INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE PROPAGATION OF THE HATE SPEECH AMONG POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS

BY

ABDULLAHI RASHEEDAT BUKOLA

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project work has been read and approved as meeting part of the requirements of Mass Communication Department, for the award of Higher National Diploma (ND) in Mass Communication, Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin.

_____   _____

MR. IBRAHEEM A.F   *Date*
(Project Supervisor)

_____   _____

MR. OLUFADI B.A   *Date*
(Project Coordinator)

_____   _____

MR. OLOHUNGBEBE, F.T.   *Date*
(Head of Department)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project work to ALMIGHTY GOD and our beloved parents for their wholesome supports throughout the thick and thin of our Higher National Diploma (ND)program.

ABSTRACT

In order to gain a better understanding of the prevalence and characteristics of hate speech within academic environments, we conducted a detailed survey of 79 carefully selected students. The survey was designed to determine the most frequently occurring types of hate speech, identify where these incidents commonly occur. and show whether or not students have personally experienced such instances. This study provides a comprehensive understanding of hate speech in educational settings. The findings revealed that a vast majority of the respondents had been exposed to hate speech, albeit unknowingly. However, a small percentage of the participants had not encountered any form of hate speech. These results highlight students' need for belter education and awareness regarding the various forms of hate speech and where they can manifest. It is important for students always to be aware and knowledgeable about how to handle hateful speech and promote a culture of acceptance and kindness. This way ,everyone can feel secure, and comfortable in their surroundings and have the opportunity to flourish.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Hate speech is not a new phenomenon. Hate remarks and comments cut across race.ons, tribes, political parties, nationality, local communities and groups. Hate speech is widely spread by the media. It was because hate speech was made in the mass media that the Hate Radio' was developed. There are examples of hate speech having disastrous, results. It is widely believed that hate speech played a significant role in the massacre of is and Hutus in the 1994genocide in Rwanda. In the aftermath of the December elations in Kenya, violence erupted ,mainly between Kenya's three largest ps. More than 1,100 people were killed. A popular radio broadcaster, Joshua Arap was accused of using his position to encourage ethnic attacks. Text messages were widely circulated calling on one group or another to "exterminate" ethnic rivals. Since then, Kenya has passed new laws prohibiting hate speech on any medium of mass communication(from the Agency for Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO,2016).

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of the UN treaty calls on governments to prevent hate speech. Article 20(2) says:"any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law (CEPO,2016) Christians for several decades. In 2017,during the hot agitation of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)for succession, the social media were used as platforms for hate speech and remarks between the IPOB and the Arewa Youths Consultative Forum (AYCF). In July 2017,the AYCF gave an ultimatum to the Ibos living in the Northern part of Nigeria to leave before October 1st,2017.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many studies have looked at social media and hate speech from different perspectives but based on time and location differences, this study looks at social media and hate speech not from the journalist narratives but from the public perspectives. The study therefore determines the views of users' about hate speech in the social media, and to ascertain users' views of government monitoring of hate speech in the social media. New media channel such as Facebook,Youtube,Twitter,WhatsApp, and others provided easy platforms for spreading hate speech. Whereby perpetrators can spread hate speech anonymously without fear of sanction. Since the commencement of Nigeria's fourth republic in 1999,the use of social media for spreading hate speech has increased. Inflammatory or inciting statements from politicians and/or their supporters, in addition to hate speech, is in part to blame for the escalation in the level of violence and public riots being witnessed presently in Nigeria.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Study as follow:

1.To find out whether the polytechnic student and residents are aware of the use of new media for the spread of hate speech

2.To identify factors promoting the use of new media for the spread of hate speech among users

3.To identify the consequences of hate speech as perceived by polytechnic student and residents.

4. To determine polytechnic student and residents disposition to use of legislation regulate new media against hate speech.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Are polytechnic student are aware of the student use of media for the spread of hate speech?

2. What are the factors promoting the use of media for the spread of hate speech among users?

3. What are the consequences of hate speech as perceived by polytechnic students and resident

4. What is the disposition of government to use of legislation to regulate new media against hate speech?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE.OF THE STUDY

This study would be beneficial to the Federal Government of Nigeria because it would enable them to be aware of what Nigerians feel about the spread of hate speeches through new media channels, thereby enabling them to take necessary measures to stem the tide. The Federal Government is expected to tackle challenges that are capable of affecting the peace and stability of the country. Knowledge of how Nigerians feel about the spread of fake news would encourage the FG to take necessary measures in addressing the issue of hate speech.

Average Nigerians would also find this study to be relevant as it would reveal the level of spread of hate speech in new media. They would be able to know how far the spread of hate speech has gone and the likely implications of such on the stability of the nation.

Students, scholars and other researchers who may intend to conduct study in similar area would find this research work a good reference material.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OFTHESTUDYT

This study is on the evaluation of new media as instrument for the dissemination of hate speech. It is limited to among of the polytechnic student and residents. There are some other factors that may serve as constants to the success of this research work. Wide research of this in nature cannot be carried out without some constants pose a lot of limitation to this work.

The duration for the research work is relatively short. Stress emanated from other activities such Iso pose as limitation to the study. There are also financial constrains also posses Most of the information gotten are gathered through journals, publication and the internet particular visible in the society. At a critical time such as during election campaigns, may be prone to manipulation, accusations political opponents or used by those in wer to curb dissent and criticism(Ezeibe,2015).

It is the hash reality that increase of hate speech is rapidly growing in across the world. According to the report of Simon Wiesenthal center. 2012 the practice of hate-speech through social media by extremists groups or individuals to speed discrimination and hate is concern in political communication (Ben and Matamoros,2016).

Social media is being utilized for influencing preoccupied public ideology for political. psychological, social and to detach people from political parties by promoting hate speech.The internet allowed politicians and public to spread conflicts, rumors and hate speech against politicians or minorities which is related to freedom of expression (Benette and Iyengar,2008).

While hate speech manifest itself regularly, it crystallizes during election periods when the struggle for votes and political power provides a conducive environment for hate speech and elections related violence. Some politicians, public officers, religious figures, and ethnic jingoists spread hate message during and after elections especially on social media in the form of campaign advertisements, slogans and verbal expressions. These expressions sometimes translate into physical exchanges and violence I public spaces (Isola,2018).

It was also a period of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) hot agitation for secession. The vaccine exercise started in the South-east, Anambra state, at a time when the army launched operation Python Dance'. Operation Python Dance was to quell the civil unrest by the IPOB in the

Abia State in the South-east. Fake news in the social media went viral that the army was going to use the immunization exercise to eliminate the Ibos. Out of fear, parents and guardians went to schools to pick up their children and wards. The unverified news also went viral indifferent parts of the country. The Nigerian army in a press statement said that the fake news about "killer vaccine' as the people call it, was the work of mischief makers using the social media to discredit the army.

However, many Nigerians blamed the Nigerian army for not carrying out enough sensitization and enlightenment campaigns on the immunization exercise. The aftermaths of the hate speech situations in the country made the Nigerian army to say that they have set up machinery to monitor' what has been seen as hate speeches phenomenon in the social media capable of destabilizing the unity of the country. Major-General John Eneneche, Director of Defense Information, observed that the social media have become a place for hate speech. anti-government and anti-security activities in Nigeria.

In general, description of hate speech tend to be wide, sometimes even extending to embody words that are insulting of those in power or minority groups, or demeaning of individuals who are particularly religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination. hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law (CEPO,2016)Christians for several decades. In 2017,during the hot agitation of the indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) for succession, the social media were used as platforms for hate speech and remarks between the IPOB and the Arewa Youths consultative forum (AYCF). In July 2017,the AYCF gave an ultimatum top the ibos living in the Northern part of Nigeria to leave before October 1st.2017.

This "quick" notice to evacuate was carried by both the mass media and social media as it became a hot national issue in the country. It was a threat to national unity and capable of destabilizing the peace and unity of the country. On one hand, the Ibos and the Niger-Delta Avengers

(a militant group in the Nliger-Delta) gave the Hausas ultimatum to leave the South-east and the South-south. This hate development made President Muhammadu Buhari in his national broadcast, after returning from a long medical vocation from London, to complain that some of the discussions on the social media in his absence crossed the line and left him distressed. Invariably, social media users aggravated the situation by posting fake and panic news on the Internet.

Hate news and fake information in the media are capable of jeopardizing the unity of the country if not checked. In the same 2017, the Nigerian Military embarked on a social responsibility exercise by giving vaccine to children in the South-east. The exercise was to be for primary and secondary schools pupils and students.

1.7 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Influence: influence is typically means" to affect or change someone or something in an indirect but usually important way." Something or someone that influences a person or thing. then, has an influence on that person or thing.

Social media: Social media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social media facilitates the sharing of ideas and information through virtual networks .From Facebook and Instagram to Twitter and YouTube, social media covers a broad universe of apps and platforms that allow users to share content, interact online, and build communities. More than 4.7billion people use social media, equal to roughly 60% of the world's population.

Propagation: Is the act or process of propagating: as. a.: multiplication (as of a kind of living thing) in number of individuals. To the he spreading of something (as a belief)abroad or into new region propagation is the behavior of radio waves as they travel, or are propagated, from one point to another in vacuum, or into various parts of the atmosphere

Propagation means radio waves which travel in a straight line from the transmitting antenna to the receiving antenna. Line of sight transmission is used for medium-distance radio transmission. such as cell phones, cordless phones, walkie-talkies, wireless networks, FM radio, television broadcasting, radar, and satellite

Hate Speech: This is any utterance or publication that is considered insulting and capable of bringing disrepute to an individual or a group.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The study focuses on review of empirical studies on social media and hate speech. In the view of Nockleby (2000),hate speech can be described as speech, gesture or conduct, writing ,or display against a person, group of persons, tribes, religion, race on the basis of their membership of the group. The Agency for Community Empowerment for Progress Organization(2016)in Berlin, Germany, defined hate speech is a communication that denigrates people on the basis of their membership to a particular group. This can include any form of expression, such as images, plays and songs as well as speech. According to CEPO, hate speech is not freedom of speech. Hate speech is forbidden in many countries by law because it not only incites violence but it destabilizes an individual.

The lineage of hate speech, which had taken a serious and offensive dimension in the social media, is traceable to the collapse of the socio-political system in Nigeria. Dambazau (2014) shared his thought on this when he argued that security challenges posed by violent crimes, ethno-religious conflicts, resource-based conflicts, election induced violence and insecurity of lives and properties are as result of the collapse of the economic and political systems. The central factors responsible for the collapse of the socio-economic system according to Daimbazau, were poor governance and lack of effective leadership at all levels of governance .The collapse of the socio- economic and political system and failure of governance had led to frustrated-aggressive approach by restive youths in the Niger-Delta as arm militants; insurgency in the north-east; and in the South-east ,IPOB agitation for succession. Aggrieved people took to social media to express their thoughts bordering on corruption, insecurity, kidnapping, injustice and negligence of the Niger-Delta, Fulani-herdsmen and farmers clashes, poverty, unemployment and many other issues affecting the generality of Nigerians.

This is in line with CEPO (2016)(Agency for Community Empowerment for Progress Organization) findings on the factors that drives hate speech in the social media. These are: children affected by or involved in violence at earlier ages; proximity to conflict; learning to hate; breakdown of positive norms/values and youth who feel frustrated. Also, lack of political accountability; misconception on cultural diversity; and, lack of policies to guide online freedom of expression, ethics and privacy are driving factors for hate speech in the social media. On this, the social media offer an open platform which can further entrench hate.

Hate speech posted on the social media also charged people for a revolutionary course. The Arab Spring or the Social Media Revolution that occurred in 2010,2011 in some parts of the Arab nations was as a result of the social media to incite streets protests .Protests in some Arab counties as a result of the social media usage brought about political change in countries that have been considered as hard-rock in religious and social beliefs. This was after violence and civil war in some places or countries like Libya. Reason why oppressive governments often try to censor the Internet and social media is because they are mechanisms or catalysts for change. Social media provide a source of information as well as a venue for collaboration. Facebook. YouTube and Twitter are the most effective tools in today's media-driven society for spreading ideas informally, especialy among youths. This was particularly evident in Egypt, where it was widely known that the youths were driving force for the revolution. Fruistrated young people took to their computers and smart phones to spread messages of freedom and change.

Social media also inspired protests in Bahrain ,Libya ,Iran, Algeria ,Morocco ,Yemen .Jordan and even faraway China. The protests were spurred by extensive use of social networking sites such as Facebook. YouTube and Twitter, which are seen as the tools of revolution. Pro-democracy activists use

these tools to reinforce political rhetoric and develop a foundation of support. On January 28th,2011, Egypt's ousted President Hosni Mubarak ordered all Internet providers to shut down their services within the country. This Internet blackout followed a like manner in other places (Akpoghiran,2014).People have used the social media to occasioned social change and good governance in different parts of the world but this had not worked in Nigeria. Major social media company like Google's YouTube, Twitter have its own policy regarding what content can be considered as hate speech or what they can be defined as hate speech and fake news.

For example, in late 2012, Google was publicly criticized for its decision to remove a hate-propaganda film, "The Innocence of Muslims," from its video-sharing site (YouTube) in certain countries (Ring,2013).The film mocked Prophet Mohammed and was highly offensive to many Muslims. It sparked violent riots throughout the Middle East. Google blocked the content in seven countries while in Pakistan, 19 people were killed in the resulting riots, and critics blamed Google for allowing the content, which they said was directly responsible for global upheaval (Sengupta, 2012). Becker in 1975 cited in Olayiwola (2013)described the media as 'manipulative media' on a susceptible citizenry'.

2.1 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

THE NEW MEDIA

The concept of the new media is one that is an ever continuous changing form. It is the present and possible future of the mass media based on development of new technologies that can be used to share and transfer information and data in the world .Maltoni(2007)says the new media is a way in which the delivery of news and information follows a many-to-many format .Bittner,(1980)noted that once upon a time, the new media was the printing press. In 1906,itwas the radio and in 1923,it was the television.

Today's new media encompasses all technological equipments and platforms that can be used to transmit information to as many people as possible. Onabajo (2012)describes the ne medias a broad term in media studies that emerged in the later part of the 20th century which refers to an on demand access to content anytime, anywhere on any digital device, as well as interactive user feedback, creative participation and community formation around the media content

According to Onabajo (2012),the new media theory does not include television programs. feature films, magazines, books or paper based publication unless they contain technologies that enable digital interactivity. Examples include internet, websites, computer multimedia, video games, CD-ROMS and DVDs. The rise of the new media has increased communication between people all over the world through the internet. It has allowed people to express themselves through blogs, websites, pictures and other user-generated media.

According to McQuail (2005)"the new media are disparate set of communication technologies that share certain features apart from being new, made possible by digitalization and being widely available for personal use as communication devices". This implies that the new media are advancements of the traditional or old media through digitalization and convergence ,and these have made the new media to have an edge over the old (analogue) media. The new media has drastically changed communication in some fundamental ways over the traditional media especially in information dissemination. It is imperative to note that many newspapers and broadcast news operations now have websites from which they dispense news. Furthermore, using the internet as a platform, the e-mail and videoconferencing have also become veritable tools in this new dimensional (Fitzgerald & Dennis, 2005).

2.2.I CONCEPT OF HATE SPEECH

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2013) notes that hate speech includes: (a) all dissemination of ideas based on racial or ethnic superiority or hatred, by whatever means; (b) incitement to hatred, contempt or discrimination against members of a group on grounds of their race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin;(c) threats or incitement to violence against persons or groups on the grounds in (b)above; (d) expression of insults, ridicule or slander of persons or groups or justification of hatred, contempt or discrimination on the grounds in (b) above, when it clearly amounts to incitement to hatred or discrimination, and (e) participation in organizations and activities, which promote and incite racial discrimination.

Neisser (1994) defines hate speech as "all communications (whether verbal, written. symbolie) that insults a racial, ethnic and political group, whether by suggesting that they are inferior in some respect or by indicating that they are despised or not welcome for any other reasons". On the other hand. Kayambazinthu and Moyo (2002)refer to hate speech as "war waged on others by means of words". This understanding of hate speech is particularly true when it comes to hate speech on social media networks.Online hate speech is mainly characterized by the use of words and symbols.

From the legal perspective. The US Legal (2016) describes hate speech as a communication that carries no other meaning than the expression of hatred or incitement to hatred against some group of persons defined in terms of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender .religion or sexual orientation especially in circumstances in which the communication provokes violence. This description rightly points generally to communication of information, which is characterized by not only articulate vocal sound -speech-but also to other communicative activities. Impliedly, it considers all forms of expressive communication-written, oral and display-that are intended to carry meaning to members of the public about certain groups. It also considers the potential provocation of violence as the result of such communication. However, the

definition does not consider expression of hatred to individuals and it limits the potential consequences of hate speech to violence. It should be noted that hate speech affects individuals as it affects groups in the society, especially in the competitive field of politics characterized by struggle for supremacy and power. An individual political candidate could be targeted in an expression of hate just as a political group or party. Also, violence may not be the only consequence of hate as there are other effects such as denigration, promotion of inequality, discrimination and avoidance in socio-political interaction or affiliation.

A bill on Prevention of Hate Crime and Hate Speech' in South Africa, the summary of which was published in Government Gazette No. 41543 of 29 March 2018,describes an offence of hate speech. Section 1(a) of the Bill describes an offence of hate speech as an intentional communication, publication, propagation or advocacy of any message to:

"one or more persons in a manner that could reasonably be construed to demonstrate a clear intention to (i) be harmful or to incite harm; or (ii)promote or propagate hatred,based on one or more of the following grounds: age, albinism, birth, colour, culture, disability, ethnic or social origin, gender or gender identity, HIV status, language ,nationality ,migrant or refugee status, race, religion, sex, which includes inter sex, or sexual orientation (Republic of South Africa,2018,p.4-5).

The Bill also provides that intentional distribution or display of materials capable of being communicated or electronic communication of messages known to constitute hate speech as provided in the paragraph above through electronic communication system to which members of the public have access and which is directed at a specific individuals who can be victims of such messages is guilty of an offence of hate speech. However, the Bill provides exceptions to the ingredients that constitute hate speech offence. These include

(a) Any bona fide artistic creativity, performance or other form of expression, to the exigent that such creativity, performance or expression does not advocate hatred that constitutes incitement to cause harm, based on one or more of the grounds referred to in subsection(1)(a):

(b)Any ac

(c)Fair and accurate reporting or commentary in the public interest or in the publication of any information. y. advertisement or notice, in accordance with section 16(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa,1996:or

(d) The bona fide interpretation and proselytizing or espousing of any religious tenet, belief teaching, doctrine or writings, to the extent that such interpretation and proselytisation does not advocate hatred that constitutes incitement to cause harm, based on one or more of the grounds referred to in subsection (1)(a)(p.5).

The European Court of Human Rights (2018) reports in its facts sheet that tolerance and respect for equal dignity of all human beings constitute the foundations of a democratic. pluralistic society. Based on this, as a matter of principle, it may be considered necessary in certain democratic societies to sanction or even prevent all forms of expression which spread. incite, promote or justify hatred based on intolerance. The court identifies the forms of hate speech to include ethnic hate, racial hate, religious hate, threat to democratic order, verbal violence and incitement to hostility, expressions condoning terrorism, expressions condoning war crimes, expressions denigrating national identity, display of a flag with controversial historical connotations, incitement to ethnic/racial/national hatred, incitement to religious intolerance and insult of state officials.

According to Gagliar done et al (2015) online hate speech is not essentially different from similar expressions found offline; however, there are some specific characteristics as well as challenges unique to online content and its regulation. They summarized these characteristics as permanence, itinerant, anonymity or pseudonym and transnationality. On permanence, hate speech can remain online for long periods of time and in different formats across different platforms, and can be repeatedly linked. In this sense, the architecture of any particular platform influences how long topics 'stay alive' .For instance, Twitter is built around the idea of trending topics, which may facilitate quick and wide dissemination of hateful messages, however, if topics are ignored, discussion rapidly fades; Facebook on the other hand, provides the opportunity for longer lasting discussion threads.

Notwithstanding, online hate speech content may particularly be itinerant, which means that even when it is removed from one platform it may find expression elsewhere, possibly on the same platform under a different name or on different online spaces. If a website is shut down. it can quickly reopen using a web-hosting service with less stringent regulations or are allocation to a country with laws imposing higher threshold for hate speech. The atonement (a)Any bona fide artistic creativity, performance or other form of expression, to the extent that performance or expression does not advocate hatred that constitutes incitement to cause harm, based on one or more of the grounds referred to in subsection (1)(a);

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under a different name or on different online spaces. If a website is shut down.it can quickly reopen using a web-hosting service with less stringent regulations or vin reallocation to a country with laws imposing higher threshold for hate speech. The itinerantnature of hate speech also means that poorly formulated thoughts that would not have found public expression and support in the past may now arrive on spaces where they can be visible to large audiences(Alakali,Faga and Mbursa,2017).

NEW MEDIA IN DEMOCRATIC SETTING

The proliferation of new media platforms in Nigeria recently has attracted the attention of researchers to investigate the rippling effects in several fields such as the economy, education, politics and health among others. In all of these fields, research evidence has demonstrated that the platforms have proved effective in increasing access to vital information that helps people to make informed decisions (Alexander, Ifeanyi and Martin 2016).Basically, the scope of new media (as used in this study) is broad, and encapsulates platforms such as online newspapers. social media and blogs, all of which are domiciled on the internet. Of all these, social media play leading role in filling the hitherto existing information gap, as it comfortably houses the other new media platforms on its various channels.

Social media are online communication media that use web based technologies which enable users to download, upload, interact and collaborate with one another regardless of distance and time. Social media as a concept is the use of technology combined with social interaction to create and co-create value (Olise 2014). It is thus a shift in how people discover, read and share news, information and content which may be text, audio, video or graphics.

Media scholars argue that social media involve a fusion of sociology and technology to transform the process of communication from monologue to dialogue or better still, to an interactive process. Some of the common social media sites include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Flicker, 2go, YouTube, Instagram, and Google among others. These relatively new media gain popularity in Nigeria, in spite of her technological backwardness, helping to accomplish complex political tasks across the country.

According to Nwabueze (2014), Nigeria has registered some level of presence in the internet-based community. There are numerous weblogs run by Nigerians, many of which create the forum for the masses to air their views and make meaningful contribution to topics being discussed by a chain of users,Klinreports.com, Chidiopara reports, Naira-land ,Naija-post, Naija. com, Pulse Nigeria,Topic.net and Amana online among a host of others are some of the popular blogs in Nigeria. In fact, as at July 2009,there were about 475 Nigerian blogs, with Nigeria having an online population of 42million people (Nwabueze 2014). This trend must have improved significantly over the years.

As one could rightly expect, the heavy online presence has widened the scope of citizen journalism practice in the country, a form of joumalism where members of the public pay active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information. With citizens becoming reporters of issues and events happening around them, freedom of information is enhanced, empowering them to be actively involved in the democratic process(Suntai and Targema 2015).

Democracy as a concept originates about 2400 years ago in ancient Greece. It simply mcans "rule by the people(Galadima and Goshit 2013). Democracy requires that each individual be free to participate in the political community's self-government. To this end, political freedom lies at the

heart of the concept of democracy. Basically, democracy connotes rule by the people through free and fair elections and other forms of participation.

According to Galadima and Goshit (2013),the Athenians of ancient Greece, progenitors of democracy, did not leave us in dearth of definition for the concept, conceiving it in their days as "government of the people, by the people and for the people". To this end, democracy entails **popular** sovereignty, political equality, recognition of the consent of the governed as free and fair elections among other forms of participation.

Democracy puts accent on people's participation. Everyone involved should be carried along, and this is where the role of the media becomes necessary. Thus, an environment of dialogue is sine qua non for the sustenance of democracy, but this cannot be achieved unless the media and other essential fabrics that hold democratic institutions are in place. The trending social media and citizen journalism that allow for participation and unlimited access to all, among other virtues, are thus central to the sustenance of modern democracies.

However, central to the exercise of this civic responsibility is the volume of information at the disposal of the masses to take informed decisions all through the electoral process, and that is why Gambo (2013) stresses that liberal democracies rests purely on the capacity of the mass media to gather and disseminate information that can guide citizens in making rational choices. Citing Ibrahim, he notes that for the people to be able to determine who wants to rule them based on an understanding of his policies as well as what structures etc. are preferable in the society presupposes a certain amount of knowledge and information which must be supplied .the availability of neutral information about the functioning of the political system makes it possible for the electorate of a democracy to perform its recruitment function

intelligibly and effectively and ;at the same time tends to create an informed stratum of citizens who are public policy-oriented rather than interest oriented in a narrow sense (Gambo 2013,109).

This is where the nexus between new media and democracy lies. While democracy needs adequate information to filter through its various levels, the new media provide the best platform for the circulation of such information. Through its various platforms, the masses get exposed to information about the activities of the principal actors in the process of governance. Thus, new media has become a formidable force that drives contemporary Nigerian democracy.

FREE SPEECH AND HATE SPEECH

Freedom of expression is a natural right individuals enjoy, which is enshrined in local legislation and international human rights law. The historical development of the philosophy of free speech dates back to the ancient Greek when the debate about whether persons other than male landowners should be allowed to speak in public (Rodman,2006). The advent of mass action through the invention of printing also attracted repression of expression through licensing laws .Her, the popularity of democracy the world over has paved way debates leading to legislations and conventions that promote free freedom derives. These have resulted in many international legal documents that mote free speech

Notable of these documents (to which Nigeria is a signatory)vant sections are Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): Article 19,International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR);and Article 9.African Charter on People's and Human Rights (ACPHR). These legal documents are unequivocal on the fundamentality of the right of every person to seek, receive and share any kind of information in any form without any let or hindrance. Mihajlova et al (2013) identify

the classes of information as political, artistic and commercial and the forms of communication as oral, written, artistic and any other media including new technologies. Derived from these international legal documents, section 39(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended provides that "every person shall be entitled to freedom to hold opinions and receive and impart ideas and information without interference".

Press freedom and free speech could be considered two sides of the same coin as they are both derivatives of the fundamental right to seek, receive and disseminate information without interference. Freedom of the mass media to source for, gather, disseminate information and protect their sources is enshrined in the international human rights law as well as in the Nigerian constitution. All the international human rights documents cited above, which give credence to the right to free speech, provide foundations for freedom of the press. This is because according to Mihajlova et al (2013), the right to free of speech "includes all stages of identification and dissemination of information, as well as of ideas as processed information, regardless of the format or the media on which they appear" (p. 9).

This suffices then to affirm that press freedom solidly builds on the right to free speech as enshrined in the international laws and conventions. As an extension of the right to free speech, the Nigerian 1999 Constitution expressly provides for freedom of the press in section 39(2) thus:"Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1)of this section, every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate any medium of for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions". However, it further provides conditions for ownership of television of wireless broadcasting station. Therefore, within the(Nigerian)national and international levels, legislations about free speech and press freedom are clearly enshrined in legal documents. In while, it should be noted that there is no absolute freedom anywhere in the

world. in the fact that a society is characterized by a web of social interactions, in the course of a right by an individual or a group, an infringement on the rights of others may operation and that of national security are often adduced for limitations to human clouding the right to freedom of expression and of the press. MeQuail (2010) observes ns and control lead to censorship-restraints or limits on publication. One of suave attracted concerted focus in the international community and now gaining c is restrictions on hate speech. The need to promote equality and discourage action is provided in Articles 1, 2, and 7 of the UDHR and Articles 2(1),Article 20(2)iCCPR. For instance,. Article 20(2) of the ICCPR places the obligation on St habit "any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to action, hostility or violence".

This is an express international human rights requirement biotin of hate speech. The Nigerian constitution does not expressly provide actions on hate speech but in section 42, it provides for the right to freedom of discrimination to which a person may be subjected expressly or by application of law or any executive or administrative action of government on the basis of the person's place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion. However ,the fact that the provision for non-discrimination in the Nigerian constitution focuses on the application of law and government actions but not on the expressive activities of individuals, groups and the mass media makes this provision inadequate to address the issue of hate speech.

It should be noted that many countries of the world have built on international human rights law to conceptualize and expressly restrict expression of hatred in any form in their legal documents. According to Hernandez (2011), Britain, Germany, Austria ,the Netherlands, India and South Africa have enacted and enforced hate speech legislation. In Poland for instance, there are prohibitions of hate speech in criminal law and civil law as well as administrative law (Article 19,2018).Articles 119(1),256(1)and 257 of the Polish Penal Code are provisions in the country's criminal law that restrict hate speech. The Polish

Construction Law and the Law on al and Ethnic Minorities and Regional Language are relevant administrative m against hate speech. Article 23and 24 of the Polish Civil Code prohibits hate speech and s to demand for civil action redress.

As regards media regulation on s Broadcasting Act of 1992 specifically prohibits the broadcast of co action against person sups on the basis of heir identifiable In South Africa , the debate about restriction of hate speech has a with the introduction of Prevention and of Hate Crimes an e National Assembly on March 29,20published in Government Gazette (No. 41543 o 2018) Nigeria needs to take the debate on hate speech beyond mere campaign and advance steps towards legislation. This becomes necessary due to the growing importance of the discourse to our growing democracy as a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-lingual society. The potential damaging effect of hate speech on the victims and the consequences it is capable of wielding on the democratic system of the Nigerian state suffice that adequate legal and administrative attention be paid to the issue The need to set boundaries to the legal guarantee of free speech and press freedom necessitate express legislation on the issue on the one hand. On the   and the need for legal and administrative conceptualization of hate speech for the purpose its distinction from insults, slander, libel, satire, comedy, propaganda, criticisms and legitimate protests against government policies is of necessity for the present government not to be guilty of political witch-hunting as the campaign intensifies (Oriola,2018).

EFFECTS OF HATE SPEECH

Mean while, public discourse about hate speech has been gathering momentum in recent times, especially as the present President Muhammadu Buhari-led administration is calling attention to it and launching campaigns to discourage it. Based on the attention the construct is gathering in Nigeria,

media practitioners have lent their voices to its orientation among members of the in-group. Fourthly, hate speech serves recruitment purposes for group members. Derived from these ingredients, this paper hereby conceptualizes hate speech thus: an expression of extreme dislike in verbal or non-verbal communication forms publicized or displayed which is targeted at individuals or groups with the intention to intimidate, promote denigration, discrimination and violence against the out-group, mobile recruitment and construct a collective form of memory for the in-group. Such expression of hatred is based on, and harmful to the individual's or group's sexual orientation, gender bias, disability, religious orientation racial or ethnic connection, health status. age limit action, language or political affiliation. The publication of the expression of hatred in the Nigerian political horserace, through news reporting and the consequences of such publication are within the purview of this paper.

On the effects of hate speech, Brown(2017)points attention to its implications on "harm, dignity, security, healthy cultural dialogue, democracy and legitimacy"(p.420).It is harmful to individual and group victims alike. Corroborating Brown on the harmful effect of hate speech, Hernandez (2011)states that "hate speech expresses, advocates, encourages, promotes or incites hatred of a group of individuals distinguished by a particular feature or set of features. Creates discord in the community, harms the target group, and infringes upon equality" (p. 807-809).Citing examples of Britain, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, India, and post-apartheid South Africa, he observes further that political discourse and competition are healthier in climes that enact and enforce hate speech legislation. This opinion points to incitement, disunity and in quality as harmful effects of expression of hate, the consequence of which denigrates the victim based on their identifiable features and disrupts the political process. Lending their voices to the debate, Mihajlova. Bacovska and Shekerdjiev.(2013) observe that hate speech causes emotional and psychological discomfort to the victims; diminishes social and entrepreneurial mobility by

promoting inequality: leads to humiliation which could make victims engage in anti-social behavior such as drug abuse and alcoholism; diminish self-confidence and promotes acceptance of social failure: and potentially leads to hate crime, which has serious consequences for societal peace, order and security. More relevant is the authors' opinion that hate speech impedes on the principle of free marketplace of idea in a democracy as it promotes social and political exclusion against certain individuals and groups-termed as out-group in Waltman and Ashely's (2017) classification.

HATE SPEECH AND ITS CONSEQUENCE

Electoral violence is the greatest consequence of hate speech. Fischer(2002)identified different manifestations of election violence as follows:

1 .Pre-election day violence (it occur during registration period and can lead to massive disenfranchisement of voters due to psychological fear);

2. Campaign violence (it is during this period that major political meeting and rallies are held. This period is a prominent stage with high tendency for electoral violence);

3.Election day violence (it manifests in the forms of burning of election offices and material including ballot boxes and papers, intimidation of voters, snatching of ballot boxes, rigging and diversion of election materials;

4. Post-election day violence (violence can also occur hours and days after elections. This can emanate from dispute over election results and the inability of judiciary system to handle election dispute fairly. The manner in which election result are announced might also lead to electoral violence Straus and Taylor **(2012)** examined African national elections from 1990 to 2008and observed that 10 percent of the

elections involved the highest level of violence and a further 10percent involved substantial, though lower violence. Another 38 percent had limited violence and 42 percent had no substantial violence.

Notably, the Nigerian political history has been very unstable. Electoral violence in Nigeria dates back to the pre-colonial era, through the First, Second, and Third Republics to the Fourth Republic in 1999. In fact, violence has become a regular character of election such that the democratic process, values and institutions are prevented from developing because power is gained and retained through violence. Like the proliferation of small arms, peddling of hate speeches sustains the culture of intolerance and electoral violence in Nigeria. It is observed that pectoral violence in Nigeria manifests in forms of killings, looting, destruction and damage of property, assault and death threats, bombings, forceful dispersion of political rallies, destruction of campaign billboards, fighting among political parties, violent street protests and hooliganism arbitrary detentions and arrests without warrant and abduction. These manifestations threaten democratization in Nigeria(Ezcibe,2015)

In 2003, at least one hundred people were killed and many more injured during the elections in Nigeria(Human Right Watch. 2004).The majority of the violence was perpetrated by supporters of the then ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP).The highest level of violence was recorded in the South West and South East, where PDP governors and supporters desperately resisted opposition. Environmental Right Action (2003) observed in parts of Rlivers and Bayelsa states that the elections were characterized by armed struggle between adders of the Niger Delta militants-Asari Dokubo and Atcke Tom.

Despite that the two major candidates during the 2007 presidential election Northern Muslims from the same state (Kastina),HRW (2007) reported that there were about 967 incidents of electoral violence in which at least 300 people were killed. High level of violence was not unrelated to the level of

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electoral fraud. Ahead of the 2007elections,former President Olusegun Obasanjo reportedly declared the election was going to be "a do-or-d for PDP" .Thus, the election was going to be a matter of ,life and death for the PDP and Nigeria (Tenuche,2009).This explains why the 2007electoral rigging was direct ,brazen and daring.

Notably,the 2011 presidential election was the first genuine political contest between the predominantly Christian south and the Muslim north since Nigeria was swept into the third wave" of democratization. The presidential election divided the country along ethnic and religious lines. Violence during the party primaries, campaigns and the Election Day killed at least 165 people. Although the April 2011 elections were heralded as among the fairest in Nigeria's history, they were also among the bloodiest. Post election violence began with widespread protests by supporters of the main opposition candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, a northem Muslim and the presidential candidate of the Congress for Progressive Change. They protested the re-election of

Incumbent Goodluck Jonathan, a southern Christian. The protests degenerated into violent riots or sectarian killings (targeted mainly against the Christian and southerners)in the northern states and reprisal attacks in southern Nigeria (Human Right Watch,2011).

Like in 2011, the major candidates for 2015 presidential elections were General Muhammadu Buhari (an indigene of Kastina state in North West zone) and President Goodluck Jonathan(Bayelsa state in South-South zone). Again, Nigerians voted along ethnic and or zonal (regional) lines. The final INEC result shows that each candidate received block votes from their respective ethnic/regional groups.. For instance, General Buhari received 81.34 percent of total votes cast in North West while President Jcnathan received 89.66 percent of votes cast in South South(INEC,2015).

Meanwhile, the repoat of the National Human Righis Commission (NHRC) m 2015shows that hate speech preceded the 2015 presidential election and this accounted for the high level of pre election violence (Ezcibe,2015).

THE HATE SPEECH BILL

In March of 2018.the Nigerian Senate through its Communication Committee chairman.Aliyu Abdullahi, indicated that it is considering a proposed bill that would make hate s offenses punishable by capital punishment.20 The explanation of what constitutes hate speech in the proposed bill is ambiguous, and the proposed law associates tackling hate speech with t fight against terrorism. The law also proposes the establishment of an Independent Natio Commission for Hate Speech to determine the offenses and prosecution. The media has suggested that the law targets critics of the government, especially in the media and separatist movements.21 It is clear from public reaction that the Snare will not likely pass the hill, and Nigerian media and civil society advocates for free expression have already mobilized against the enactment of the proposed law (Olusola, 2018). Below is the analysis of the Hate Speech Bill by Eke and Ajibade (2020):

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework is a foundation review of existing theories that serves as a roadmap for developing the arguments you will use in your own work Theories are developed by researchers to explain phenomena, draw connections and make predictions.

The theories are:-

Social identity theory

Use and gratification theory

The technological determinism theory

The study is anchored on the Social Identity Theory The social identify theory was propounded by Henri Tajfei in 1979 and later John Tuner developed it in 1980. The social identity theory deals with individual's sense of belonging to a group. It is a sense of identity in the sense that the individual feels he/she belong to a group, and a group is influence by information relevant and prevailing among the group members. In today's world, the social media influence people's way of doing things. The platform also gives a sense of identity and belonging. ast in North West while President Jonathan received 89.66 percent of votes cast in South Meanwhile, the report of the National Human Rights Commirsion (NHRC) in 2015ch preceded the 2015 presidential clection and this accounted for the high clection violence(Ezeibe,2015).

The social identity theory also posits that group or groups an individual belonged is a source of identity. The group could be religious, family, age, business associates, academics. social or sport club; they influence and make individual identity through information shared

ASSUMPTIONS OF THE SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

The core assumptions of the Social Identity Theory are that individuals are identified by the group they belong to, and groups are affected by information received and shared, in this theory, groups are divided into 'them' and 'us' or in-group and out-group based on a process of social categorization. The them' and 'us' is a way of differentiating from other group and identifying with our group; social identity theory states that the in-group (us) will discriminate against the out-group (them) to enhance their self-image. For instance, political parties like APC and PDP will always discriminate against each other; and we identify with the group we share the same ideologies, beliefs and information with.

The Social Identity Theory also finds its bearings with Benesch's Model five variables for analyzing the dangers of hate speech, as cited in the Agency for Community Empowerment for Progress

Organization (CEPO) (2016). These are the degree of the speaker's influence over an audience; the grievances or fears of the audience that can be cultivated by the speaker. whether or not the speech act is understood as a call to violence; the social and historical context (such as previous episodes of violence); whether the means distributing the speech is als0 influential (such as when a media outlet is the sole broadcaster of information in that area).

In the light of this study, the social media by virtue of its nature enable people to identify and form social groups. Based on the attributes of the social media namely instructiveness, social and heavy presence, degree of usage and autonomy, the social media are capable of affecting users beliefs, attitude, perceptions and behaviour. Such groups are affected by the information they received and shared. On daily basis, So many items are posted in the social media and so many people visit the social media on daily basis. People identify with groups that they share the same ideas or beliefs. These ideas or beliefs on the social media formed their attitude. People can identify with hate speech when it suits their ideas, interest and belied. Some of these groups in the social media post hate speech comments.

USES AND GRATIFICATION THEORY

This study adopts the Uses and Gratification Theory. The uses and gratification theory is about that social and psychological origin of needs, which generate expectations of the mass media or other source, which leads to differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities),resulting in need gratification and other consequences ,mostly unintended ones. Katz(1974)cited in Ojobor (2002).

Wogu(2008)stated that the uses and gratification theory "deals with what the audiences use the media to do, and what gratifications/gains/satisfaction they derive from using the media"Quoting Kunczik (1988) cited in Ojobor (2002),he stated that the theory believes that an individual has some needs related

to communication; he/she selects the media that appear to satisfy those needs; he/she selectively consumes the content; an effect may or may not occur. Granted that this theory recognizes that there are various media for the audience to choose from, it is then very likely that the public would opt for those mediums which are less likely to present fake news as one of their gratifications to the users. On this basis, mass media when lumped with the social media as purveyors of false information would lose the confidence and readership/viewership of enlightened audience who expose themselves to the media not to be fed with fake news. This simply means that if the public have the perception that some newspapers for instance carry fake news, they would rather use the broadcast media as their exposure to the media is not to be gratified with fake news.

The criticism of uses and gratifications theory lies in the fact that it is said to be parsimonious in nature. This means that media use is followed by an effect (i.e. gratification).If this effect is not derived then there will not be media use in the first place. Ruggiero (2000) finds that although the uses and gratifications theory is straight forward, there are complications at various stages. Wimmer and Dominick (1994) cited in Kombol and Kombol (2015) wrote that there are complications in:

(a) media selection initiated by the individual;(b) expectations for media use that are produced from individual predispositions ,social interaction, and environmental factors; and (c) active audiences with goal-directed media behavior Secondly,Elliot (1974) cited in Kombol and Kombol (2015) wrote that the uses and gratifications theory is too individualistic ,because it focuses on audience consumption. Since the theory is individualistic, it makes limits the studies to the sample population. In other words, it becomes difficult to predict beyond the people studied.

THE TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM THEORY

The study is also anchored on the interpretations of Technological Determinism which stated that media technology shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, act, and how society operates as we move from one technological age to another (Tribal-Literate-Print-Electronic).This is to say that: We learn and feel and think the way we do because of the messages we receive through the current technology that is available. The radio required us to only listen and develop our sense of hearing. On the other hand, television engages both our hearing and visual senses. We then transfer those developed senses into our everyday lives and we want to use them again. The medium is then our message. Humans do not have much free will at all. Whatever society as a whole is using to communicate, they too will use to communicate. Therefore the will adapt to the medium they are using so that they can send and receive messages like everyone This theory, coined by American Sociologist Thorsten in Veblen(1857-1929)presumes that modern society's' technology, drives the development of its social structure and cultural values. first major collaboration of technological determinism came from the German philosopher and economist Karl Mar, whose theoretical framework was based upon the idea that change in technology and productive technology are the primary influence on the organization of social relations, and that social collations and cultural practices ultimately revolve around the technological and economic base of a society (Wikipedia,2014).

According to technological determinists. particular technical developments. communication technologies or media, or most broadly, technology in general are the prime antecedent causes of change in society, and technology is seen as the fundamental condition underlying the pattern of social organization (Chandler,1995).

Technological determinism theory is usually based on the following assumptions:

1. Communication technology is basic to society.

2. Technology drives change in media industries.

3. Each technology is tilted towards particular communication forms, contents and uses.

4. The sequence of invention and application of technology influence social change.

5. Communication revolutions engender social revolutions.

6. New media undermine old bases of power (McQuail 2005).

The uses and gratification theory explains how audience use media platforms for their satisfaction. The new media can be used to spread hate speech just for ulterior motives that could be detrimental to the stability of Nigeria.

From the view of the Technological Determinism theory, many people do not really have a clear cut objective of using new media, but because he or she believes a friend is hooked to the new media, it becomes needful for him or her to be online. And because their friends and other people rain all sort of abuse online, they also pour out abuses and vulgar languages online without considering the implications.

2.4 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Nyaruai (2015) invested hate speech control for peace of building in Kenya social media, with focus on Kenyan bloggers. The study is was based on the three objectives. Hate speech monitoring and control tools, hate speech sensitization and hate speech laws. The studies theoretical framework for legal regulation of hate speech. First he argues that the "harm" association with "hate speech" has

nothing to do with the motives of speech, and everything to do with the message and the damage that message does in a democratic society predicated on equal citizenship. Second, would an argues that written deformation matter much more than the spoken word. As he put it, libel is much more serious because their importance it embodies take a more permanent form. Research design applied was descriptive where data was collected using structured questionnaire and analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The targeted population comprised bloggers in Kenya that included 85 bloggers listed in 18categories out of which a sample of 70 bloggers where selected through stratification of 18 strata and random sampling was done for each stratum .

A questionnaire was used to collected data while the statistical package for social science (spss) was used to analyze data. According to the finding majority of the respondents disagreed with the monitoring and control tools used to monitor hate speech at 47.6% while 42.57% being branded as hate speech more than half of the respondent out 52.54% did not agree to removal of content by commercial internet service providers hence there was a small positive correlation between hate speech monitoring of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed at an average of 34%, 11 and only 6.5% of the response where strongly disagree to level of hate speech sensitization. A large of the respondents,69.49% agree to understand what constitutes hate speech hence a strong correlation between sensitization and hate speech.

There was a general mixed reaction of question regarding use of law to control hate speech in Kenya social media 30.05% of the respondent agreed while 31.76% of the respondent disagreed hence in indication the correlation between the two variable as a moderate positive correlation. The key recommendations of study is that should be clear definitions of what constitute hate speech and " coursing anyone" as gerunds for taking legal action against individuals and the circumstance and laws under which

individual are charged over their online activities should e clarified while the reviewed studies looked at the implication of hate speech in individuals, none has deemed it necessary to look at how social medial had contributed to the promotions of hate speech and how it could affect our national unity as a nation hence, the knowledge gap this study to fill.

Alakali, fage andmbursa (2016) examined the phenomenon of hate speech and foul language on social media platforms in Nigeria, and assessed their moral and legal consequences in the sociality and to journalism practice, it used both quantization and quantitative methodology to sample 384 respondents. Using questionnaire and focus group discussion as instruments for data collection. Finding, from the research indicate that promoting hate speech and foul language on social media have moral and legal consequence, they do not know what obligation are created by law against perpetrator of hate speech and foul language in Nigeria. The paper therefore, adopted the qualitative doctrinal and analytical methodology to discuss the legal consequence and obligation created against perceptions of hate speech and foul language in Nigeria. The paper conclude based on the findings that hate speech and foul language is prevalent on social media platforms in Nigeria and that there are adequate legal provisions to curb the phoneme in Nigeria. It recommend among others that the Nigerian government and NGO' should sponsor monitoring projects like the UUMATI in Kenya to better understate the use of hate speech and that monitoring agencies set up under the legal regime should adopt mechanisms to identify and remove hate speech content on social media platform in Nigeria.

Olufunke (2019) on tier part examined the effect of hate speech on citizen in Ibaban,oyo state, Nigeria. The population consisted of residents of Ibadan, oyo state estimated at over 6,000,000. a sample of 200 respondents was purposely and randomly chosen for the study .A self designed questionnaire filed "hate speech and its effect on communities (HSEC)"was used to gather data for the study. The data were

analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistic. The findings showed that hate speech permanent the Nigeria society and has the potential of disrupting the progress and development of the nation as its feints are against tolerance and respect for human dignity. The finding amongst others should that hate speech affect its victim to the extent that some can become distressed and withdraw from public debate. The study also showed that there were no legal laws on hate speech. It was therefore, recommended among others that every Nigeria should make efforts to end the increase of hate speech by being hated.It was also recommended that awareness should be created in schools, churches, mosques and in communities to educate people on what constitutes hate speech.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0   INTRODUCTIONS

The survey research method was adopted because it allows respondents to express their ideas,   feelings, views, opinion, attitude and behavior on the subject mo t appropriate gil nature of this research is survey method.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This is a method of researching in which researcher are interested, in studying certain characteristic, attitude motivations, behaviors, or opinion of population which may be large or small without attempting to manipulate any variable (Olawyi,2010). This mixed methods design integrates both qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a comprehensive understand of the intersection between social media usage and hate speech awareness among students, the reason for choosing this method was because the survey method aims not only at collection of data built also the discovering of meaning in the data collected so that the fact can be better interpreted. Explain and understood.

3.2 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Population see in research context refers to the entire members, group, objects or an clement a researcher is interested in. the population however refers to the number of people living in a particular geographical location. The research population refers to the individuals when the research is directed to (Aremu,2010).

The population gander the study comprises undergraduate. Students enrolled and kwara state polytechnic approximated of 25,000. The institution comprise five institutes namely. Institute of technology (IOT)

Institute of applied science (IAS), institute of environmental science (IES)institute of finance and management studies. (ifms), institute of information and communication technologies (IICT). The population includes student actively engaged on social media platforms and reflects the demographic diversity with the institution.

3.3 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

Bamidele (2020) as cited in olayede and adejare (2015) defines sample size as the selection of a part to represent a while this means the extra number of respondent which the researcher studies out of the entire population. Simple random sampling technique was adopted for the survey .Stratified sampling technique was used to select student who actively engage in social media platform that reflect. The demographic diversity within the institution in order to give a better representation. As the research is not probabilistic and due to the geographical boundaries, simple random sampling technique was used. The institute of information and communication technical [IICT] was randomly selected and a sample of one hundred [100] youngsters was selected from the mass communication department bringing the total sample size to one hundred [100] and they were given the questioner to fill

3.4 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUCTION

In this study, the data collection instrument to be used to questionnaire. The questionnaire is simple, structured and will be self administered.

3.5 VALIDITY OF THE STUDY

The instrument used will be validated by the questionnaire developed to scrutiny of the project supervisor.

3.6 RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

A study is reliable when represented measurement of the same material result in the similar decision or conclusion, swimmer and Dominick (2003) test re-test technique will be used in ascertaining the reliability of the instrument. the questionnaire will be administered and re-administered and tested for coherence ability of elicit responses comprehensibility and consistency.

3.7 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Data in this study is generated from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data are generated or collected from oral interviews and questionnaire, this is because it involves direct contact with our sauces of data.

The secondary data were collected from the library through the consultation of journals newspaper, magazines, periodical and other.

Published and unpolished works that have relationship of this study. Also there was extensive intemnet browsing which formed part of the major information source for this study because of the nature of the study. The copies of questionnaire will be distributed to the respondents' directly by the researcher this would enable her to monitor the following of the questionnaire by the respondent. So that substantial copes, if not all, can be retrieved

3.8 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is defined by Teju aya (2003) as the transformation of the observation gather red from the field into a system of these categories into codes that could be quantitatively analyzed. The method to be used in the prevention analysis and interpretation of data to e collected is statistical method involving the use of simple percentage and tables.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the data analysis and discussion of the findings of the study. These are presented under the following sub-sections-:

(ii) Presentation of data, analysis and interpretation; and

(ii) Discussion of Findings

4.1   DATA PRESENTATION AND

The data for this study were analyzed in line with the research questions. The results are presented on the basis of a influence of social media on the propagation of hate speech among polytechnic student. The data used tables for simple frequency and percentage for analysis.

A total of 100 copies of questionnaire were administered and the 100 copies were returned. The analysis was therefore based on the population figure of 100 respondents.

Section A: Personal Information of Respondents

Table 1: Sex of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Female	44	44.0
Male	56	56.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of Research field survey 2025

The table presents gender distribution with 44% female and 56% male respondents, totaling 100individuals. It indicates a slight male majority.

Table 2: Age of respondent

Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
17-23	24	24.0
24-29	36	36.0
30-35	25	25.0
36-above	15	15.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of Research field survey 2025

The table depicts the age distribution of respondents: 24% are aged 17-23, 36% fall between 24-29,25% are within 30-35, and 15% are 36 or older, summing up to 100 participants. Each age group constitutes a proportionate quarter of the total sample.

Table 3: Level of Educational Background of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
BSc	38	38.0
HND	40	40.0
ND	19	19.0
PhD	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of Research field survey 2025

The table outlines educational attainment: 38% holds a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree, 40%possess a Higher National Diploma (HND), 19% have a National Diploma (ND), and 3% hold a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). These percentages reflect the distribution among 100 respondents, show casing a notable presence of individuals with BSc and HND qualifications, while ND and PhD holders are comparatively fewer in the sample.

Table 4: Respondents' by Religion

Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Christianity	59	59.0
Muslim	41	41.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table delineates religious demographics: 59% identify as Christians, while 41% adhere to Islam, summing up to 100 respondents. This breakdown signifies a near-equal distribution between Christianity and Islam within the surveyed population. Other religious affiliations are absent, indicating a predominantly Christian-Muslim demographic or a focus solely on these two major religions within the sample.

Table : 5 Working Occupation

Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Civil Servant	26	26.0
Self-employed	27	27.0
Student	47	47.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

This table depicts the distribution of respondents across different occupational categories. Among them, 26% are Civil Servants, 27% are Self-employed, and the majority, constituting 47%, are Students. The totals indicate that each category encompasses a proportional percentage of the total sample size, with a sum of 100 respondents.

SECTION B: INDICATE YOUR PREFERENCE ON THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIALMEDIA ON THE PROPAGATION OF HATE SPEECH AMONG POLYTECHNICSTUDENT

Table 6: Do you have access to social media?

	Frequency	Percentage %
Maybe	5	5.0
No.	17	17.0
Yes	78	78.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

Table 7:Which of the social media platform do you often use?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Facebook	32	32.0
WhatsApp	67	67.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

Table 8: Have you ever come across hate speech on social media platform?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
No	25	25.0
Yes	75	75.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

This table illustrates responses to a binary variable. 75% of respondents answered "Yes," while 25% responded "No." The percentages reflect the distribution of responses within the sample. With a total of 100 respondents, the data suggests a clear majority in favor of the affirmative response.

Table 9:How often do you come across hate speech everyday

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Every Month	45	45.0
Every week	54	54.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table displays the frequency of an activity among respondents. The majority, accounting for 54%, engage in the activity every week, while 45% do it monthly. The absence of other frequencies suggests these two options encompass the entire spectrum of responses. This distribution indicates a preference for weekly engagement, with a significant portion also participating monthly. The total of 100 respondents ensures comprehensive coverage of the sample's activity habits.

Table 10:Have you ever been provided to disseminate hate speech on social media?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
No	66	66.0
Yes	34	34.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table outlines responses to a binary question. 66% answered "No," while 34% responded "Yes." This suggests a clear majority of respondents chose the negative option. The percentages indicate the distribution of responses within the sample. With a total of 100 respondents, it shows a dominance of the negative response but also highlights a significant minority in favor of the affirmative choice.

Table 11:Do you think hate speech can affect the unity of Nigeria as a country?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %

No	24	24.0
Yes	76	76.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

This table presents responses to a binary inquiry. The majority, comprising 76%,answered"Yes,"while 24% responded "No." This indicates a significant preference for the affirmative option among respondents. The percentages represent the distribution of responses within the sample. With a total of 100 respondents, it demonstrates a clear dominance of the affirmative response, suggesting a prevalent inclination toward the positive choice among the

Table 12: Should there be a national law to curb hate speech?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
No	14	14.0
Yes	86	86.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

In this table, responses to a binary question answered "Yes," while 14% responded "No." This suggests a strong inclination towards the affirmative option among respondents. However, it's worth noting a discrepancy between the frequency and percentage for the "Yes" category, possibly due Surrounding errors. With a total of are presented. The majority, constituting 86%, 100 respondents, the data indicates a prevalent preference for the positive choice within the surveyed population.

Table 13: In your own observation, who usually disseminate hate speech on social media platform Response?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Adult	20	20.0
Children	21	21.0
Youth	59	59.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

This table delineates the distribution of respondents across different age groups. Among them,20% are categorized as Adults, 21% as Children, and the majority, comprising 59%,fall into the Youth category. The totals indicate that each age goup represents a proportionate percentage of the total sample size, with a sum of 100 respondents. This distribution suggests a significant presence of youth among the surveyed population compared to adults and children.

Table 14:To what extent do you believe hate speech quickly spread through social media ?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
g	65	65.0
Low	5	5.0
Medium	29	29.0
Very High	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table presents data on the distribution of responses based on a variable's level. The majority, constituting 65%, fall into the "High" category, followed by "Medium" at 29%. Surprisingly, only 5% are categorized as "Low," and merely 1% fall under "Very High." This distribution indicates a predominance of high and medium levels, with low levels being less common. The total of 100 respondents ensures comprehensive coverage of the sample's variable level assessments.

Table 15: Government should implement regulation on social media platform to prevent the spread of hate speech

Variables	Frequency	Percent

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Agree	45	45.0
Disagree	10	10.0
Neutral	11	11.0
Strongly agree	21	21.0
Strongly disagree	13	13.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table illustrates responses to a statement, categorized into five options. The highest percentage, at 45%, is "Agree," followed by "Strongly agree" at 21%. Conversely, "Disagree" and "Strongly disagree" have lower percentages, at 10% and 13%, respectively. Additionally,11% of respondents chose "Neutral." This distribution indicates a tendency towards agreement with the   statement, though a notable minority expresses disagreement or neutrality. The total of 100   ensures comprehensive representation of responses.

Table 16: social media platforms should be regulate as a means of spreading of hate speech

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Agree	38	38.0
Disagree	24	24.0
Neutral	9	9.0
Strongly Agree	19	19.0
Strongly Disagree	10	10.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table depicts responses to a statement, categorized into five levels. The highest percentage, at 38%, is "Agree," closely followed by "Strongly Agree" at 19%. Conversely, "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" account for 24% and 10%, respectively. Additionally, 9% of respondents chose "Neutral." This distribution reveals a significant proportion leaning towards   agreement, with a smaller fraction in disagreement or neutrality. The total of 100 ensures   comprehensive coverage of the responses.

Table 17: The prevalence of hate speech on social media has a significant negative impact on society

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Agree	46	46.0
Disagree	11	11.0
Neutral	16	16.0
Strongly agree	17	17.0
Strongly disagree	10	10.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table represents responses to a statement, categorized into five levels. The highest percentage, at 46%, indicates "Agree," closely followed by "Neutral" at 16%. "Strongly agree" and "Strongly disagree" both have a similar percentage of 17% and 10%, respectively. Conversely, "Disagree" represents the lowest percentage, at 11%. This distribution reflects a predominant inclination towards agreement, with a notable portion expressing neutrality, while disagreement is comparatively less prevalent. The total ensures comprehensive coverage of responses.

Table 18: Hate speech is a universal phenomena prevalent in all communities, though with varies of magnitude

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Agree	53	53.0
Disagree	14	14.0
Neutral	15	15.0
Strongly Agree	16	16.0
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table presents responses to a statement, categorized into five levels. The highest percentage, at 53%,indicates "Agree," followed by strongly Agree" at 16%. Conversely, "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" represent 14% and 2%, respectively. Additionally, 15% of respondents chose "Neutral." This distribution suggests a predominant agreement with the statement, with a smaller portion expressing disagreement or neutrality. The total of 100 ensures comprehensive coverage of the/responses, reflecting the diversity of perspectives within the sample.

Table 19: Hate speech are usually thrilling in nature and by this factor, it is very likely to spread quickly

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Agree	49	49.0
Disagree	9	9.0
Neutral	15	15.0
Strongly Agree	22	22.0
Strongly Disagree	5	5.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table displays responses to a statement, categorized into five levels. The highest percentage, at 49%, indicates "Agree," followed by "Strongly Agree" at 22%. Conversely, "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" account for 9% and 5%, respectively. Additionally, 15% of respondents chose "Neutral." This distribution reveals a predominant agreement with the statement, with a smaller fraction expressing disagreement or neutrality. The total ensures comprehensive coverage of the responses, capturing the spectrum of perspectives within the sample

Table 20 : Government should play a role in regulating spread of hate speech on social media

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Agree	46	46.0
Disagree	14	14.0
Neutral	16	16.0
Strongly agree	13	13.0
Strongly disagree	11	11.0
Table 22:Hate speech on social media affected majority of Nigeria		100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table represents responses to a statement, classified into five levels."Agree" holds the highest percentage at 46%, followed by "Neutral" and disagree "at 16%and 14%, respectively."Strongly disagree and strongly agree" both have similar percentages of 11% and 13%,   respectively. This distribution suggests a predominant inclination towards agreement, with a notable portion expressing neutrality or disagreement. The total ensures a comprehensive overview of responses, capturing the diverse range of perspectives within the sample.

Table 21: should invest more in technology to detect and stop the spread of hate speech Social media platform

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Agree	50	50.0
Disagree	11	11.0
Neutral	16	16.0
Strongly agree	13	13.0
Strongly disagree	10	10.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table presents responses to a statement categorized into five levels. The highest percentage, at 50%, represents "Agree," followed by "Neutral" at 16 disagree" accounts for 11%,while "Strongly agree" and strongly disagree" each hold 13% and 10%, respectively. This distribution indicates a predominant agreement with the statement, with a portion expressing

neutrality or disagreement. The total ensures comprehensive coverage of responses, reflecting the diverse array of perspectives within the sample.

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Agree	46	46.0
Disagree	11	11.0
Neutral	18	18.0
Strongly agree	14	14.0
Strongly disagree	11	11.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table illustrates responses to a statement categorized into five levels. The highest percentage, at 46%,indicates"Agree," followed by "Neutral" at 18%. "Disagree" and "Strongly disagree" each account for 11%, while "Strongly agree" holds 14%. This distribution suggests a predominant agreement with the statement, with a notable portion expressing neutrality or disagreement. The total ensures comprehensive coverage of responses, reflecting the diverse range of perspectives within the sample.

Table 23: Media channels such as face-book, you-tube, twitter, whatsapp and other provided easy platform for spreading hate speech

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	45	45.0
Disagree	15	15.0
Neutral	18	18.0
Strongly Agree	17	17.0
Strongly Disagree	4	4.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

The table showcases responses to a statement, categorized into five levels. "Agree" represents the highest percentage at 45%, followed by "Neutral" at 18%."Disagree" and" Strongly Agree" account for 15% and 17%,, respectively, while "Strongly Disagree" hold 4%. This distribution suggests a predominant agreement with the statement, with a notable portion

expressing neutrality or disagreement. The total ensures comprehensive coverage of responses, portraying the diverse spectrum of perspectives within the sample.

Table 24: The responsibility of hate speech lies more with individual users than with social

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Agree	44	44.0
Disagree	12	12.0
Neutral	24	244.0
Strongly agree	8	8.0
Strongly disagree	12	12.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

In this table, responses to a statement are categorized into five levels. "Neutral" appears to be a typo, as the percentage is erroneously stated as 244%, likely meant to be 24%. Following this correction, "Neutral" accounts for the highest/percentage at 24%."Agree,""Disagree," and "Strongly disagree" each represent 44%, 12%, and 12%, respectively, while "Strongly agree "holds 8%. This distribution indicates a substantial portion expressing neutrality, with other viewpoints also represented.

Tables 25: Government should use the legislation to regulate media against hate speech?

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Agree	46	46.0
Disagree	7	7.0
Neutral	19	19.0
Strongly Agree	20	20.0
Strongly Disagree	8	8.0
Total	100	100.0

Source of research field survey 2025

This table illustrates responses to a statement, categorized into five levels. The highest percentage, at 46%, indicates Agree," followed by "Strongly Agree" at 20%. Conversely," Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" account for7%and8%, respectively. Additionally, 19% of respondents chose" Neutral." This distribution suggests a predominant agreement with the

statement, with a significant portion expressing strong agreement. However, there are also notable representations of neutrality and disagreement within the sample.

4.2 Analysis Of Research Questions

ResearchQuestion1: Are polytechnic student aware of the student use of media for the spread of hate speech?

Table 8 answers this question because it reveals that 75% of respondents answered" Yes,"   while 25% responded "No." The percentages reflect the distribution of responses within the   sample. With a total of 100 respondents, the data suggests a clear majority in favor of the affirmative response.

Table 9 also answers this Question. The table displays the frequency of an activity among respondents. The majority, accounting for 54%, engage in the activity every week, while 45% do it monthly. The absence of other frequencies suggests these two options encompass the entire spectrum of responses. This distribution indicates a preference for weekly engagement, with   a significant portion also participating monthly. The total of 100 respondents ensures comprehensive coverage of the sample's activity habits.

Research Question 2: What are the factors promoting the use of media for the spread of hate speech among users?

Table 14 also answer this Question. The table presents data on the distribution of responses based on a variable's level. The majority, constituting 65%, fall into the" High" category, followed by "Medium" at 29%. Surprisingly, only 5% are categorized as1ow," and merely 1% fall under "Very High." This distribution indicates a predominance of high and medium levels, with low levels being less common. The total of 100 respondents ensures comprehensive coverage of the sample's variable level assessments.

Research Question 3: What are the consequences of hate speech as perceived by polytechnic students and resident?

Table 17 also answer this question: The table represents responses to a statement, categorized into five levels. The highest percentage, at 46%, indicates "Agree," closely followed by "Neutral" at 16%. "Strongly agree" and "B Strongly disagree" both have a similar percentage of

Table 17 also answer this question: The table represents responses to a statement, categorized into five levels. The highest percentage, at46%,indicates "Agree," closely followed by "Neutral" at 16%. "Strongly agree" and "B Strongly disagree" both have a similar percentage of 17% and 10%,,respectively. Conversely, ´´*D*isagree"represents the lowest percentage,at 11%.This distribution reflects a predominant inclination towards agreement, with a notable portion expressing neutrality, while disagreement is comparatively less prevalent. The total ensures comprehensive coverage of responses.

Research Question 4 :What is the disposition of government to use of legislation to regulate new media against hate speech?

Table 15 answered this question. The table illustrates responses to a statement, categorized into five options. The highest percentage, at 45%,is "Agree," followed by strongly agree" at 21%.Conversely,disgree" and"Strongly disagree" have lower percentages, at 10% and 13%, respectively. Additionally, 11% of respondents chose "Neutral." This distribution indicates a tendency towards agreement with the statement, though a notable minority expresses disagreement or neutrality. The total of 100 ensures comprehensive representation of responses.

4.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to assess the influence of social media on the propagation of hate speech among polytechnic students. The result obtained the statistical analysis was used to provide an answer to this research study. Definite question were asked in the questionnaire to generate answers to each of the questions posed in this study.100 questionnaire were administered to the respondent and all the copies of the questionnaire were returned.

I discovered that the distribution of respondents according to the sex, 56 are male constituting 56% of the population while the remaining 44 are female constituting 44% respondents, totaling100 individuals. It indicates a slight male majority. I also found out that the age percentage of individual's falls within different age depicts the distribution of respondents: 24%are aged 17-23,36%fall between24-2925%are within 30-35,and 15% are 36 or older, summing up to 100 participants. Each age group constitutes a proportionate quarter of the total sample Strongly agree" holds 14%. This distribution suggests a predominant agreement with the statement, with a notable portion expressing neutrality or disagreement. The total ensures comprehensive coverage of responses, reflecting the diverse range of perspectives within the sample.

The prevalence of hate speech on social media has a significant negative impact on society. responses to a statement, categorized into five levels. The highest percentage, at 46%,indicates "Agree," closely followed by "Neutral" at 16%. "Strongly agree" and "Strongly disagree" both have a similar percentage of 17% and 10%, respectively. Conversely, "Disagree" represents the lowest percentage, at 11%. This distribution reflects a predominant inclination towards agreement, with a notable portion expressing neutrality, while disagreement is comparatively less prevalent. The total ensures comprehensive coverage of responses.

Do you come across hate speech every day. activity among respondents. The majority, accounting for 54%,engage in the activity every week, while 45% do it monthly. The absence of other frequencies suggests these two options encompass the entire spectrum of responses. This distribution indicates a preference for weekly engagement, with a significant portion also participating monthly. The total of 100 respondents ensures comprehensive coverage of the sample's activity habits.

I also found out how people disseminate hate speech on social media responses to a binary question. 66% answered "No," while 34% responded "Yes." This suggests a clear majority of respondents chose the negative option. The percentages indicate the distribution of responses within the sample. With a total of 100 respondents, it shows a dominance of the negative response but also highlights a significant minority in favor of the affirmative choice.

Do you think hate speech can affect the unity of Nigeria as a country The majority, comprising 76%,answered "Yes," while 24% responded "No." This indicates a significant preference for the affirmative option among respondents. The percentages represent the distribution of responses within the sample. With a total of 100 respondents, it demonstrates a clear dominance of the affirmative response, suggesting a prevalent inclination toward the positive choice among the surveyed population.I discovered that Facebook helps in connecting unemployed youth with potential employers. Half of the respondents, 50%, agree, and 18% strongly agree with its efficacy in this aspect. Conversely, only 5% disagree, and 4% strongly disagree. Additionally, 23% hold a neutral stance, suggesting varied opinions on Facebook's effectiveness in facilitating connections between job seekers and employers.

I discovered that Government should play a role in regulating spread of hate speech on social media. responses to a statement, classified into five levels."Agree" holds the highest percentage at 46%, followed by "Neutral" and "Disagree" at 16% and 14%, respectively. "Strongly disagree"

and "Strongly agree "both have similar percentages of 11% and 13%, respectively. This distribution suggests a predominant inclination towards agreement, with a notable portion expressing neutrality or disagreement. The total ensures a comprehensive overview of responses, capturing the diverse range of perspectives within the sample.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

SUMMARY

The study examines the impact of social media on the spread of hate speech among polytechnic students. It explores how social media platforms have become conduits for the dissemination of hateful messages, potentially leading to harmful consequences within educational institutions.

The study is divided into five chapters; the first gave a background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, scope of the study, justification of the study and definitions of operational terms as peculiar to the research.

The second chapter of this research work deals with review of relevant literature. The review made a notable attempt towards examining the stands of various authors and scholars as with propagation of Hate Speech: A Conceptual Review and Implication on National Stability; Legal Consequences of Hate Speech and Foul Language in Nigeria; Legal Frameworks for Counteracting Hate Speeches; The Spread of Hate Speech in Nigeria: Media Responsibility; Hate Speech Vs Freedom of Speech; Publication of Information on Social Media; The Four Major Jurisdictions; Social Implications of Internet and Social Media; Uses of Social Media. This chapter also has several reviews of related studies (empirical review). The chapter also include a theoretical framework which discuss a couple of mass communication theories such as assumptions of the social identity theory; uses and gratification theory and the technological determinism theory of the press and their relevance to this study. In a nutshell, the work of scholars, their postulations, theoretical assumptions and literary documents that were consulted and reviewed was done for reasonable generalization, coupled with the findings of the study itself.

Chapter three of this work deals with the research methodology adopted. The researchers used descriptive design, a component of survey method of research for collecting the required data. Simple Random Sampling Technique coupled with the descriptive survey method of research which involves the use of questionnaire as research instrument was deployed. The total

of 100 students of Mass Communication that were selected randomly formed the sample of this study.

In chapter four, the data gathered through the use of questionnaire as aforementioned in the third chapter of this study was analyzed using statistical table. Also, interpretations of the findings were made in line with responses gotten from respondents. The data were analyzed based on the one hundred (100) questionnaires that was issued out and completely returned by respondents.

In the fifth chapter, this study recorded certain findings that are quite worthwhile to note about the subject matter of the enquiry. By the assessment of the users, it has been established that Mass Communication students have access to usage of new media; Mass Communication students highly employ usage of social media; Mass Communication students make use of Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and YouTube; Mass Communication students have come across hate speech on social media; Mass Communication students come across hate speech on social media every day, every week while come across it once in a while; New media is an effective platform for the propagation of hate speech; Mass Communication students sometimes confirm the authenticity of an information on social media before sharing it; Mass Communication students posited that citizens are the ones who usually disseminate hate speech and fake news on social media; Mass Communication students have never been provoked to disseminate hate speech and fake news on new media; Mass Communication students usually delete hate speech and fake news messages they come across on new media platform; Fake news and hate speech has an implication on national stability; Mass Communication students do not support the enforcement of social media bill in Nigeria.

5.2 CONCLUSION

In the present time, the internet (social media) is being used exceedingly by good number of Nigerians of distinct status and categories; the youths, the adults as well as the male and the female constituents of the country have been documented to be involved in its usage. Due to the tremendous increase in the use of the internet, the researchers deemed it worthwhile to examine the perception of mass communication students on hate speech. The followings are however the conclusions of this study.

The survey results indicated that most respondents had heard and observed hate speech in the past without realizing it was hate speech. However, a small percentage had neither heard nor observed hate speech. These findings suggest a need for more education and awareness about hate speech among students.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of this paper, we recommend that:

i. Nigerian users of the social media should be wary of some of the contents they consume as unscrupulous users have been found to display misleading information that could be harmful to the public.

ii. Social media users in the country have to be aware that some political contents were mere propaganda tools apply to debase other politicians or political party's ideologies as well as exaggerate and or falsify some information on political-related issues.

iii. Members of the public are encouraged to desist from the various abuses in the usage of the social media for the interest of greater number of Nigerians found to be users of the sites in search of various relevant pieces of information.

iv. Media practitioners and academics should devote time to educate the people to avoid negative uses of the social media as they form major credible channels of public communication in Nigeria now.

v. Social media users should go extra miles to verify from other credible sources on some of the information they get from the sites since anybody can post anything on the social media.

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