interactivity and wider reach. The study concluded that social media is effective for political engagements. The study therefore recommended that social media should also be deployed when conducting local government elections, political parties and politicians using social media for elections should also maintain the credibility of their information and messages as the electorates continues to depend

on social media as sources of information during electioneering campaigns and the Benue state House of Assembly (BSHOA) should enact policies that would prioritize social media as an effective platform for political campaigns.

The review is relevant to the current study because both studies focus on the use of social media for the purpose of political engagements. The gap is therefore observed in the aspect that the study failed to address the impact of social media on legislative transparency which is the bone of contention in the current study.

2.1.5. Gaps In Knowledge

The literature reviewed has identified a wide research gap in the study. It is evident from the literature reviewed that previous studies did not assess the impact of social media on legislative transparency in Nigeria, this study therefore aims to bridge this gap with a view to further promote the frontiers of knowledge.

The gap is therefore observed in the aspect that, the study failed to address assess the role of social media for enhancing legislative transparency, establish the extent to which legislators use social media to communicate their legislative activities to constituents, assess the of social media on legislative transparency in Nigeria as well as identify the challenges of using social media for legislative transparency. This current study is aimed to bridge the study gap using the mixed-methods research approach of quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews)

2.2 Theoretical Framework

In keeping track with academic best practices, scholars often use theoretical postulations to backup scholarship submissions. The study is not an exception hence it is anchored on transparency theory supported by democratic participant's theory.

Transparency Theory

Transparency theory was formulated by G.E. Moore (1922). The theory emphasizes openness, communication, and accountability, and it is used as a means to establish trust in democratic systems. The theory believed that government is obligated to share information about its functioning and use of taxpayer money, which allows citizens to monitor their representatives, hold them accountable, and participate in public life. This openness is a cornerstone of democracy, helping to combat corruption, increase public trust, as well as ensure resources are effectively utilized.

The Assumption of the Theory

The core assumption of theory is that open and accessible information fosters accountability, trust, and better decision-making (Averill & Gottlieb, 2021). The theory also emphasized the importance of making information readily available to stakeholders, allowing them to understand processes, assess performance, and hold institutions accountable.

In other words, transparency theory focuses on the idea that open and clear communication, especially regarding information and decision-making processes, leads to greater accountability, trust, and potentially improved outcomes in various contexts, such as governance, organizations, and even interpersonal relationships. The principles of transparency theory include the following:

- a. Transparency emphasizes the free flow of information, making it available to those who need it.
- b. By making information public, institutions are more likely to be held responsible for their actions and decisions.
- c. Transparency can foster public trust and participation, leading to better outcomes for the public.

- d. When stakeholders have access to information, they can make more informed decisions and contribute to more effective processes.
- e. Transparency can be applied at different levels, from the disclosure of information about operational capacity to the transparency of software and business processes.

The strength of this theory lies in building trust, fostering accountability, promoting ethical behavior, and improving communication. Transparency helps prevent corruption, encourages collaboration and innovation, and can lead to better decision-making by making information accessible to all stakeholders. In view of this social media has been used positively over the years to exposed corrupt activities and scandals of those in leadership positions.

Critique of the Theory

The theory is criticized because of its failure to guarantee democratic outcomes, the simplification of complex communication processes, and the risk of negative consequences like increased political cynicism. Critics point out that transparency alone does not prevent corruption without other supportive conditions, can lead to a "blame culture," and may not always build public trust if citizens focus on mistakes (Mejir, 2014).

Relevance of the Theory

Despite the criticisms, transparency theory is relevant to the study because it advocates for open communication, accessible information, and clear decision-making processes to improve outcomes in various domains, promoting accountability and trust while also potentially contributing to public value creation and good governance.

Democratic Participant Theory

Democratic-participant theory was proposed by Denis McQuail in 1987 as a reaction against commercialization and centralized control of media. The theory emerged as a response to the

perceived limitations of other media theories like the Libertarian and Social Responsibility theories (Babatunde, 2024). The implication is that the theory, rooted in the idea of media democratization, advocates for equal access to media for all citizens, promoting cultural pluralism and public governance.

Assumption of Theory

The core assumption of democratic participant theory is that citizen participation in media and communication. It suggests that media should be a tool for social action and should empower individuals to express their views and participate in decision-making processes (Garba, 2020).

Agaku (2023) summarized the principles of democratic participant theory as follow:

- a. The theory encourages horizontal and bottom-up approach in media
- b. The theory also supports democracy, existing political rule, national socio-economic development efforts and to implement policies
- a. Media has supportive rather than critical role
- b. Government controls some aspects if media does not act as it should by the process of registration, licensing, censorship, by preparing guidelines for media, monitoring, etc.
- c. Self-regulation of media is also encouraged
- d. More applicable to new media
- e. Development of creativity and innovation in small media
- f. Replacement of media from big media houses to small media.

The strength of this theory lies in the fact that the audience can participate and get alternatives if not satisfied with one media, the theory is stricter than libertarian and social responsibility which makes it more responsible towards the needs of the audience, the community can work

for themselves as social action, the theory is not very authoritative unless the press hinders the work of the government, there are the concepts of equality, inclusion and equal access which makes it eliminate marginalization., democracy becomes strong with the application of this theory as well as small media gets the chance to work for local people respectively.

Critique of the Theory

The theory is criticized because criticizing the government is not considered to be productive role of media, Local level media might lack professionalism and skills and the small local media might not be able to compete with media giants.

Relevance of the Theory

The theory is relevant to the study because social media platforms can empower citizens to provide feedback on political issues, hold legislators accountable, and access information about government actions.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research design, population and sampling techniques, the sample size, research instrument, validation and reliability of the instrument, method of data collection, method of data analysis and limitation of the study.

3.1 Research Design

The research design adopted for this study is a mixed method research design. This design is used for the purpose of collecting and analyzing data through questionnaire and in-depth interview in a given study. The design is usually applied to enable the researcher approach complex research issues as it integrates both quantitative and qualitative data in such a way that research issues are meaningfully explained (Fetters, 2016).

Mixed methods research designs involve the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods in a single study. Mixed methods research design is considered the most appropriate method especially in a study where quantitative or qualitative data alone cannot sufficiently answer the research questions. (Creswell, 2014). Similarly, Creswell and Clark (2007) argue that mixed methods research enables the researcher answer the questions that cannot be answered by quantitative or qualitative methods alone and provides a greater repertoire of tools to meet the aims and objectives of a specific study.

In using the mixed method, the researcher usually adopts different methods of data collection such as survey, interview, observations as well as document analysis to gather data from different sources. The mixed method also allows the researcher to leverage on the strength of both quantitative and qualitative methods for a more understanding of complex research questions.

The depth and context of a phenomenon is explored through qualitative data while generalization insights and statistical analysis is provided through quantitative data.

In this study, the questionnaire was used for quantitative data while in-depth interview guide will be used for the purpose of generating qualitative data. The choice of mixed method research design is justified on the basis that it would enable the researcher generate both quantitative and qualitative data on assessing the impact of social media on legislative transparency.

3.2 Population and Sampling Technique

The population of this study is the entire residents in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) which has a population figure of Abuja Municipal Area Council. According the World population review 2023, the population of Abuja is estimated to be 1.200,000 as shown in tabular form below:

Population of AMAC

2023	Population size
AMAC	1.200,000
Total	1.200,000

Source: World population review, 2023.

In terms of the sampling technique, the study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique which consist of stratified sampling, purposive sampling and simple random sampling technique.

In the first stage, the study population was stratified into Apo, Karu, Jikwoyi, Garki, Asokoro and Wuse.

Secondly, the purposive sampling was used to purposively select respondents in Apo, Karu, Jikwoyi, Garki, Asokoro and Wuse.

Finally, the simple random sampling was used to randomly sample respondents in the study area.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample size for this study is 357 respondents. The sample size for the study was determined using Cozby's table for sample size determination at +5% (95% confidence level) as shown below.

Population size	+ 3%	+ 5%	+ 10%
2,000	696	322	92
5,000	879	357	94
10,000	964	370	95
50,000	1,045	381	96
100,000 and over	1056	383	96

Source: Cozby (2004)

Where:

Population size (N): 1,200,000

Sample size (n): 357

Desired precision (margin of error)

Confidence level: 95%

3.4 Research Instrument

Questionnaire and in-depth interview were adopted as instruments for the collection of quantitative data in this study. The questionnaire is a data collection instrument whereby respondents are given standardized questionnaire to complete in written form.

Xu et al. (2025) argued that in-depth interviews are a widely used in qualitative research method that enables researchers to gain a detailed understanding of the life experiences, behaviors, and perspectives of individuals within specific social groups.

Furthermore, in-depth interviews are a widely used qualitative research method that enables researchers to gain a detailed understanding of the life experiences, behaviors, and perspectives of individuals within specific social groups.

This instrument is considered appropriate because it help to generate data for the study. The questionnaire consists of two sections namely: Sections A and B. While section A contain the biodata of respondents, Section B on the other hand, contain general questions designed to elicit data for the study.

In other to generate qualitative data for the study, the researcher conducted twelve in-depth interviews with Honourable members of the House of Representatives of the 10th National Assembly with a view to complementing the data generated through the instrument of questionnaire. The choice of twelve (12) participants for in-depth interview is justified by Creswell and Creswell (2018) submission that a figure of 10 - 50 participants is sufficient for in-depth interviews. The rationale for in-depth interview was to generate qualitative data to complement the quantitative data obtained through the instrument of questionnaire.

3.5 Validation and Reliability of Instrument

In order to validate the instrument designed for this study, content validity was used to determine through the judgment of the research supervisor for the purpose of expert validation. The suggested corrections and suggestions were affected on the instrument to meet both the face and content validity as well as to determine the reliability of the instrument, the test-retest technique was used.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

The data collated was statistically presented and analysed using simple percentage, expressed in tabular format in chapter four of the study. The data was organized, tabulated, summarized and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Data collected through the survey questionnaire was compiled, analyzed and reported using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The SPSS gave a clear representation of the research methods used for collecting data. The qualitative data on the other hand was analyzed thematically.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter focus on data presentation, data analysis and results as well as discussion of findings respectively.

4.1 Data Presentation

The presentation and analysis of data in this section based on the data obtained from the field survey through the instruments of questionnaire and in-depth interviews. The researcher administered 357 copies of the questionnaire on respondents to collect data on assessing the impact of social media on legislative transparency. However, 345 copies were completed and returned useable. The remaining copies formed the mortality rate of the total number administered. The mortality figure was however not significant to negatively affect the results of the findings.

4.2 Data Analysis and Results

This section focused on the analysis and results of data collected from the field survey. Data collected from the instrument of questionnaire was presented in tables and analyzed using frequency and percentages while data from in-depth interview was analyzed using explanation building method. Below is a tabular presentation of the data obtained through the questionnaire while the data obtained through in-depth interview is analyzed in the proceeding section.

Table 4. 1: Biodata of Respondents

Variables	Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Gender	Male	187	54.3
	Female	158	45.7
	Total	345	100
Age	18-25	103	29.8
	26-35	169	48.9
	36 and above	73	21.3
	Total	345	100
Marital Status	Single	121	35.0
	Married	187	54.3
	Divorced	37	10.7
	Total	345	100
Educational Qualification	FLSC/SSCE	3	0.8
	OND/HND	93	26.9
	Degree	197	57.3
	Postgraduate	52	15.0
	Total	367	100
Occupation	Student	91	26.3
	Civil servant	121	35.0
	Self-employed	133	38.7
	Total	345	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Data in this table focus on the respondent's Biodata specifically on gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and occupation. Data on gender of respondents indicates that 187 (54.3%) respondents were male while 158 (45.7%) respondents were female. This implies that most of the respondents were male as revealed by 187 (54.2%) of the entire respondents.

Data on the age range of respondents established that respondents between the ages of 18-25 were 103 (29.8%), respondents between the ages of 26-35 were 169 (48.9%) while respondents between the age of 36 and above were 73 (21.1 %) of the sample respondents. The implication is

that majority of the respondents 169 (48.0%) were matured enough to provide accurate data on the assessing the impact of social media on legislative transparency.

Data on marital status of respondents revealed that 121 (35.0%) respondents were single, 187 (54.2%) respondents were married while 37 (10.7%) respondents have been divorced. This implies that majority of the respondents are married as shown by 187 (54.2%) of the entire respondents.

Data on the educational qualification of respondents shows that 3 (0.8%) respondents are First School Leaving Certificate/Secondary School Certificate in Education holders, 93 (26.9%) respondents are Ordinary National Diploma and Higher National Diploma certificate holders, 197 (57.3%) were degree holders while 52 (15.0%) were postgraduate degree holders. This implies that majority of the respondents are educated enough to respond accurately on the impact of social media on legislative transparency.

Data on the occupation of respondents revealed that 91 (26.3%) respondents are students, 121 (35.0%) respondents were civil servants while 133 (38.7). This implies that most of the respondents are self-employed as affirmed by 133 (38.5) of the entire respondents.

Section B: General Questions

The questionnaire was designed to generate data on assessing the impact of social media on legislative transparency.

Table 6: Familiarity with social media

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	345	100
No	0	0
Total	345	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Available data indicates that 345 (100%) are familiar with social media while 0 (0) respondents held divergent views. This implies that most of the respondents are familiar with the use of social media as affirmed by the entire respondents.

Table 7: Use of social media for legislative transparency

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	291	84.4
No	54	15.6
Total	345	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Data in table 7 sought to ascertain whether social media is use for legislative transparency. 291 (84.3%) responded in affirmation while 54 (15.6%) respondents held divergent views. This implies that social media is used for the purpose of legislative transparency as affirmed by 229 (84.3%) of the entire respondents.

Table 8: Social media platform is mostly used by legislators for legislative transparency

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Twitter	159	46.0
Facebook	127	36.8
TikTok	20	5.8
WhatsApp	19	5.6
Instagram	11	3.2
Others	9	2.6
Total	345	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Data in table 8 revealed that 159 (46.0%) respondents use Twitter, 127 (36.8%) respondents affirmed Facebook, 20 (5.7%) respondents affirmed TikTok, 19 (5.9%) respondents affirmed WhatsApp, 11 (3.1%) respondents affirmed Instagram while 9 (2.6%) respondents affirmed other social media platforms. This implies that Twitter is the social media platform mostly used by legislators for legislative transparency as affirmed by 159 (46.0%) of the entire respondents.

Table 9: Role of social media for enhancing legislative transparency

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Rapid information dissemination	142	41.1
Engagement and feedback	27	7.8
Direct citizen interaction	93	26.9
Facilitate citizen monitoring	25	7.4
Accountability of legislative process	58	16.8
Total	345	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Data in table 9 revealed that 142 (41.1%) respondents affirmed rapid information dissemination, 27 (7.8%) respondents affirmed engagement and feedback, 93 (26.9%) respondents affirmed direct citizen interaction, 25 (7.4%) respondents affirmed that social media facilitate citizen monitoring, 58 (16.8%) respondents affirmed accountability process as the role of social media for enhancing legislative transparency. This implies that the role of social media for enhancing legislative transparency is rapid information dissemination as affirmed by 142 (41.1%) of the entire respondents.

Table 10: Extent to which Nigerian lawmakers use social media for legislative transparency

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
To some extent	59	17.1
To a large extent	197	57.2
To a very large extent	89	25.7
Total	345	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Data in table 10 shows that Nigerian lawmakers use social media for legislative transparency to some extent as affirmed by 59 (17.1%) respondents, 197 (57.2%) affirmed to a large extent while 89 (25.7%) revealed that Nigerian lawmakers use social media is utilized for legislative transparency. This implies that the Nigerian lawmakers use social media transparency to a large extent as affirmed by 197 (57.1%) of the entire respondents.

Table 11: Whether social media is impactful on legislative transparency among Nigerian lawmakers

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	273	70.2
No	72	29.8
Total	345	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Data in table 11 revealed that 273 (70.1%) affirmed that social media is impactful on legislative transparency while 72 (29.8%) respondents held divergent views. This implies that social media is impactful on legislative transparency as affirmed by 273 (70.1%) of the entire respondents.

Table 12: Impact of social media on legislative transparency

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Enhance transparency	30	8.8
Public engagement	67	19.4
Accountability	112	32.4
Monitoring oversight process	136	39.4
Total	345	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Available data in table 12 showed that 30 (8.8%) affirmed that social media enhance transparency, 67 (19.4%) respondents affirmed public engagement, 112 (32.4%) accountabilities while 136 (39.4%) respondents affirmed monitoring oversight process. This implies that the impact of social media on legislative transparency is based monitoring oversight process as affirmed by 136 (39%) of the entire respondents.

Table 13: Whether users experience challenges when using social media

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	311	90.1
No	34	9.9
Total	345	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Data in table 13 revealed that social media users often experience challenges. This was revealed by 311 (90.1%) respondents while 34 (9.9%) held divergent views. This implies that their challenges of using social media for legislative transparency as affirmed by 311 (90.1%) respondents.

Table 14: Challenges of using social media for legislative transparency

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Misinformation and disinformation	163	48.4
Digital divide	85	24.6
Data privacy and security	53	15.3
Echo chambers and polarization	42	11.7
Total	345	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Data in table 14 identified some of the challenges of using social media for legislative transparency. 163 (48.4%) respondents affirmed misinformation and disinformation, 85 (24.6%) respondents affirmed digital divide as a challenge, 53 (15.3%) affirmed data privacy and security while 42 (12.1%) affirmed echo chambers polarization. This implies that there are numerous challenges of using social media for legislative transparency such as misinformation and disinformation, digital divide, data privacy and security as well as echo chambers and polarization

4.2.1 Data Analysis and Results of In-Depth Interview

The analysis and results of data generated through in-depth interview is presented in this section of the study using explanation building methods. The interviews were conducted with some honourable members of the 10th National Assembly to get their views on the impact of social media on legislative transparency. The idea was to complement the quantitative data obtained through the instrument of questionnaire.

Use of social Media for Legislative Transparency

On the use of social media for legislative transparency, majority of the participants affirmed they actively leverage social media as a vital tool to promote transparency in my legislative duties. Furthermore, social media provide a platform for them to communicate directly with constituents, share insights into their work, and foster an open dialogue about governance. This implies that social media provides a direct channel for communicating constituents and the broader public to share updates on legislative activities, policy positions, community projects, and ongoing debates in the National Assembly. This approach helps build trust and keeps the public informed about my work as their representative.

Social Media Platform uses for Legislative Transparency

On the social media platforms used for legislative transparency, participants averred that they use Facebook for its real-time engagement and wide reach, complemented by X and Instagram. These platforms enable them to share updates, connect with diverse audiences, and provide accessible information on legislative activities. Social media has democratized access to information; made the activities of legislators more visible to the public, given citizens a voice, and pressured public officials to be more accountable. It has also increased political awareness among young people

and allowed for faster dissemination of government activities. Increased political awareness and participation, especially among youth.

Role of Social Media play in Enhancing Legislative Transparency

On the role of social media for enhancing legislative transparency, social media serves as a powerful bridge between lawmakers and citizens, breaking down barriers to information. It facilitates real-time dissemination of legislative processes, voting records, and policy discussions, empowering constituents to stay informed and hold public officials accountable. By fostering two-way communication, it strengthens trust and participation in the democratic process. Social media bridges the gap between lawmakers and citizens. It gives the public direct access to legislative updates, encourages dialogue, and helps debunk misinformation quickly. By sharing proceedings, achievements, and challenges, it builds trust and makes governance more participatory. It also fosters civic education, as many Nigerians learn about the legislative process and governance issues through lawmakers' social media posts.

Extent to which you use Social Media for Legislative Transparency

On the extent to which social media is utilized for legislative transparency, participants stated they extensively use social media to keep constituents informed about legislative activities. This includes regular posts on proposed bills, voting outcomes, and constituency projects, as well as hosting live question and answer sessions and virtual town halls. These efforts enhance accessible, transparent, and responsive to the needs of the constituents.

Impact of Social Media on Legislative Transparency in Nigeria

On the impact of social media on legislative transparency in Nigeria, majority of the participants noted that social media has revolutionized legislative transparency in Nigeria by making governance more accessible and inclusive. It has empowered citizens to engage directly with lawmakers, monitor legislative activities, and contribute to policy discussions. This increased visibility has heightened accountability, encouraging lawmakers to act in the public's best interest while fostering a more participatory democracy.

Social media also improved accountability as it holds lawmakers accountable for their activities are subject to public scrutiny and criticism as well as enable citizens to participate in public debate, express opinions and engage with us directly. This implies that social media is impactful on legislative transparency since social media platforms provide opportunity for Nigerians to know what is happening in National Assembly.

Challenges of using Social Media for Legislative Transparency

On the challenges of social media on legislative transparency, participants averred that while social media is a powerful tool, it comes with challenges such as the spread of misinformation, which can distort legislative narratives. Limited internet access in rural areas restricts reach, and managing negative or polarizing feedback requires careful navigation. Although these hurdles can be addressed by prioritizing clear, factual communication, engaging with credible sources, and ensuring inclusivity through alternative outreach methods where possible. Other participants noted that the challenges include lack of personal media. That is some social media handlers are lacking in some offices. Again, if you are not a leader or doesn't fall within the leadership of Parliament it is difficult for your impact to be showcased or projected by the in-house social media handlers.

Other participants identified misinformation and fake news that can mislead the public, cyberbullying and abuse targeted at lawmakers. Online abuse and harassment, which can discourage open dialogue, limited digital literacy among some constituents, access inequality, since not everyone has smartphones or stable internet especially in rural areas as well as the risk of oversimplifying complex legislative processes to fit social media formats.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

In this section of the study, the findings from the study are discussed in line with the objectives designed to guide the study, the general literature as well as the theoretical postulations.

The first objective of the study was to:

1. Assess the role of social media for enhancing legislative transparency. In response to this objective, the study found social media serves as a powerful bridge between lawmakers and citizens, breaking down barriers to information as well as facilitates real-time dissemination of legislative processes, voting records, and policy discussions, empowering constituents to stay informed and hold public officials accountable. By fostering two-way communication, it strengthens trust and participation in the democratic process. Data evidence equally revealed that the role of social media for enhancing legislative transparency is rapid information dissemination as affirmed by 142 (41.1%) of the entire respondents. This implies that social media provide the constituents direct access to legislative updates, encourages dialogue, and helps debunk misinformation quickly as this help to build trust and make governance more participatory.

2. Secondly, the study was conducted to establish the extent to which Legislators use social media. In response to this objective, data evidence revealed that the Nigerian lawmakers use social media transparency to a large extent as affirmed by 197 (57.1%) of the entire respondents. Qualitative data social media is utilized for legislative transparency, participants stated they extensively use

social media to keep constituents informed about legislative activities. This includes regular posts on proposed bills, voting outcomes, and constituency projects, as well as hosting live question and answer sessions and virtual town hall. This means that social media is used by legislators to a large extent to enhance legislative transparency.

3. Furthermore, the study assesses the impact of social media on legislative transparency in Nigeria.

In response to this objective, data evidence indicate that social media has revolutionized legislative transparency in Nigeria by making governance more accessible and inclusive. It has empowered citizens to engage directly with lawmakers, monitor legislative activities, and contribute to policy discussions. This increased visibility has heightened accountability, encouraging lawmakers to act in the public's best interest while fostering a more participatory democracy. Data analysis also indicate that the impact of social media on legislative transparency is based on monitoring oversight process as affirmed by 136 (39%) of the entire respondents. This means that the impact of social media on legislative transparency has help to monitor legislative processes and as well as to make governance accessible and engage with constituents.

4. Finally, the study was carried out to identify the challenges of using social media for legislative transparency. Data evidence showed that there are numerous challenges of using social media for legislative transparency such as digital divide, data privacy and security as well as echo chambers and polarization. Furthermore, qualitative data indicate that the spread of misinformation, which can distort legislative narratives. Limited internet access in rural areas restricts reach, and managing negative or polarising feedback requires careful navigation. include lack of personal media. This means that their numerous challenges of using social media for legislative

transparency such as misinformation, digital divide, data privacy and security limited internet access in rural areas among others.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the summary, conclusion, recommendations, contribution to knowledge and suggestions for further studies have been presented.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study focused on assessing the impact of social media for legislative transparency. The rational for the study was established in chapter one as well as the scope and significant. In chapter two the general literature was extensively reviewed while a theoretical framework was established and the study adopted transparency theory supported by democratic participant's theory. The theories were extensively reviewed and their relevance to the study clearly stated. The mixed method design was adopted with questionnaire and in-depth interview as instruments for data collection on a sample size of 357 respondents drawn from the study population while twelve (12) participants were used for in-depth interview.

The data obtained from the instrument of questionnaire was presented in tabular form and analyzed using simple percentage while the data obtained from in-depth interview was presented and analyzed using explanation building method. Below is a summary of results of the study:

Results from the study revealed that social media serves as a powerful bridge between lawmakers and citizens, breaking down barriers to information as well as facilitates real-time dissemination of legislative processes, voting records, and policy discussions, empowering constituents to stay informed and hold public officials accountable. This implies that social media provides a public direct access to legislative updates, encourages dialogue, and helps

debunk misinformation quickly as this help to build trust and make governance more participatory.

Results also showed that the Nigerian lawmakers use social media for transparency to a large extent as affirmed by entire respondents. This means that social media is used by legislators to a large extent to enhance legislative transparency.

Furthermore, the study revealed that the impact of social media on legislative transparency is based monitoring oversight process as affirmed by 136 (39%) of the entire respondents. This means that the impact of social media on legislative transparency is to monitor legislative processes and well as to make governance accessible and engage with constituents.

Finally, the study found that their numerous challenges of using social media for legislative transparency such as misinformation and disinformation, digital divide, data privacy and security limited internet access in rural areas among others.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were drawn from the study:

1. Policy makers should encourage the use of social media among legislators to enhance direct access to public office holders with the aim to enhancing legislative transparency
2. Policy makers should create an environment where citizens can use social media to question government actions, highlight irregularities, and mobilize for collective action, holding lawmakers accountable.
3. Beyond, monitoring legislative process, the Nigerian government should make it a policy to institutionalize social media platforms to ensure sustained transparency and accountability in governance. This is possible by establishing official social media channels, developing a social

media policy framework, capacity building for public officials, citizen engagement initiative and regular monitoring and evaluation. Furthermore, social media should be utilized to hold legislators accountable to attract meaningful constituency projects in their respective constituencies, as it will not only build public trust and confidence on legislative proceedings or activities but also ensure legislative transparency which promotes participatory democracy.

4. Constituents in rural areas should also be trained on the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social media for effective engagement with legislators. And the social media should be regulated to address and correct misinformation to maintain public credibility and trust, as misinformation can undermine transparency efforts.

5.3 Conclusion

Social media has revolutionized legislative transparency in Nigeria by making governance more accessible and inclusive. It has empowered citizens to engage directly with lawmakers, monitor legislative activities, and contribute to policy discussions. This increased visibility has heightened accountability, encouraging lawmakers to act in the public's best interest while fostering a more participatory democracy. This has enhanced constant information as well as engagement with constituents as such the use of social media should be encouraged.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

The study has contributed to knowledge on the effectiveness of social media to enhance legislative transparency in Nigeria. This is because social media serves as a powerful bridge between lawmakers and citizens, breaking down barriers to information as well as facilitates real-time dissemination of legislative processes, voting records, and policy discussions, empowering constituents to stay informed and hold public officials accountable.

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Appendix 1

National Institute for Legislative and
Democratic Studies (NILDS),
Abuja.

May, 2025

Dear Respondent,

Request to Complete Questionnaire

I'm a student of the above-named institute currently conducting research on "Assessing the Impact of Social Media on Legislative Transparency"

I therefore request that you help complete the questionnaire which is strictly meant for academic purpose.

Yours Faithfully,

OCHONU WILLIAM OKEFIE

PG/NLS2315096

Masters in Legislative Studies (MLS)

Appendix II

Section A: Demographic characteristics of respondents

1. Gender (☐) Male (☐) Female
2. Age (☐) 18-25 (☐) 26-35 (☐) 36 and above
3. Marital status (☐) Single (☐) Married
4. Educational Qualification (☐) SSCE (☐) Degree (☐) Postgraduate
5. Occupation (☐) Student (☐) Self- employed (☐) Civil servant

Section B: General Questions

6. Are you familiar with social media? (☐) Yes (☐) No
7. If yes above, do you think legislators in Nigeria use of social media for legislative: transparency? (☐) Yes (☐) No
8. In your opinion which social media platform is mostly used by legislators for legislative transparency?
(☐) Twitter
(☐) Facebook
(☐) Tiktok
(☐) WhatsApp
(☐) Instagram
(☐) Others

9. What do you consider as the role of social media for enhancing legislative transparency?
- ☐ rapid information dissemination tool
 - ☐ Providing platforms for public discourse and feedback
 - ☐ enabling direct citizen interaction
 - ☐ facilitating citizen monitoring
 - ☐ accountability of legislative processes and decisions.
10. What is the extent to which Nigerian lawmakers use social media for legislative transparency?
- ☐ To some extent
 - ☐ To a large extent
 - ☐ To a very large extent
11. In your opinion, do you think social media is impactful on legislative transparency among Nigerian lawmakers? ☐ Yes ☐ No
12. What is the impact of social media on legislative transparency?
- ☐ Enhances transparency
 - ☐ Public engagement
 - ☐ Accountability
 - ☐ Citizen engagement
 - ☐ Monitoring oversight process
13. Do you experience challenges when using social media ☐ Yes ☐ No
14. What do you consider as the challenges of using social media for legislative transparency:
- ☐ misinformation and disinformation
 - ☐ Digital divide
 - ☐ Data privacy and security
 - ☐ **Echo Chambers and Polarization**

Interview Guide

1. Do you use of social media for legislative transparency?
2. Which social media platform do you use for legislative transparency?
3. How often do you use social media for legislative transparency?
4. What is the extent to which you use social media for legislative transparency?
5. In your opinion, what is the impact of social media on legislative transparency among Nigerian lawmakers?
6. What are the challenges of using Social media for legislative transparency?