SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AMONG UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES FOR POLITICAL STABILITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper is an empirical treatise which examined the impact of social media usage on political participation of university undergraduates for political stability in Nigeria. It raises questions about the interplay of indispensable social media usage which also grants greater access to information that stimulates political participation for political stability in Nigeria. This study is a descriptive survey research. The population of this study consisted of all undergraduates in universities in Oyo State. The target population for this study was all 400 level undergraduates from two purposively sampled universities in Oyo State. The multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for this study, as different sampling techniques were used at different stages of sampling in this study. Proportionate sampling technique was adopted in the selection of 387 respondents from the two sampled universities. A researchers’-designed questionnaire with psychometrics properties of content validity and 0.84 reliability index. Percentage, mean and standard deviation, and bar chart were used to illustrate the results. Results show, that social media is indispensable among university undergraduates and has a greater impact on their political participation in political stability. It shows that utilizing social media is an effective strategy for arousing the interest of university undergraduates in political participation. University undergraduates do not want social media to be regulated as it provides them with the tool to engage in governance and ensure the country remain politically stable. It also instituted the importance of a holistic approach to social media development, in terms of research and practice.

Keywords: social media, university undergraduates, political participation, political stability

Introduction

Nigeria has undergone national division, civil war, state building, industrialization, military coups and dictatorship, and democratization since attaining independence in 1960. The nation crossed another threshold of political transition in May 1999, upon the death of the Military dictator, General Sani Abacha in June 1998, the Supreme Military Council announced the restoration of political competition in a concession to popular demand. After the May 29th handover, which ushered in a democratically elected President, the country has witnessed consecutive, consistent and successful political transitions (1999 – 2003, 2003 – 2007, 2007 – 2011, 2011 – 2015). For the first time since independence, Nigerians are regularly electing leaders of their living communities. The battleground of Nigerians has been moved from a war of movement to dethrone military dic-
tatorship to the war of position to construct accountable and responsive political institutions which are a strong bastion of political stability. These are sufficient enough to rationalize that Nigeria has already crossed the irreversible threshold of political transition. This implies that Nigerians are now at the second stage of politicization, i.e. political stability.

The second stage of politicization focuses on the stability of fragile political institutions and norms. This is manifested in making the populace internalize, habituate, participate and routinize political rules of game and norms. Explicitly, a country that is constantly witnessing political coups, civil wars like Nigeria experienced between 1960 – 2000, would be seen to have very low political stability. As political stability involves respect for the existing political order, constitution, and government institutions by key politicians, electorates, public servants and army officers (Doumit, 2015; McCullough, 2015). Political stability is defined as the ability of a people’s government to share, access, or compete for power through nonviolent political processes and to enjoy the collective benefits and services of the state (Sheehan, 2015). Political stability refers to the empowerment of people to seek not only their own self-improvement but also the improvement of future generations. According to Sheehan (2015), the criteria for political stability include but not limited to the following:

i. Provision of essential services:

ii. Stewardship of state resources;

iii. Civic participation and empowerment; and

iv. Political moderation and accountability.

The third criteria imply political participation which is the focal point of this paper. Literally, political participation can be described as a situation when an individual participates in a political process by making his/her opinions and beliefs known (White, 2015). In social studies, political participation is often used to describe an action taken by a citizen to influence the outcome of a political process. Political participation has also been described as a means of improving state accountability and responsiveness and empowering the populace. Within a broad view perspective, political participation can be defined as all voluntary activities that aim to influence political decisions at all levels of the political system. Political participation involves ordinary citizens expressing their opinions by contributing to the political process through activities ranging from voting, protest, public consultations, signing of a petition, writing letter to a public official (open letter), joining a political party or union, volunteering for a political
campaign, becoming an activist, or joining an interest group, discussing politics with friends or engaging in community self-help initiatives, blogging/tweeting/posting comments on a political issue, and so on. The last form of political participation which is the use of social media piques the interest of this study.

Technically, social media has been defined as a group of Internet-based applications that are built on the ideological and technological foundations of world wide web (www) version 2.0 (Web2.0) which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated contents (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In addition, social media is described as a read-write web where online audience moves beyond passive users of web contents to active contributors of the contents (Sweetser & Larisey, 2008). In recent years, social media has served as an anchor for various facets of the society as it is used to support societal fundamental activities, uphold the majority rule, expose the vices in the society, brings out positives and negatives of governance, gives citizens the platforms to air their voices to decision makers. Social media serve numerous broadcast purposes as it is recognized as a medium of information to reach a large population due to its high awareness and usage rate. Social media is characteristically identified for its reach, openness, transparency, quality and independence possibilities.

It has been reported that an estimated 2 billion people use social media platforms around the world while 96% of content on these platforms is from individual users and not brands or companies (Gardezi, 2014). In 2014, Swartz (2014) tweeted that Facebook now ranks among the most populous nation in the world with 1.35 billion users, second only to China with 1.367 billion population. Just as Sesan (2014) tweeted that Nigeria had 12.6 million Facebook users (7.4% of Nigeria’s population) out of the 1.35 billion users in the world, representing 0.93%. But in 2015, Facebook has leapfrogged China as the world most populous nation with 1.55 billion monthly active users, as Nigeria is also ranked top in Sub-Saharan Africa with 15 million monthly active users (NairaMetrics, 2015). Interestingly, these numbers exceed that of people participating in democratic elections every year.

In the 2014 Pew Internet’s 2014 study that mapped Twitter topic networks and clusters of users with polarized views, it was found that users organized according to their personalities and affinities (Gardezi, 2014). Social media helps users find like-minded people and facilitate connection and congregation. The function of a ‘follow’ on twitter or ‘like’ on Facebook is predicated on delivering more of what the user already likes which means social media coagulates rather than fragments online. Social media is also described as ‘extra-national’ as they seem more important to users than nationality (Gardezi, 2014). Although social
media instigate unrest, like the fuel subsidy protest in January 2012, they do not create or start it. Social media only amplify existing attitudes of unrest in Nigeria and across the globe which buttress the point that it is embedded in the pre-existing social fabric of the real world.

The phenomenon usage and dependence on social media in Nigeria is apparent in the social and political transformation as reflected in the use of social media for social action and governance. Social media gained official endorsement in 2010 when former President Goodluck Jonathan created a Facebook account on the 28th of June, 2010 which swelled his popularity and he became the second most popular President on this platform with over 2 million fans, only behind President Barack Obama of the United States of America, who has over 30 million fans. Ogungbemi (2013) claimed that this was the turning point for social media as a tool of political engagement in Nigeria and it got further interesting in the build-up to the 2011 general elections when former President Jonathan published a book, ‘My Facebook Friends and I’ which was a compilation of his posts and comments of Nigerians.

Thus, this influenced the deployment of social media for the 2011 general elections and further strengthened during the 2015 general elections, by key electoral stakeholders, including:

a. Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC): deployed social media to share information on the elections;

b. Politicians and political parties: politicians to canvass for support;

c. The Electorate (citizens of all ages, education levels and from all regions of the country): to participate in the election by commenting on various electoral activities and reporting their experiences; and

d. Civil Society Organisations: to educate the electorate and report on their monitor the electoral process (Asuni & Farris, 2011, PLAC, 2012).

In the acceptance speech of President Muhammadu Buhari during his inauguration as the fifth elected President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on May 29, 2015, he acknowledged the role of social media which led to his victory. The role of social media was further recognized after the President’s swearing-in ceremony when social media accounts (@NGRPresident) were created on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for the office of the President. Some government personalities presently using the microblogging platform, Twitter to inform the public of government activities include:
i. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria only joined Twitter in December 2014 via the handle @MBuhari and already amassed close to 500,000 (489,000+) followers.

ii. Vice President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo tweets through the handle @ProfOsinbajo and has over 324,000 followers.

iii. The Senate President and former Governor of Kwara State, Senator Bukola Saraki, is acknowledged as the first Nigerian senator to share his weekly political activities on social media via his handle @bukolasaraki and has gathered over 288,000 followers.

iv. Mr Femi Adesina is the current Special Adviser on Media and Publicity to President Muhammadu Buhari and his twitter handle which has over 63,000 followers is @FemAdesina.

v. Alhaji Garba Shehu is the Official Spokesperson for President Muhammadu Buhari and he tweets Mr President’s activities via the handle @GarShehu which has over 65,000 followers.

vi. Mallam Nasir El-Rufai, former Minister of Federal Capital Territory and present Governor of Kaduna State tweets via @elrufai. He has over 677,000 followers which are a representation of his level of engagement on this platform.

Statement of the Problem

A cursory look at the condition of governance and institutional development in Nigeria in the last two decades is statistically not promising. The stagnant or redundant developmental story of Nigeria is often attributed to a variant number of factors such as social, political, cultural and demographic factors. Of these factors, political participation is often cited as a key determinant of political stability and development in Nigeria. As Nigeria strive for political stability, information dissemination, and the broader issue of political participation have become primary concerns to Nigerians in the improvement of her development, governance and political stability. From this standpoint, information supports political stability when the majority of the people have access to the information they need to make informed political decisions. It is often argued that social media assists reduce information asymmetry and create a transparent and accountable government.

In this vein, this study tried to ascertain if the two elemental structures of
social media and political participation strengthen the path of political stability. This study examined the influence of social media on political participation of university undergraduates for political stability in Nigeria.

**Research Questions**

a. How frequently do university undergraduates use social media?

b. Do university undergraduates use social media to participate in politics?

c. What is the opinion of university undergraduates on social media regulation?

**Methodology**

This study is a descriptive survey research. The population of this study consisted of all undergraduates in universities in Oyo State. The target population for this study was all 400 level undergraduates from two purposively sampled universities in Oyo State. The multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for this study, as different sampling techniques were used at different stages of sampling in this study. Purposively, the universities in Oyo State were clustered into two categories of public and private ownership, hence, the University of Ibadan and Lead City University were selected to represent both public and private ownership respectively. Proportionate sampling technique was adopted in the selection of 387 respondents from the two sampled universities.

A researchers’-designed questionnaire with a content validity which was ascertained by experts in the field of Educational Research Measurement and Evaluation, Department of Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin. Test-retest reliability method was used with a sample of 85 respondents in Ajayi Crowther University, Ibadan, within three weeks interval. The scores of the first test were correlated with the second test, using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient and a reliability index of 0.84 was obtained. Percentage, mean and standard deviation was used to answered the research questions, and bar chart was used to illustrate the results.
Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on a theory of social media uses and gratifications theory. Uses and gratifications theory basically stresses how and why the audience use the media (Klapper, 1963) as cited by Haridakis and Hanson (2009:7). Also, expatiating on the theory, McQuail (2010:423) states that “the central question posed is: why do people use media, and what do they use them for?” He further posits that:

Functionalist sociology viewed the media as serving the various needs of the society—e.g. for cohesion, cultural continuity, socialization, social control and a large circulation of public information of all kinds. This, in turn, presupposes that individuals also use media for related purposes such as personal guidance, relaxation, socialization, adjustment, information and identity formation.

The theory recognizes and maintains that the audience has various needs that prompt them to expose themselves to any media or media content. Therefore, the focal point is that the theory is the notion that there are distinct benefits the media message consumers envisage to get from any medium they would expose themselves to. Once the medium does not deliver to the people those purposes, needs and or benefits they anticipate from the organ, the tendency is that they (the audience) will desert the very channel or content that does not satisfy them. The significance is that the media audience is not an “idle” soccer spectator that accepts what his football team plays; failure of a medium to satisfy the audience’s basic desire regularly will give them room to search for another medium.

The theory is applicable to the studies where the audience is free to choose what to use based on an anticipated benefit from the content of the media. The suitability of it in our discourse here springs from the fact that undergraduates in the university communities’ usage of the social media channels depends largely on the specific satisfaction they derive from them (the social media channels). The significance is that the public gives attention to media productions or services strictly on the bases of the satisfaction which they (the media services) offer to the users. So, the audience directly or indirectly participates actively in determining the very media content they consume. This is why Zafar (2010) contends that uses and gratifications theory suggests that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media. These studies quoted above paint a lucid picture that would actually buttress the meaning of the uses and gratifications theory and the rationale for its application in this study.
Hence, the uses of the social media have been in existence for years, it is an indication that they certainly provide meaningful gratifications to those who use them. This study shall unearth the benefits or gratifications which the social media presence to their teeming number of undergraduates-users within the Universities in Nigeria. Just as all commercial commodities have definite needs they provide their satisfaction to the consumers, in a much similar way, all media and or their contents are envisaged to play certain roles to their users. Otherwise, the audience at their discretion could jettison the very media or a media content that tends not to present a profitable consumption. Such profitable consumption in the context of this study is referred to as gratifications, purposes, benefits or satisfactions which the social media provide to those who use them.

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: How frequently do university undergraduates use social media?

Data was collected from the questionnaire and research question 1 was answered using percentage and bar-chart. The output of the analysis was presented in Figure 1.
Figure 1 revealed that a high frequency of respondents sampled, 315 (81.4%) use social media regularly at all times; 35 (9%) use social media mostly at nights; 21 (5.4%) use social media mostly during weekends while others 16 (4.1%) use social media irregularly. What is clear from the finding of this study is that social media in all of its forms has definitely become an integral part of life for University undergraduate. Young adults have consistently been the heaviest users of social media by a substantial margin, and today that’s even truer: a staggering 95.9% of them use social media at the different level either regularly, mostly at night or even at weekends, when compared with 4.1% of those who were using social media irregularly. The high frequency of respondents sampled who use social media regularly at all times implies that social media is indispensable in the lives of university undergraduates.

Research Question 2: Do university undergraduates use social media to participate in politics?

Research question 2 was answered using mean and standard deviation with the data from the instrument and result revealed in Table 1.

Table 1: University Undergraduates’ Use of Social Media for Political Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Participation</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>ST. D</th>
<th>RANKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage to Vote</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in Protest</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>.216</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join a political party</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>.264</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer for political campaign</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>.272</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join an interest group</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.327</td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate political issues</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>.362</td>
<td>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in community initiatives</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>.416</td>
<td>7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign a petition</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>.429</td>
<td>8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Propagation</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.440</td>
<td>9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work and Study</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>.455</td>
<td>10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>.461</td>
<td>11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking &amp; Business</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>.462</td>
<td>12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 illustrates that social media encourage university undergraduates to vote as it garnered a mean score of 1.99 and ranked highest. Engage in protest and join a political party had a mean score of 1.95 (2\textsuperscript{nd}) and 1.93 (3\textsuperscript{rd}) respectively. This they enjoyed because social media is characterized by Mobile, Visual, Private. Mobile in the sense that they can be anywhere and participate actively in their political rights. Over the past five years from now, Undergraduate of the University of Ilorin has been casting their vote to elect their union leaders through e-voting which they can do at their convince with their mobile PC Tablet. Visual because it also allows them visual interaction between them and candidate of their choice before the decision. Lastly, it is private because it provides the maximum security and protects of individual student interest as well as also guaranteed absolute freedom of choice, expression and personal liberty. Take to instance the issue of signing the petition on social and political matters, the most recent is the issue of Discrimination against Hijab by the Nigeria Law School, where over 100,000 people had to sign in to the petition to condemn the act. Also the case of adoption of Chibok school girls among others.

While entertainment gist, music/movies and dating/flirting had mean scores of 1.68, 1.62, 1.56 and ranked 13\textsuperscript{th}, 14\textsuperscript{th}, 15\textsuperscript{th} respectively. This implies that use of social media stimulates political participation among university undergraduates.

**Research Question 3**: What is the opinion of university undergraduates on social media regulation?

Data was collected from the questionnaire to answer research question 3, using percentages and bar-chart, and the result was presented in Table 2 and Figure 2 and 3.

**Table 2: Opinion of University Undergraduates on Social Media Regulation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPINION ON SOCIAL MEDIA REGULATION</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To reduce Cyber-Crime 26 26
To eradicate pornography, nudity and lewdness 43 43
To curb hate speech and false information 31 31
NO 287 74.16
Freedom of speech 128 41.7
Access to privacy denied 159 58.3
TOTAL 387 100

**Figure 2: University Undergraduates who want the Regulation of Social Media**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cyber-Crime</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>74.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nudity</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hate Speech</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of speech</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to privacy denied</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>387</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 and Figure 2 and 3 indicated that out of 387 respondents sampled, 100 (25.83%) want social media to be regulated while 287 (74.17%) objected...
to the regulation of social media. Out of the 100 (25.83%) respondents, they perceived that social media regulation will mostly eradicate pornography, nudity and lewdness (43 – 42.5%); curb hate speech and false information (31 – 31%); and reduce cyber-crime (26 – 26.5%). On the other hand, out of the 287 (74.17%) respondents sampled who objected to the regulation of social media, they perceived that social media regulation will deny users access to privacy (159 – 58.3%); also an intrusion on freedom of speech of citizens (128 – 41.7%) and ultimately impinged on the fundamental human right of every citizen. Social media has been criticized a lot due to the effect it has on the way students produce and retain information. Some parents are of the opinion that social media can be very distracting and harmful to students. On the contrary, social media offers plenty of opportunities for learning and interaction. It is rather simple to see how students benefit from social media. By using technology in classrooms, the young generation is paving a new way of education and learning. Students are getting to explore and experience the world not only by books and assignments; but also by adopting a new form of communication.

Social media connections are designed to increase your networks, form communities and interact easily. Today’s students are accessing Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other such social networking sites to connect and share information with those around them. One of the fascinating things about social media is the way the users can interact and engage with each other through a mere web presence without having to meet someone in person. The use of social media has made it easier and faster to interact with peers or teachers about class-related topics. In a world where online engagements are important for businesses, these students are already experts at developing an online presence. Students are also experts in interacting with others on the internet. They know how to use basically as well as complex functions on various social media sites. Because of all these majorities of university undergraduates do not want social media to be regulated.

Summary of the Findings

1. Social media is indispensable in the lives of university undergraduates.

2. Social media stimulates political participation among university undergraduates.

3. The majority of university undergraduates do not want social media to be regulated.

Discussion of the Findings
The first finding of this study revealed that social media is indispensable in the lives of university undergraduates. This corroborates Noah, Oyeyemi and Adeyemo (2014), Ezeah, Asogwa and Obiorah (2013), and Ajewole and Fasola (2012) who found out that social media has become a constant presence and almost indispensable part in the lives of the average Nigerian university undergraduates. It also confirmed that the socialization patterns of undergraduates have dramatically and rapidly evolved, as social media is now solely depended upon for all forms of social interaction. A situation described by Ajewole and Fasola (2012) and Noah, et al (2014) as leading to addiction and individualism.

The outcome of the analysis also revealed that social media stimulates political participation among university undergraduates. This is in consonance with Best and Meng (2015) who observed that social media offers new ways for citizens to discuss and debate politics and engage in the democratic process. This finding supports the assertion that social media holds the key to ensure greater accountability and exchange between the rulers and the ruled and to reduce the gap of communication between them. The adequacy of reach of social media enables informed decision making for effective political participation. The linkage between social media and political stability is embedded in the critical role of watchdog that social media provides its users which assist in holding the government to account and curbing extractive rent-seeking and corrupt practices. In addition, social media satiate the thirst of the populace on access to information about government’s decisions and actions which give the people the power to analyse and understand government actions and act accordingly.

Political participation has remained one central feature of modern democracy and political stability. Although, it is often claimed that democracy continually fails in Africa because it is an alien concept but traditional African political systems included widespread participation, consent of the governed and the public accountability of those in power – the same principles that underpin today’s established democracies. Thus, it makes the use of social media which stimulates political participation, a promoter of African traditional values. Social media ensures that information is reported without the fear of government and other interest groups, views are expressed from a wide variety of perspectives, including the capacity to produce political, social and economic information for all institutions in the society. Social media reduces the information asymmetry in the society by addressing the principal-agent problem and instituting the process of checks and balances to ensure the accountability of forces in power.

Former Vice President of Nigeria, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar tweeted recently that he believed that all leaders should be on social media in this age, it is the
way their constituents can reach them directly (Atiku, 2015). The Senate President and former Governor of Kwara State, Senator Bukola Saraki also added his tweet to laud social media that elections might not be won on social media, but he believes that social media plays a strong role in shaping decisions of leaders all over the world (Saraki, 2015).

On the last finding, this study revealed that majority of university undergraduates do not want social media to be regulated by the government. This is in line with Yik (2013) and Joergensen (2014) who argued that regulating social media by the government is tantamount to breach of fundamental human rights of users which are similar to a denial of access to privacy and freedom of speech. Yik (2013) noted that any move to regulate social media would amount to limiting socialization, social interaction, disregarding freedom of expression, government interference in free speech and provision of a bed for abuse of administrative power by government agencies. Norris and Zinnbauer’s (2002) thesis follows this line of argument, and they find that an independent media is strongly associated with good governance and human development.

In particular, nations with a free media are characterized by less corruption, greater administrative efficiency, effective rule of law, better economic development, and a politically stable environment in general. Bandyopadhyay (2009) discovered that mass media and information-communication penetration is associated with lower levels of corruption and poverty. Dutta, Pal and Roy (2011) find that independent media acts as a means of enhancing socio-political stability which in turn leads to higher economic growth via increased domestic investment.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Social media is seen as a tool that ensures meaningful political participation which enhances the capacity of government to design appropriate policies and deliver effective and appropriate services. Social media provides the platform for citizens engages in political participation. Social media is seen as an emblem for citizen mobilization for political participation which can generate political stability. This paper demonstrated how the prospects for achieving political stability depend on the adoption of social media to stimulates political participation. Social media is a potential tool that produces the framework through which government can explore in informing, consulting and engaging citizens in maintaining political stability. In this vein, this study suggests the following:
1. University management should engage students on social media to cease the initiative and enhance the use of social media for beneficial means.

2. The need to popularize the measures of social media development in mainstream academic literature to expand and improve analysis.

3. Recognition of social media as an integral part of core institutional framework that stimulates political participation and maintains political stability.

4. The government should engage the populace before embarking on social media regulation.

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