

## **AUDIENCE PERCEPTION OF TINUBU’S PETITION LETTER TO NBC OVER DATTI’S “*END OF DEMOCRACY*” COMMENT ON CHANNELS TV**

**<sup>1</sup>Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, <sup>2</sup>Okelue, Collins E. and <sup>3</sup>Okeke, Chinaza, C.**

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus, Lecturer, <sup>2</sup>Department of Political Science, COOU, Igbariam Campus and <sup>3</sup>Department of Mass Communication, COOU, Igbariam Campus,

[casfranklin@gmail.com](mailto:casfranklin@gmail.com), [cu.obiakor@coou.edu.ng](mailto:cu.obiakor@coou.edu.ng), 08069833048/ [ce.okelue@coou.edu.ng](mailto:ce.okelue@coou.edu.ng), 07038475917/

**[chianzaokeke@gmail.com](mailto:chianzaokeke@gmail.com), 08181165973**

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11172793>

**Abstract:** Vice Presidential candidate of the Labour Party in the 2023 presidential election in Nigeria, Ahmed Datti made a controversial comment during an interview on Channels TV, where he said that swearing in the “purported” winner of the election Ahmed Bola Tinubu of the All-Progressives Congress (APC), would mark the end of democracy in Nigeria. Channels television was reported to the Nigeria Broadcasting Commission (NBC) which led to penalty of payment of fine on the station. How the audience perceived this action from the NBC remains to be studied. This research investigated audience perceptions of Tinubu’s petition letter on this issue. Survey research method was used to study 384 respondents in Awka metropolis. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the respondents studied. This study was anchored on the agenda setting theory. The objectives of this study are to determine the frequency of exposure to Tinubu’s petition letter to NBC against Datti by respondents in Awka, to determine the source of exposure to the letter by respondents in Awka, to determine their perception of the petition letter, and to determine their perception of the NBC for sanctioning Channels TV due to the petition. The results showed that respondents were highly exposed to the letter, and their main source of exposure was social media. The study also found that respondents had a negative perception of the letter as an instrument against freedom of speech, and their perception of the NBC was that it was a biased regulatory body. The study recommended, among others, that the NBC should be open-minded and independent in order to be critically objective in the reaction of petitions from the ruling party so it will not seem as if the commission is biased.

**Keywords:** Tinubu’s petition letter, Audience perception, NBC, “*End of Democracy*” comment, Channels TV.

### **Introduction**

A historical analysis of elections in Nigeria provides an opportunity to assess the various roles that the media play in Nigerian politics. The realization of national goals in the electoral process is a product of the extent of information, education, and mobilization of the electorates by the mass media (Oshega, *et al.*, 2017). Electoral processes in Nigeria are replete with cases of candidate imposition, manipulation of results, and other electoral malpractices that have continued to jeopardize the possibility of a credible, free, and fair electoral outcome. In

every democratic society, mass media is established as an important organ of information sourcing and dissemination, provision of electoral education, surveillance, social enlightenment, and mobilization (Oshega, *et al.*, 2017).

Agba and Ogri (2016) summarized the role of the mass media in a democratic process by stating that during political campaigns, the media are extensively used by competing candidates and political parties to canvass for the electorates' votes and support. They further state that the electoral umpire and concerned government agencies also use media platforms to educate the electorates during elections. In addition, the media carry messages about events that reflect positively or negatively on government and other actors in the political arena (Agba & Ogri, 2016). The above functions of the mass media bridge the yawning gap between the government and its citizens to facilitate the growth and development of Nigeria's nascent democracy. In contemporary times, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to have a functional electoral process without the mass media.

Citing Thomas Jefferson (former American president), Akinfeleye (2008) avers that since the basis of democracy was the opinion of the people, the very first objective to keep was that "if it were left for me to decide whether we should have a government without the mass media or the mass media without a government, I would not hesitate to choose the latter". The above statement further emphasizes the vital role of the mass media in a viral democratic process.

The media, like a double-edged sword, could be employed either for positive or negative ends in an election. As purveyors of information, market place of ideas, and watchdogs of society, a vibrant and active 'media' is an indispensable tool for the successful execution of any election. In addition, when an election is viewed as a process rather than an event, a responsible and responsive medium becomes a *sine qua non* for deepening democracy. Thus, it is noteworthy that the history of elections and the electoral process in Nigeria is replete with a myriad of negative accusations on the media. The accusations include ethnic and religious chauvinism, partisanship, distortion of reality, blackmail of some political candidates, corruption, marginalization of women, the poor, and opposition parties, aiding and abetting violence, sensationalism, poor voter education, exaggeration of the North – South dichotomy, and increasing political apathy (Akinsanya, 1981; Akpan, 1985; Nwosu 1990; Ezinwa, 2015). These charges are capable of eroding the public trust and credibility of the media as purveyors of information and, by extension, the credibility of an election. The implications are further described by Kogah (2005, p.15) as follows "...declines in public evaluations of media performance is significant because without public trust in media contents, the media's ability to inform the public, serve as watchdog over powerful institutions, and assist in self-governance are compromised". Thus, Araka (2011), as cited in Ezinwa (2015), cautioned that the credibility of any election with the populace is largely a function of their perception, and it is the media's prerogative and privilege to mold that perception. Araka emphasized that-, perception is everything and that the political role of the media is to mold people's political perception.

Writing on media and elections in 1999, Udejaja (2004, p.208) observed that the activities of the media were not restricted, although there were some kinds of government control, but not as strict as in previous elections. He attributed any shortcomings of the broadcast media within the period to their negligence or weakness. He commended the media for their role in informing the electorates, interpreting issues and events for them, and sensitizing and mobilizing them for effective political participation.

In every profession of human endeavor, ethical codes and standards exist that guide such profession, which at times could be different from the general ethical principles that guide human behavior in society (Edu, 2020). As

ethical codes guide the operations of practitioners in other fields of human endeavor, so also the field of journalism is not excluded of ethical codes and standards guiding professionals in the field.

Although there are well-outlined and well-spelt-out codes of professional standards for practitioners in the field of journalism, there have been outcries over the years that so-called professionals operating in the field had failed to uphold the standards stipulated by the codes of professional practice mandated by the National Broadcasting Commission (Edu, 2020). This is why Santas and Ezekiel (2014) assert that in Nigeria today, as it is elsewhere in the world, violation of the ethics of journalism has almost become the rule, rather than an exception.

Broadcasting as an aspect of journalism has diverse levels of complexity, technicality, and sensibility, and it is trite that it should be handled as such (Edu, 2020). The unique characteristics of broadcasting underline the reason why a body has been set up to monitor the activities of the industry in the country known as the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), established to ensure and enforce adherence to the codes of ethical standards guiding professionals in the industry (Edu, 2020).

The powers of the NBC as a regulator in the broadcasting industry was displayed after presidential candidate of the All-Progressives Congress (APC), Bola Tinubu wrote a petition letter dated March 30, 2023, against Channel's TV for airing the interview where Vice Presidential candidate of the Labour Party (LP) in the 2023 presidential election, Baba Ahmed Datti where he said that swearing in Tinubu would mark the end of democracy in Nigeria. The NBC sanctioned Channels TV with a fine of N5 million, and this led to outcry among some Nigerians who felt that the fine against Channels TV was undeserved (Aikulola, 2023).

Hence, this study seeks to analyze audience perception of the petition letter against Ahmed Datti submitted to the NBC by Bola Tinubu and how this letter has influenced the way audience members see the NBC as a broadcast regulator in Nigeria. This gives an insight into the reality and objectivity of the NBC in monitoring the mass media during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria and anytime else.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In electioneering campaigns, candidates could resort to issues that would favor them, those which are also against an opponent, although there is always an established boundary concerning ethics in journalistic practice (Oshega, *et al.*, 2017). The established boundary, among other things, abhors issues such as the portrayal of blatant lies or falsehood and a breach of professional ethics. In fact, the media are expected to respect the bounds at all times (Yaqub & Maikudi, 2015).

In modern society, where practices are dictated by postmodern principles, it is difficult to find concepts such as "truth" or "objectivity" (cardinal principles) in journalism practice with absolute value (Oshega, *et al.*, 2017). This has made communication scholars lend diverse voices in a bid to correctly demystify the import of these concepts and their use in journalism practice. Ibrahim (2023) observed that the media coverage of the 2023 presidential election was terribly one-sided without any semblance of balance and objectivity.

Sadly, the media have been widely criticized for the level of unprofessionalism displayed during the 2023 general elections. Electronic media in particular were believed to have been monopolized by anxious politicians to broadcast hate campaigns against opponents. The NBC urged broadcasters to avoid ethnic and religious politicking, impart Nigerians with the spirit of tolerance of all shades of opinion, promote social justice based on the rights and responsibilities of individuals, and ensure objectivity and balance in their reportage (Olupohunda, 2015).

The petition letter from APC's Bola Tinubu dated March 30, 2023, against LP's Ahmed Datti reflected the NBC's powers as a regulator, but- in a way that raised uproar. If the NBC is seen as a biased umpire of the broadcast

## **Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

industry in Nigeria, this would portend grave danger to objectivity in broadcast journalism. What the audiences think about the petition against Ahmed Datti, which led to the sanctioning of Channels TV, has not been empirically determined. This is the problem that informed this study.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives that guided this study are as follows:

- To examine the respondents' level of exposure to Tinubu's petition letter to NBC against Datti's interview on Channels TV.
- To determine the respondents' source of exposure to Tinubu's petition letter to NBC against Datti's interview on Channels TV.
- To determine the respondents' perception of Tinubu's petition letter to NBC against Datti's interview on Channels TV.
- To determine respondents' perception of NBC's reaction against Channels TV due to Tinubu's petition letter.

### **Significance of the Study**

NBC will benefit greatly from the findings of this study. This study will provide information on the perception of media audiences on the petition letter written by APC's Bola Tinubu to NBC against LP's Ahmed Datti's interview on Channels TV. This study will provide literature on the influence of NBC's reactions to such issues on how the public sees the commission as an objective umpire in the broadcast industry. Students, researchers, and scholars in communication and related disciplines will also find this study very useful as it contributes to the literature on media coverage of election issues and politics in general. Given the points above, this study provides data on the major reasons why audience members view television news channels as watchdogs of society. Of course, the study exposes the reasons behind the criticism of the NBC and the need for the mass media to be truly independent in their coverage of the pressing issues in society. Again, the study has added to the already existing literature for referencing the area of media coverage of politics and NBC as a broadcast industry regulator.

### **Theoretical Perspective**

#### **Perception Theory**

Perception, according to Burgeon and Ruffner (1978) "is a process of making sense out of experiences". For Folarin (1998, p. 24), "perception is how an individual makes sense out of their world". There are two dimensions to this theory, self-perception theory and cognitive dissonance theory. There are also many theories about different subjects in perception. Again, there are also disorders that relate to perception even though one could see perception as just a person's viewpoint. First, the self-perception theory, inspired by B. F. Skinner's analyses, is when individuals come to "know" or better understand their own attitudes, emotions, and other personal states, mostly by concluding them from observing their own behavior and/or the situations in which these behaviors occur. One example is an individual who describes "butterflies in the stomach". We have all identified this feeling on our own. Perception theory was formulated by Bem in 1967 as an alternative account of cognitive dissonance. The cognitive dissonance theory describes a person having two thoughts that contradict each other (Baran, 2002). For example, when a person advances that eating sugar is bad for someone, but then continues to eat sugar because to that person, not eating sugar would not change anything; meaning that nothing will change the current health of the individual. These thoughts are contradictory, almost hypocritical. According to Leon Festinger, the existence of dissonance causes the individual to be psychologically uncomfortable, which then allows the individual to try to remain constant in his/her thoughts (cited in Baran, 2002).

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

In addition, while the individual wants to become consistent, the individual will try to avoid situations that include that subject that causes dissonance (Festinger, 1956). According to Folarin (1998), perception depends on a complexity of variables such as psychological disposition, past experiences, cultural expectation, and social relationships. The process of media audience perception involves four stages: selective exposure, where individuals select what to expose themselves to; selective perception, where individuals selectively perceive a particular issue; selective attention, where individuals selectively pay attention to issues; and selective retention, where individuals select what to retain. These fall within the selective process, a postulation of Festinger Leon of 1957. Research often emphasizes the study of these selective processes especially in dealing with media audience perception and attitudinal change. Perception theory is apt to this present study because it concerns the perception of the people about the petition letter written against LP's vice presidential candidate and how it influences their attitude towards the NBC and objectivity in broadcast journalism.

**The Review**

**The Role of Mass Media in Political Awareness Creation**

The role of the media in electioneering campaigns is to provide information on the registered parties, their programs and candidates that would enable citizens to decide on the party and candidates that they wish to vote for during elections (Oboh, 2016). Norris (1997) noted that one of the primary functions of the media's coverage of campaigns is to increase information about the choices on offer, stimulating interest in public involvement in the process and watching politicians debate; the major issues during the campaign may stimulate viewers to feel better informed, more aware of the choices on offer, and therefore better equipped to exercise their choice at the ballot.

The media, which entail radio, television, newspapers, and the Internet, are very crucial in shaping a country's development process. Development entails changes or advancements in a nation that are aimed at improving the political, economic, and social lives of the people. It is a multidimensional process of action, organization, and communication that involves political, social, economic, and cultural factors. The real influence of the media in national development is dependent on the media themselves, the societies in which they operate, and the audience they reach (Oberholzer-Gee & Waldfogel, 2009). None of these factors are the same everywhere, at all times, or under all conditions.

The media's crucial role in national development is not in doubt. The role covers the political, economic, and social spheres. The media set the public agenda and act as the gatekeeper of public issues (Agbanu, 2013). They perform the role of watchdog over society, especially in political transparency and the fight against corruption. The media, also as the fourth estate, provide checks and balances regarding the three branches of government, as created by the constitution. Furthermore, they are important in enhancing nation building, especially in post-colonial societies and those experiencing ethnic and religious diversity (Arthur, 2010). The media have been defined by scholars of mass communication as a means of communication by which the public is informed about day-to-day events in society. The media are also said to be a collection of all communication channels that use different techniques for making direct personal communication between the communicator and the public.

Research on the influence of mass media in society suggests that mass media could affect voting behavior because of their potential to provide direct and cheap access to the consumption and dissemination of information (Heblich, 2016). Thus, better access to information may provide society with more knowledgeable voters, who make better-informed voting decisions (Falck, Gold & Heblich, 2014). Yet, another school of thought says that not all voters use the internet to improve their political knowledge (Falck, Gold, & Heblich, 2014). In other words,

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

some people visit the internet to seek online entertainment. This invariably, affects the extent of the consumption of other media (newspapers, radio or television), as online consumption replaces higher information content (Falck, Gold, & Heblich, 2014).

An alternative scenario is that individuals seek information online, but only selectively. This is especially true for those with prior ideological inclinations who primarily source information that matches their preconceptions; thus, ideologically “locking themselves in”. While the consumption of traditional media exposes users to diverse viewpoints and new topics and ideas, self-selected news consumption based on prior beliefs bears the risk of segregation (Heblich, 2016). This might lead to ideological polarization. Therefore, the introduction and diffusion of the internet may improve or reduce the range of news and political opinions that voters are exposed to, depending on which effect prevails (Falck, Gold, & Heblich, 2014).

While studying the potential ideological bias caused by the selective use of the Internet, Gentzkow and Shapiro (2010) analyze the ideological segregation of individuals’ online news consumption using US data. The findings showed that segregation on the internet is low but higher in most traditional media and significantly lower than segregation in personal interactions (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2010). Online news consumption is mostly concentrated on some relatively centrist outlets. Ideologically extreme outlets, such as political blogs and activist sites, account for only a minor share of online news consumption. In line with this, a study for Germany found no evidence that the internet significantly affects the vote-shares of extremist parties (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2010; Falck, Gold & Heblich, 2014).

Second, another concern about the rise of the Internet is the fact that new media entering the market may crowd-out established media (i.e. the “substitution” effect) (Heblich, 2016). This may imply a temporary decrease in information being disseminated through traditional media, until information providers find new techniques to employ the new medium (e.g by creating an attractive format to present news) and consumers become accustomed to the format. For example, the entrance of television into the media market affected newspaper consumption; thus, generating an overall negative effect on the dissemination of political information. This is because at the time of television introduction into the media, newspapers provided more political information than television programs (Oberholzer-Gee & Waldfogel, 2009). Similarly, the internet may crowd-out television or newspaper consumption. It suffices that the two traditional media have a high probability of so-called “by-product learning”; that is, newspapers and broadcasting media present a compilation of diverse issues that expose consumers to opinions and topics they did not intentionally look for (Heblich, 2016). When “Googling” or searching for specific news and information, it is expected that the probability of such chance encounters would decrease, as the search would be more focused. This might cause consumers to end up being less informed when the internet crowds-out broader media coverage, and reduced information on political issues may result in lower voter turnout (Heblich, 2016). Specifically, an increase in entertainment consumption may obviously compete with the time spent on acquiring information online and offline, or simply distract individuals from voting.

**NBC and Broadcast Media Regulation in Nigeria**

Regulations may be administered directly by the government, as it was in Nigeria before 1992. It could also be through statutory agencies that enjoy some degree of independence from the government. This is exemplified by the National Broadcasting Commission, NBC, of Nigeria; the Federal Communications Commission, FCC, of USA; and the Independent Television Commission, ITC, of Britain (Ihechu & Okugo, 2013).

At the basic level of broadcasting, regulation involves the issuance of permission, which implies, the granting of licenses to broadcasting organizations. In most countries, for example Nigeria, licenses become very expensive

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

to obtain by private organizations. For instance, by 2006, the lowest license fee for private radio was 15 million naira, as opposed to the lowest fee for public stations, which was 10 million naira (NBC, 2006, p.13). It is imperative to note that broadcasting regulation is subject to cultural norms, and it also “contributes to the shaping of these norms, and can at times have a significant impact on the form and content of programmes” (Harvey, 1999, p.3); thus, affecting the economic and management structures of broadcasting. Hence, it suffices that an appraisal of the philosophy and practice of broadcasting regulation expose its impact on overall broadcasting activities in Nigeria.

The NBC was established by the government to control broadcasting. The regulatory body was charged to protect the interest of the government as well as ensure that the citizens’ interests are protected (Nzomiwu, 2023). Regulation is an instrument used by society to check media content and portrayal. The political system of a country determines the direction in which its regulations follow. In Nigeria, the National Broadcasting Commission was established by Decree 38 of 1992, to register, regulate, and control broadcasting in Nigeria. However, Ihechu and Okugo (2013) state otherwise, having established that the Commission serves as an agent of government, thereby beclouding its agenda of pluralism in the broadcast sector. Nevertheless, the NBC’s regulation approaches include: licensing, monitoring, sanctioning defaulters, intervening and arbitrating in conflicts, and other control measures. The Commission performs all these duties with a very obvious bias against the private stations; thus, making the Commission an “irregular” regulator. Therefore, the reason behind the NBC’s inability to exercise its duties independently rests on the fact, that the power to issue licenses is with the Nigerian president, and not with the commission. In addition, the laws erroneously gave the commission two much powers – making it a regulator and an arbitrator – thus, it commits some fundamental flaws that place the country far behind other nations in terms of positive regulation (Nzomiwu, 2023; Ihechu & Okugo, 2013).

NBC is saddled with the responsibility of sanitizing the broadcasting industry in Nigeria. This includes music, videos, and songs played by various television and radio stations. This is a difficult task to achieve with social media, but NBC makes an effort to tackle songs and music-videos with negative content aired on various broadcast channels in the country. The NBC had placed a ban on some popular Nigerian songs, as they do from time to time, after finding certain songs unfit for radio and television airplay. Among them were Olamide’s latest hit ‘Wo’ and ‘Wavy level’, Davido’s ‘Fall’ and ‘If’ remix and 9ice’s ‘Living things’. There has been no official reason why the songs were blacklisted (Tribune, 2017; Ohai, 2018).

This particular ban came days after the Federal Ministry of Health had, in a tweet, on Friday, August 18, 2017, said that the video of Olamide’s ‘Wo’ violated the Tobacco Control Act 2015 (Tribune, 2017). Tweeting the information via its official Twitter page, the Ministry of Health claimed that the video, which features scenes in which youths are seen smoking, encourages second-hand smoking. According to the 2015 Tobacco Control Act, it is prohibited to promote or advertise tobacco or tobacco products except between a manufacturer, retailer, and consenting persons above 18 years of age. “No person shall promote or advertise tobacco or tobacco products in any form. No person shall engage or participate in any tobacco advertising, promotion, or sponsorship as a media or event organizer, celebrity, or other participant,” it reads. This shows the powerful role of NBC in Nigeria’s broadcast industry.

Freedom of the media is essential in a democracy to protect human rights, promote transparency and accountability in government, and curb corruption and other forms of abuse of political power. As one of the essential pillars of democracy, it allows journalists to report freely on matters of public interest without encumbrances from any quarter (Nzomiwu, 2023).

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

To underscore the importance of press freedom, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in December 1993 proclaimed May 3 as World Press Freedom Day. This has been commemorated every year for the past 30 years with global conferences on media freedom. The United States is seen as the bastion of democracy in the world. Thomas Jefferson, statesman, lawyer, and the third President of the United States of America, said that if he had to choose between government without newspapers and newspapers without government, he would not hesitate to choose the latter. The First Amendment in the constitution of Uncle Sam's country protects freedom of speech and the press, among others. Broadcasting regulations in the United States are rooted in this First Amendment (Nzomiwu, 2023).

In August 2022, the commission, under very controversial circumstances, imposed a fine of N5 million each on three media organizations, Trust TV Limited, Multi-choice Limited, and NTA-Star Times, for violating the Broadcasting Code by airing a documentary by the BBC Africa Eye on the activities of armed bandits wreaking havoc in Northwest, Nigeria. The sanction against the three media organizations was described as "unwarranted" by The Guardian in an editorial on August 17, 2022 (cited in Ihechu & Okugo, 2013).

While the dust raised by the sanctions on the three media organizations was yet to die down, the commission struck again, revoking the licenses of 54 media organizations, including Arise TV, AIT, and Silverbird TV Network, over N2.6 billion debt. It ordered the enforcement of the revocation order within 24 hours (Ihechu & Okugo, 2013). The action of NBC attracted public condemnation, and it quickly reversed itself by extending the enforcement of the order, claiming it was due to appeals by the affected stations, stakeholders, and public-spirited individuals and organizations.

**Brief on Tinubu's Petition Letter to the NBC against Datti Ahmed**

The President-elect after the 2023 presidential election in Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, petitioned the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) to sanction Channels Television for breaching the Nigerian Broadcasting Code during an interview with the Vice-Presidential candidate of the Labour Party, Datti Baba Ahmed. This happened shortly after the presidential elections held in February, which the LP lost amidst allegations of widespread irregularities (Suleiman, 2023).

While speaking on Wednesday, March 22, in an edition of "Politics Today" on Channels Television, Mr. Baba-Ahmed called on President Muhammadu Buhari and the Chief Justice of Nigeria not to swear in Bola Tinubu, whom INEC declared as the president-elect, insisting that declaring Mr. Tinubu a winner and issuing him a certificate of return was against the constitution. He said, "Whoever swears in Mr. Tinubu, Mr. Baba-Ahmed said, has "ended Democracy" in Nigeria. Mr. President, do not hold that inauguration. CJN your lordship, do not partake in unconstitutionality. I am taking this risk for the sake of my country" (Suleiman, 2023). "Yes, it is extreme, and I am saying it. It was more extreme for Yakubu (INEC Chair) to issue that certificate (of return). It was reckless. He is putting all our lives in danger; all of us. I am telling you that on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, 2023, swear in Tinubu as this result is, you have ended democracy whoever you are. You cannot swear in people who have not met constitutional requirements. If you do that, you have done something unlawful, something unconstitutional. And I am repeating it, whoever does not meet the constitutional requirement must not, and must never be sworn in. You said my name. If you like, I can say it again. I am Datti Baba-Ahmed" (Suleiman, 2023, p.2).

Mr. Ahmed said the APC candidate had not met the constitutional requirement to be declared president-elect, saying that INEC Chairman- Mahmood Yakubu, had put the lives of Nigerians in danger by issuing Mr. Tinubu a certificate of return. "Swearing in a ticket that has not met the constitutional requirements of the constitutions

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

is ending Democracy. Quote me on it... and that is indeed a correct interpretation,” he said. “However extreme it is, I am saying it on national TV. I do not like to take risks. I am not taking any risk” (Suleiman, 2023, p.2). Consequently, Tinubu wrote a petition to the NBC against these comments by Datti. The petition was signed by the All-Progressives Congress (APC) presidential campaign council director of Media and Publicity, Bayo Onanuga, on March 30, 2023. Tinubu in the petition said “in line with Section 14.0.1 of the Nigerian Broadcasting Code 6<sup>th</sup> edition stating the duty of the commission to accept complaints from aggrieved persons, bodies or members of the public and investigate as well as apply sanctions where necessary, the APCPCC hereby petitions the commission on breaches by Channels TV on its program- *Politics Today*.

The president-elect accused the Labour Party Vice presidential candidate of making several comments that attacked the integrity of the 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2023 presidential elections. In the interview, Baba-Ahmed had faulted the emergence of the former Lagos Governor as the president-elect and requested the Chief Justice of Nigeria and President, Major Gen Muhamadu Buhari (rtd) not to swear him in. Tinubu also noted in the petition that the host of the show should have cautioned Baba-Ahmed for making such careless comments, and for failing to do so, the station should be sanctioned. The petition partly reads as follows: “The guest on the program in question, Datti Baba-Ahmed, said President Muhammadu Buhari should not swear in the President-elect because he did not score 25% of the vote in the FCT, which is one of the prerequisites for being declared the winner. This is a subversive comment because the matter is among the issues submitted in their petition before the tribunal for adjudication. Therefore, until the court rules otherwise, the status quo is the INEC position as declared in the final results.

“Furthermore, Section 3.0.2.1 said that no broadcaster shall encourage or incite crime, lead to public hate, disorder, or repugnant to public feelings’ materials that cause disaffection. We, therefore, urge NBC to invoke the necessary sanctions on Channels Television for the breaches enumerated above” (Aikulola, 2023; Okeh, 2023). The NBC eventually sanctioned Channels TV and fined the station N5 million, which was condemned by media scholars and analysts (Aikulola, 2023). Therefore, this study investigates audiences’ perception of this petition and their thoughts on how the NBC reacted to the petition by sanctioning Channels TV with a fine of N5 million. Whether this petition and the reaction by NBC influenced audience members in any way has not been empirically established. This is what this study set out to ascertain, using the residents of Awka as the study focus.

**Methodology**

This study used the survey research method. The method assisted the researchers in obtaining data from residents of Awka who were exposed to the petition written by Tinubu against Datti Ahmed. The population of this study comprised residents of Awka who were exposed to the petition Tinubu wrote against Ahmed Datti of LP. The researchers used the total population of Awka, which is 301,657 (according to 2006 population census). To obtain the current figure for 2023, the population is projected using the following formula:  $PP = GP \times PI \times T$

Where;

GP = given population (301,657);

PI = population index/growth rate, which 2.8%;

T = Difference between the time of the given population and this present time of the current study.

Projected population (PP) = 301,657x 2.28% 2023-2006

PP = 301,657x 0.0228 x 17 = 116,922

PP = 301,657+ 116,922 = 418,579

Population of study = 418,579

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

Because the population was large, a sample size of 384 respondents was used. It was determined using Cozby's (2004) table of sample size determination, which states that at +/-0.05 error margin, a population of 100,000 and above will have a sample of 384. Thus, the sample size for this study was 384 respondents. The purposive sampling technique, otherwise known as judgmental sampling, was used to identify the respondents that were studied. The researchers used a structured questionnaire to obtain responses from the respondents. Meanwhile, out of the 384 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 372 copies were retrieved and found usable. This means that only 3% mortality rate was recorded.

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

**Answers to the Research Questions**

**Research Question 1: What is the respondents' level of exposure to Tinubu's Petition to NBC against Datti's interview on Channels TV?**

**Table 1: Responses on Level of exposure to Tinubu's Petition to NBC against Datti's Interview on Channels TV?**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	96	26
High	142	38
Moderate	91	24
Low	30	8
Very Low	13	4
Total	372	100

Source: *Field survey, 2023*

Table 1 shows that 26% of the respondents (n=96) were very highly exposed to Tinubu's petition letter to NBC against Datti's interview on Channels TV, 38% (n=142) were highly exposed, 24% (n=91) did so moderately, 8% (n=30) did so at a low level, and 4% (n=13) did so at a very low level. These findings show that most respondents were well exposed to Tinubu's Petition letter to NBC against Datti's interview on Channels TV, as the majority of them were highly and very highly exposed to the letter under discussion.

**Research Question Two: What is the respondents' source of exposure to Tinubu's Petition to NBC against Datti's Interview on Channels TV?**

**Table 2: Responses on respondents' sources of exposure to Tinubu's Petition to NBC against Datti's Interview on Channels TV**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Social media	276	74
Mainstream media	96	26
Total	372	100

Source: *Field survey, 2023*

Table 2 shows that 74% of the respondents (n=276) indicated that social media such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok are the main sources where they got to know about Tinubu's Petition to NBC against Datti's interview, which he granted to Channels TV; 26 percent (n=96) got the information from mainstream media, especially televisions. These results show that the majority of the respondents heard about this news from social media sources.

**Research Question Three: What are the respondents’ perceptions of Tinubu’s Petition to NBC against Datti’s Interview on Channels TV?**

**Table 3: Responses on respondents’ perception of Tinubu’s petition to NBC against Datti’s interview on Channels TV**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	36	10
Negative	324	87
Neutral	12	3
Total	372	100

Source: *Field survey, 2023*

Table 3 shows that 10% of the respondents (n=36) indicated that they had a positive perception of the petition. Such positive perception is in the form of seeing the petition as good for promoting professionalism in journalism and checking excesses of the media, as indicated in the questionnaire follow-up question on this research question. The table further shows that an overwhelming majority, 87 percent (n=324) had a negative perception of the petition. This was probably because NBC acted rashly by fining Channels TV for airing the interview. Respondents saw this as highhandedness on the part of the NBC and a breach of press freedom. Only 3% of respondents had a neutral perception of the petition. This shows that, overall, respondents had a negative perception of the petition written by Tinubu against Ahmed Datti.

**Research Question Four: What is the respondents’ perception of NBC’s reaction against Channels TV due to Tinubu’s petition letter?**

**Table 4: Responses on respondents’ perception of NBC’s reaction against Channels TV due to Tinubu’s petition letter**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	10	3
Negative	327	88
Neutral	35	9
Total	372	100

Source: *Field survey, 2023*

Table 4 shows that 3% of the respondents (n=10) indicated that they had a positive perception of NBC’s reaction against Channels TV due to Tinubu’s petition letter. Such positive perception is in the form of seeing the NBC’s reaction as good for promoting professionalism in journalism practice and checking the excesses of broadcast media houses, as indicated in the questionnaire follow-up question on this research question. The table further shows that an overwhelming majority, 88 percent (n=327) had a negative perception of the NBC’s reaction to the petition. They saw it as highhandedness on the part of the NBC and a breach of press freedom. Only 9% of respondents had a neutral perception of the petition. This shows that respondents had a negative perception of NBC’s reaction to the petition written by Tinubu against Ahmed Datti, including the reaction of NBC by fining Channels TV over the interview.

**Discussion of the Findings**

The first objective of this study was to determine respondents’ level of exposure to Tinubu’s petition to NBC against Datti’s interview on Channels TV. The findings show that most respondents were well exposed to Tinubu’s Petition to NBC against Datti’s interview on Channels TV. This exposure is enough for the respondents

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

to react to the petition by giving their views on the petition and the reaction of NBC to the petition by fining Channels TV. This agrees with studies that suggest that vibrant and active media is an indispensable tool for the successful execution of any election (Ezinwa, 2015). Furthermore, the news media have been identified as modern platforms from which party candidates disseminate information to voters and solicit their support to win elections (Oboh, 2016). Similarly, Kurfi (2010) observed that without access to the full range of information about their world, citizens cannot fulfill their roles, and democracy will wither.

The second objective sought to determine respondents' sources of exposure to Tinubu's petition to NBC against Datti's interview on Channels TV. The findings show that most respondents obtained information about Tinubu's petition and the NBC reaction from social media sources. This supports studies that suggest that social media is one of the major sources of information on politics for users (Duru, 2019; Aslan, *et al.*, 2021). After a study, Aslan *et al.* (2021) observed that social networking is used for effectively and efficiently interacting with electorates, especially during election processes, through campaign activities. This finding also supports the assertion by Shadrach (2017) that social media are gaining popularity among citizens because they pass information freely without the control of government, powerful politicians, and advertisers, as well as free from conventional professional bottlenecks such as gate-keeping. Again, the finding is also in line with Ikegbunam and Obiakor (2021); Obiakor and Ikegbunam (2021), who stated that social media is one of the most vibrant means of dissemination of information to the masses and that they have the capacity to provide direct access to content to an unprecedented number of people.

The third objective sought to determine respondents' perceptions of Tinubu's Petition to NBC against Datti's interview on Channels TV. The findings show that respondents had a negative perception of the petition written by Tinubu against Ahmed Datti. Research shows that the mass media provide information that helps in political awareness creation in society, and this could affect voting behavior (Heblich, 2016). Better access to information may provide society with more knowledgeable issues for audience members to make better-informed voting decisions (Falck, Gold & Heblich, 2014). Furthermore, Maisel (2007) noted that democratic regimes span a wide spectrum in terms of how freely those in power can be criticized by the opposition, the amount of information to which citizens have access in reaching their judgments, and the freedom that candidates have to express their views. The public often relies on the media for information on the ideologies and manifestoes of political parties, as well as on the competence of the candidates contesting for elections (Egbuna, 2012). This influences their judgment on such issues as the comment of Ahmed Datti against the 2023 presidential election, making them see the petition by Tinubu in a bad light, especially adding to the fact that the NBC sanctioned Channels TV with a fine.

The fourth objective sought to determine respondents' perceptions of NBC's reaction against Channels TV due to Tinubu's petition letter. The findings show that respondents had a negative perception of NBC's reaction to the petition written by Tinubu against Ahmed Datti, including the reaction of NBC by fining Channels TV over the interview. They see this as a breach of press freedom and highhandedness by the NBC while conducting their role of regulating the broadcast industry in Nigeria. This finding supports studies that have suggested that the NBC serves as an agent of government, thereby beclouding its agenda of pluralism in the broadcast sector (Ihechu & Okugo, 2013). The NBC has also been accused of performing its duties with an overt showcase of bias against the private stations, thus making it an "irregular" regulator (Ihechu & Okugo, 2013; Nzomiwu, 2023). In addition, it has been argued that the laws establishing the NBC erroneously gave the commission too much power, making it a regulator and an arbitrator; thus, it commits some fundamental flaws that place the country far behind other

nations in terms of positive regulation (Ihechu & Okugo, 2013; Nzomiwu, 2023). Owing to political interference, the NBC has since abandoned the job of a regulator of the broadcast industry, to assume the role of the tormentor of the industry; thus, infringing on press freedom (Ihechu & Okugo, 2013).

### **Summary**

This study investigated the audience perception of Tinubu's petition letter to NBC over Datti's "*End of Democracy*" comment on Channels TV. This study focused on residents of Awka who were exposed to Tinubu's petition against Ahmed Datti's "*End of Democracy*" comment on Channels TV. The researcher chose to focus on the residents of Awka based on discretion and convenience. The study was premised on four objectives. The survey method was used in this study. At the end of the study, it was revealed that residents of Awka were well exposed to Tinubu's petition against Datti's "*End of Democracy*" comment on Channels TV, and they had a negative perception of the petition. The respondents also had a negative perception of the reaction of NBC to the petition by fining Channels TV. They see the NBC's reaction as a breach of press freedom and highhandedness on their part. Perception theory was used as the theoretical framework for the study.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusion has been drawn:

Residents of Awka were well exposed to Tinubu's petition against Datti's "*End of Democracy*" comment on Channels TV; most of the residents of Awka received information about Tinubu's petition against Ahmed Dattii's "*End of Democracy*" comment on Channels TV from social media; residents of Awka had a negative perception of Tinubu's petition against "*End of Democracy*" comment on Channels TV by Datti Ahmed; residents of Awka had a negative perception of the reaction of NBC on the petition by fining Channels TV. They see the NBC's reaction as a breach of press freedom and highhandedness on the part of the NBC.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusion drawn after this study, the following recommendations are put forward on mass media and political reporting/election issues in Nigeria, including media regulation:

The NBC should take extra care not to react to petitions in a manner that will look as if they are biased. The reaction to Tinubu's petition by fining Channels TV did not go down well with members of the public who felt that NBC went too far on the issue.

There is a need for further scrutiny of NBC's decisions before they are executed. This will ensure that innocent media organizations are not unjustly penalized over issues or actions that seem like objective reporting misjudged by the commission.

The Federal government should develop stringent laws on how to monitor and control the social media environment without necessarily infringing on the freedom of expression of social media users. This will help curb the use of platforms such as social media in spreading hate speech that could be harmful to the management of political information, especially during and after political campaigns as well as election periods.

Social media should be combined with mainstream media in managing information during and after election campaigns. The use of social media should not be an afterthought or secondary option but should be made part of the original information campaign plan since it is effective in reaching a vast number of audience members.

Political parties should emphasize the use of social media in information dissemination. Social media are an effective tool in information dissemination if the right messages are passed to the audiences. This is based on the

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

fact that many people get political information through social media, including information originally obtained by the mainstream media.

Further studies should be conducted on the perception of residents of other cities in other parts of Nigeria regarding Tinubu's petition against Ahmed Datti over his "End of Democracy" comment.

## References

Agba, P. C. (2007). Role of mass media in electioneering campaign in a developing context. In I. E. Nwosu, N. T. Ukozor, & L. C. Nwodu (Eds.), *Communication for sustainable human development* (72-88). African Council for Communication Education.

Agba, U. J. & Ogri, E. U. (2016). Media, globalization and democracy practices in Africa: A study of 2016 democratic transitions in Nigeria and Burkina-Faso. *Journal of Theatre & Media Studies*, 1(2), 366-390.

Agbanu, V. N (2013). Mass communication introduction, techniques, issues. Enugu: Rhyce Kerex Publishers.

Aikulola, S. (2023). NBC's N5 million fine on channels tvanti-democracy'. *TheGuardian*. Accessed 11-06-2023 from <https://guardian.ng/features/media/nbcs-n5-million-fine-on-channels-tv-anti-democracy/>

Akinfeleye, R. (2008). Media policy: Tool for national development. In R. Akinfeleye (Ed.), *Contemporary issues in mass media for development and national security* (126-139). Lagos: Jesuoboh & Associate.

Arthur, P. (2010). Democratic consolidation in Ghana: The role and contribution of the media, civil society and state institutions. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 48(2), 203–226. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14662041003672510>.

Aslan, A., Karakoc, E., & Bekirolu, O. (2021). Effect of social media on voter behavior: Sample of Kayseri province. *Revista Argentina de ClinicaPsicologica*, 30(1), 828-840. [DOI: 10.24205/03276716.2020.2079](https://doi.org/10.24205/03276716.2020.2079).

Baker, C. E. (2002). *Media, markets, and democracy*. Cambridge University Press.

Balkin, J. M. (1999). How mass media simulate political transparency. *Journal for Cultural Research*, 3(4), 393-413. Accessed 21-06-2023 from <http://philpapers.org/rec/BALHAMM/>.

Baran, S. (2002). *Introduction to mass communication: Media literacy and culture* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Boston: McGraw Hill.

Burgeon, M. & Ruffner, M. (1978). *Human communication: A revision of approaching speech/communication*. Winston NY: Holt.

Commonwealth (2007). *Nigeria election: Departure statement*. Accessed 23-03-2023 from <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/document/181889/34293/35144/152078/162848/270407nigeriadeptstatement.htm>.

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

Duru, C. W. (2019). Exposure to social media political campaigns and their influence on the choice of candidates during the 2019 governorship election in Imo State, Nigeria. *SAU Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 4(1&2), 241-248.

Edu, S. O. (2020). Assessment of the role of the national broadcasting commission (NBC) in enforcing media ethics among broadcast journalists in Ondostate. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research*, 9(4), 124-243.

Egbuna, B. (2012). *Covering elections: The broadcaster's responsibility*. Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Conference on Innovating for Quality Broadcasting, Commonwealth Broadcasting Association, London, England. Accessed 23-06-2023 from [http://www.cba.org.uk/conferences and events/Covering Elections The Broadcaster's Responsibilities](http://www.cba.org.uk/conferences%20and%20events/Covering%20Elections%20The%20Broadcaster's%20Responsibilities).

Ezinwa, C., A. (2015). When our expectations are met: An analysis of voters' perception of the media coverage of 2011 general elections in Nigeria. *International Journal of African and Asian Studies*, 15, 117-141.

Festinger, L. (1956). *An introduction to the theories of cognitive dissonance*. London: Standford University Press.

Folarin, B. (1998). *Theories of mass communication: An introduction*. StirlingHorden Publishers Ltd.

[Gentzkow, M. & Shapiro, J. M. \(2010\). Ideological segregation online and offline. \*Quarterly Journal of Economics\*, 126\(4\), 1799–1839.](#)

Gordon, T. (2006). *The vote motive*. London, England: Institute of Economic Affairs. Accessed 23-03-2023 from <http://www.iea.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/upldbook397pdf.pdf>.

Hansrod, Z. (2017). How media and ethnic politics inter-twine in Africa. *Radio France Internationale*. [http://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20170917-How-media-and-eth nic-politics-intertwine-Africa](http://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20170917-How-media-and-eth%20nic-politics-intertwine-Africa).

Harvey, S. (1999). *Broadcasting regulation: On the side of the angels?* Accessed 25-06-2023 from <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/screeningthepast/firstrelease>.

Heblich, S. (2016). [The effect of the internet on voting behavior](#). *IZA World of Labor*, 10, 294 - 301.

Ibrahim, B. Y. (2023, March 21). Mainstream media coverage of Nigeria's 2023 presidential election. *Daily Trust*. Accessed 10-06-2023 from <https://dailytrust.com/mainstream-media-coverage-of-nigerias-2023-presidential-election/>.

Ihechu, I. & Okugo, U. (2013). Broadcasting regulation and broadcasting in Nigeria: An overview of the approaches. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(2), 12-19.

Ikegbunam, P. C. & Obiakor, C. U. (2021). Encouraging popular political participation and effective election monitoring through whatsapp social media platforms. *International journal of Social Sciences and Human Research (IJSSHR)*, 4(4), 698-709.

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

Jebril, N., Stetka, V., & Loveless, M. (2013). *Media and democratization: what is known about the role of mass media in transitions to democracy*. Reuters Institute for the Study Journalism.

Kogah, V.C. (October – December 2007). Mass media management of post-election crisis. *NBC News*, 9 (1), 23-27.

Konkwo, D. E. (2003). Role of the mass media in mobilization of the Nigerian masses for peaceful elections. In I. E. Nwosu (Ed.), *Polimedia: Media and politics in Nigeria* (pp. 85-92). Enugu: African Council for Communication Education, Nigeria Chapter.

Kurfi, M. Y. (2010). The role of mass media in democratic society: An opinion survey in Bayero University, Kano. In O. A. Okwilagwe (Ed.), *NigerianaStirling–Horden: Encylopaedia of mass media & communication—Historical and theoretical perspectives* (pp. 289-300). Ibadan, Nigeria: Stirling–Horden.

Maisel, L. S. (2007). *American political parties and elections: A very short introduction*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

MRA (2001). *Broadcasting commission suspends licence of private radio station*. Accessed 23-06-2023 from <http://www.ifex.org/nigeria/2009/05/12/broadcasting> National Broadcasting Commission, NBC (2006, April-June). Licence fees. *NBC News*. 8(2).

NBC (2009, September 3). *Grant of radio and television network service licences*. [Information Memorandum] Abuja. Accessed 20-06-2023 from; <http://www.nbc.gov.org.php? menu=1xsubmenu=>.

Norris, P. (1997). *Electoral change since 1945*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing Limited.

Nwosu I. E. (1990). Mass media and political mobilization during elections: Toward improved knowledge and skills. *Nigerian Journal of Mass Communication*, 1 (1), 31-44.

Nzomiwu, C. (2023, March 22). NBC: The regulator or tormentor of the broadcast industry. *This Day*. Accessed 23-06-2023 from <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2023/04/07/nbc-the-regulator-or-tormentor-of-the-broadcast-industry>.

[Oberholzer-Gee, F., & Waldfogel, J. \(2009\). Media markets and localism: Does local news enespanol boost hispanic voter turnout? \*American Economic Review\*, 99\(5\), 2120–2128.](#)

Obiakor, C. U & Ikegbunam, P. C. (2021). Social media shared video-clips on covid-19 and undergraduates perception of health realities of the virus. *ANSU Journal of Arts and Social Sciences (ANSUJASS)*, 8(2): 57-72, ISSN: 2315-7178.

Oboh, G. E. (2016). *Reflecting on the Nigerian media, elections, and the African democracy*. SageOpen. DOI: 10.1177/2158244016666886.

Oboh, G. E. (2017). Influence of ethnicity and religion in Nigerian elections and the imperative of media intervention. *Sociological International Journal*, 1(3), 79 - 84.10.15406/sij.2017.01.00013.

**Obiakor, Casmir U., PhD, Okelue, Collins E. and Okeke, Chinaza, C. (2024)**

Ojo, E. O. (2000). *Mass media and democracy in Nigeria: An in-depth analysis of the nexus*. A Paper Presented to Nigerian Psychological Association (NPA) 19th Annual Conference held at University of Ibadan, Nigeria, 18–21 October, 2000.

Okeh, A. (2023, March 31). Tinubu writes NBC to sanction channels tvoverdatti's comment. *Punch*, Accessed 10-06-2023 from <https://punchng.com/tinubu-writes-nbc-to-sanction-channels-tv-over-dattis-comment/>.

Olupohunda, B. (2015). *Nigeria decide: Media, hate broadcast and 2015 elections*. Retrieved from <http://www.nigeriaelections.org/blog> post/82/nigeriadecides-media-hate-broadcast-and-2015-elections.

Oshega, A., Henshaw, A. A., Ogri, E. U. & Arekong M. D. (2017). Audience perception, reality and objectivity in media reportage: An analysis of broadcast media coverage of the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. *The Leajon*, 8(2), 42-65.

Santas, T. & Ezekiel S.A. (2014). An investigation of media practitioners' adherence to professional ethics in Minna, Nigeria. *Review of Communication and Media Studies*, 1(1),8- 13.

Seteolu, B. (2017). What will election be without the media?An appraisal of the media and 2015 presidential elections in Nigeria. *Journalism and Mass Communication*, 7(2), 78–89.10.17265/2160-6579/ 2017.02.002.

Shadrach, I. & Apuke, O. D. (2020). Investigating the effectiveness of social media usage for political dialogue in Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 3942-3951. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/3942>.

Smith, L. (2009). Explaining violence after recent elections in Ethiopia and Kenya. *Democratization*, 16, 867-897. doi:10.1080/13510340903162085.

Suleiman, Q. (2023, April 1). NBC fines channels tvN5 million over Datti's "ending democracy" comment. *Premium Times*. Accessed 23-06-2023 from <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/591249-nbc-fines-channels-tv-n5-million-over-dattis-ending-democracy-comment.html>.

Swigger, N. (2012). What you see is what you get: Drawing inferences from campaign imagery. *Political Communication*, 29, 367-386.

Udejah, R.A. (2004). *Broadcasting and politics in Nigeria (1963-2003)*. Enugu: SNAAP Press Ltd.

Ukonu, M. O. (2005). Influences of media ownership patterns on media freedom and professionalism in Nigeria. *Nsukka Journal of the Humanities*, 15, 144–159.

Umeagbalasi, E., & Onwuatuegwu, C. (2015). Media falsehood & propaganda on rampage in Nigeria. *The Nigerian Voice*. Retrieved from on 10/10/2018. <https://www.thenigerianvoice.com/news/176761/>.

Yaqub, N. & Maikudu, A. S. (2015). *The mass media and the 2015 general elections*. Paper submitted to National Conference by Electoral Institute of Independent National Electoral Commission. Retrieved from 10-06-2023 from; [www.inecnigeria.org/wp...2015/.../conference](http://www.inecnigeria.org/wp...2015/.../conference).