

**MOBILE INTERNET AND THE RISE OF DIGITAL ACTIVISM  
AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN NIGERIA**

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## ABSTRACT

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Digital activism literature has proposed several ways in which social media impacts collective actions. These include providing news and information not available on traditional platforms, assisting in the coordination of protests, helping users to join political causes, creating opportunities for protestors to interact with one another, spreading enthusiasm and facilitating emotional contagion (Bennett & Segerberg, 2011, 2014; Chadwick & Howard, 2010; de-Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012; Gerbaudo, 2012, 2016; Halupka, 2014, 2016; Reedy & Wells, 2010). However many of these previous works (a) do not focus upon mobile social networking applications, and (b) are located within either legacy democracies or authoritarian regimes.

In order to bridge this research gap, this study focuses upon the use of mobile social networking applications to support digital activism within the nascent democracy of Nigeria, a country that has only recently returned from military dictatorship. Specifically, this study investigates the impact of mobile internet on the rise of digital activism among Nigerian university students from two universities in Nigeria during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest against the removal of petroleum subsidies by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The movement lasted for one month and took place in all the major cities in Nigeria.

A mixed-methods approach was adopted featuring two principal methods: (a) a cross-sectional quantitative survey of media platforms used by protestors (n=440); and (b) semi-structured qualitative interviews on protestors' experiences before, during and after Occupy Nigeria (n=19). Findings suggest that mobile social networking applications and social media were the platforms most used by protestors to learn, plan, coordinate and mobilize for the protest as well as to document their participation. Facebook was the most used media platform for protest purposes, while Eskiimi was of higher importance when it came to joining the protest on the first day. Controlling for other factors, mobile social networking applications and social media use increased the odds that a student attended the first day of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.

**Keywords:** mobile social networking, social media, Occupy Nigeria, connective action, collective action, political participation.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

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**EFA** – Exploratory Factors Analysis

**IPPA** – Intention to Participate in Political Affairs

**MANOVA** – Multivariate Analysis of Variance

**PCL** – Perceived Corruption Level

**PCPP** – Perceived Competitiveness of Political Parties

**RSUST** – Rivers State University of Science and Technology

**SD** – Standard Deviation

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

---

The plethora of internet technologies available to the people has consistently been linked to the recent increase in the organization of collective action around the world such as the Occupy Movements, the 2011 Arab Spring and the 15M in Spain, and. Generally, digital activism literature has proposed several ways social media has an impact on collective actions such as providing mobilizing information and news not available in other media, assisting in the coordination of protests, helping users to join political causes, creating opportunities to debate or chat with other people, spreading enthusiasm and facilitating emotional contagion (Bennett, Breunig, & Givens, 2008; Bennett & Segerberg, 2011, 2014; Chadwick & Howard, 2010; de-Zúñiga *et al.*, 2012; Gerbaudo, 2012, 2016; Halupka, 2014, 2016; Reedy & Wells, 2010). However, many of these studies are exclusively concentrated on one platform and hardly incorporate mobile social networking applications in their study. In addition, most data concerned with social media and participating in digital activism have been collected in either established (legacy) democracies or authoritarian regimes and by so doing abandoning the unique case of nascent democracies – that is, countries that became democracies between the 1970s and 1990s including those that recently returned to democracy from military dictatorship such as Nigeria. This apparent gap in the literature is what this study sets out to bridge, particularly as it concerns the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. The 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest was a protest against the removal of petroleum subsidies by the Nigerian Government. It lasted about one month and took place in all the major cities in Nigeria. The protest stopped when the government partially reinstated the subsidy after a dialogue with the leadership of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC).

In order to understand the political environment in Nigeria, a brief history of political activism will suffice. Nigeria is a West African country of about 180 million people (Nwankwo, 2008). Its history can be traced to pre-historic settlers living in the area as early as 11000 BC. Many ancient African civilizations settled in the region that is today Nigeria, such as the Benin Empire, the Kingdom of Nri, the Oyo Empire and the Hausa States (Nwankwo, 2006). Nigeria became a colony of Britain in 1800 and achieved self-government in 1960. Until independence in 1960, Nigeria used the mass media for political activism. This mass-mediated political activism culture was introduced during the nationalists struggle for self-

rule from the colonial masters. Writers such as Ernest Ikoli and Nnamdi Azikiwe used the mass media (newspaper) to engage in political activism (Amadi, 2003, 2006). But the seizure of political power by the military in post-colonial Nigeria stifled freedom of expression and press freedom suffered (Amadi, 2006; Ogbondah, 1991, 1994, 2000). Military dictatorship caused Nigerians to avoid visibly participating in political discourse and as a result, cynicism and pessimism flourished (Amadi, 2003, 2006; Ogbondah, 1994) and continued until 2012, when Nigerians protested against the removal of subsidy from petroleum products.

The 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests occurred when social media platforms and mobile social networking applications were becoming popular in Nigeria. Moreover, digital activism studies from other countries with similar history like Nigeria, such as Tunisia, Egypt, Indonesia and Thailand were consistently finding that social media platforms had an impact on the organisation of social movements. For example, Tufekci and Wilson's (2012) work on how social media platforms helped protesters during the Egyptian revolution. They argued that social media use 'greatly increased the odds that a respondent attended protests on the first day' (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012, p. 363).

There was high political apathy in Nigeria pre-Occupy Nigeria protest. The researcher was interested in knowing how the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest influenced the political psyche of Nigerian students. For example, did political apathy continue after the protests or did the protest change Nigerian students' attitude to political participation and engagement? Alternatively, was the protest a one-off event that did not have any impact on the political psyche of the people? Looking at the students' current perceptions of change in democratic governance in Nigeria enabled the researcher to evaluate the state of the students' political engagement psyche, something that will be useful in assessing if the protests changed anything at all. This project attempted to not only evaluate the impact of digital media technologies on the organisation of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest, but also to ascertain if the protests had impacted on how the students perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria. Below are the aim and objectives of this study.

### **1.1. Aim and objectives of the research**

The aim of the research was to empirically evaluate the impact (if any) of the mobile internet on the rise of digital activism among university students in Nigeria and determine whether this rise had an impact on the students' perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria.

#### **Objectives:**

In order to achieve this aim, the following objectives were established:

1. To examine the extent to which mobile internet use has had an impact on how protesters learned about, planned and documented their participation during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.
2. To evaluate Nigerian university students' mobile internet use and perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria.

In order for these objectives to be achieved, it was essential that the project be guided by research questions. The questions were to provide both direction and assurance in the research that the researcher adhered to the relevant theoretical, methodological and analytical focus areas than diverge into discussion into other areas of research not of direct relevance to the project.

### **1.2. Research questions**

The research questions were as follows:

1. To what extent did mobile internet use:
  - a. Impact how protesters participated in the protest
  - b. Influence how protesters learned about the protest?
  - c. Influence how protesters planned their participation in the protest?
  - d. Impact how protesters documented their participation in the protest?
2. What was the interplay between protesters' media use, protest experience, and participation on the first day of the protests?
3. How does the protesters' media use help explain the interplay between knowledge, planning and documentation of protest participation?
4. To what extent do students' protest participation status, internet use type and political efficacy predict their intention to participate in political affairs?

5. Are there differences between students who did or did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest with regards to how they perceive changes in democratic governance in Nigeria?

### **1.3. Research design**

The project follows a mixed-methods research design and the underpinning epistemological perspective was positivist. The first phase used respondents' responses to survey questions to undertake a quantitative analysis in order to evaluate how much the media was used for protest purposes and whether there was any perceived change in democratic governance because of the protest. The second phase used real narratives from the protestors taken from semi-structured interviews to explore how the media was used and their personal experiences during the protest. While the quantitative phase preceded the qualitative phase, it was important to the project to see a 'happy marriage' of the two paradigms so that a growth of awareness and understanding was possible, rather than undertaking a project that appeared as two separate projects that were contained within the one (Bryman, 2016; Clark & Cresswell, 2011).

### **1.4. Significance and contribution of the study**

As with any research in the academic domain, the key goal was to be able to contribute to understanding and knowledge in the research field. Firstly, – by considering current dominant digital activism theories – the project adds to the understanding of communication networks and organization and participation of social movements. Secondly, special attention was given to the Nigerian university student context within which the study was conducted with a view to producing a foundational mixed-methods study that enquired into the birth of student digital activism in Nigeria, and how the rise of student digital activism influenced their perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria.

This project is also significant as it will help bridge the gap in digital activism literature by empirically investigating the role that social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, as well as mobile social networking applications such as WhatsApp, Eskimi, 2go and Badoo played during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. This evaluation will widen the number of media platforms researched in the digital activism literature in Nigeria as well as add the Nigerian context and that of nascent democracies to the body of knowledge in this area globally. Such addition will deepen the contextual understanding and arguments in the literature and provide insights into possible areas for further studies.



Finally, the project is significant in that it is the first among recent studies that investigates the impact of protest participation in perceived change in democratic governance. This part of the project brings a new understanding of political efficacy and intention to participate in political affairs among Nigeria students into the Nigerian political communication literature and generally extends knowledge in this regard in global political communication literature.

### **1.5. Organisation of the thesis**

This thesis begins with a detailed historical and socio-political analysis of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests (see Table 1.1 below). In this Chapter, an overview of the literature concerning the context of the study is provided. Chapter Three presents arguments relating to the impact of the internet and its technologies on political participation and engagement. The chapter begins by reviewing early debates for and against the internet and democracy; then, drawing on the arguments above, the chapter reviews online political participation by looking at studies in support of and against online political participation and engagement. Secondly, there is a review of the online political participation debate in Africa. The chapter then reviews the debates on definitions of political participation and closes with a review of the debate about the public sphere potential of the internet.

In Chapter Four the arguments relating to the relationship between internet technologies and social movements are addressed by reviewing results of empirical studies on social media and social movements. This is followed by a review of mobile applications and social movements. The chapter closes with a discussion of the logic of connective and collective actions and through this review it was revealed that such actions (collective and connective) are better described as symbiotic rather than dualisms.

Chapter Five looks specifically at previous research on digital activism in Nigeria and within the broader domain of mainstream digital activism and communication, with particular note made of the weaknesses and gaps. This chapter provides detailed background on the mobile internet alongside a historical perspective to digital activism and political participation in Nigeria, both of which are essential knowledge to understanding the main study. There is then a review of governance and the public sphere in Nigeria. The chapter presents an evaluation of mobile internet and digital activism in Nigeria – particularly as it concerns the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. The chapter then analyses ICT adoption in Nigeria as it relates to mobile phone use and internet adoption.

The research methodology is presented in Chapter Six. The main purpose of this chapter is to explain the rationale behind the research design and to outline the actual research methods and instruments used. A mixed-methods approach was adopted for the project with a leaning towards quantitative methods in terms of relevance and importance to the study, but with qualitative methods playing a crucial role. A clear rationale for the mixed-methods approach is provided at the end of the chapter.

The results of the project are presented in Chapter Seven. Firstly, the results of the quantitative phase are presented, followed by the results of the qualitative phase. The presentation of the quantitative results is guided by research questions one, two, four and five concerning the impact that media platforms played in mobilizing the students to participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests (RQ 1 and 2), and how these have shaped students political engagement (RQs 4 & 5). The results of each stage of the process are presented, and statistical models set out. The qualitative results are based on Research Question Three, which looked at the experience of the students during the protests. Some selections of the comments made by the participants are presented with interpretive analysis as well as the presentation of the combined results of both the quantitative and qualitative phases.

A discussion of the results and findings is provided in Chapter Eight. There is further interpretive analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data and the research questions are addressed specifically, with reference to the literature both in digital activism as well as in communication and media studies. Chapter Nine concludes the thesis by revisiting the overall aims of the research and considering exactly what was achieved.

The overall hope for the thesis is to fit within the disciplines of both digital activism and communication and media studies.

**Table 1.1. Project Layout**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Chapter Name</b>	<b>Chapter Objective</b>
<b>2</b>	History and social-political analysis of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest.	Provided a detailed historical and socio-political analysis of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. Looking at the who, what, when, why and how of the Occupy Nigeria protest.
<b>3</b>	The internet and political participation	Reviewed the impact of internet and its technologies to political participation and engagement
<b>4</b>	Internet technologies and social movements	Reviewed social media and social movements
<b>5</b>	Mobile internet and digital activism in Nigeria	Provided background on mobile internet in Nigeria as an essential precursor to the main study
<b>6</b>	Methodology	Outlined the research design and provided justification for the chosen research design
<b>7</b>	Results	Presented the results of the project
<b>8</b>	Discussion	Interprets the results of the project
<b>9</b>	Conclusion	Reiterates the main objectives of the research and what the research achieved

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE HISTORY AND SOCIO-POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE 2012 OCCUPY NIGERIA PROTESTS

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#### **2.1. The 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest**

The Occupy Movements were socio-economic and political protests around the world that took place from 2008 to 2012 as an outcome of the world financial crisis (Castells, 2012). The movements addressed common problems such as economic fairness, climate change and political liberation. Examples of such protests include: ‘Put People First’ protests in the United Kingdom, ‘the Occupy Wall Street Movement’ in the United States of America, ‘the Arab Spring’ and the ‘Indignados’ movement in Spain. It has been argued that these Occupy movements were coordinated using internet technologies such as social media (see Chapter Four for a review). The ‘Occupy Nigeria’ protests were reportedly named after the Occupy Wall Street protest (Campbell, 2012), and like the Arab Spring, organization of the protest was facilitated by social media platforms (Bociurkiw, 2012; Egbunike & Olorunnisola, 2015; Fripp, 2012; Global Press Institute, 2012; Itua, 2012; Usman, 2012; Vlam, 2012). This chapter provides the contextual political and historical background to the protests. Also included is a preliminary analysis of how social media users in Nigeria framed the protest. A deeper analysis of the role of social media platforms in the protest will be discussed in later chapters.

Occupy Nigeria was a socio-political protest that started on Monday, 2 January, 2012 in response to the removal of fuel subsidy by the Federal Government of Nigeria led by President Goodluck Jonathan on Sunday 1 January, 2012. The protest took place in all of the thirty-six states of Nigeria as well as the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Nigerians in the United States of America also took part, protesting at the World Bank complex in Washington and those in the United Kingdom protested at the High Commission of Nigeria in London. Nigerians in Belgium protested at the Nigeria embassy in Brussels, and there was a protest by Nigerians in South Africa.

On January 1, 2012, the Federal Government of Nigeria announced the upward movement of the pump price of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) from N65 (AUD 0.43) to N141 (AUD 0.94) (above 100% increment) following the removal of an oil subsidy. Three months before the announcement, Nigerians began speculating about the removal of the oil subsidy. The

Nigerian government, anticipating the upheaval it might bring, began consultations and dialogue with civil groups – an arena in which the ‘emergence of normative claims from society regarding its own identity and the role of public institutions in shaping that identity are formulated’ (Woods, 1992, p. 96). However, Nigerians were surprised when the President made the announcement of removal subsidy from petroleum products. The action translated into not only an above 100% increase in petrol price, but also an increase in the price of other basic goods and services in Nigeria such as transport, food, rents and electricity (CNN, 2012; Enough is Enough Coalition, 2012; Ogala & Ben, 2013).

As a result of the hardship, Nigerians were angry with the government for removing the oil subsidy. Because of the years of neglect of Nigeria’s refineries, the government imports refined petroleum products such as: diesel, petrol, and kerosene. In order to keep the prices affordable, the government pays a subsidy equivalent to the variance between the cost of importation and the locally regulated market (Hari, 2014; Ogala & Ben, 2013; Social Action, 2012). This was in line with the provisions of the 2012-2015 Medium-Term Fiscal Framework and the 2012 fiscal strategy paper submitted to the National Assembly by President Jonathan. Included in these documents was a proposal for full deregulation of the oil industry beginning from the 2012 fiscal year.



**Figure 2. 1. Crowd protesting a rise in fuel prices in Lagos, Nigeria.**  
**Source: Nairaland.com**

However, the Occupy Nigeria protest went beyond petrol price and resulted in a full-scale probe of governance processes with incisive questions asked about the workings of the

subsidy system (Bako, 2012; Cleen Foundation, 2012; Hari, 2014). Nigerians vented their frustrations at the insensitivity of their leaders, particularly voicing their concerns about corruption, and social inequalities through social media and street protests (Bako, 2012; Ogala & Ben, 2013).

With the majority of Nigerians living on less than USD2 per day, many Nigerians see cheap petrol as the only tangible benefit they receive from the state, thus the widespread disapproval of the subsidy removal (Chiluwa, 2015). Also, the haste to implement the deregulation was perceived as outrageous by Nigerians who felt the government was out of touch with the people, and was protecting the interests of a few individuals. Consequently, an extemporaneous nationwide protest ensued.

It is estimated that over 30 million people took part in the protests in Nigeria, and sixteen protesters were reportedly killed by Nigerian Security Officers during the protest (Adibe, 2012; Bako, 2012; Cleen Foundation, 2012; Jimoh, 2012; C. Onuoha, 2012; H. Shittu, 2012). After two weeks of sustained protest, the government was forced to rescind their decision by reducing the price of petrol, and a committee was established to probe those in charge of the fuel subsidy. Later revelations, following reports by the House of Representative's committee of enquiry set up to investigate the Nigerian oil sector and the fuel subsidy removal policy, subsequently revealed that about USD 6 billion had been defrauded from the fuel subsidy fund between 2010 to 2012. The parliamentary report also uncovered the records of retailers, Nigeria's Oil Management Company and the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) who, in collaboration with fifteen fuel importers, received over USD 300 million without importing any fuel; over 100 oil marketers were also said to have collected the same amount of money on several occasions for doing nothing.

Occupy Nigeria was one of the few successful protest the Nigerian people had carried out in recent times. The previous successful protest was the 'Aba Women' Riot of 1929 – a riot organized by women in the old Eastern Region of Nigeria in 1929 to protest against the imposition of tax in Nigeria by the colonial government (Okafor, 2004). There have been occasional industrial actions in Nigeria since, but nothing like the Occupy Nigeria protests. The change in communication practices and technologies has increased information sources and dissemination channels, and is a development, helping Nigerians to be more informed about features of democracy; it has also provided them with a platform to compare

governance in Nigeria with that in other countries (Hari, 2014; Kombol, 2014; Onwuegbuchi, 2012).

The protest was carried out in different forms, but including anti-government songs, ignition of bonfires on the streets, blockades of highways, converging on parks where leaders and celebrities addressed protesters. An estimate of the cost of the protest is N300bn (Onuba, 2012).

### **2.1.1. The politics of fuel subsidy/removal**

In this project, ‘subsidy’ means money paid by the government to reduce the cost of a service to the consumer or the production cost of goods to keep their prices low (Ogwuonuonu, 2011). While this definition highlights a reduction of prices of goods and services as the underpinning motivation for a subsidy, a subsidy can distort the market and attract larger economic costs than necessary when government requires suppliers to sell at a predetermined price, rather than the price set by the interaction of demand and supply. Nigeria is the largest crude oil producing country in Africa and the 7<sup>th</sup> largest in the world. Statistically, Nigeria produces about 2.5 million barrels of crude oil in a day. The actual process is slightly different (in the country) as the crude oil produced is usually exported for refining, and subsequently imported for local consumption due to the inadequate refining infrastructure and total breakdown of the country’s refineries. With a population of over 180 million, Nigeria consumes an average of 45 million litres of fuel per day (Vanguard, 2016). According to Chiejina (2012), the pricing template of the Petroleum Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPRA) revealed that the landing cost of a litre of fuel in Nigeria in August 2011 was N129.21. The margin for transporters and marketers stood at N15.49, bringing the expected pump price of fuel to N144.70. Using this statistic, the government in 2011 subsidized the pump price with N79.79 per litre with the intention of making fuel available to the citizens at an affordable official price of N65.

Some economists and public affairs commentators have viewed the subsidies as a massively corrupting and profligate system, arguing that the subsidies do not benefit the people; rather, it is petroleum importers who are the true beneficiaries (BBC, 2012; Sanusi, 2012). The government also argued that the increase in the cost of importing fuel had made the subsidy an overload on government expenditure, with the government spending about N1.4 trillion (USD 8 billion) in 2011 on fuel subsidy alone. This and other factors such as insufficient funds to meet infrastructural needs in the country, resulted in the decision to withdraw the fuel

subsidy (Alabi, 2012). The government had also argued that deregulation of the oil sector was necessary because the fuel subsidy merely enriched a few corrupt government officials. Over the years, Nigeria had enjoyed cheap fuel prices since the introduction of the subsidy policy in 1982 (Chiluwa, 2015). However, following the withdrawal, the pump price of fuel rose from the initial N65 to N141 per litre (less than USD 1). This resulted in a drastic increase in transportation fares, goods and services in the market became more expensive, and the general cost of living became much higher for most Nigerians. It has been estimated that Nigeria has earned about USD500 billion from oil exports since production began in 1958 and earns about USD10 billion annually (Chiluwa, 2011). Recent studies from the World Bank and the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) have estimated that over N 60 trillion (USD400 billion) may have been stolen by corrupt officials since 1960. According to the Economic Intelligence Unit report, the Nigerian GDP nearly doubled from N25.5 trillion (USD170.7 billion) in 2005 to N43.9 trillion (USD292.6 billion) in 2007. The GDP per capita had also moved from N103, 800 (USD 692) per person in 2006 to N263, 100 (USD1, 754) per person in 2007. Currently, Nigeria is the largest economy in Africa with GDP growth totalling N80.3 trillion (USD509.9 billion) for 2013, higher than South Africa at USD370.3 billion (Chiluwa, 2015).

The growing Nigerian economy, ironically has not had an impact on the living standards of most of its citizens (Chiluwa, 2011). The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and public affairs commentators argued that the estimated N1.3 trillion the government claimed it would save from removal of the subsidy might have been embezzled by politicians and not used for development purposes. They recommended that politicians and public office holders should rather cut down on their high living standards. For example, it was reported that in 2010, the average senator in Nigeria earned much more than a senator in the United States of America or the President of the United States of America with take home income of about N255 million (USD1.7 million) per annum; this is ten times more than the salary of a US senator (Sagay, 2010). A 2015 analysis of the annual emolument of Nigerian Senators by the *Premium Times* using data from the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) revealed that, on average, a senator in Nigeria takes home about N2 billion (USD 13 million) (Olufemi & Akinwuma, 2015). It has also been said, some federal ministers are paid in US dollars rather than the Nigerian local currency, a procedure which is contrary to the Nigerian constitution (Akande, 2011). In view of this situation, civil rights groups insisted that the rise in the cost of fuel production and importation should not be borne by the masses



who were already facing hardship from the perceived greed of their leaders and led to the nationwide protest called 'Occupy Nigeria'.

### **2.1.2. The Protest Participants**

After President Jonathan announced his reform policy that ended the twenty year old subsidy that kept Nigeria's petrol prices the lowest on the continent, the mood in the country changed and Nigerians criticized the government's action as being inhuman and callous. By Tuesday 3rd January 2012, protesters in Lagos were blocking access to petrol stations and cordoning off stretches of motorways by building burning barricades. On the 4<sup>th</sup>, Protesters in Kano shut-down petrol stations and threatened to burn down a newspaper they believed was supporting the removal of the subsidy (Aljazeera, 2012; Zuckerman, 2012). This escalated further when the trade unions joined the protest on 9<sup>th</sup> January.

The 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest participation cuts across ethnicities, religions, occupations, and party lines. There were doctors, students, lawyers, human rights activists, civil society groups, traders and clergymen included. One of the clergymen, an Abuja based Pastor Akindeji Falake was reportedly said to have challenged men of the Nigerian police to shoot him if they wished. According to CNN's iReport video from a citizen Journalist in Abuja, Falake could be heard in the video saying, 'shoot me let me die, I am ready to die for Nigeria' (Duthiers & Karimi, 2012). The protest was not just unique in terms of the sheer number of protesters but also from the overwhelming demographic reach.

**Table 2.1. Timeline of the protest**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event (s)</b>
January 1	Removal of fuel subsidy was announced by the Federal Government of Nigeria.
January 2	‘Nationwide Anti-Fuel Subsidy Removal: Strategies and Protests’ group was created in Facebook.
January 3	Street Protest began in Lagos, Lagos State and Illorin, Kwara State.
January 4	Street protest began in Kano.
January 5	The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress (TUC) issued ultimatum to the Federal Government.
January 6	Street protests in Abuja, Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Port Harcourt, Enugu, Owerri and London.
January 9	NLC and TUC commenced industrial action and joined street protests as street protest spread to all major cities in Nigeria.
	Protest in Washington DC, Brussels, and South Africa.
January 13	FG began talks with Labour Leaders.
January 16	President Jonathan re-introduced fuel subsidy and reduced the price of petrol to N87 per litre.
	NLC/TUC suspends strike and ended their protests
January 28	The last day of protest. The civil society groups and other citizens who felt betrayed by the trade unions continued their protest until this day.

**2.1.3. Casualties during the protest**

The 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest turned violent in many parts of the country: in all, about sixteen protesters were killed and hundreds of others injured. For example, Muyideen Mustafa was killed at the Post Office junction in Ilorin, Kwara State on the first day of the

street protests. His death was the first among other deaths recorded across the states during the subsidy protests. The Nigerian Labour Congress, Trade Union Congress, Civil Society organizations and the National Association of Nigerian Students renamed the junction ‘Muyideen Mustafa Freedom Square’ in memory of the deceased (Adeniji, 2016). It was reported that a stray bullet fired by an unidentified policeman killed Mustafa during the peaceful demonstration (Aljazeera, 2012).

Abiodun Ademola, a fashion designer, was reportedly shot by Mr Segun Fabunmi, a former Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Pen Cinema Police Station, Agege, Lagos, during the protest in Ogba, Lagos State. Fabunmi was said to have shot Ademola in his crotch in the presence of other protesters who had gathered at Yaya Abatan Junction, (Aljazeera, 2012; Ifejika, 2012; Ohuocha, 2012; Parker, 2012). Fabunmi was later arraigned on seven counts of murder, attempted murder and causing grievous bodily harm by the Lagos State Directorate of Public Prosecution in December, 2015, Justice Olabisi Akinlade of the Lagos State High Court found Fabunmi guilty and sentenced him to ten years in prison. He was also found guilty of shooting three other persons during the protest, – Alimi Abubakar, Egbujor Samuel and Chizorba Odoh, and causing them severe bodily harm. For that, he was sentenced to an additional five years in prison: the sentences were to run concurrently (Adeniji, 2016).

Hammed Okanlomo was killed after a confrontation with men of the Nigerian Police Force trying to disperse protesters who blocked the Ibafo end of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. The same was the fate of Olurin Olateju, a 27 year-old spare parts seller who was reportedly killed by a policeman who fired shots in the air to disperse protesters who were burning tyres at the Target/Ogbere Olunloyo area of Ibadan, Oyo State. Olateju, was taken to Atipe compound, Oke-Afa area where he later died (Adeniji, 2016; Aljazeera, 2012). There were reports of the killing of protesters in Kano, three hundred injured and nineteen protesters arrested (Aljazeera, 2012), and other parts of Northern Nigeria.

However, the death of Mojeed Rahimi, an Osogbo, Osun State-based hip-hop musician was different. Mojeed died of machete cuts reportedly inflicted on him by Lawrence Dauda during the protest at the Jaleyemi area of Osogbo. Trouble started, according to reports, when Mojeed and some other protesters cordoned-off a road that Dauda attempted to drive on. Dauda was challenged and allegedly took a machete from the boot of his car and dealt several blows to Mojeed before hurried into his car and speeding off. Mojeed died shortly afterwards (Adeniji, 2016).

## **2.2. Protesters vs media organizations in Nigeria**

The 2012 Occupy Nigeria protesters were not only angry with the government for eliminating the fuel subsidy, but also angry at the inability of the news media to cover the protests. According to news reports from CNN and Aljazeera, the protesters took their protests to local media outlets, threatening to burn them down if they refused to cover the protests; some protesters even tried to burn the office of the *Daily Trust*. The newspaper's Kano Bureau reported a news story that supported the removal of the fuel subsidy (Aljazeera, 2012; Clottey, 2012; CNN, 2012; Ifejika, 2012; Parker, 2012).

Outside the *Daily Trust* newspaper's threat, the protesters were angry that broadcast stations such as the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), a government owned Television channel and the biggest independent television station, the African Independent Television (AIT) refused to report the protests. In the case of NTA, the station was accused of 'telling the world that Lagos had not witnessed any protests' and noted that this amounted to biased reporting (Punch, 2012).

The protesters were frustrated when they realized that AIT and NTA were silent on the protests. *The Punch* Newspaper reported that the protesters became 'more furious' when it was noticed that NTA was showing a swimming lesson when the country was on 'fire' as a result of the protests. Protesters raised the alarm on social media a move which culminated in protesters storming the stations and forcing the journalists into broadcasting the protests live (Keita, 2012; Punch, 2012).

Before they forced their way into the NTA's premises, some of the protesters started tweeting '#OccupyNTA'. Protesters had been tweeting from '#Occupynigeria': this was the first time they tweeted '#OccupyNTA'. For example, a tweet by a Twitter user reads, 'NTA fools showing us how to swim when there better things to know'. Another Facebook user criticized President Jonathan for trying to drown the voice of the people with his massive media campaign to promote subsidy removal. He wrote on a Facebook post that the 'massive media campaign to promote subsidy removal is misleading, and further waste of money'. Some other protesters online were more aggressive in urging the people to pressure the media outlets to broadcast the protests. One example of such is a protester who encouraged protesters in his January 5 tweet to take action against the media stations. 'It's time we #Occupy NTA ...they aint carrying the news...' he tweeted. Another is from a Facebook user who, through his Facebook post called for action against the media station when he posted

that protesters should, '#Occupy NTA till they broadcast #OccupyNaija live to the world' A tweet from another protester called on fellow protesters to 'Occupy NTA anywhere in Nigeria, they must show the protest'. The protesters pushed for their views to be heard and forced the local broadcast channels to start broadcasting the protests as were the international broadcast channels such as BBC, CNN and Aljazeera.

One of the earliest broadcast stations to provide live coverage of the protests was a Lagos-based independent television station, TV Continental (TVC). The station started its coverage on Monday 9 January. As a result, the Nigerian Broadcast Commission (NBC)<sup>1</sup> threatened to sanction the station. NBC had asked TVC to censor its broadcast to 'avoid the deep criticism of President Goodluck Jonathan by protesters' but they had also warned TVC that it would incur 'appropriate sanctions' if the station failed to censor its coverage of the protests (Premium Times, 2012). This attempt to crack-down on media organization is arguably one of the reasons many media organization shied away from broadcasting the protest and serves as a pointer to the fact that the Nigerian press is not as free as it may seem on the surface (Premium Times, 2012; Punch, 2012).

### **2.3. Social media and Occupy Nigeria protest**

The 2012 Occupy Nigeria or what some called the Nigerian 'Harmattan storm' (Onwuegbuchi, 2012) has been credited to social media platforms accessed through smart phones (CNN, 2012; Danny, 2012; Fripp, 2012; Ifejika, 2012; Usman, 2012; Vlam, 2012).

Social media was reported to have been used by Nigerian citizens 'to plan the Occupy Nigeria' protests (CNN, 2012; Duthiers & Karimi, 2012). In a 2012 report, Usman (2012) asserted that for the most part, #Occupy Nigeria started online, with Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms provided an avenue for the people to express their anger. It was also a way of organizing and mobilising people for street protests. Onwuegbuchi (2012) made similar claims in an opinion article he wrote during the protest. 'So as Nigerians woke up on the first day of the protests, the virtual world was already agog with Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, Google+ and so on, aggressively organizing and inspiring a Nigerian "Harmattan Storm", a kind of Arab Spring' (Onwuegbuchi, 2012). Onwuegbuchi was not alone in believing that social media 'fuelled' the protests: major news media organizations reported how social media was helping the protesters to organise the protests and linking the

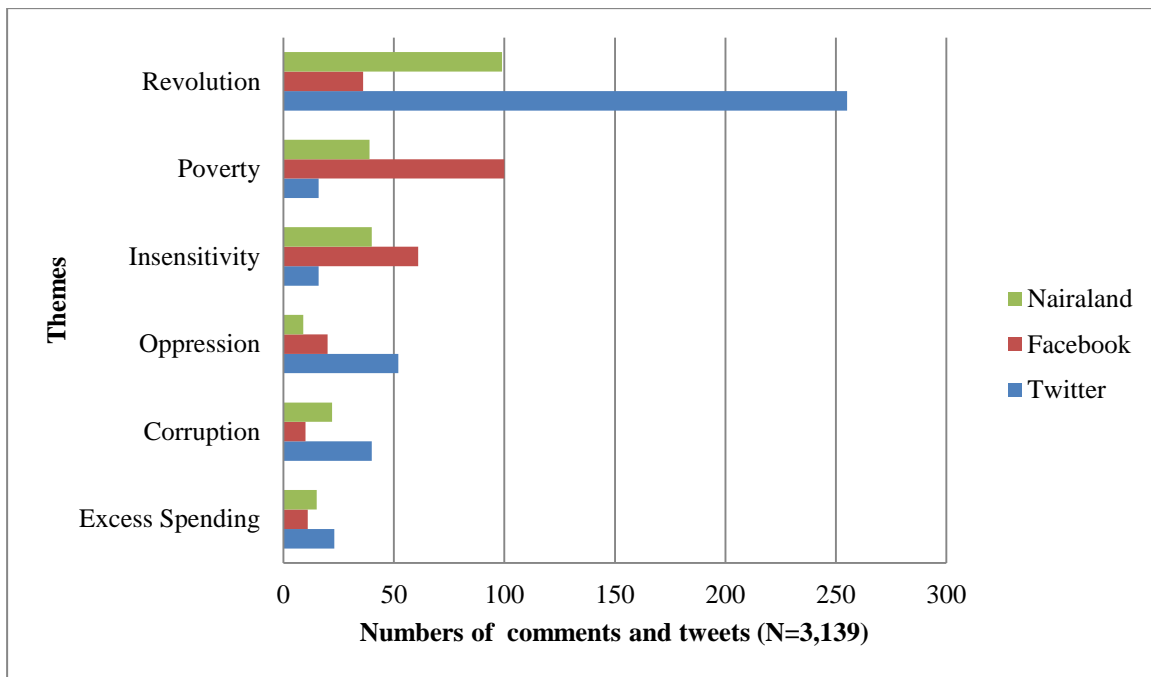
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<sup>1</sup> NBC is a parastatal of the Federal Government of Nigeria established by section 1 of the National Broadcasting Commission Act, Cap. NII, Laws of the Federation, 2004 and vested with the responsibilities of, amongst other things, regulating and controlling the broadcasting industry in Nigeria. See: <http://www.nbc.gov.ng/home>

protests to both the Arab Spring and the Global Occupy movement. For example, in writing in the *Huffington Post*, Bociurkiw (2012) argued that although there were few parallels between the ‘Arab Spring’ protests and what transpired in Nigeria, the ‘use of social media to share feelings of outrage and to mobilize the people’ was similar.

In order to have an understanding of how protesters defined the Occupy Nigeria protest, framed the cause of the protest in social media and framed the solution to ending the protest, an analysis of social media posts of the #Occupy Nigeria protest (January 2 and January 31) was undertaken by this researcher. The researcher analysed Facebook Group: “Nationwide Anti-Fuel Subsidy Removal: Strategies and protests”, Twitter feeds of the Occupy Nigeria protests – the tweets were obtained from #Occupy Nigeria and # Fuel subsidy. and finally, an analysis of Nairaland, an online discussion forum in Nigeria. The tweets, Facebook posts and comments and Nairaland posts and comments were scraped from the web using Netlytic. This is a cloud-based text and social networks analyser that can automatically summarise large volumes of text and discover social networks from conversation on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blogs, Online forums and chats (Netlytic, 2016).

The total number of text analysed were: Nairaland discussion threads (224), Tweets (402) and Facebook comments (236). This qualitative analysis of the content was revealing as revolution was the dominant frame in the social media platforms (see Figure 2.2). Tweets ranked first with 63%, followed by comments in Nairaland (44%) and Facebook (15%) posts on defining the occupy Nigeria protests as a revolution. For example, a Facebook user in one of the Facebook protest groups announced the protest venue, date and time in his Facebook post. He said ‘comrades, wake up early tomorrow, Friday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, and march down to Olaiya Roundabout in Osogbo by 8am. It’s time to make our voices heard; it’s time to make our will hold!’ Also, a Nairaland commentator, cautioned protesters to desist from unruly behaviour. He admonished protesters to stay away from trouble: ‘I urge you to go out and demonstrate. Please note, these are peaceful demonstrations, not riots’. The protesters were actively commenting and passing on information that would not only help in organising the protests but also keep protesters safe.



**Figure 2.2. Social media users' definition of Occupy Nigeria**

Benford and Snow (2000) argue that the definition of a social movement is necessary for its validation and legitimacy, given that a positive framing spurs mobilization. This argument is in line with the preliminary findings. This is because the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protesters defined the protest on social media mainly as a revolution. The protesters definition of the protest as a revolution is not surprising. Between the years 2010 to 2012 the term 'revolution' seemed to be the buzzword during the Arab Spring and other Occupy Movements. This arguably may have helped in validating the protest and thereby mobilizing more Nigerians to participate in the street actions.

To examine how the protesters framed the cause of the protest and their motivations, the researcher analysed text from three social media platforms: Facebook (623 comments), Nairaland (536 discussion threads) and Twitter (618 tweets). A prominent pattern developed from the texts evaluated and the researcher grouped them into the below themes: sympathy, distrust, violence, conspiracy, validating frames and invalidating frames and others such accountability. From the analysis, Facebook (301, 49.1%) and Nairaland (217, 40.4%) users focussed mainly on validating the protest (see Figure 2.3). They primarily used the legitimizing and validating frame to solicit support for the protest and to motivate those who were undecided about the participating. However, the top frame in Twitter was the distrust frame (292, 47.1%) of the tweets showing a trust deficit between the users and the leaders.

The above order is reversed when looking at the frames with the second highest frequency. The distrust frames were the second most prominent frame on both Facebook (99, 15.9%) and Nairaland (112, 21%) while on Twitter (105, 17%), it was the validating frames that were prominent. An example of a validating frame can be seen in the Nairaland post of a Nairaland commentator:

Ibadan, ours was a success story dis morning. We took off as planned at Mokola roundabout by Tantalizers and marched slowly and peacefully. We were joined by students from D Polytechnic UI. We all had the honour of a senior police officer and her team escorting us to see the Governor at the Govt house.

Another Facebook user incorporated historical figures into his post to arouse the interest of the undecided. He subtly played into their ego by making a post that invoked the heroism of the protest participants. Specifically, he posted that:

‘If you protest courageously, and yet with dignity and christian love, when the history books are written in future generations, the historians will have to pause and say, “There lived a great people - a black people who injected new meaning and dignity into the veins of civilization – Martin Luther King Jr., address to Holt Street Baptist Church, December, 1955”’

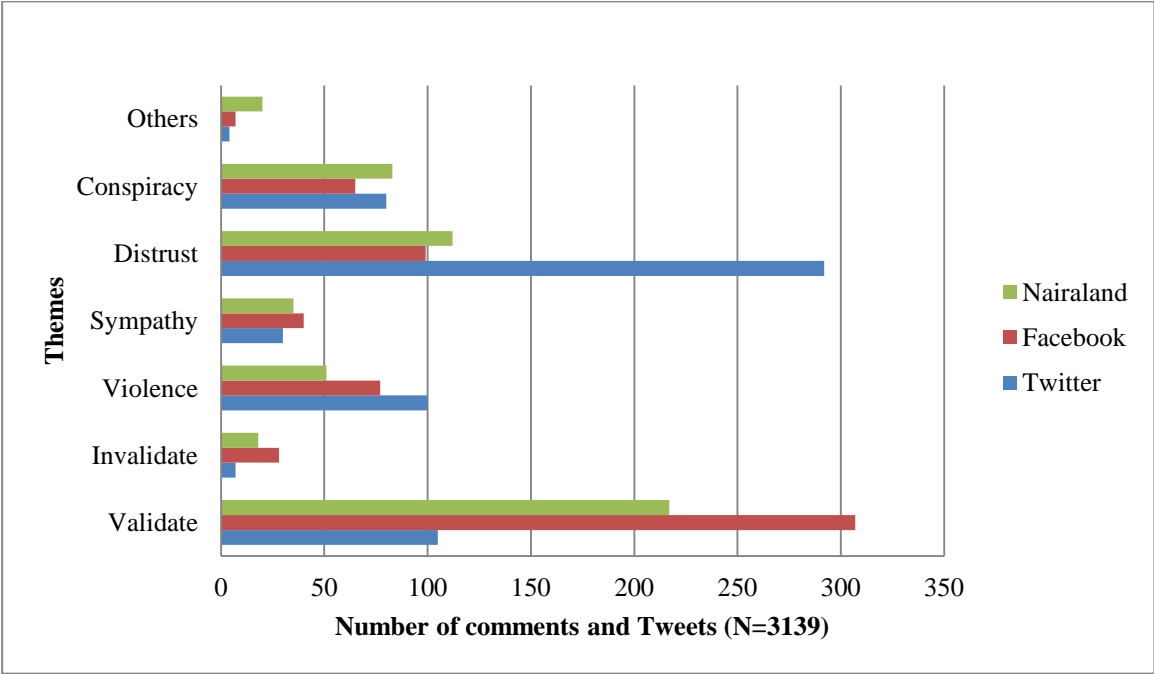


Figure 2.3. Social media users’ framing of the cause of the protest

While the validating frame was popular, some users also invalidated the protest by trying to delegitimize the process, the objectives and participants, although invalidating frames were



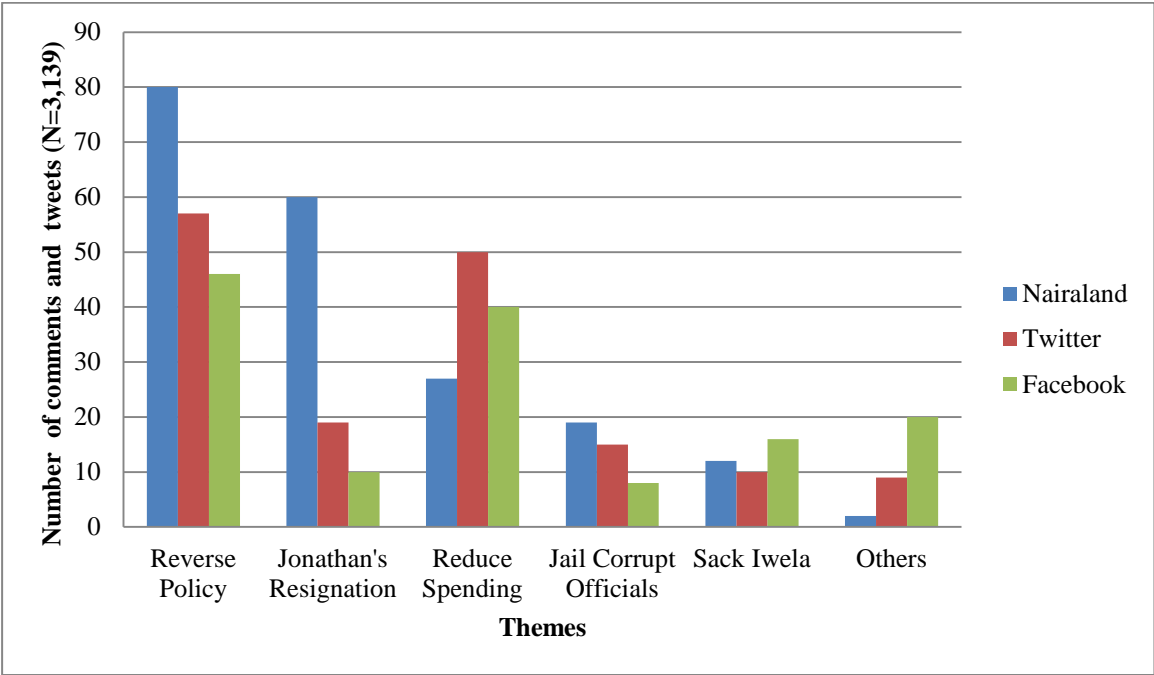
less prominent: Facebook (28, 4.5%), Nairaland (18, 3.4%) and Twitter (7, 1.1%). For example, a Twitter user blamed the major ethnic groups for their intolerance of the minority ethnic groups, ‘why did these fools not riot during the third term bid of Obasanjo? They are angry because a man from a minority ethnic group is the president. Don’t mind them GEJ, they can go and hug transformer’. As in the above Twitter user’s tweet, the ethnic sentiment and name calling was prominent in the invalidating frames. For example, another Nairalander blamed the Yorubas for the protest: ‘...rubbish, just keep instigating dumb folks; I know your type, typical Yoruba blood, always bolting away at the slightest sound of violence, just the same way your folks did during the Lekki protest’. There were other invalidating frames that did not have ethnic coloration. A Nairalander, asked rhetorically, ‘and who are supposed to go out? ...I am sorry to burst your bubble but there are many reasons why no protest would work ...’ For his part, a Twitter user reminded his followers about other revolutions that their impact still bites and so he believed that the protest was needless: ‘we are wise, dialogue is the way to go...Libya is yet to know peace same with Egypt’.

The conspiracy and violence frames were present in all platforms, though they are not prominent as were the validating and distrust frames. A Facebook commentator stated: ‘In the next few days, our patients will be tested. This government and her sympathizers will begin to plant moles in our midst to create chaos and then kill the protesters. The idea is to discredit the movement’. This protester raised the issue of a conspiracy about how the government planned to shut down the protest. However, other participants raised the issue of violence and laid it at the feet of protesters. A Nairaland commentator questioned: ‘what is the rationale for burning tires? Thought the idea was to use placards? I just pray that this protest remains peaceful’. This Nairalander’s fears were confirmed by another Facebook user who commented that ‘they are rioting in Ilorin right now, my dad was attacked while driving and they snatched his handset. F\*\*kers almost broke his windscreen’

To understand what the protesters were asking the government to do in order to stall protest actions, the researcher analysed texts from social media platforms. The total numbers of text analyzed were: Nairaland discussion threads (200), Tweets (160) and Facebook comments (140). Themes emerged in the texts that can be grouped into the following: that the President should resign, reverse the policy – that is, keep the subsidy and revert to the old price (N65), sack the Finance Minister, jail corrupt officials, cut government overhead costs (cut cost) building more refineries in Nigeria.

Among the themes, ‘reverse the policy’ (see Figure 2.4) was the primary online solution recommended as the means of ending the Occupy Nigeria protest: Nairaland (80, 40%), Twitter (57, 35.6%) and Facebook (46, 32.8%). Comments and tweets from online protesters on social media platforms during the protest urged the government to reverse the subsidy removal policy<sup>2</sup>. ‘Reduce spending’ was the second solution advocated for ending the protest: Twitter (50, 31.2%) and Facebook (40, 28.6%) while in Nairaland (60, 30%), the second solution advocated was for President Jonathan to resign.

In order to unpack Figure 2.2 a little more, some sample comments and tweets from the protesters add valuable insights. For example, A Twitter user tweeted, ‘We shall call off strike only when price is returned to former price #occupyNigeria’. A Facebook user commented that the ‘Occupy Nigeria’ Facebook page reads, ‘the convener of the Save Nigeria Group (SNG), Pastor Tunde Bakare, Human Rights Lawyer, Mr Femi Falana; and Founder of O’odua Peoples’s Congress (OPC), Dr Fredrick Fasheun, along with other artists yesterday in Lagos, asked President Goodluck Jonathan to resign or revert the pump price of fuel to N65 per litre’.



**Figure 2.4. Social media users recommended solution to end the protest**

<sup>2</sup> The government did reverse the policy by instituting fuel subsidy. However, the price of petrol per litre did not revert to N65. The new price was N87 a significant decrease from the earlier price N140 before the protest <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jan/16/nigeria-restores-fuel-subsidy-protests>

Protesters online were firm in their demands because they were convinced the government had not addressed corruption in the petroleum industry or the irresponsible government spending. In fact, they were disturbed because the government had projected itself as weak in fighting corruption in the petroleum industry, particularly when it blamed ‘the cabal’ for all the ills in the petroleum industry without making any apparent effort or firm pronouncements as to what would happen to ‘the cabals’ for bringing untold hardship to the citizenry of the country.

A comment from a Facebook user on Facebook highlights this argument. Garba explained: ‘we do not need any compromise; it is either N65 or lower. NLC/TUC, don’t cave in’. In a similar vein, Kola Femi said: ‘N65/litre of petrol is no more acceptable!’ For his part, another Facebook user stated: ‘we have to say no to fuel subsidy removal and to corruption. The leaders are ready to once again allow the masses to pay for their corruption and gross mismanagement’. Another Twitter user tweeted: ‘N1.4Tr in subsidy payments is a lie! Our government is wasteful, not serious about fighting corruption! #Occupy Nigeria’. From the comments and tweets above, it is evident that Nigerians, particularly those who used Facebook, Twitter and Nairaland felt betrayed by the government and consequently were urging the trade unions to resist any increase in cost that may, have been passed on to the ordinary people. They were at a loss as to why they were expected to cut costs when government overheads kept increasing. Their only explanation for this was that the government was insincere and only wanted them to pay more in order to increase revenue that would then be available to those in power to ‘waste’. In the psyche of the protesters, this viewpoint erased any consideration of the positive side of removing the subsidy from petroleum products, and it also informed Nigerians’ anger towards anyone, both local and international who supported the government policy. For example, Ethan Zuckerman was attacked in his blog after supporting the removal of the subsidy in his blog post (Zuckerman, 2012).

#### **2.4. Chapter Summary**

This chapter provides a detailed historical and socio-political analysis of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. The 2012 ‘Occupy Nigeria’ protest is a socio-political protest that started on January 2, 2012 in response to the fuel subsidy removal by the Federal Government. The chapter explains that participation in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests cut across the entire spectrum of the Nigerian society. The chapter also provides details of the casualties as well as the mainstream media reporting of the protest.

The chapter concludes with a brief evaluation of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest in the social media. What the participants tweeted or commented was analysed. The results indicated that the protest was defined by the protesters on social media as a revolution while they advocated that the policy to end the fuel subsidy by the regime be abolished in order to stop the protest. This chapter causes the suggestion that the protesters believed that the government was insincere, and only wanted the people to pay more in order to increase revenue that would then be available to government officials to mismanage. This was the basis of their anger and thus, the protest.

This chapter provides the background of the study. It points towards relevant aspects of the digital media and communication literature such as social media and social movements. The chapter also points towards mobile technologies thereby making it imperative that adequate review of the literature in social media and social movement, mobile technologies, and the internet and democracy. The next chapter (Chapter 3) begins this probe into the literature. It considers arguments for and against the impact of the internet on political participation.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE INTERNET AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter reviews arguments relating to the impact of the internet and its technologies on political participation and engagement. The chapter begins by reviewing the concept of the public sphere and, how it has evolved. The chapter then reviews the debate about the online public sphere by focusing on the public sphere potential of the internet. The chapter then progresses to a review of the early debate about the internet and democracy. Drawing from the arguments presented, there is finally a review of online political participation, first, by looking at studies in support of and against online political participation and engagement in general and then the debate around online political participation in Africa. In closing, the chapter reviews the ‘arena’ and ‘process’ definitions of political participation.

#### **3.2. The public sphere**

The idea of ‘the public’ is closely tied to the democratic ideal that calls for citizen participation in public affairs (Papacharissi, 2002). The word public also suggests ideas of commonality, citizenship and non-private things, things that are accessible by all. The influential 1920s social thinker, John Dewey’s conceptualization of communication was firmly community-based and face-to-face; he asked for a communitarian democracy where individuals come together to create and preserve the good life in common, and the public sphere was seen as an area in social and political life where individuals could freely discuss and identify societal problems and, through that discussion, develop public opinion. Habermas (1989) theorized the bourgeois public sphere with the intention of showing the rise and fall of the public sphere - the rise of a critical public and its decay. He felt that the growing complexity of societies over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, along with the growth of the mass media, had altered the public sphere: ‘the public sphere becomes the court before which public prestige is displayed - rather than in which public critical debate is carried on’ (Habermas, 1989, p. 201).

The public sphere concept has received a great deal of attention from researchers. Some scholars disagree with some of Habermas’ views especially in regard to ‘public opinion in the mass media’ (Calhoun, 1992): ‘the difference between the common domain and advocacy domain’ (Dahlgren, 1994), and about the public sphere being in a state of flux rather than at rest (Downey, 2014; Downey & Fenton, 2003). Other scholars have criticized the exclusion of

women and non-propertied people (Fraser, 1992; Papacharissi, 2002), while still others have labelled it 'idealist' (Dean, 2001, p. 244) and 'open yet closed' (Stevenson, 2002, p. 49), and some have suggested the existence of multiple public spheres (Fraser, 1992; Gitlin, 1998).

Habermas has since reviewed his original thesis about the public sphere and has acknowledged, among other things, that there were some other public spheres not covered in his original thesis (Habermas, 1992, 1998). However, he is still critical of the public sphere potential of the internet (Habermas, 1998, 2006, 2014). The concept of the public sphere is a useful concept when studying political participation. There is a noticeable agreement between Habermas and other scholars regarding his original argument about the concept of the public sphere. However, one area that has remained unresolved and is an important aspect of this project is the debate about the public sphere potential of the internet.

### **3.2.1. The public sphere online**

Contributions to the debate on the public sphere potential of the internet are divided. Benkler (2006) explained the importance of a networked public sphere. He noted that the ease of communicating effectively in the public sphere allows individuals to reorient themselves, turning from passive readers and listeners to potential speakers and participants in a conversation. Similarly, Papacharissi (2009) stressed the 'Virtual Sphere 2.0' in which citizens participate and express 'dissent with a public agenda, by expressing political opinion on blogs, viewing or posting content on YouTube, or posting a comment in an online discussion group' (p.244). In pointing out the novelty of this sphere, Castells (2009) posited that the construction of the new public sphere in the network society proceeds by building protocols of communication between different communication processes. Also, the striking similarity of digitally mediated political actions by citizens, particularly young citizens in different parts of the world in recent years, has raised the intriguing possibility that these may be indicators of an emerging transnational public sphere (Bruns & Highfield, 2016; Loader, 2014).

For their part, Bruns and Highfield (2016) recognising Habermas' concept of the public sphere as the building block for the understanding of public communication and deliberation, contend that it has given 'way to a considerably more fragmented and complex system of distinct and diverse, yet interconnected and overlapping publics that represent different themes, topics, and approaches to mediated communication' (Bruns & Highfield, 2016, p. 98). They unpack the traditional public sphere into a series of 'sphericules' (Gitlin, 1998) and

micro-publics – none of which are mutually exclusive but co-exist , intersect and overlap in multiple forms.

However, Habermas (2006, 2014) argues that the publics produced by the internet remain closed off from one another and may not have the potential for critical debate that will lead to a critical public opinion. Similarly, Fuchs (2014b) is not convinced that the internet will achieve its public sphere potential. He explains his doubts in what can be summarized as three antagonisms to the public sphere potential of the internet. He argues that the internet is facing economic, political and civil society antagonisms between users' interest in 'data protection and corporate tax accountability on the one side, and corporations' interest in user data's transparency/commodification and corporate secrecy on the other hand' (p.83). Secondly, he argues against the political level of the internet. There is an antagonism between civil society's interest in holding the powerful accountable and protecting communications from the powerful institutions' access on the one side and on the other side power 'holders' interest in keeping power structures secret and criminalizing the leaking and making public of any data about them' (p.86). Finally, he states that civil society is facing an antagonism between networked protest communication that create political public spheres online and offline, and the particularistic corporate and state control of the internet that 'limits, feudalizes and colonizes these public spheres' (p.89).

As a result of the division in the assessment of the public sphere potential of the internet, two scholars Dahlberg (2004) and Poor (2005) have developed online public sphere conditions using Habermas' theory of democratic communication. These conditions were developed to provide some form of evaluation of the online public sphere. For example, Dahlberg (2004) in evaluating the online public sphere using the Habermas' model derived a set of normative conditions from Habermas' theory of democratic communication. These are autonomy from state and economic power, exchange and critique of criticizable moral-practical validity claims, reflexivity, ideal role taking, sincerity, and discursive inclusion and equality (Dahlberg, 2004; Habermas, 1984, 1987, 1990, 1992, 1996, 2001). Dahlberg compared people's general practices online with these conditions and concluded that the public sphere that is constituted every time people enter into political debate online does not meet these conditions. He however argued that the internet, nonetheless, fosters a public sphere because it facilitates rational critical debate and the formation of public opinion.

Similarly, Poor (2005) presents conditions for an online public sphere, based on Habermas' model. Poor (2005) outlined his criteria for the online public sphere as (1) public spheres are spaces of discourse, often mediated; (2) public spheres often allow for new, previously excluded discussants; (3) issues discussed are often political in nature; (4) ideas are judged by their merit, not by the standing of the speaker. Poor (2005) applied these conditions to an e-community, Slashdot, a news website for techno-enthusiasts. He concluded that an online public sphere was not radically different from a face-to-face public sphere and that Slashdot met the conditions and thus constituted an online public sphere. Papacharissi (2002) explained also the conditions necessary for the internet to be considered as a public sphere: it must facilitate discussion that promotes a democratic exchange of ideas and opinion.

While there are other, accounts of the public sphere online, most of them are based on Habermas' conception (Al-Saggaf, 2006; Lowrey & Anderson, 2005; Ng & Detenber, 2005; Paulussen, 2004). Papacharissi (2004) studied 287 political discussion threads in Usenet newsgroups in order to answer questions related to civil discourse online. She found that messages posted in Usenet were civil, and further suggested that because of the absence of face-to-face communication fostered more heated discussion; the online public sphere might actually promote democratic emancipation through disagreement and anarchy. Cammaerts (2005) examined four online communities to ascertain the usage of the internet among transnational social movements from the standpoints of organization, mediation of participation, and public opinion formation. They found online communities foster public spaces that facilitate online civic engagement.

Al-Saggaf (2006) analysed 272 articles posted to Al Arabiya, the website for the popular TV station Al-Arabiya in Dubai, in an attempt to understand the potential of the online community in the Arab world to foster civic engagement. He found that e-communities helped the people to challenge the views of the TV station and to offer their own versions of the truth. In a study that evaluated political actions on websites on the theme of the United States 2000 presidential election, Foot and Schneider (2002) found that the hyperlinked web not only reshaped the way electoral campaigns are conducted, but also the interactions between the candidates and citizens. Similarly, Uwalaka (2015b) postulated that Nairaland – an online platform that gives Nigerians space to debate on many issues that affect them, provides opportunities for greater thought and comprehensive reflection on matters that concern Nairalanders than is possible in the traditional mainstream media. In sum, online



public spheres are capable of promoting democratic values and helping create platforms that can foster rational discourse.

The online public sphere provides a platform for engaging in political discussions that may 'spill' to the mainstream public sphere. An online public sphere can become more potent in bringing political change when it spills debates to the physical world as some studies have demonstrated (Ibrahim, 2013; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Dunn, 2011). The result of these studies are similar to the debates on arena and process definition of politics (see Section 3.5 below) and the logic of collective and connective actions (see Section 4.5 below). These studies show that the internet can function as a public sphere because it offers the people its platforms to engage in political debates that may lead to the formation of critical public opinion. This, however, does not mean that the internet will supplant the mainstream public sphere of journalism; rather, it is most useful if they are considered as dualities. Bebawi and Bossio (2014) made this point when they noted that institutional journalists during the Arab Spring used social media updates in their reports as much as social media users used institutional media reports in their updates. It is appealing to see the mainstream public sphere of journalism and the online public sphere as a dualism, but it may be more accurate to consider their relationship symbiotic.

### **3.3. The internet and democracy**

The concept of the internet and political participation has changed over the years. These changes brought about modifications to how these phenomena are studied and researched. Early researchers of the impact of the internet on politics studied it from the perspective of the internet and democracy. Since its inception and subsequent diffusion, the internet has often been lauded as a potent democratizing agent (Bimber, 1998; Groshek, 2009; Norris, 2000a; Polat, 2005). Researchers have been concerned, for example, with the effects of the internet on political institutions and their operations because of its democratizing effect. In particular, researchers and practitioners have questioned if the internet acts as a positive force in the development of democratic systems and ideals (Best & Wade, 2009). This part of the review looks at the two viewpoints about the role of the internet in democracy.

#### **3.3.1. The internet and democracy – optimistic views**

During the early days of the internet, there were overwhelming optimistic views on the contributions the internet could make to democracy. This may be partially attributed to the correlation found in the diffusion of earlier communication networks, such as telephony and democracy – a country's telecommunication development is highly associated with its

political development (Sun & Barnett, 1994) - as well as the democratic vision and architectures inherent to the internet itself (Barlow, 1996; Castells, 2005). The internet, ideally, helps create a space where anyone, anywhere may express his/her beliefs without fear of being forced into silence or conformity and once connected provides a level playing field for those who participate (Barlow, 1996). While in reality there is censorship, social, economic, cultural and legal frameworks that can limit internet users' unfettered access and use (Lessig, 1999), the internet nonetheless, makes it possible for tens of millions of widely dispersed citizens to receive the information they need to carry out the business of governing themselves, gain admission to the political realm and retrieve at least some power over their own lives (Ott & Rosser, 2000).

Initially, it was difficult to empirically establish the democratizing effects of the internet: there were many reasons for this difficulty. In developing democracies, for example, the democratic potential of the internet is influenced by factors such as the government regime type, the degree of internet diffusion, the social roles of the internet, limitations on internet data and the limited internet presence (Best & Wade, 2009). Additionally, the definition and evaluation of many of these variables can be vague and uncertain. For example, even the boundaries of the term democracy and how it is evaluated are subject to debate (Best & Wade, 2009). Undeterred by these analytic hardships, researchers such as Kedzie (1997), Best and Wade (2009) and Groshek (2009) continued to explore the interrelationships between the internet and democracy.

One of the earliest theories in this regard is Kedzie's 'dictator's dilemma'. This theory is founded on the idea that globalization and free global markets (largely promoted and intensified by the internet) force governments to keep their countries' communication borders open. The result is the free flow of information, including both commercial and democratic information, giving citizens the power to unmask government abuse of power. This could negatively affect governments if they are seen as illegitimate, violent, dishonest or untrustworthy. The internet's collective features (of multi-directional capability, anonymity, convenience, and low cost) for example make this possible (Best & Wade, 2009). Additionally, the internet can inform citizens of developing democracies about aspects associated with more advanced democracies such as free speech and, consequently, they may begin to desire democratic change to a more advanced level of democracy. In this situation, the internet provides the people with a space where democracy-related debates can be carried out.

Kedzie (1997) found a positive correlation between ICT diffusion and the fall of the Soviet Union. He explained how Relcon-Russia's first electronic network was fundamental to bringing in foreign sources of news via emails. He contends that this news requiring greater accountability from the conventional Soviet media, may have acted as the vehicle that dismantled the bias of the conventional Soviet media. Increased accountability by the media exposed poor governance and helped to educate the people about rights and privileges such as freedom of expression.

Most of the early cross-national research (Best & Wade, 2009; Groshek, 2009; Kedzie, 1997) examining the internet and democratization found positive relationships between internet penetration and democracy. This trend has changed over time as recent cross-national studies point to internet use rather than diffusion. For example, in a study that examined the relationship between internet penetration, individual internet use and citizen demand for democracy across 28 countries, Nisbet, Stoycheff, and Pearce (2012) found that Internet use but not national internet penetration was associated with greater citizen commitment to democratic governance. The data for their study came from a secondary source, namely survey data from the 2008 Afrobarometer and Asian Barometer. Afrobarometer and Asian Barometer are independent, nonpartisan applied research projects that measure the social, political, and economic atmosphere in Africa and Asia. Their results show that individual internet use was associated with increased citizen demand for, or commitment to, democratic governance while national internet penetration had a null relationship with citizen demand for democratic governance. They suggested that internet use may play a more meaningful role in strengthening and enhancing young democracies through the impact it has on citizen attitudes rather than promoting outright democratic transitions among autocratic regimes. Unlike Kedzie (1997), Best and Wade (2009) and Groshek (2009), Nisbet et al. (2012) incorporated individual internet use and demand for democracy variables in their study. Although Nisbet et al. (2012) provided a robust demonstration of how internet use may promote democratic outcomes – by influencing citizens' attitudes - their data came from a secondary source. The survey questions of their secondary data source may not have been constructed to provide for sufficient depth of analysis. In a recent nationwide representative study in China, again using a survey method, Lei (2011) found that Chinese Netizens were more politically opinionated, likely to be supportive of the norms of democracy and, 'critical about the party-state and political conditions in China' (Lei, 2011, p. 291) compared to Chinese who were not connected to the internet.

### **3.3.2. The internet and democracy – negative views**

Some early researchers questioned the impact of the internet on democratic development. For example Boas and Kalathil (2003) observed that the governments of China, Cuba and Saudi Arabia filtered materials and promoted self-censorship through regulation, policing, and punitive actions. For his part, Bimber (2000) noted that, although online technologies contributed towards greater fragmentation and pluralism in the structure of civic engagement, their tendency to deinstitutionalize politics, fragment communication and accelerate the pace of the public agenda and decision-making may have undermined the coherence of the public sphere. Some recent studies (Fenton & Barassi, 2011; Fuchs, 2014b; Manjikian, 2010; Markham, 2014; Morozov, 2012; Nocetti, 2011) still downplayed the role of the internet in democratization and have raised their misgivings about the free flow of information over internet. For example, Nocetti (2011) argued that the Russian government moderated the national information space and broadcast political messages favourable to itself while ensuring that shares in the Russian internet firms remained in the hands of government sympathizers. In addition, the possibility of the government to collude with internet providers and commercial social networking site owners has been a source of concern (Fuchs, 2014b). These commercial social networking sites owners engage in such activities to maximize profit (Fuchs, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c), but inadvertently abet bad governance or even autocracy. Fuchs recommended that public service social media be encouraged to minimize users' fear of harm, and that non-commercial civil society organizations can get financial and technical support from the government and volunteers. In the same vein, other researchers have argued that there are other ways a government can control communication technologies use. In his book *The Net Delusion*, Morozov (2012) observes that the Russian government uses frivolous online programs like 'the tits show' (p. 57) to divert the attention of Russians online, and thereby subtly suppresses Russians' ability to politically engage the government. These researchers are not convinced that the internet enhances democracy. However, while some are simply critical, others contend that the internet hinders democracy. In order to look at this debate comprehensively, in this project the arguments about how online platforms impacts on political participation are examined and evaluated.

### **3.4. The internet and political participation**

The debates about the role of the internet in political participation and engagement has followed the same dimension as its earlier version 'internet and democracy' with some researchers extolling the ingenuity of the internet while others continues to question whether

the internet has any impact on political participation. Some of the early research in this area showed a negative relationship between the internet and political participation. For example, in their study, Scheufele and Nisbet (2002) found that in the United States of America, people do not use the internet to engage in politics. They found that Americans use the internet for entertainment (online relationship chats, games, and watching movies) more than they use it for political engagement. However, they cautioned against overextending the results of their study as there was no research to compare their results with. They noted that internet users maybe more attracted to some forms of democratic knowledge and participation that were not covered in their questionnaire as their study data was from a telephone survey of 307 residents of New York City.

The findings from the research of Horrigan, Garrett, and Resnick (2004), Gibson, Lusoli, and Ward (2005) and Kavanaugh, Kim, Perez-Quinones, Schmitz, and Isenhour (2008) all suggest that internet users may be attracted to some forms of democratic knowledge and participation (such as sending political postcards and political jokes to friends from the websites) that were not covered in the Scheufele and Nisbet (2002) questionnaire. Horrigan et al. (2004) found that the internet was successfully exposing Americans to a wider array of political viewpoints, while Gibson et al. (2005) and Kavanaugh *et al.* (2008) showed that certain sectors of the population who did not normally engage off-line, engaged in politics through the internet. The sample size of Gibson et al. (2005) was larger and comprised of a more diverse range of participants than that of Scheufele and Nisbet (2002).

Recent studies have followed the trend of earlier studies with some of the studies finding a positive relationship between the internet and political participation and engagement (Loader, Vromen & Xenos, 2014). Meanwhile, the internet has changed significantly between 2002 and 2016. For example, the advent of web 2.0 has increased interactivity among users in comparison to web 1.0 and this has potentially changed the impact of the use of the internet in political participation. In this project, western studies provide a basis for the study of the Nigerian case.

#### **3.4.1. Studies with positive results**

A 2013 Pew report on civic engagement in the digital age found that the internet and social networking sites in particular, are playing prominent roles in politics in the United States of America: many people are getting politically involved in issues based on their discussions on social networking sites. The report adds that social networking activism frequently spills over

into other online and offline spaces such as the ‘Occupy Wall Street’ protests (PEW, 2004, 2013)

Norris (Norris, 2000b, 2002, 2005, 2007) argued that the role of the internet in democracy is to provide pluralistic competition and, participatory and civil and political liberties. Furthermore, in a study that analysed the connections between internet use and political participation, Kenski and Stroud (2006) found that internet access and online exposure to information about the presidential campaign were significantly associated with political efficacy and participation. Also, Ragauskas (2014) posits that an increase in internet usage allows for greater communication and better access to information and this in turn increases political participation and democratic governance. Results from the studies of Brian Loader, a political sociologist at the university of York, (United Kingdom) and his colleagues (Loader, Vromen, & Xenos, 2014; Xenos, Vromen, & Loader, 2014) suggest a strong positive relationship between the internet and political engagement among young people across the USA, Australia and the UK, and provide insights regarding the role participatory media use plays in the process by which young people become politically engaged.

Findings from some studies have shown that the internet increases political participation during elections (Effing, Hillegersberg, & Huibers, 2011; Kenski & Stroud, 2006; Oyesomi, Ahmadu, & Itsekor, 2014; Robertson, Vatrappu, & Medina, 2010; Vitak et al., 2011). For example Effing et al. (2011) studied the impact of the internet during the 2010 Netherland’s national elections and their findings revealed that politicians with a higher internet engagement with voters got relatively more votes within most parties. Also, in a study that analyzed the effect of the internet on students’ political participation during the US presidential election, Vitak et al. (2011) found that student political activity online was a significant predictor of other forms of political participation. Similarly, Robertson et al. (2010) argued that internet technologies, particularly social media, played an important role during the 2008 USA presidential elections.

In a survey study that was conducted among 526 Malaysian adults, Willnat, Wong, Tamam, and Aw (2013) found that online media use was positively associated with higher levels of political participation among Malaysian voters. As with Loader and colleagues and Willnat et al, Moeller, de-Vreese, Esser, and Kunz (2013) using a survey of 729 Dutch adults, for data collection, studied the influence of online and offline news media on internal efficacy and

turnout of first time voters. They found that active participation in the communication of political information online had a strong impact on internal efficacy.

The internet and its technologies do not just increase users' online political participation; they also help their offline participation. In their study, de-Zúñiga et al. (2012) found that seeking information via participatory media was a positive predictor of people's civic and political participatory behaviours online and also offline. They contended that online forms of political participation complimented offline political participation. Hargittai and Shaw (2013) found that for young adults in the US there was an association between internet skills, social network site usage and greater levels of political. They argued that, although internet usage alone was unlikely to transform existing patterns of political participation radically, it may facilitate the creation of new pathways for engagement. From the results of a young American adults in a university in Mid-West (N =600) study that examined whether social media and mobiles serve as forces of political mobilization, Yamamoto, Kushin, and Dalisay (2013) argue that online political expression enhanced the effects of political mobile apps, traditional offline and online media. They also posited that social media enhanced political participation.

In a slightly different but positive result, Christensen and Bengtsson (2011) from their rigorous empirical study made a number of interesting observations. First, their study showed that it was mostly politically active and conscious citizens who were utilizing the internet as a vehicle for political participation. Second, and surprisingly, their study revealed that the internet acted as an arena for political engagement for people who were otherwise unengaged in politics. These findings suggest that the internet contributes to a rise in political participation while also fostering the deepening of people's overall political competence. However, some studies have revealed that the internet and its technologies do not aid political participation. Some of the more significant studies are reviewed in the following section..

### **3.4.2. Studies with negative findings**

Putnam, Professor of public policy at the Harvard University was one of the first scholars to inquire into the role technologies play in political participation and social capital. According to Putnam (2000) social capital is the 'connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arises from them' (p. 19). He presented the view that social capital enhances political participation and civic engagement and observed that a lack of social capital has been the cause of the diminishing political participation and plummeting civic engagement in the United States of America. Drawing evidence from nearly

500,000 interviews over a quarter of a century, his work (Putnam, 1996, 2000) has shown that Americans signed fewer petitions, belonged to fewer organizations that meet, knew their neighbours less and socialized with families less. He argued that Americans were 'bowling alone' and that this was affecting political participation and democracy.

Among the culprits to this 'unhealthy' development in America were television and the computer (internet). He posited that America had become a society of watchers rather than doers and that the advancement in technology, television in particular, had resulted in a large erosion of social capital (Putnam, 2000). He further stated that:

Some of the same freedom-friendly technologies whose rise are predicted may indeed be undermining our connections with one another and with the community (Putnam, 1996, p. 15).

Putnam's studies found that technology positively correlated with the collapse of social capital, meaning that technology, together with other variables, was impoverishing the lives of the American people and their communities. Following in the steps of Putnam, McChesney (McChesney, 1995, 2013, 2015) argues that capitalism is turning the internet against democracy.

Some contemporary scholars remain skeptical of the role of the internet in enhancing political participation. For example, White (2010) believed that the internet or online participation was ruining activism, while Fenton and Barassi (2011) argued against the internet being an effectiveness agent for enhancing political participation. They argued that, far from being empowering, the logic of 'self-centered participation promoted by social media can represent a threat for political groups rather than an opportunity' (Fenton & Barassi, 2011, p. 179). This, according to the authors, is because social media breeds individualistic autonomy. They see the problem of creative autonomy and individuation where individual agency is prioritized over the political and ideological context. A similar understanding was expressed by Fuchs (2009) when he contended:

The empowerment discourse issue is individualistic because it focusses research primarily on how individuals use SNS for making connections, maintaining or receiving friendships, falling in love, creating autonomous spaces etc. It does not focus on how technology and technology use are framed by political issues and issues that concern the development of society, such as capitalist crises, profit interest, global war, the globalization of capitalism, or the rise of a surveillance society (Fuchs, 2009, p. 18).



On the contrary, contemporary political participation and activism, though carried out at the individual level, or even it may be a solitary action, does benefit political groups because such political actions though individualistic, are usually situated around a common concern and this helps stimulate feelings of collective togetherness (Halupka, 2016).

Much of the literature on political participation has focused extensively upon the forms of civic engagement which emphasize the role of citizens within traditional representative democracy, including the channels influencing elections, governments, and parties (Norris, 2007). Much has been written about low voter turnout and dwindling party membership (Norris, 2002; Piven & Cloward, 2000; Putnam, 1996, 2000; Warren & Shanks, 1996) but these researchers neglect the political activism of the citizens. Cohen and Kahne (2012) contend that some scholars misunderstand the passive stance of the citizens in mainstream political activities such as voting, becoming a political party member and supporting political campaigns as lack of political interest and activism. For example, young peoples' abhorrence to politics does not mean that they are politically inactive. Cohen and Kahne (2012) suggest that researchers maybe missing the picture if they consider only traditional measures of civic engagement, such as voting, as a measure of how active or inactive people are. There are other channels that people, particularly young adults are exploring and serve as political participation. The idea of considering alternative political participation styles outside mainstream political participation activities will help researchers provide an all-inclusive theory of political participation. Some studies (Gladwell, 2010; McChesney, 2013; Morozov, 2009a; Oyston, 2012; Putnam, 2000; White, 2010) still blame the citizens' 'political apathy' on the information and communication technologies especially the internet. In contrast, internet technologies have arguably helped rekindle people's interest in politics or, as argued above, have given the people multiple channels through which they can participate in politics (Breuer & Farooq, 2012; Freelon, 2014; Halupka, 2014; Howard, 2014, 2015; Tufekci, 2014; Zuckerman, 2013, 2014). Given the level of disillusionment many citizens feel with the political process (Harvard University Institute of Politics, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2013b) perhaps citizens should not be expected to get involved in politics in the traditional way.

The accounts by Zuckerman (2014), Norris (2007) and Halupka (2014) are useful starting points because they aim to locate specific current political participation strategies of the people, particularly the youth, and juxtapose them with how people participated in politics prior to the advancements in internet technologies.

For example, Zuckerman (2014) reports that dissatisfaction with existing government, a broad shift to post-representative democracy and the rise of participatory media are leading towards the visibility of different forms of civic participation. Post-representative democracy or what Keane (2009) calls ‘monitory democracy’ occurs when the people go beyond attempting to influence representatives as they seek change. Zuckerman (2014) has developed a framework to describe the new civic participation in theories of change. He submits that citizens are critical of representative democracy and the traditional means of influencing elected representatives, and so have created a new form of political participation he calls ‘participatory civics’ (Zuckerman, 2014, p. 151). Participatory civics refers to forms of civil engagement that use digital media as a core component and embrace a post-informed citizen model of civic participation (Zuckerman, 2013, 2014).

Norris (2007) also argued that the realization by the citizens that they have limited power to effect policies and secure some degree of accountability from their leaders forces them to seek alternative means of participation which are now available to them particularly with the continuous advancements in internet technologies. One such alternative means is ‘cause-oriented activism’ (Norris, 2007, p. 638). For his part, Halupka (2014) has argued that one of these alternative means of participation that is available to the people is what he calls ‘clicktivism’. He believes that clicktivism is a legitimate political act. Although clicktivism may not involve a great deal of effort or commitment, but that it is now probably the most common form of “political” engagement and that it can, and often do, lead to more overtly political action, sometimes in the political arena (Marsh & Akram, 2015, p. 641).

In contrast to earlier models that recognised dutiful citizenship based on one-way communication managed by authorities, the current generation, particularly young adults are embracing more expressive styles of actualizing citizenship that are defined around peer content sharing and social media (Bennett, Wells, & Freelon, 2011). This is why communication aimed at promoting civic engagement is becoming problematic. In an analysis of 90 youth websites operated by diverse civic and political organizations in the United States, the results revealed uneven conceptions of citizenship and related civic skills, suggesting that many established organization are out of step with changing civic style (Bennett et al., 2011). This argument fits with the logic of connective action and is discussed in Chapter Four (see Section 4.5).

In the majority of these studies, there is a tacit understanding that the internet or online platforms or participatory media were found to enhance political participation. In the few studies that the results do not support the notion that online platforms enhance political participation, there is the belief that political participation must be in a political arena. However, this is not consistent with developments in political participation, particularly when they are looked at from the perspective of engagement and not just the participation domain. Before looking at this argument, a review of online political participation literature from Africa is undertaken. This review provides an African perspective that helps to situate this study.

### **3.4.3. Online political participation in Africa**

Most research on the topic of online political participation has been conducted in the US and Europe. However, as this project is based in Nigeria it is important that the African context be reviewed in order to understand the state and stage of research in this area. Studies have shown how the internet and its technologies have helped political participation and civic engagement in Africa. For example, it has been reported that simple, affordable, and cost effective ICT tools are being used to mobilize, and to activate the intuitiveness and, assertiveness and also facilitate local citizens' participation in a good governance process in Western Uganda (Baguma, 2014). Kanjo (2011) similarly, argues that an experience-based model that promotes the use of multiple ICTs enhances citizen's democratic participation in low-ICT resource countries as online platforms have the potential to increase citizen's political participation and engagement and thus lead to social movements and protests.

In a study that evaluated the impact of internet technologies used for political communication and participation during the 2011 general election in Nigeria, Oyesomi et al. (2014) found that internet technologies, particularly Facebook were used to a great extent by aspirants in mobilizing the support of the electorate and helping the electorate to participate during the election. However, the mobilization and participation was limited to those 'who had internet or mobile phones with internet applications' (Oyesomi et al., 2014, p. 1). Also, in a study that evaluated the impact of social media on how State Governors in Nigeria engaged their citizens, Mejabi and Fabgule (2014) found that, although few State Governors engaged and opened avenues for political participation with their citizens online, Nigerians engaged and participated significantly when given the opportunity to do so. In effect, the internet enhances political participation and engagement to great extent, and is a new avenue for participation especially for the marginalized. The results of the research of Christensen and Bengtsson

(2011) were similar to the findings of Mejabi and Fabgule (2014) in that they indicated that social groups or people that were politically marginalized became politically active through the internet (see Chapter Five for more on the context of the study).

### **3.5. The arena and process debate**

The arena definition of politics sees politics in terms of the things that happen within formal institutions and processes. Extant literature in political communication holds that the 'political' is innately tied to conventional modes of political engagement (Hirst, 1999; Schmitt, 2008). The 'political' is usually voting, government, democracy, political parties, politicians and legislature. These are traditional approaches to political participation.

However, a number of researchers support a broader view of participation. A process definition of politics sees politics 'occurring more broadly in society, both within and outside formal institutions and processes' (McCaffrie & Marsh, 2013, p. 114). To Marsh and colleagues (Marsh & Akram, 2015; McCaffrie & Marsh, 2013) a process definition of politics is required in order to understand the changing nature of political participation that has been occasioned by the advancement of internet technologies. A process definition of politics and political participation recognizes that contemporary political participation has diversified in terms of 'agencies (the collective organizations structuring of political activities), repertoires (the actions commonly used for political expression), targets (the political actors that participants seek to influence)' (Norris, 2002, pp. 215-216) and also it acknowledges other popular forms of political participation that are not within the conventional political arena. Unlike the Norris (2002) repertoires, a process definition of politics and political participation accepts the use of memes, social buttons and social media to engage in political participation. One example of this type of political participation is clicktivism – this sees people engage in small, impulsive, non-ideological, political actions such as clicking a like on Facebook, in an attempt to bring about social change through awareness-raising (Halupka, 2014).

There are increasingly forms of political participation that are underpinned by engagement norms, rather than duty norms (Bang, 2011): the emphasis is on engaging with particular problems, rather than taking action which is ideologically driven. A process definition of politics permits researchers to recognize action that is based on engagement norms which at some stage spill into the political arena, as another way to participate in politics. More importantly, a process definition of politics and political participation understands and acknowledges the changing nature of the society. The internet has helped uncouple citizens

from their political authorities, and this has empowered the citizens to seek political change on their own, engaging on their own terms and in their own ways (Halupka, 2016).

However, these changes in the political engagement norm have forced skeptics of the process definition of politics, and political participation to argue that the process definition will lead to a ‘study of everything’ as politics and ‘every action’ as political participation (Hirst, 1999; Schmitt, 2008). In addition, Hay (2014) argues that the engagement pattern of a process definition of politics and political participation marginalizes the political arena thereby undermining an arena based definition of politics and democracy.

In proposing the theory of reflexive modernisation, Beck and colleagues (Beck, 1994, 1997; Beck, Giddens, & Lash, 1994), used the term ‘sub-politics’ to explain politics beyond the tenets that have been espoused by scholars espousing an arena definition type of political participation and political system. In explaining the ‘sub-politics’ concept, Beck (1997) hinged his argument on the concept of ‘individuation’. He believed that through sub-politics, individualism has returned to the society. His explanation of individualism or individuation aligns not only with the process definition of politics but also with the theory of connective action (see Chapter Four, Section 4.5 for a review of literature on connective action). Beck started his description of individuation by defining ‘disembedding’ and ‘re-embedding’ (Giddens, 1991, p. 21). According to him, ‘individuation’ means:

‘first, the disembedding of industrial society’s ways of life, and second, the re-embedding of new ones, in which the individuals must produce, stage and cobble together their biographies themselves. This type of individualization does not remain private, it becomes political in a definite new sense: the “individualized individuals, the tinkerers of themselves and their world” are no longer the “role players” of simple classical industrial society’ (Beck, 1997, p. 156).

Beck and his colleagues (Beck, 1994, 1997; Beck *et al.*, 1994; Giddens, 1991, 1999) defined sub-politics to mean the shaping of the society from below. They went further and stated that when, ‘viewed from above, this results in the loss of implementation power, the shrinkage and minimization of politics’ (Beck *et al.*, 1994, p. 23). Their argument was that in the wake of ‘sub-politicalization’, that there were growing opportunities to have a voice and a share in the arrangement of the society even for groups hitherto uninvolved in the substantive ‘technification and industrialization process’. This brought further opportunities for courageous individuals to ‘move mountains’ in the nerve centres of development (Beck, 1994, p. 23). In brief, the rise of sub-politics could be said to indicate a weakening of bureaucratic,

state-oriented politics (arena definition) thereby, suggesting a tilt towards the process definition of politics or connective action frame.

Giddens's *The Third Way* as it relates to his concept of sub-politics, particularly his argument about the usefulness of sub-politics, critically recounts shifts in democracy and political participation. His definition of sub-politics as 'politics that has migrated away from parliament towards single-issue groups in the society' (Giddens, 1999, p. 49) strengthens the argument that citizens engage in solitary political actions that are situated around a common concern; helps stimulate the idea of collective togetherness through comradeships that come from such participation. His argument about sub-politics corresponds to Norris (2007) concept of 'cause-oriented activism' as well as Zuckerman (2014) notion of 'participatory civics'.

Overall, it is crucial that political participation literature move past the dualism of arena and process definitions, to embrace duality. With evidence from contemporary studies noting changing patterns of political participation, it would be erroneous to perceive politics and political participation as something that happens only in the political arena; neither does it benefit the research community to see it as ubiquitous (Marsh & Akram, 2015). There is however, a need to carefully evaluate the relationship between the social and the political.

### **3.6. Chapter summary**

The review of the internet and political participation revealed that as internet technologies keep developing, so do the number of studies. Using different results and debates, researchers have tried to understand citizens' political participation patterns online and the effect the online presence has had.

One notable point from this review is that most of the researchers that are critical of the role of the internet to political participation are scholars who believe that political participation needs to occur in a political arena and so follow more in the arena definition of what is 'political'. Conversely, researchers who follow the process definition of politics and political participation tend to accept that the internet helps political participation.

The matters addressed in the chapter that are of most relevance to the current study are those pertaining to the internet and political participation, as this study evaluates the effect of mobile internet use on the rise of digital activism in Nigeria and, analyses whether the rise in mobile internet use impacts on users' intention to participate in political affairs.

The chapter further reviewed the public sphere potential of the internet, showing that although the internet can act as a veritable public sphere platform, it is most effective when it works together rather than in isolation of the mainstream public sphere.

The next chapter (Chapter Four) focuses on findings from the digital activism literature as it relates to the role of the internet and its technologies on the success of social movements. The chapter brings into perspective the debate on arena and process definitions of politics and political participation and reviews arguments on the logic of collective and connective actions.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### INTERNET TECHNOLOGIES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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#### **4.1. Introduction**

Chapter Three appraised the principal arguments about the role of the internet in political participation. This chapter reviews arguments relating to the relationship between internet technologies and social movements. The chapter begins by reviewing the results of empirical studies that have been carried out on social media and social movements. This is followed by review of mobile applications and social movements. The chapter then concludes by reviewing the debate on the logic of connective and collective actions and through the review shows that they have a symbiotic relationship than as a dualism.

#### **4.2. Social media and social movements**

Social media has become an all-encompassing term used to describe platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, and BlogSpot among others. The popularization of social media coincided with protests around the world, making it important to study. One such protest was the Arab Spring (Castells, 2012; Howard, Duffy, *et al.*, 2011; Howard & Hussain, 2013; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). The Arab Spring was a political protest that started in Tunisia and spread to other Arab countries from 2010 onwards. It was made possible because of internet technologies particularly, social media (Howard & Hussain, 2013). The term 'social media' is used in this research to refer to mainstream social networking sites whereas mobile social networking application is used in this research to refer to internet-enabled mobile application. It is worth noting that a substantial portion of the research reviewed is of the Anglo-American tradition because there is minimal digital activism literature in Nigeria. However, there are socio-cultural differences between research contexts of Nigeria, Europe and the USA, and it must be recognized that context has an impact on some aspects of the research particularly in the process of data collection.

Prior to the Arab Spring, Wheeler (2010) predicted that the cumulative long-term effects of internet use in Arab societies would alter the ways in which people lived their lives in the region. Similarly, Howard (2011) asserted that the diffusion and use of the internet would increase the involvement of young Muslims in democracy and related discussions and campaigns. He noted that countries where civil society and journalism made 'active use of the new information technologies subsequently experience a radical democratic transition or



significant solidification of the democratic institutions' (Howard, 2011 p. 200). In further evaluating the causal influence of the internet on the Arab Spring, Howard and Hussain (2012) found that social media played a causal role in that it provided the fundamental infrastructure for a social movement.

In assessing the use of social media in Egypt and the decision to participate in political protest, Tufekci and Wilson (2012) found that social media in general, and Facebook in particular, provided new sources of information that could not easily be controlled. According to them, this information from social media enabled people to mobilize and participate in the protest in Tahrir Square. However, with the disruption of the internet in Egypt during the protests it became evident that the internet was far from free because it faced subtle antagonism from corporations and governments that tried to limit its use. Internet disruption is one way governments try to overthrow the powers of communication technologies and, clearly, a great deal of power rests in the hands of governments. Governments not only have the power to shut down communication technologies, but they can also for example co-opt the commercial social media platform owners into releasing to them their users' private details and this enables the governments to identify, track and arrest users (Fuchs, 2014b; Hassanpour, 2014; Howard, Agarwal, & Hussain, 2011b; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012).

Other studies have also shown that internet use, particularly social media, played a crucial role in the Arab Spring (Alexander & Aouragh, 2014; Aouragh & Alexander, 2011; Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011; Khamis & Vaughn, 2011, 2013; Lotan, Graeff, Ananny, Gaffney, & Pearce, 2011). For example, Lotan *et al.* (2011) assert that Twitter played a key role in amplifying and spreading timely information across the globe during the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions. Eltantawy and Wiest (2011) found that social media played an instrumental role in the success of the protests in Egypt. Drawing on interviews and observations conducted during the Egyptian revolution, Aouragh and Alexander (2011) concluded that the internet and other media such as satellite television contributed to the success of the protest. After revisiting this study, Alexander and Aouragh (2014) went on to argue that the key dynamics of media production and consumption by revolution activists was not in the affordances of the internet but in shifting the balance of forces between revolution and counter-revolution on the wider political stage. They concluded that important parts of the popular movement in Egypt had moved away from reliance on old and new capitalist media as simply carriers of the activist's voices and hopes toward media practices through which they expected to develop media voices and infrastructures of their own. It is evident that

present day internet technologies are playing important roles together with old media such as satellite television in reshaping Egypt (Alexander & Aouragh, 2014; Aouragh & Alexander, 2011).

Still on the matter of the Arab Spring, using evidence from a survey and also interview data obtained from the protesters, Breuer, Landman, and Farquhar (2015) found that social media acted as an important mobilization resource against the Ben Ali regime. They went further by stating that these social media platforms allowed a digital elite to break the national media blackout by brokering information for mainstream media, and providing a base for intergroup collaboration to set up platforms for a larger 'cycle of protest'. The reported event's magnitude raised the perception of success for potential free-riders, and provided additional 'emotional mobilization' to the Tunisian protesters by depicting the worst atrocities associated with the regime's response.

Castells (2012) points out how the use of the internet helped in the 15-M (Indignados) movement in Spain and Occupy Wall Street. Occupy Wall Street is a social movement that began on September 17, 2011, in Zuccotti Park, New York against social and economic inequality in the US (Castells, 2012). Astra and Cessen (2011) recounted how blogs and other internet platforms were used to organize 'Occupy Wall Street'. In a study that analysed likes and comments of Facebook pages of protest activists in the Arab Spring, and the 15M Gerbaudo (2016) contends that the hopeful narrative produced by activists' administrators managing political Facebook pages, and the receptivity and cooperation of ordinary internet users who overwhelmingly reinforced the message put forward by them created moments of digital enthusiasm. Moreover, the emotional dialogues between the administrators and users generated a process of 'emotional contagion that helped establish propitious psychological conditions for mass protest participation' (Gerbaudo, 2016, p. 254).

Other studies have explained how social media use has helped protesters mobilize in a number of countries (Chadha & Harlow, 2015; Harlow, 2012; Margetts, 2013; Nugroho, 2015; Nugroho & Syarief, 2012; Valenzuela, 2013; Valenzuela, Arriagada, & Scherman, 2012). For example, Margetts (2013) describes how social media has reshaped the ecology of interest groups, and created new organizational forms and new patterns of looser association that are really making a difference. She explains that although this difference is most evident in authoritarian countries such as those relevant to the Arab Spring, it is also evident in some

of the oldest of liberal democracies, where protest, demonstration and mass mobilization seem to be on the rise.

Scholars have noted also that social media platforms are facilitating protest activities in Chile, Indonesia, Guatemala, India and Thailand (Chadha & Harlow, 2015; Nugroho, 2015; Nugroho & Syarief, 2012; Valenzuela, 2013; Valenzuela et al., 2012). For example, in a study that evaluated the role social media use play in opinion expression, activism and protest in Chile, Valenzuela (2013) found that using social media for opinion expression and activism mediates the relationship between overall social media use and protest behaviour. He concluded that digital activism platforms are facilitating direct political actions and social movements. In a previous work with his colleagues, Valenzuela et al. (2012) found that Facebook use by Chile's youths was directly associated with protest activity.

In a study that evaluated the influence of social media on the social movement in Guatemala, Harlow (2012) found that social media users' protest related comments in addition to their use of links and other interactive elements available on Facebook, helped organize massive protests demanding justice, the resignation of Guatemalan president, Alvaro Colon, and an end to violence. Chadha and Harlow (2015) explored Indian activists' beliefs in regards to social media's potential to building social change and found that Indian activists were positive about the use of social media in their work, believing social media helped to transcend geographic and temporal boundaries and reach out to wider audiences. They concluded that, despite the digital divide, activists did not view lack of internet access or technical skill as a major challenge to social media use for activism. However, they noted that Indian activists believed that social media needed to use both online and offline activism tools together in order for the activist movement to reach its full potential.

In their study, Nugroho and Syarief (2012) found that the widening use of social media by civil societies in Indonesia's dynamic social media landscape increased not only digital activism but also protest cultures. Indonesian civil societies are now more vocal and participate in more political activism due to the increased popularization of social media (Nugroho, 2015; Nugroho & Syarief, 2012).

Using a social media data analysis in their study, Nyblade, O'Mahony, & Sinpeng (2015) argued that social media in general and Facebook in particular, was colossal in the mobilization of anti-government protests in Thailand. They further noted that the reason Thais used social media during their anti-government movement protests was because social media

tool presented to them, a relatively low cost means of ‘overcoming collective action problems’ (Nyblade, O’Mahony, & Sinpeng, 2015, pp. 554).

Mare (2014) argued that social media was the new ‘protest drums’ in Southern Africa. He contended that social media played an important role during the Occupy Grahamstown protest in South Africa and others such as the 20 July 2011 protests in Malawi, the 10 September 2010 food riot in Mozambique, the April 1, 2012 protest in Swaziland and the WOZA and Mthwakazi protests in Zimbabwe. In all, Social media enables ordinary citizens to join in the mobilization stages during a social movement, and these platforms permit activists to sustain multiple engagements in different protest events.

#### **4.3. Mobile phone access**

In this review, mobile internet is the term used to refer to the internet-enabled mobile phone. This is a mobile phone that has the capacity to connect to a company’s cellular wireless internet network. Internet-enabled mobile phone is different from mobile broadband which refers to a number of devices, such as notebooks, netbooks, USB modems and cell phones that can connect to a wireless internet (Charles, 2012).

It is evident that mobile communication has become mainstream and even universal, and arguably the most successful and certainly the most rapidly adopted technology in the world as more than two in every three people worldwide possess a mobile phone (N. BBC, 2011; Katz, 2008). By the end of 2015, there were more than 7 billion mobile phone subscriptions, corresponding to a penetration rate of about 97%, up from 738 million in 2000 (ITU, 2016). This growth has occurred not only in the developed countries such as the United States of America where mobile phone subscription is widespread (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010) but also to other countries including Nigeria. For example, a 2010 Pew research on social media and mobile internet in the United States, mobile phones, it was found, are nearly ubiquitous in the lives of American youths with ownership cutting across demographic groups at that time (Lenhart et al., 2010). With 150 million mobile phone subscription - about 82 subscription per 100 household, Nigeria has the highest number of mobile phone subscription in Africa and is one of the countries with such subscription rate globally (ITU, 2016).

Prior to mobile phone uptake in developing countries such as Nigeria, the impact of the digital divide caused by the lack of such devices was severely felt. Although the digital divide still exists, particularly in Africa (ITU, 2016), the low cost of mobile phones in these developing nations is increasingly closing the gap between the internet haves and have-nots, thereby

eroding the information poverty that previously existed. Moreover, mobile phone access has levelled internet access, and enabled users to contribute to political discussions (Fuchs & Horak, 2008).

As mobile phones become widespread (ITU, 2016), democracy is enhanced because citizens are empowered to not only participate in politics locally but also in global affairs (Eger, 2009). Prior to the diffusion of mobile internet and the internet in general, vast majority of citizens of poor nations such as Nigeria had no means of accessing the internet, meaning that access to information was not possible and participation in politics was little or non-existent. However, equal access to information is one of the most stated principles in the global information economy, and the increase in mobile diffusion in developing countries is helping achieve this task of equal access to information (Gebremichael & Jackson, 2006; Mariscal, 2005).

The current information environment is characterized by growing abundance, scalability, and near-ubiquitous networking capacity (Castells, 2000), even in parts of the world (e.g. Nigeria) that have come relatively late to the digital technology explosion (Bailard & Livingston, 2014). Although the internet is important in the industrialized West, the more germane source of change in the developing countries has been mobile telephony (Alozie, Akpan-Obong, & Foster, 2011; Bailard & Livingston, 2014). In mid-2010, there were over 5 billion mobile phone subscribers around the globe. However, two years later, the total had reached 6 billion mobile phone subscriptions, and that number had increased to above 7 billion at the end of 2015 (BBC, 2011; ITU, 2016). This has been the trend in Africa, for example Africa has seen a 20% increase in mobile phone penetration rates for each of the past five years: by 2012, Africa's 54 countries and 1.08 billion people had 821 million mobile subscribers, up 16.9% from the previous year to a percentage increase of 76.4% of the mobile subscribers (BBC, 2011; International Telecommunication Union, 2013). Nigeria had the largest number of mobile phone subscription in Africa with a total of more than 93 million<sup>3</sup> in 2010 and this represented 16% of the continent's total mobile subscriptions (BBC, 2011). At the end of 2015, this number stood at about 150 million subscription, a staggering 61 percent increase in four years (ITU, 2016).

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<sup>3</sup> Many Nigerians use prepaid SIM cards. This creates some ambiguity as to what these numbers mean. For example, one can have a mobile subscription without having a mobile phone; or one can have multiple mobile phones and multiple subscriptions.

Consequently, as more people purchase internet-enabled mobile phones, the more they are able to have access to information. Internet-enabled mobile phones help people around the world, but particularly people in developing countries, to follow news channels outside their countries channels such as CNN, BBC, online newspapers and social media platforms such as YouTube, Twitter and Facebook but also mobile social networking applications such as 2go, WhatsApp, Eskimi and Badoo. These channels, platforms and applications have given a voice to the people, thus have helped them vent their anger at their governments.

Equity in information access is important as it helps remove the scales from the eyes and shackles from the feet of those who originally belonged to the 'information have-not' groups. These are groups that were originally deprived of computers and internet access (Fuchs, 2014b), but the levelling, or increase of information to the 'information have-not' group arguably contributed to the Arab Spring. However, achieving equal access to information can be difficult. This is aside from the digital divide between rich and developing countries; there are divides within countries that lead to information poverty. Access to the internet is arguably indispensable for equality of information access (Castells, 2002), and access to the internet helps to reduce information poverty. Consequently, the mobile phones' ability to connect its users to the internet has greatly changed how the internet is accessed, particularly in developing countries. Some scholars (Bailard, 2009; Kreutzer, 2009; Wei, 2014) consider this as democratizing the internet, because it reduces the possibility of the rich alone accessing it.

Furthermore, mobile phones with internet connections have changed internet usage in many developing nations (Mariscal, 2005). The mobile phone's ability to connect users to the internet is not only giving poorer segments of a society the chance to engage in political discussions but also serve as a channel for digital literacy as the more people use mobile phones to access the internet, the more digitally educated they become on how to use digital technologies (Fuchs & Horak, 2008; Park & Burford, 2013). In addition, the internet connection, capability and the cost of acquiring mobile phones in a number of countries, helps poorer members of the society to increasingly purchase mobile phones with internet capabilities, thereby giving them access to both the internet and the ability to access information that they may originally have been unable to access. Such information will lead to informed citizenry which may lead to better governance. For example, in an empirical study of mobile phone diffusion and political corruption in Africa, Bailard (2009) found that mobile phone diffusion would decrease corruption at both institutional and individual levels.

This would happen, according to her, by decentralizing control over information and communication, thereby reducing the space available for committing corrupt acts, as well as increasing the threat of both detection and punishment. Also, Alozie et al. (2011) found that the mobile phone was the most robust factor in explaining variations in political developments in Africa. They explained that mobile phone subscription had greater correlation with political development in Africa than subscription for internet on personal computers. This was as a result of usage of the internet. They argued that most people in society could use cell phones, while the internet on personal computers was primarily used by the rich.

Some studies have stated that mobile phones have the ability to increase political debates and participation as the mobile phone's comparative affordability, ease of use and convenience (mobile nature) allowed more people to have access to political debate and engagement in the media and other fora (Gordon, 2007; Hermanns, 2008; Khamis & Vaughn, 2011, 2013; Sheller & Urry, 2003). Citizens of developing countries (and elsewhere) not only use mobile phones for voice calls and text messages, but also for internet and multimedia needs, such as electronic mail, online chatting, uploading pictures and videos in social networking sites, reading newspaper articles, and commenting on them in the comment sections. They go to internet cafes for the tasks that mobile phones cannot help them do, like scanning, printing and completing some forms (Akpan-Obong, 2010; Kreutzer, 2009; Wasserman, 2011). In a nutshell, they used their mobile phones for basic internet surfing. Kreutzer (2009) eloquently pointed this out when she asserted that:

Based on their users' interests and the technical features available on them, phones are being appropriated in a myriad of ways other than standard phone calls, but increasingly also to make up for a lack of domestic and school-based access to the internet and computers in developing nations (p. 2).

By comparison, Hermanns (2008) suggested that mobile phones were used to build networks, obtain information and mobilize activists. According to him, mobile phone technology allowed users to be directly accessible at all time and in all locations, resulting in decentralized and nonsynchronous communication. Both contacts in person and over the phone are organized easily at a moment's notice, without previous planning influencing the arrangement of interpersonal relationships greatly. He asserted that mobile phones have increased the volume of information available to people and, opened private spaces in countries where politics is dominated by the government. In addition, he stated that mobile phones were becoming a means for political organization such as spontaneous gatherings in

smart mobs and flash protests, and then extrapolated that mobile phones will aid e-voting. This has already commenced in some countries. Estonia, for example, used mobile phones to authenticate voters in its 2011 election (National Democratic Institute, 2012).

#### **4.4. Mobile phone and social movement**

A 2008 report in the *Economist* (Economist, 2008) forecast that a revolution would come about because of the growing number of people, especially in emerging democracies, who were using mobile phones to access the internet. This revolution had commenced long ago in developing countries such as China and the Arab world, where mobile phones with internet capabilities were fostering political talk among the people, and in Africa also, where the widespread endorsement of mobile phones with internet capabilities has led to new optimism about the potential mobile phones hold for stimulating political participation and broadening political debate (Wasserman, 2011; Wei, 2014).

Mobile phones with internet capabilities influence how people access social media platforms. The significance of the mobile phone with internet connectivity and associated social media platforms is that they defy boundaries, challenge governmental media censorship, and provide an alternative voice to traditional media outlets (Ibrahim, 2013; Khamis & Vaughn, 2011, 2013). Internet-enabled mobile phones also enable the flow of information via a ‘virtually defined, emerging cyber world that knows no physical boundaries’ (Salmon, Fernandez, & Post, 2010, p. 159). During the Arab Spring, messages transmitted through social media outlets such as Facebook, You Tube, Twitter via users mobile phones enabled peer-to peer communication and thereby allowed users to transmit their ideas and images to a larger number of people (Khamis & Vaughn, 2011, 2013). Also, mobile phone with internet connection helps people, particularly those from developing countries, access social media platforms, and this helps them to mobilize, coordinate and participate in social movements. For example, in a study that evaluated the impact of social media and mobile internet on revolutions, Jurgenson (2012) found that the rise of mobile phones and social media was helping revolutions around the world.

Specifically, during the Arab Spring, it was through social media that, citizens who were disappointed with mainstream media’s version of events recounted their own version of the event. These patterns of political expression are pivotal to developing democratic deliberations (Howard, 2010; Howard, Agarwal, & Hussain, 2011a; Howard, Agarwal, *et al.*, 2011b; Howard, Duffy, *et al.*, 2011; Howard & Hussain, 2011, 2013). In confirming the



above assertion, Howard and Hussain (2013) argued that mobile phone use has consistently appeared as one of the key ingredients in parsimonious models behind regime fragility and social movement success during the Egyptian revolution. According to them, the use of mobile phones by the people during the Arab Spring in Egypt enabled the development of an information infrastructure that sustained the flow of information during the revolution.

Scholars are also evaluating the impact of the use of mobile phones with internet capabilities on other forms of movements and engagements, such as in exposing human rights abuses, crimes, corruption and promoting participation (Assmann & Assmann, 2010; Ghannam, 2011; Obijiofor, 2011a, 2011b; Savinov, Rostami, & Lorenz, 2014; Warrioba & Ally, 2014). For example, mobile phones allow citizens to expose crimes and, government official excesses, and to engage the government by taking instant photographs or videos and posting them online (Obijiofor, 2011a, 2011b). For example, a mobile phone was used to record and upload to YouTube the killing of Neda Agha-Soltan during the Iranian election protest in 2009 (Murphy, 2012), and Egyptians used their mobile phones to send photographs and videos to international news channels and YouTube during the Egyptian revolution. Also, mobile phones were used to video and upload pictures of the physical assault of Ms Uzoma in Lagos, Nigeria by Nigerian Naval Officers and the information contained helped identify the offending Officers (Obijiofor, 2011b).

Mobile phones played a prominent role in reporting dissent in Burma in 2008 as users of 'camera phones' took and sent pictures of the dissent to the mainstream media and, by doing so, ensured that the dissent was reported by mainstream media (Goggin, 2012). It is evident, then, that mobile phones with internet capabilities and social media platforms provide opportunities for public mobilization.

There are also, unintended consequences that can be associated with the use of mobile phones, the internet, social movements and protests. For example, in the case of Iran and Neda Agha-Soltan, Assmann and Assmann (2010) noted that, although the new technology empowered citizens in the face of Iranian government censorship, it did have a downside. In the early stages of telling the Neda story, the image of another Neda (Neda Soltani) was downloaded from her Facebook page and this Neda, consequently, had to flee Iran because of government harassment. The authors explained that 'It took some time to clarify the mistake and to replace the images but the damage could not be undone. For Neda Soltani it had tragic consequences and changed her life forever' (Assmann & Assmann, 2010, p. 122). This error

did not only hurt Neda Soltani, but also encouraged the government into denying the massacre that was happening. It accused the media of peddling lies and whipped up a conspiracy theory. This Neda Soltani case illustrates the sometimes notorious problem of evidence conveyed by messages spread on the internet, that is a problem of verification on the one hand and sloppy research on the other hand (Assmann & Assmann, 2010).

But there are other dangers that emanate from the use of mobile phones and the internet for, social movements and protests that are not within the realm of users. Government censorship for example as was the case in Iran (Assmann & Assmann, 2010; Murphy, 2012), and there are other examples where government censor by blocking the internet. This type of actions waere evident during the Egyptian revolution (Dainotti et al., 2011; Howard, Agarwal, et al., 2011b) and, the ‘social media bill’ in Nigeria (Uwalaka, 2016). Moreover, there are risks of arrest and possible jail from intolerant governments. This was the case for Eskinder Nega and Mahmoud Addel Nabi (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2014) in 2013.

Despite the challenges noted above, mobile phone and its technologies has been put to good use in some other areas. For example, in their study that examined how mobile phone enhanced human rights reporting, Warioba and Ally (2014) found that, due to poor internet infrastructure, high internet cost, the shortage of electricity and computer illiteracy among citizens in Tanzania, that the Tanzanians used SMS to report human rights abuses to the Commission of Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRGG). Savinov et al. (2014) reported how they designed a U-Call<sup>4</sup>, a service that could be made available to everyone through existing technologies and basic mobile phones to facilitate communication between the people and the government in Northern Uganda. In Nigeria also, internet enabled mobile phones have been used for election monitoring and agricultural development. In 2015, Revoda, an internet enable mobile application was used in Nigeria to crowdsource election monitoring (Uwalaka & Amadi, 2016). Also, internet enabled mobile application generally known as E-Wallet in Nigeria has been used for agricultural development in Nigeria (Uwalaka, 2017a).

But mobile phones have been known to be useful in mobilizing for collective actions: mobile collective action literature is replete with studies on how mobile phones have helped in organizing collective actions. Notable among them is Howard Rheingold’s *Smart Mob*

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<sup>4</sup> U-Call is a free and automated mobile reporting system which facilitates the communication between the people and the government (Savinov et al., 2014).

(Rheingold, 2002). In this work Rheingold explored the importance of emergent ‘smart mobs’ or ‘mobile ad hoc networks’ to collective actions. Drawing from collective actions such as the 1999 protests in Seattle and the 2001 People Power II protests in the Philippines, Rheingold (2002) suggested that smart mobs arise when the human propensity for cooperation is amplified by information and its dissemination through communication technologies.

Another work that extolled the potential of mobile phones in organizing collective action is *Here Comes Everybody* by Clay Shirky. Similar to Rheingold (2002) and Wasik (2009) in his book *Flash Mob, Shirky in Here Comes Everybody*, is optimistic about the potential use of mobile technologies for collective action. Shirky (2008) argued that mobile technologies foster the rise of new forms of collective action by reducing users’ investment in time and money. Like Shirky, and Rheingold, Hardt and Negri (2005) argued that ‘swarm intelligence’ are those fluid social formations arising from complex technical linkages that enable intelligent collective action out of heterogeneity and multiplicity, without the need for centralization.

However, these studies have been criticized as too simplistic and techno-centric. For example, Rafael (2003) argued that the crowd in Manila themselves served as an alternative communication, while Miard (2012) found no evidence for the hypothesis that mobile phones alone will create a measurable impact on political activism. In the same vein, Morozov (2012) challenged Shirky for his insistence on the emancipatory potential of new media, suggesting that the internet, including the mobile web, strengthens the surveillance capabilities of authoritarian regimes. While it is important to acknowledge that Rheingold, Shirky, and Hardt and Negri’s thesis may be hyperbolic in nature, discountenancing the role of mobile technologies is in itself pessimistic, as it is logical that mobile technologies being in their formative years, impact collective actions, and recent results strengthen this point. For instance, a *Guardian* – LSE team found that BlackBerry Messenger was the communication method of choice for youths rioting in England in 2011. They argued that this was partly due to the low cost of the ‘pay as you go’ platform and partly to the secure nature of particular network. Their result correspond with that of Chiumbu (2012) who explained how ‘flash’ or ‘please call me’ have made mobile phones affordable to the vast majority of the people. She contended that mobile phones have amplified mobilization for social movements.

In general, these studies failed to reveal the role (or lack) of specific mobile technologies in organizing a social movement. Outside of SMS specifically studied in the work of Rheingold,

no specific mobile application has been studied in the mobile collective action literature. Although in their study of the use of mobile phones for social protest by Spain's indignados, Monterde and Postill (2014) used processual dimension to conduct phase-by-phase analyses, to establish which mobile technologies and mobile ensembles were salient at which stage in the course of the protest, they did not mention or evaluate specific mobile technologies or applications. Some other concepts, such as 'complex dialectics' (Barassi, 2013), 'hybrid media' (Chadwick, 2013), 'new media ecology' (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012) and 'media cultures' (Costanza-Chock, 2012), have been considered and they are relevant in the discourse of the compatibility of mobile technologies with other technologies leaving a lacuna in the mobile collective action literature as to how individual mobile applications impact social movement organizations and this project will try to bridge this gap.

Mobile phones and the internet can be used in different contexts too. For example, there is a large body of research that has explained the role of the internet, Twitter, Facebook and blogs during natural disasters. Bruns and his colleagues have written about the use of Twitter for rapid emergency relief during natural crises as well as for elections (Bruns & Burgess, 2011a, 2011b; Bruns, Burgess, Crawford, & Shaw, 2012; Bruns & Highfield, 2013; Bruns & Liang, 2012). Having examined the rapid emergence of online citizen interactions during the 2011 flood in Queensland and Wikileaks, Bruns and Burgess (2011b) argued that the value of going beyond mainstream approaches to build government-to-citizen or citizen-to-citizen engagement is a rapid adhoc forms of participatory organization which are forged in a more distributed fashion during acute events' (p. 48). Similarly, having examined the patterns of tweet that occurred during and after the February, 2011 Christchurch earthquake, Bruns and Burgess (2012) thought that the use of Twitter and other social media platforms for 'crisis communication' pointed not only to the importance of 'social media as a tool for the affected communities to self-organise their disaster response and recovery activities', but also as a tool for 'emergency management services to disseminate key information and receive updates from local communities' (p. 229). Bruns et al. (2012) contended that Twitter was 'used in important ways to find and disseminate information' as well as for retweeting Queensland flood (#qldflood) messages thus, acting as amplifiers of emergency information and thereby increasing its reach (p. 7).

The Christchurch Recovery Map created in the February 2011 New Zealand earthquake, contained information gathered via email, Twitter, SMS as well as locally based websites. It was built with open source tools and the active support of crisis-commons and Ushahidi, a

not-for-profit software company had a phenomenal benefit in Christchurch (Bourk & Holland, 2014; Duc, Vu, & Ban, 2014; Hersman & No, 2012) and then again in Chile and Haiti (Liu, Iacucci, & Meier, 2010; Morrow, Mock, Papendieck, & Kocmich, 2011).

Ushahidi was first developed to map reports of violence in Kenya in 2008 following the disputed presidential election (Meier & Brodock, 2008; Okolloh, 2009). Ushahidi uses crowdsourcing for social activism: what it does has been termed ‘activist mapping’ meaning the integration of social activism, citizen journalism and a geospatial map. Ushahidi has since been used in crowdsourced election monitoring in Nigeria and other countries (Bailard & Livingston, 2014; Uwalaka & Amadi, 2016). These examples show that mobile phones and the internet are being used in many contexts to improve society. They also show that the use of mobile phones and the internet transcends the purview of this project.

#### **4.5. Collective and connective actions**

The debate about the logic that necessitates collective action is one that has evolved as digital technologies have evolved. On the one hand are scholars who believe in the logic of collective action and on the other are those that support the logic of connective action. Scholars who argue that for a collective action to impact political participation it has to be a collective enterprise which involves the development of strong, thick, deliberative ties between participants or citizens (Hay, 2007; Stoker, 2006). Some communication and digital activism scholars (Gladwell, 2010, 2011; Morozov, 2009a, 2009b, 2014; Putnam, 2000) argued that the shift in late-modernity towards the atomization and personalization of politics stands in contrast to the thick collective capacity a healthy democratic system requires. From their perspective, as with the arena definition of political participation scholars, the new social trends which prefer thin, loosely organized forms of engagement, can be disadvantageous to effective governance, and in many ways, echo the growth of neoliberalism which defends a negative view of the state and its interventionist role.

Conversely, Bennett and his colleagues (Bennett, 2012; Bennett & Segerberg, 2011, 2012, 2014; Bennett, Segerberg, & Walker, 2014) contend that communication, and the means of communication can facilitate the development of organizational structures. According to them, the communication networks acts as organization, and so, permits the development of connective action frames. Digitalized technology results in loosely interconnected, interpersonal networks that create outcomes that resemble those of collective action, yet are ‘without the same role played by formal organizations or the need for exclusive, collective

action framings' (Bennett & Segerberg, 2014, p. 35). This point is crucial, as it highlights how online forms of engagement can reflect the function of their traditional counterparts.

Prior to the popularization of the internet, scholars had tried to re-conceptualize Olson's collective action (Olson, 1965) to incorporate the changing media environment. One of such studies is Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl (2005). They argued that much of the traditional theory of collective action was simply too limited to conditions in which private – public boundaries were firm and comparatively impermeable, such that individuals' efforts to cross them were characterized by discreet free-riding calculations in the context of high costs. They went further to suggest that:

It may well be that no actions taken using contemporary technologies are strictly new in a qualitative sense; many actions, such as those of self-organizing groups, clearly have antecedents in a time well before the internet. Indeed we are intrigued by the possibility of similarities between contemporary collective actions using new technologies and historical cases under conditions where costs of relevant information, communication, and coordination were also low and individuals could readily negotiate boundaries between their private and public lives (Bimber et al., 2005, p. 385).

Similarly, before the Arab Spring, in a survey study (N=705) that evaluated digital media and the organization of anti-Iraq war demonstrations in the United States of America, Bennett *et al.* (2008) found that the diversity of personal networks provided a far stronger explanation for a predominant reliance on digital media than did simple association with organizations sponsoring the demonstrations. This means that those who are not 'loyal' to a particular organization are more likely to use digital media and this has a crucial ramification for the logic of connective action. Organizationally, Bennett *et al.* (2014) saw three elemental modes of peer production that operated together to create organization in the crowd: the production, curation, and dynamic integration of various types of information content and other resources that become distributed and utilized across the crowd.

Tacit from the foregoing is that, Bennett and Colleagues' the logic of connective action is similar to the inquest of Bimber and colleagues, as terms such as 'self-organizing groups' and 'private-public lives' are similar to Bennett and colleagues' 'loose networks' and 'personal action frames'. These logics (connective and collective actions) like the definitions of what is 'political' (in arena and process definition) are related but also different.

The changing media environment means that scholars, particularly those that espouse arena definition to political participation, cannot ignore the role of self-organizing groups and the

contemporary way that they participate in politics. It would be harsh to see these new activism styles as inauthentic as is sometimes done by mainstream analysts because it does not happen in the political arena and is not collective in nature as are some of the new activism styles such as clicktivism (Halupka, 2014) which lead to more visible political action. Again, as with the arena and process definition of political participation (see Chapter Three for full review), it is necessary that scholars move beyond dualism and embrace dualities because the advancement in communication technology has made it almost impossible to see political activism as something that only occurs when there are strong, thick, deliberative ties between citizens; neither does it help to see it as ubiquitous. Rather, political participation should be seen as dualities where one helps the other. Marsh and Akram (2015) made this point when they argued that connective action and personal action frames are becoming increasingly important, but if ‘citizens are to effect change this still usually involves collective action’ (Marsh & Akram, 2015, p. 641). One idea that will help to synthesize and bridge the dualism in connective and collective actions and compress them into dualities is Halupka (2016) conceptualization of ‘information activists’ that is, individuals who are deeply involved in connective action; they communicate information through their network and may either become involved in collective action themselves or influence others to do so.

The need for scholars to see collective and connective actions as dualities is clearer when we follow the debate about how activists organize collective actions as they pertain to leadership and resource building (Bennett, 2012; Bennett & Segerberg, 2011, 2012, 2014; Bennett et al., 2014; Bennett et al., 2011; Margetts, John, Hale, & Reissfelder, 2013; O’Neil, 2009; Segerberg & Bennett, 2011). For example, Bennett and his associates argued that personalized content sharing across media networks presents networks that are new becoming prominent in the contentious politics of the contemporary era, where self-organizing, organizationally enabled networks and organizationally brokered networks are helping to organize movements and protests (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012, 2014). Margetts et al. (2013) argued that the availability of internet-based platforms challenges the long standing conventional wisdom about the limits and barriers to mass political participation that exist with the facilitation of huge online gatherings of people who do not know each other. They argued, further, that social media helped to facilitate online collective action or participatory actions such as signing e-petition or raising the profile of a demonstration through endorsement or notification, and concluded that online starters and followers have a role of ‘leadership without a leader’ (Margetts et al., 2013, p. 1).

Castells (2012) posited that contemporary social movements can be understood as non-violent and leaderless; global and local at the same time; consist of multiple forms, flowing from online spaces to urban, project oriented, and, public outrage transitioning to hope through deliberations in the space of autonomy. Not unrelated here is Bennett and Segerberg's (2012, 2014) work on the logic of connective action. Addressing similar developments in engagement structures and alluding to the lack of leadership in online networks, they posited that taking public action becomes an act of personal expression and recognition or self-validation, and that the participants usually loathe the idea of 'leaders and official spokespeople'.

Conversely, Gerbaudo (2012) argued that the impact of social media was complex and ambiguous. He interviewed 80 activists, that is, social movement participants, about their use of social media such as Twitter and Facebook and their views about the leaderlessness of the social movement. He argued that activists' use of social media did not fit with the image of a cyberspace detached from physical reality. He asserted that social media was used as part of a project of re-appropriation of public space, and, that the 2011 social movements had leaders (soft leaders), and these handful of soft leaders controlled the flow of communication, directing people towards specific protest events, providing participants with suggestions and instructions about how to act, and constructing emotional narration to sustain their coming together in public space (Gerbaudo, 2012, 2014, 2016). His argument about the leadership online is in line with O'Neil (2009) case analysis about leadership and authority in online communities and how the 'cyberchiefs' achieved leadership and legitimacy in their online communities.

#### **4.6. Review of designs of social media and social movement research**

How researchers gather the data that informs their findings and arguments is an important aspect of any given research. Consequently, this section reviews the design of research already undertaken and relevant to social media, mobile phone and social movement and this review sets a departure point for this project's design from some of the projects that have been undertaken.

Generally, social media and social movement studies have been carried out using a number of designs, including quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods and big data. There are variations in the results of social media and social movement studies, but these studies have also used a variety of types of research analysis; for example, in their study, Tufekci and Wilson (2012)



used a quantitative approach, a paper based survey for their data collection, and logistic regression in their data analysis. This type of statistical analysis entails the use of dichotomous variables. A dichotomous variable is synonymous to binary variable in that observations that occur in one of two possible states, often labelled zero and one. Some examples includes such as ‘improved/not improved’ ‘joined protest/ did not join protest’ ‘yes/no’ (Lunney, 1970). The criticism levelled at this type of variable is that the variable fails to provide detailed information about the topic under investigation. However, it is important to use this variable in cases that demand a-two level answers such as in protest participation (participated in a protest/did not participate in a protest).

Breuer et al. (2015) used probit-ordered regression to analyse the data they obtained from their quantitative online survey about protest participation in Tunisia. This is closely related to the analytic technique that Tufekci and Wilson (2012) used in their study. Howard and his colleagues (Howard, Agarwal, et al., 2011a; Howard, Duffy, et al., 2011; Howard & Hussain, 2011, 2013) collected data from tweets of participants during the Arab Spring. They used fuzzy logic as the analytic technique: fuzzy logic was first advanced by Zadeh (1965) as an approach to focus on degree of truth rather than the usual true or false Boolean logic. Fuzzy logic includes zeros and ones as extreme cases of truth but also includes the various state of truth in between (Klir & Yuan, 1995). This type of analysis has similar drawbacks to logistic regression analysis explained above.

Digital activism literature in Nigeria has made use of a range of data collection methods both qualitative and quantitative such as: interviews, surveys, social networking content analysis, and discourse analysis. For example, Ibrahim (2013) collected his data through Facebook status updates and a paper-based survey. For his part, Kombol (2014) did a quantitative analysis of data collected from a survey using a tabular presentation. In contrast, Ejiogu, Olatunji, and Szczygiel (2013) and Hari (2014) collected qualitative data semi-structured interviews and in-depth interviews. The differences and similarities in these studies inform my research design (see Chapter Six). Table 4.1 outlines comparable studies, the data collection methods and the results

**Table 4.1: A summary of comparable social media studies and their results**

<b>Study</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Gaps</b>
Tufekci & Wilson (2012)	Quantitative - paper base Survey -Logistic Regression	Social media in general and Facebook in particular, provided sources of information the regime could not easily control in Egypt	1. Dichotomous variable does not give detailed information.
Breuer et al. (2015)	Quantitative - online Survey Probit-ordered regression	Social media allowed a digital elite to inhabit the national media breakout by brokering information for main stream media	1. Dichotomous variable was used. This limits the amount of information or detail available from the protest participants
Howard and Hussain (2012)	Quantitative - Tweets analysis from twitter - Fuzzy logic	Digital media had a causal role in the Arab Spring, in that they provided the fundamental infrastructure for a social movement	1. Dichotomous Variable 2. Extrapolated themes from protesters' tweets.
Ibrahim (2013)	Quantitative - Facebook status updates analysis - Paper based survey	The socio-economic and political issues discussed by the online protesters motivated offline protesters during the protest	1. This study did not show any relationship between social media and protesters' decision to participate in the protest. 2. It did not compare protesters use of other media such as mobile phone.
Kombol (2014)	Quantitative – Survey - Tabular Presentation	Social media was used to during the protests because restrictions in other media stifled expression of individual opinion in the public sphere	1. The population of the study is divisive (Nigeria Labour Congress). This is because NLC only joined the protest on the sixth day via offline directives. 2. Did not compare social media with other media such as mobile phone
Ejiogu, Olatunji, and Szczygiel (2013)	Qualitative - Semi-Structured Interview	Innovative use of Twitter has given rise to a virtual sphere that has grown into Arab Spring and Occupy movements	1. Interviews were too short. 2. Findings were too broad for sufficient information to have real meaning.
Hari (2014)	Qualitative - In-depth and focus group	Social media use during the protest was a driver for 'Occupy Nigeria'	1. The result is too broad – need to be more specific. 2. Did not show any pattern associating social media use and decision to participate in 'Occupy Nigeria'.

#### **4.7. Chapter summary**

This review of internet technologies and social movement has revealed that the internet and its technologies are helping the people participate in politics, engage leaders and, are depleting the power of dictators. One important role of social media in social movements that the review showed is in the area of the mobilization and coordination of social movements. Prior to the advent of web 2.0 that encouraged the formation of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and my Space, protest mobilization was always through other media platforms. However, that has changed, particularly during the Arab Spring and Occupy movements when social media played a cardinal role in mobilizing protesters and helping them coordinate the protests.

With improved mobile phone technology and the spread of mobile phone, internet-enabled mobile phones have made it possible for more people to engage their leaders. People in poor countries with inadequate internet infrastructure are using their mobile phones as gateways to access social media platforms and mobile social networking applications. Mobile phones do not only allow for the communication of political information needed for rational deliberation in the political arena, but also cultural and social borders and hierarchies so that identities are re-fashioned and informal economies and communication networks created.

The review also showed that the logic of collective action changes as internet technologies change, but it was concluded that connective and collective actions should be more of dualities than dualisms. In the chapter there was also a review of research designs of relevant social media studies. The review revealed that digital media and political communication studies have used various research designs in order to obtain results that were helpful in informing their argument.

This chapter has given a perspective from the literature reviewed into how the internet and mobile technologies are having an impact on political participation and social movements. The next chapter will give contextual insight into how the internet and mobile technologies work in Nigeria by reviewing the processes of mobile phone and internet-enabled mobile phone diffusion, the current state of play and the directions that it seems to be heading. The chapter will conclude with a review of related social media studies in Nigeria.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### MOBILE INTERNET AND DIGITAL ACTIVISM IN NIGERIA

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#### **5.1. Introduction**

The previous chapter reviewed the debate about the role of internet technologies in social movement organizations. Moving on from this, the present chapter provides detailed background information on the mobile internet and an historical perspective on digital activism and political participation in Nigeria, providing knowledge that is an essential precursor to the main aspect of this study. To do so, the chapter reviews governance and the public sphere in Nigeria followed by an evaluation of mobile internet and digital activism in Nigeria, and concludes with a consideration of the studies undertaken in Nigeria on social media use.

#### **5.2. Governance and public sphere in Nigeria**

‘A nation conceived in faith and unity is born today...’ These lavish words of patriotism were written by Jose Babatunde, the veteran editor of *The Daily Times* newspaper on the morning of 1 October 1960 to celebrate Nigeria’s political Independence from Britain. Nowadays, they ring hollow in the ears of millions of Nigerians (Dare, 2011; Kogbara, 2010). Though the faith endures, achieving the ideals of independence is uncertain due to years of leadership failure and stunted development. The unity has been weakened by decades of uneven development and the erroneous implementation of the tenets of democracy and the spirit of federalism that are enshrined in the Nigerian constitution (Dare, 2011; Nwankwo Arthur, 1972; Obafemi, 1947; Sklar, 1983). Five decades after independence, these problems are not abating and have taken on a different twist – the deepening distrust between the leaders and the led (Amadi, 2003).

In their hurry for independence, the founding fathers in politically decolonized countries such as Nigeria have been found to have overlooked certain serious matters. Amadi (2003, 2006) has argued that one is the failure to recognize that the democratizing process not only necessitates the existence of conflicting interests or opposing viewpoints but, importantly, imposes an obligation on the leaders to devise an effective political communication model for managing the conflicts which the democratizing process usually breeds and a model that fosters democratic participation by all. Instead, the political leaders constructed a political

communication system that was paternalistic, elitist, and as prejudiced as it was manipulative. They created their own version of an effective form of social control and believed their thought to be a reflection of all groups' values and interests (Amadi, 2003; Okafor, 2004; Uwalaka, 2010). Basking in such a delusion, they 'constrained the content of political discourse that echoed only their views on all issues' (Amadi, 2003, p. 157); and, to strengthen this mode of political communication that forbids open rational discourse, the elites conscripted the most popular and influential elements of mass media and converted them into megaphones for propagating the government's jaundiced views of political discourse (Uwalaka, 2010).

Historically, Nigeria has experienced public sphere activities in different modes. Before Nigeria was colonized, different ethnic nationalities had town-hall-like assemblies – akin to Dewey's communitarian democracy, where rational discourse and competing ideas were showcased (Njoku, 2005; Okafor, 2004). A person's idea and argument was a source of respect for him and his family, and it always came with social status (Amadi, 2006; Njoku, 2005). After the amalgamation of Southern Nigeria and Northern Nigeria, led by Fredrick Lugard in 1914, the country shifted from a town-hall-like public sphere (communitarian democracy) to a mass mediated public sphere as the national leaders engaged the colonial masters politically via the print media. It was here that comments by elites such as Nnamdi Azikiwe, Tafawa Belewa and Obafemi Awolowo set the tone for public discourse and influenced public opinion (Amadi, 2006).

Until independence in 1960, Nigeria upheld a mass mediated public sphere – the form of public sphere where journalistic writing by mainstream journalists and commentaries were the platform for critical debate that leads to the formation of public opinion (Uwalaka, 2010). Then in 1966, the seizure of political power by the military stifled freedom of expression and the public sphere or mass media public sphere suffered. During the period of military dictatorship, Nigerians were coerced into concealing their thoughts; some left the country and the few (such as Gani, Amakiri, and Soyinka) who publicly criticized the government were tortured and incarcerated (Amadi, 2006; Ogbondah, 1986, 1989, 1991, 1994, 2000). Also, there were mysterious killings of personalities during this period. Among those killed were Kudirat Abiola, Chief Alfred Rewane and Retired Major General Shehu Yar'Adua. Notably, it has been argued that 'the killings during the Babangida and Abacha regimes served as warnings to those who would have dared stand on the ways of those regimes' (Udoakah, 2006, p. 73). There was no free speech and no political parties. Political participation was

stifled as the government and military used brute force to coerce journalists and social critics into heeding their views. This caused Nigerians to avoid participating in political discourse, and civic engagement suffered. As a result, cynicism and pessimism flourished in Nigeria (Amadi, 2003, 2006; Ogbondah, 1994; Uwalaka & Amadi, 2016).

Postcolonial governments in Nigeria have used repressive methods to control the public sphere. They have engaged in this to stop the media and civil society groups from exposing bad governance to the people. The most frequently clandestine used methods include censorship and arrest of journalists and members of civil society groups (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). One method that successive governments have used successfully is to disrupt the public sphere with fake public sphere participants (Obadare, 2010; Uwalaka, 2015a). The governments achieve this through the creation of their own civil society groups. It is in the civil society arena that the 'emergence of normative claims from society regarding its own identity and the role of public institutions in shaping that identity are formulated' (Woods, 1992).

Civil society groups are potent agents in the formation of the public sphere, particularly in developing democracies, as they provide the platform for citizens' political deliberations that lead to the formation of public opinion. But in order to stifle civil society groups in Nigeria, successive governments in postcolonial Nigeria have created their own civil society groups to frustrate the operation of the public sphere (Obadare, 2005; Uwalaka, 2015a). Governments in Nigeria have 'penetrated, subverted, confused, repressed institutions of civil society and even created their own pro-regime shells within the social space traditionally identified with civil life' (Oyediran & Agbaje, 1999, p. 310). Furthermore, Ikechukwu (1997) argued that postcolonial governments in Nigeria utilized 'own' civil society groups to threaten and destabilize genuine civil society groups. He concluded that what existed in Nigeria was a restrictive and stifling atmosphere, which did not tolerate alternative points of view (Ikechukwu, 1997). Governments in Nigeria set up these groups to enable the state to subtly intervene in the public sphere, and to influence and shape the generation of ideas and mobilization of opinion (Olukoshi, 1997). According to Uwalaka (2015a) such 'fake' civil society groups or public sphere participants include Association for Better Nigeria (ABN) – Babangida's regime; Youth Earnestly Ask for Abacha (YEAA) – Abacha's regime; Transformation Ambassadors of Nigeria (TAN) – Jonathan's regime and the National Association of Nigerian Students' (NANS) support for Obasanjo's third term bid and the adoption of Jonathan in the 2015 election. 'NANS in particular is extremely depressing as the

once revered union that fought alongside the masses' like its 'predecessors such as the West African Student Union (WASU) – that fought colonialism has turned into the an auction to the highest bidder' (Uwalaka, 2015a, p. 1).

The associations that lead to civil societies, public sphere and public opinion predate colonial rule in Nigeria. They were vital vehicles for the nationalist groups across Africa and Nigeria. They acted as a means of mobilizing local populations in the struggle for political independence. While civil society groups, particularly youth groups and the intellectuals, were important in the independence movement of the 1950s in Nigeria, these groups, particularly the intellectuals or 'the intelligentsia' (Amadi, 2006, p. 56) did not play the same extensive role in mobilizing and shaping public opinion in postcolonial Nigeria. Bayart (1986) eloquently pointed this out when he observed that 'African intellectuals (with few exceptions) have failed to provide civil societies with the original conceptual instruments required for its growth' (p. 120). The failure of post-colonial Nigerian youth groups and the intelligentsia to provide viable civil society groups has adversely affected the public sphere and the formation of public opinion.

Many polities in transition are undermined by what is called a 'deliberation deficit' which means the absence of a given social formation of a common ethos that frames the debate on issues of general concern (Obadare, 2005, 2007, 2010). The deliberation deficit in post-colonial Nigeria, it can be argued, destroyed the Nigerian public sphere and its absence continued until 2012 when Nigerians mobilized and protested against the removal of the subsidy from petroleum products.

In 1999, Nigerians were elated at the prospect of civilian rule as the country transitioned to democracy. However, the post-military democratic regimes in Nigeria perpetuated norms and practices that were characteristics of the previous openly authoritarian era (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011; Obadare, 2009). In addition, democratic tenets such as free and fair elections have struggled and electoral violence increased. In fact, scholars (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011; Agbaje & Adejumobi, 2006; Alamu, 2009; Odebode, 2007; Omotola, 2009) have described democracy in Nigeria as a 'garrison democracy'. It has been argued that in Nigeria, the elites structure elections in a phoney manner in order to maintain their hegemonic agenda, and through this means they amass huge financial, political and electoral capital (Adejumobi, 2000; Agbaje & Adejumobi, 2006; Amuwo, 2009).

Due to this elitist mentality, selection rather than election is encouraged and any attempt by the citizens to go against the wishes of the elites usually breeds violence. For example, in 2007, former president Olusegun Obasanjo described the 2007 elections as a ‘do or die affair’ (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011; Odebode, 2007; Tayo, 2007), and during the 2015 general elections the Oba of Lagos, Oba Rilwan Akiolu, threatened the Igbos in Lagos to vote for his candidate or perish in the lagoon. He announced that ‘on Saturday, if anyone of you, I swear in the name of God, goes against my wish that Ambode will be the next governor of Lagos State, that person is going to die inside the lagoon’ (Olayinka, 2015). Akinwunmi Ambode was the governorship aspirant in Lagos under the platform of the All Progressive Congress (APC). Clearly, post-military democracy in Nigeria is arguably as autocratic as the military dictators were.

### **5.3. Mobile internet and digital activism in Nigeria – the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest**

As discussed in chapter two, the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest was sparked by the controversial decision of the Federal Government of Nigeria under President Goodluck Jonathan to withdraw the fuel subsidy from the people, a subsidy that had been in existence since 1998. The protests started on 2 January, 2012 in Lagos but soon spread to other major cities in Nigeria, especially as the movement’s goals evolved into a broader opposition to the government. By 9 January, 2012, the peaceful demonstration had transformed itself into a wide-scale resistance movement and broader than simply the fuel subsidy, as other issues such as corruption and waste were involved.

The Nigerian protests featured the heavy use of social media and internet-enabled technologies. This was as a result of or at least, in part, the conventional media’s reluctance to cover the protests, particularly positions that deviated from the government’s official line. Social media enabled protestors to stay connected, while also assisting with coordinating and mobilizing for the protests. Moreover, it enabled protestors to stay informed about emerging unreported news but below is a review of digital activism studies in Nigeria, particularly as it concerns the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest (see Chapter Two, Sections 2.1-2.3 for a full review).

#### **5.3.1. Related social media studies in Nigeria**

The 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest was mobilized and coordinated at the same time social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and mobile social networking applications such as WhatsApp, 2go, Eskimi and Badoo, were becoming popular in Nigeria. With the increase in online activity during the protest, some scholars have argued that social



media influenced the organization of the protest (Hari, 2014; Ibrahim, 2013; Kombol, 2014). While others attempt to downplay the influence of social media in the protest (Egbunike & Olorunnisola, 2015). For example, digital activism studies in Nigeria have found that the socio-economic and political issues discussed by the online protesters motivated offline protesters during the protest (Ibrahim, 2013). Also, it has been found that social media was used during the protests as a result of eroded trust in the mainstream media (Kombol, 2014) and, that it was a driver for the protest (Hari, 2014). Some other studies have found that the appropriation of social media enhanced Nigerian youths' ability to challenge dominant power groups while making it difficult for the power groups to clamp down on the protesters (Akor, 2014; Onwuegbuchi, 2012).

Conversely, some studies have found that it was old media and not social media that was the main driver for the protest (Egbunike, 2014; Egbunike & Olorunnisola, 2015). For example, Egbunike and Olorunnisola (2015) contend that the representatives of the old media were the principal contributors to the organisation of the protest. Their study was based on how the old media and social media framed the motivations, diagnosis and prognosis of the protest. Since the old media practitioners were trained journalists, it is logical and to be expected that they would have the composure and finesse to frame the motivation, diagnosis and prognosis of the protest compared to untrained citizen journalists. Besides, digital activists arguably worked in real-time, trying to 'spread enthusiasm and facilitate emotional contagion' (Gerbaudo, 2016, p. 254), and as a result, may not have been coherent in the framing of the protest.

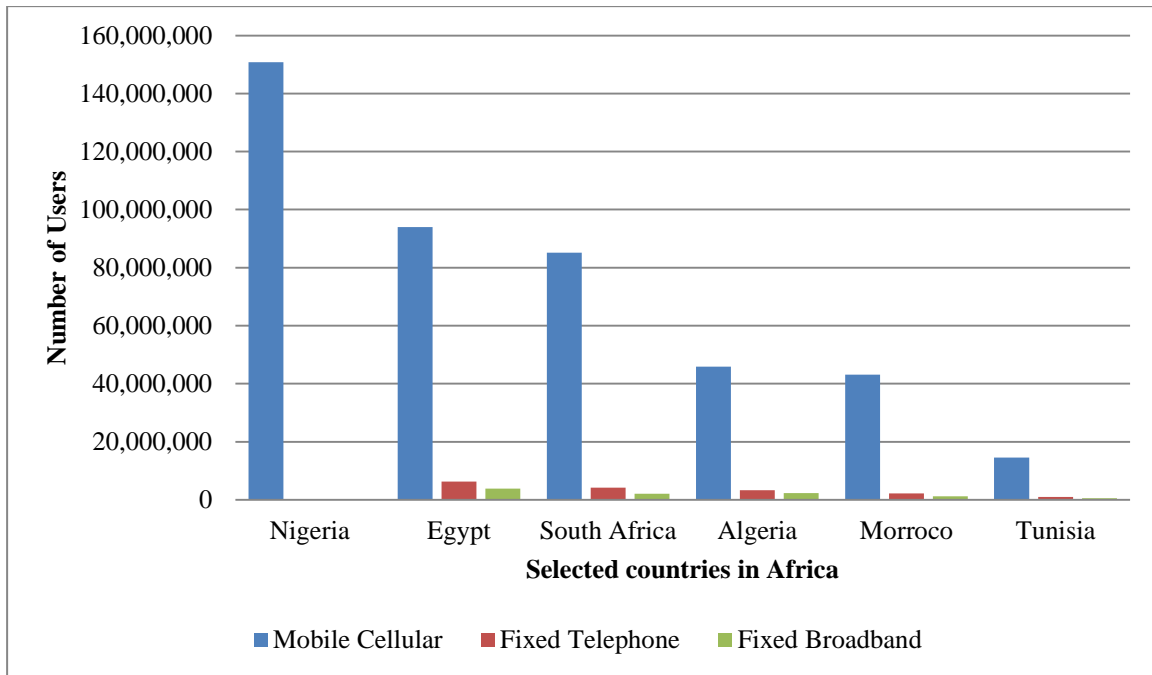
While it is true that social media platforms and mobile social networking applications occasioned by increased mobile internet diffusion have been found to have had an impact on digital activism and helped increase their penetration and scope, these studies so far, have failed to reveal the role (or lack) of social media in organizing the occupy Nigeria protest. The studies have examined social media use during the protest, but due to the nature of the political activism environment in Nigeria (see Section 5.1). The researcher argues that the more potent examination will involve evaluating how the protest was organized and the role of social media in regard to the organization of the protest.

### **5.3.2. ICT adoption in Nigeria**

As a result of restrictions on other media and the polarized nature of civil society groups, Nigerians have embraced information and communication technologies (ICTs), particularly

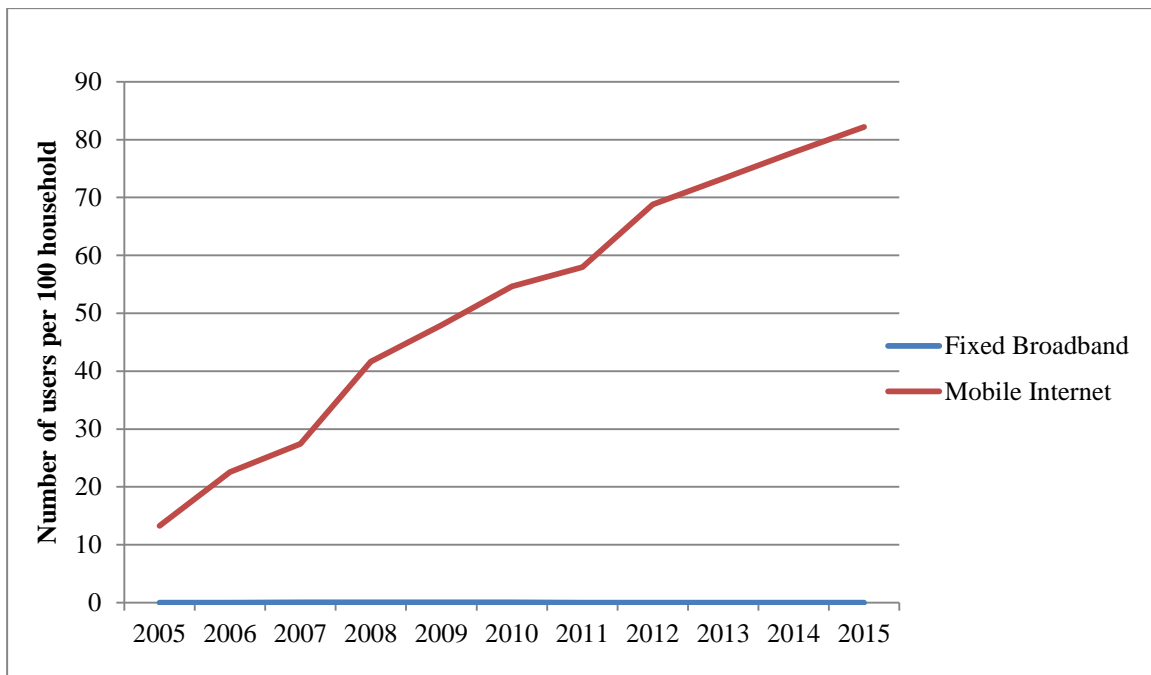
the mobile internet, as a source of information and a vehicle for transmitting their messages to the government. The providers of fixed line phones, the government controlled Nigerian Telecommunication (NITEL) had poor infrastructure. After the deregulation of the telecommunications sector in Nigeria, in 2000, investors capitalized on the dearth of infrastructure in fixed telephony and invested in mobile telephony. Investing in mobile phones was cheaper for both the investors and Nigerians, even though mobile phones were expensive initially; it slowly became less expensive and affordable to most people. As mobile telephony slowly became affordable to almost everyone, it became instrumental in facilitating communication in Nigeria. The upgrading of mobile phones to connect to the internet has helped Nigerians send and receive information cheaply and conveniently and, Nigerians have followed a similar trajectory of using their mobile phones with internet connectivity.

Nigeria has a high mobile phone subscription rate and mobile internet use with more than 40 percent of Nigerian households using internet-enabled mobile phones; this is a substantial amount in comparison to the 3.2 percent who have fixed broadband access (International Telecommunication Union, 2013). Nigeria also has about 71 mobile phone subscriptions per 100 households (International Telecommunication Union, 2013, 2014). Mobile surfing has resulted in a dramatic increase in basic access to information that was originally held back from the public or kept beyond their reach. According to Alozie et al. (2011), ‘nothing has transformed Africa in recent years as much and as rapidly, as the cellular phone’ (p.754). Cellular phone technology then, has radically altered telephony in Nigeria and one can safely say that Africans have leap frogged copper-wire technology (Alozie et al., 2011).



**Figure 5.1. Mobile cellular, fixed telephone and broadband in selected African countries for 2016**  
**Source: ITU data set, 2016.**

According to the International Telecommunication Union 2016 data set, Nigeria has the highest mobile phone subscription in Africa, with an estimated 150 million mobile cellular subscribers (see Figure 5.1). Even so, Nigeria has room for growth as its mobile phone per 100 households is 82. This is almost the lowest in Africa (ITU, 2016). Also, fixed telephone and fixed broadband are declining as mobile phone and internet increases. This trend means that Nigerians are comfortable with mobile internet. Figure 5.2 shows the trend between fixed broadband and mobile internet in Nigeria between 2005 to 2015. It illustrates that fixed broadband has been declining while mobile internet subscription has consistently increased.



**Figure. 5.2. Fixed broadband and mobile internet in Nigeria between 2005-2015**  
**Source: ITU data set, 2016.**

How Nigerians' have embraced information and communication technologies (ICTs), particularly mobile internet is in evidence in the 2016 International Telecommunication Union's ICT development index (IDI). This index shows that although Nigeria is low in ICT development, Nigerians acknowledge the importance of ICT and are striving to incorporate it into their daily routines. While Nigeria is low in both ICT development index and in the access sub-index for 2015 with an IDI of 2.72 (137<sup>th</sup> country) and 2.96 (147<sup>th</sup> country) respectively, Nigeria made progress in the IDI use sub-index with a use score of 2.28 (116<sup>th</sup> country). This statistics shows that Nigerians are particularly keen to use ICT facilities, even though access to such facilities is limited. With Nigeria performing better at the 'use-sub index' – this sub-index captures ICT intensity and usage indicators that is, individuals using the internet, fixed broadband subscriptions, and mobile broadband subscriptions, this means that Nigerians are willing to take advantage of technological advancement. The enthusiasm showed by Nigerians has been unable to transform into rapid ICT development because of the ICT 'environment' in Nigeria. The ICT environment in Nigeria is not advancing at the same rate as ICT potential in Nigeria. This slows the development of ICT in Nigeria.

But the majority of Nigerians have access to ICT technologies such as the internet via a mobile phone. The internet providers in Nigeria have internet packages that are affordable to many mobile phone users. There are about 8 mobile phone network providers and these

network providers provide mobile internet to Nigerians via subscription or data plans. These data plans range from a 24 hour plan to monthly plan. The daily rate ranges from 10 megabytes to 200 megabytes, while the monthly rates range from 2 gigabytes to 16 gigabytes. The three dominant network providers in Nigeria are MTN, Glo and Etisalat. Below is a comparison to their data plan prices.

According to the data plan price table below, MTN Nigeria has the most expensive data plan price while Glo is the cheapest. Etisalat’s data plan prices are slightly higher, than those of Glo and lower than those of MTN. In Nigeria, it costs AUD 0.64 to have a daily 10 megabytes of internet upload and download. It costs between AUD 5.09 to AUD 6.36 to subscribe to the 200 megabytes of mobile internet. It cost a maximum of AUD28.60 to buy a data plan of 2 gigabytes and it cost a maximum of AUD 47.68 to subscribe to a 5 gigabyte data plan in Nigeria <sup>5</sup>

**Table 5.1. Comparison between the 3 major Network providers in Nigeria**

Network Providers	Data Plan Price (AUD)			
	10MB	200MB	2GB	5GB
MTN	0.64	6.36	28.61	47.68
GLO	0.64	5.09	22.25	38.14
Etisalat	0.64	5.72	25.43	44.50

One distinguishing factor of the mobile internet in developing countries such as Nigeria is that it has blurred the lacuna created by other forms of internet access: it empowers the poor to communicate and have an online presence. This online presence means that the ordinary Nigerians are able to participate in political discussions. This arguably has helped increase the political engagement of ordinary Nigerians. The internet can be enabled in both low-end and high-end mobile phones. The low-end mobile phones usually have difficulty in displaying video, but they can still be used to upload pictures and status updates using social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter and mobile social networking applications such as 2go, WhatsApp, Eskimi, and Badoo.

<sup>5</sup> Data from the websites of three mobile network providers in Nigeria. The price is converted from Naira to American Dollar based on World Bank’s exchange rate (see: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator//PA.NUS.FCRF>).

The adoption of this mobile technology by Nigerians has come about because of its ability to diffuse hierarchy and help the people follow events inside and outside the country. Its value was evident in the 2011 election when mobile technology was used to assist a free and fair election process (Levan & Utaka, 2012).

### **5.3.3. Social media platforms in this project**

In Nigeria, as is the case in many other countries, social media continues to expand and change; new applications are appearing every day. While Facebook users have steadily increased over the past few years, the current numbers show that Facebook and other traditional social networking sites are losing active users to other platforms such as mobile chat applications and microblogs. Across the country, there are more users on mobile chat platforms than there are on traditional social networking sites such as Facebook. According to 2013 research about internet and mobile users in Nigeria, of the 115 million mobile telephone subscribers in Nigeria, 35 million used their handheld devices to access internet data services (Business Day, 2013). Many attribute the upsurge of social media platforms and mobile social networking applications to factors such as the capability of mobile chat applications to perform on lower bandwidths and to use less data; they are also a cheaper alternative than SMS (AfricaPractice, 2014; *Business Day*, 2013).

With almost 15 million<sup>6</sup> active monthly users, **Facebook** is still the social media with the most users in Nigeria. Facebook is followed by **Eskimi**, a mobile social networking application that covers job vacancies, music, chat and forums. It has about 12 million active monthly users in Nigeria. Also, **2go** - a social networking mobile application that allows people to connect with their friends and meet new people is widely used with about 8 million active monthly users. Then, **WhatsApp** - a cross-platform mobile social networking application that friends use to communicate, and it has about 7 million active monthly users in Nigeria. Finally, there is **Badoo**, a social networking mobile application that originally was for dating and match-making but now can be used for other information sharing. It has about 4 million active monthly users in Nigeria (AfricaPractice, 2014).

While there is a growing body of social media studies in Nigeria, there are few studies on mobile social networking applications in general and none in digital activism literature. The above statistics show that many Nigerians are using not only social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter but also the innovative mobile social networking

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<sup>6</sup> Data from AfricaPractice (2014)

applications such as Eskimi, 2go, WhatsApp and Badoo. Some studies have attempted to study these mobile social networking applications in other disciplines in Nigeria but there has been no work on digital activism and communication except for generic attempt in the area of political communication (Abubakar, 2016).

In education, mobile social networking applications have been evaluated. In a study that examined whether there was a significant relationship between the use of social networking sites by Nigerian teenage students and their academic performance, Ajike and Nwakoby (2016) found that even though there was a relationship between the use of social networking sites (social media) and academic performance of teenagers in Enugu South Local Government Area, there was no prove that the relationship was the reason for the poor academic performance of the teenagers. Although this finding is not directly relevant to this project, the type of social media platforms that they studied are salient. Ajike and Nwakoby (2016) incorporated all mobile networking applications in their study. Their respondents were teenage secondary school students in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State, who reported to know about 2go (90.76%) and WhatsApp (84.34%) more than Facebook (83.13%). There were also significant mentions of Eskimi, Badoo and Twitter. However, when asked about the social media platform that they used, only WhatsApp (54.62%) was reported to be more used than Facebook (20.88%). The teenage students also reported that they had used Eskimi, Badoo and 2go, but preferred mobile social networking applications such as WhatsApp because 'it is cheap and reliable', and 'it is fast' (Ajike & Nwakoby, 2016, p. 55).

Osokoya and Kazeem (2016) evaluated mobile social networking applications in their study on the effect of social media on the learning styles of public secondary school students in Abeokuta South Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. Facebook (57%) was the most preferred social media platform among the students, but there were also significant preferences for 2go, WhatsApp, and Eskimi by the students. The reason for the preferences according, to the authors, was the opportunities Facebook provided to its users. According to the researchers, these opportunities included, 'ability of the users to create personalized profiles that included general information such as education background, date of birth, and city ... It also makes it easy to find old friends, post and tag pictures and videos' (Osokoya & Kazeem, 2016, p. 10). In a confirmatory factor analysis of the dimensionality of 700 university students' in South Western Nigeria and their readiness to use social media for learning purposes, T. A. Shittu, Gambari, Yusuf, and Alabi (2015) reported that Facebook,

Badoo, 2go, WhatsApp and Eskimi were the social media platforms most reported as being used by their respondents.

Adeogun, Bello, and Oke (2016) evaluated health information technology instruction in achieving successful sex education among undergraduates in Ogun State, Nigeria. Their respondents reported that Facebook use and mobile social networking applications use – WhatsApp, Eskimi, 2go, and Badoo helped them to understand sex education messages. These studies show that the use of mobile social networking applications for study purposes is on the rise in Nigeria. Even with this increase in the studies of mobile based social media in other areas, it is somewhat surprising that digital media and communication researchers are yet to incorporate these platforms into their research.

#### **5.4. Chapter summary**

This chapter traced the history of the mobile internet and digital activism in Nigeria. It started with a contextual analysis of digital activism environment in Nigeria and considered governance, and the public sphere as they have developed in Nigeria. This showed why the 2012 Occupy Nigeria is critical and why the conduct of studies such as this is crucial.

The chapter showed that Nigeria to be the country with the highest number of mobile phone and mobile internet subscriptions in Africa. This reinforces the argument about Nigerians' willingness to use internet technologies even though ICT infrastructure is not developing at a rapid pace. The chapter then reviewed related social media studies in Nigeria and pointed out that the trend in the literature was for studies that examined social media use during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest rather than evaluate the role of social media in organizing the occupy Nigeria protest. It is argued here that, due to the nature of the political activism environment in Nigeria, the more potent examination would be an evaluation of how the protest was organized and the role of mobile social networking applications together with those of social media in organising the protest.

In order to unravel the role of social media and mobile social networking sites in organising the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests, the next chapter explains the research design adopted in this study.



## CHAPTER SIX

### METHODOLOGY

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#### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter draws upon the research literature presented in the previous chapters and uses it as a foundation to achieve two key purposes. Firstly, it outlines the research questions (Section 6.2). Secondly, there is an overview of the research methodologies that underpin the current project, in particular from a theoretical standpoint (Sections 6.3 and 6.4). To this end, the chapter discusses the quantitative and qualitative approaches employed in the study and the extent to which they are able to complement each other in a mixed methods approach. There is a description of the research design process (Section 6.5), the procedure for preparing and conducting the data collection (Section 6.7) and an explanation of analytical techniques applied to the data (Section 6.8). The chapter concludes with an explanation of the limitations of the research design and reflexivity

#### **6.2. Research questions**

The purpose of the current study was to evaluate the effect (if any) of mobile internet use on students' digital activism in Nigeria and, determine if digital activism had an impact on the students' perception of change in democratic governance in Nigeria.

In view of this, the current study addressed the following research questions:

1. To what extent did mobile internet use:
  - a. impact how protesters participated in the protest
  - b. influence how protesters learned about the protest?
  - c. influence how protesters planned their participation in the protest?
  - d. impact how protesters documented their participation in the protest?
2. What was the interplay between protesters' media use, protest experience, and participation on the first day of the protests?
3. How does the protesters' media use help explain the interplay between knowledge, planning and documentation of protest participation?
4. To what extent do students' protest participation status, internet use type and political efficacy predict their intention to participate in political affairs?

5. Are there differences between students who did or did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest with regards to how they perceive changes in democratic governance in Nigeria?

### **6. 3. Approaches to research**

The most common and well-known distinction between research methodologies is whether the approach is quantitative or qualitative. The way in which they are distinguished from each other is relatively straight forward, with the general inclination being to lump any research methodology that uses numbers into the ‘quantitative’ category, and any methodology that does not, into the qualitative category. Whilst at the core this is certainly true, the distinction extends much further. This is highlighted by Davis (1995) who pointed out that the primary ideological orientation underpinning a study, the method of data collection, the actual nature of the resulting data, and the method in which the data is analyzed all serve to differentiate between the two approaches.

Although clear differences exist between the two research paradigms, Sandelowski (2003) argues that qualitative research can never really be clearly distinguished from quantitative research as it is not possible to find a consistent manner by which to make a comparison. At times our experiences are translated into and interpreted through numbers in a qualitative fashion, whilst at other times numbers are converted to words in adherence to the qualitative tradition (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This has led methodological theory and approaches to where it is today, into the arena of mixed methods approaches. It is this evolution that is discussed in detail in the following sections.

#### **6.3.1. The paradigm debate**

Before launching into a description of the different methodological approaches and a discussion of each in relation to the other, it is appropriate to outline the traditional divide that has existed between the quantitative and qualitative research traditions. This divide rose out of the inherent differences between the approaches: quantitative researchers were concerned in the average descriptions that could be gained from focussing on large datasets. While qualitative researchers saw the most value in individual stories of the subjects, and felt that these would be lost in large sample sizes (Dörnyei, 2007).

During the 1970s and 1980s these differences led to what has become known as the ‘paradigm wars’. The quantitative approach was thought to offer a unique macro-perspective of the trends occurring in the world. By comparison, the qualitative approach offered a micro-perspective, which was seen as having the skill to portray the everyday realities of the world

and of individuals. This distinction was supported by Cassell and Symon (1994) who noted the importance of subjectivity, context, flexibility in the process, and the interpretation of qualitative research in comparison to quantitative. Stalwarts of each research tradition became warriors of their respective causes as they fought to demonstrate which approach was best able to deliver accurate representation of the social world and of the humans that live within it.

One of the most noticeable and agreed upon differences between the two research paradigms is the fact that, out the recent argument for ‘big data’, quantitative researchers have been able to ‘agree’ upon a set of principles that help to describe the approach, but the same certainly cannot be said for the qualitative research approach, which is notably difficult to define and describe (Dörnyei, 2007). The reason for this difficulty lies in the fact that the “qualitative approach has no theory or paradigm that is distinctly its own ... nor does it have a distinct set of methods of practice that are entirely its own” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, pp. 6-7). As such, qualitative researchers have continuously pursued any avenue that is not grounded in statistical analysis to find out what it is they want to know (Holliday, 2004). This is contestable though as writers are concerned with blanket generalization about ‘agreed upon’ sets of principles for the quantitative approach. This is because there is little or no agreement amongst quantitative researchers particularly when it comes to epistemological and ontological considerations (Bryman, 2012, 2016).

Bryman (2016) has argued against the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research. He believes that while epistemological and ontological commitments may be associated with certain research methods, such as those of the natural sciences, the epistemological positivism of social survey research, or the interpretivist epistemology of phenomenology and qualitative interviewing are not deterministic. In other words, while qualitative interviews may often reveal a predisposition towards, or a reflection of, interpretivist epistemological and constructionist ontological positions, this is not always the case. ‘This means that the connections that were posited ... between epistemology and ontology, on the one hand, and research method, on the other, are best thought of as tendencies rather than as definitive connections’ (Bryman, 2016, p. 621).

### **6.3.2. A quantitative approach**

The quantitative research paradigm is a direct result of the positivist epistemological school of thought, and is also known as the ‘normative’ paradigm, or model. The positivist school of

thought is aligned with statistical and mathematical analysis. Concerning the normative paradigm, Douglas (1973) put forward two cardinal tenets that act as guides for the quantitative approach. One was that human behaviour as we know it is governed by rules. The second was that human behaviour should be investigated by natural scientific methods.

In general, the quantitative approach is concerned with investigating cause-effect relationships among variables. In order to do this, hypotheses regarding relationships between variables are put forward in advance of the research being carried out as something to be proved or disproved. These hypotheses or models are decided upon by the researcher as far in advance as possible (Bryman, 2012; Cooper, 2003; Crotty, 1998; Denscombe, 2010; Zikmund, 2003). Following this, the numerical data is collected then used to determine and analyse the relationships between previously set out categories as well as test hypotheses proposed by the researcher. However, as quantitative researchers continue to test their hypotheses and theories with increasingly complex research methodologies, Louis, Manion, and Morrison (2011) warn that excessive statistical analysis, “push them further and further from the experience and understanding of the everyday world and into a world of abstraction” (p.18). Criticism of the normative paradigm comes from the techniques used by quantitative researchers who lean towards the abstract: it is said that in doing so they lose sight of the valuable data and insight that can be gained from a micro-focus on the individual.

With the emergence of ‘big data’, the quantitative tradition has also come under challenge. Some scholars argue that with the advent of ‘big data’ and that digital media research, lend itself to big data, and that all research should be inductive and ethnographic (Dunleavy, 2016; Hutchinson, 2016). Big data fails to address the need for the fine-grained understanding that comes from qualitative research. This project utilized an aspect of big data that is relevant to this thesis (see Chapter Two, Section 2.3).

### **6.3.3. A qualitative approach**

There are several features of the qualitative research approach that help researchers differentiate between it and quantitative research over the years. Perhaps the most important among these is the evolving nature of the research design. While in quantitative research the aim is to outline models and hypotheses as far in advance as possible, the reverse is true for qualitative research. Crucially, no aspect of qualitative research design is prefigured in a rigid manner as the research aims to maintain some fluidity and flexibility that will enable an efficient and quick response to changes or new details that may emerge during the research

process (Bryman, 2012, 2016; Cresswell, 2008; Zikmund, 2003). Another of the key differences is the source of data. Qualitative data generally comes from a wide range of sources such as interviews, journals, and diaries, photos or videos and more.

As mentioned in the preceding section, the normative research paradigm was born from the positivist school of thought, the fundamental focus of the qualitative approach adheres to an interpretivist paradigm and the aim is to comprehend the world of human experience from a subjective perspective, “efforts are made to get inside the person and to understand from within” (Louis *et al.*, 2011, p. 17).

The main criticisms of the interpretivist approach are centred on the belief that qualitative research is focussed on the individual to such an extent that there is little opportunity to observe behavioural generalizations. In support of this viewpoint, Louis *et al.* (2011) suggest that it is certainly possible that ‘anti-positivists/post-positivists have gone too far in abandoning scientific procedures of verification and giving up the hope of discovering useful generalizations about behaviour’ (p.21).

However, the qualitative approach has been widely and usefully used in internet and political participation studies (Ejiogu *et al.*, 2013; Hari, 2014; Neumayer & Stald, 2014) and the qualitative research design is a method that is acceptable in this area of study.

#### **6.4. Combining research paradigms – a mixed-methods approach**

Bryman (2016) has argued against the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research. He believes that while epistemological and ontological commitments may be associated with certain research methods, such as those of the natural sciences, the epistemological positivism of social survey research, or the interpretivist epistemology of phenomenology and qualitative interviewing are not deterministic. In other words, while qualitative interviews may often reveal a predisposition towards, or a reflection of, interpretivist epistemological and constructionist ontological positions, this is not always the case. ‘This means that the connections that were posited ... between epistemology and ontology, on the one hand, and research method, on the other, are best thought of as tendencies rather than as definitive connections’ (Bryman, 2016, p. 621).

An increased belief in the value of research that sees the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms as complementary has brought mixed methods research to the academic community. Mixed methods research refers to studies which integrate components of

qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to improve the understanding of a phenomenon of interest and corroborate the findings (Bryman, 2016; Cresswell, 2008; Johnson & Gray, 2010; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). The mixing of the components takes place at different stages of the research process (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010), depending on the type of research design. So mixed methods research is not merely a multi-method study, but there is an integration of the components that are associated with the two different approaches.

A mixed methods approach is generally based on pragmatism (Cresswell, 2008, 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010), which has emerged as a response to long standing paradigm debates between positivism/post-positivism and constructivism (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). Pragmatism rejects the binary choice between constructivism and post-positivism and embraces significant features of the two paradigms (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Onwuegbuzie, Johnson, & Collins, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). In a pragmatic stance, “what works” (Clark & Cresswell, 2011, p. 43) to address research questions determines the methods used in any single study. For mixed methodologists, research questions and the ongoing phases of the inductive-deductive research cycle are of primary importance (Cresswell, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 2010). In sum, mixed methods researchers are not confined exclusively to a single paradigm as they can combine research approaches across paradigms, if the combined approaches are considered appropriate and have the potential to address the research questions of interest (Feilzer, 2010).

Generally, a mixed methods approach is primarily adopted to seek elaboration and corroboration. Using the results from one method to elaborate and clarify the results of another enables researchers to view different aspects of a phenomenon and deepens understanding of the phenomenon (Greene & Caracelli, 1997; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989); the approach thereby enhances greater confidence in any conclusions drawn (Johnson et al., 2007). The intent of using mixed methods often is to seek corroboration of results from the different approaches applied in order to enhance the validity of findings (Johnson et al., 2007).

There are three primary considerations for researchers when choosing how to mix their research methods. These are according to Clark and Cresswell (2011) and Cresswell (2013), triangulation, explanation, and exploration. The triangulation design approach requires that both quantitative and qualitative data be collected simultaneously, then merged and

interpreted together as a means of contending with the research problem. An explanatory research design sees quantitative data collected, which is then followed by the collection of qualitative data that is used for further explanation or elaboration of the quantitative results. The third, an exploratory design, is essentially the reverse of the explanatory type. In this case, the qualitative data is collected to explore a problem and then quantitative data is collected and used to validate the findings of the qualitative data. There are other interpretations on triangulation and exploratory vs explanatory research designs but Cresswell's thinking has been widely followed: the interpretation used here in this research is aligned mainly with Cresswell's views.

### **6.5. Rationale and use of the mixed-methods approach in the current study**

The mixed methods approach has gained increasing attention in the research practice of various fields during recent decades. The choice of mixed-methods approach for this project was because the questions used dichotomous variables, and there was the need for several data sources so as to 'offset' (Bryman, 2012, p. 633) possible drawbacks with the use of a single source. Also, the multiple data sources help validate the findings through a comparison of the results of the different data sets.

The project reported here examined the extent to which mobile internet use had an impact on how protesters learned about, planned and documented their participation during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest and the relationship between the mobile internet use and perceived democratic governance in Nigeria. Research studies that have examined the relationship between the internet and social media in political participation and protest participation have consistently used dichotomous variables. However, this type of variable does not explain very much as it uses the binary numbers of '1 or 0' or categorical responses such as 'yes' or 'no'. This means that many of the questions asked in the survey and subsequently the variables identified use binary outcomes – that is, either the event happened or it did not happen. For example, either the participant joined the protest or he/she did not join the protest. However, by using a qualitative research design alone the reach of this study may be limited in terms of the number of participants and generalizability of the study. To overcome these limitations, it was decided to converge methods as a means of increasing the reliability and validity of the research results (Bryman, 2016; Kitto, Chesters, & Grbich, 2008).

For the first part of the current study, a mixed methods approach following a QUAN → QUAL explanatory design or a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was employed.

This design method, Cresswell (2008) suggests, is derived from a pragmatic worldview that enables researchers access to a range of methods, worldviews, assumptions, and data collection and analysis forms. In this design, the collection and analysis of the quantitative data were conducted prior to the collection and analysis of the qualitative data (Cresswell, 2008, 2013). This means that data from the survey research directly informed the interview data collection process. Emphasis was placed more heavily upon the quantitative data, with qualitative data supporting and explicating the quantitative data.

The primary reason for the selection of a QUAN → QUAL research design was that the quantitative data was of utmost importance to the realization of the project's aims. The quantitative method was for the purpose of examining the extent to which mobile internet use impacted how protesters learned about, planned and documented their participation in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. Subsequently, the qualitative method was used to obtain data that would provide an enriched understanding of the impact using the variables under scrutiny by exploring the protesters' media use patterns.

The quantitative and qualitative components of the research were connected in the data collection and discussion stages. The results of the quantitative data were used as the basis of drawing up of the interview questions: the responses to the questions provided for the qualitative data. The results from both quantitative and qualitative stages were then integrated and interpreted in the discussion stage.

The difference between sequential explanatory mixed methods and sequential exploratory mixed methods is in the weight the researcher places on either one of the methods and the nature of the constructs that are to be measured. For example, the sequential exploratory mixed methods approach is used mainly in a situation where the researcher does not have an idea of what to test. Whereas, the sequential explanatory mixed method uses the qualitative component to complement the quantitative component. That is, the quantitative component is dominant. This study adopted the sequential explanatory mixed methods because the quantitative variables were reasonably well known from other studies (Breuer, Landman, & Farquhar, 2014; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Dunn, 2011). The qualitative method was used to 'offset' (Bryman, 2012, p. 633) the drawbacks of using a dichotomous variable and to improve the quality of the results (Cresswell, 2008; Johnson & Gray, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). Consequently, the qualitative method is playing the role of a 'supplemental methods' (Cresswell, 2010, p. 57) as it was used to compliment



the quantitative analysis in the project. Figure 6.1 below illustrates the mixed methods procedure of this study.

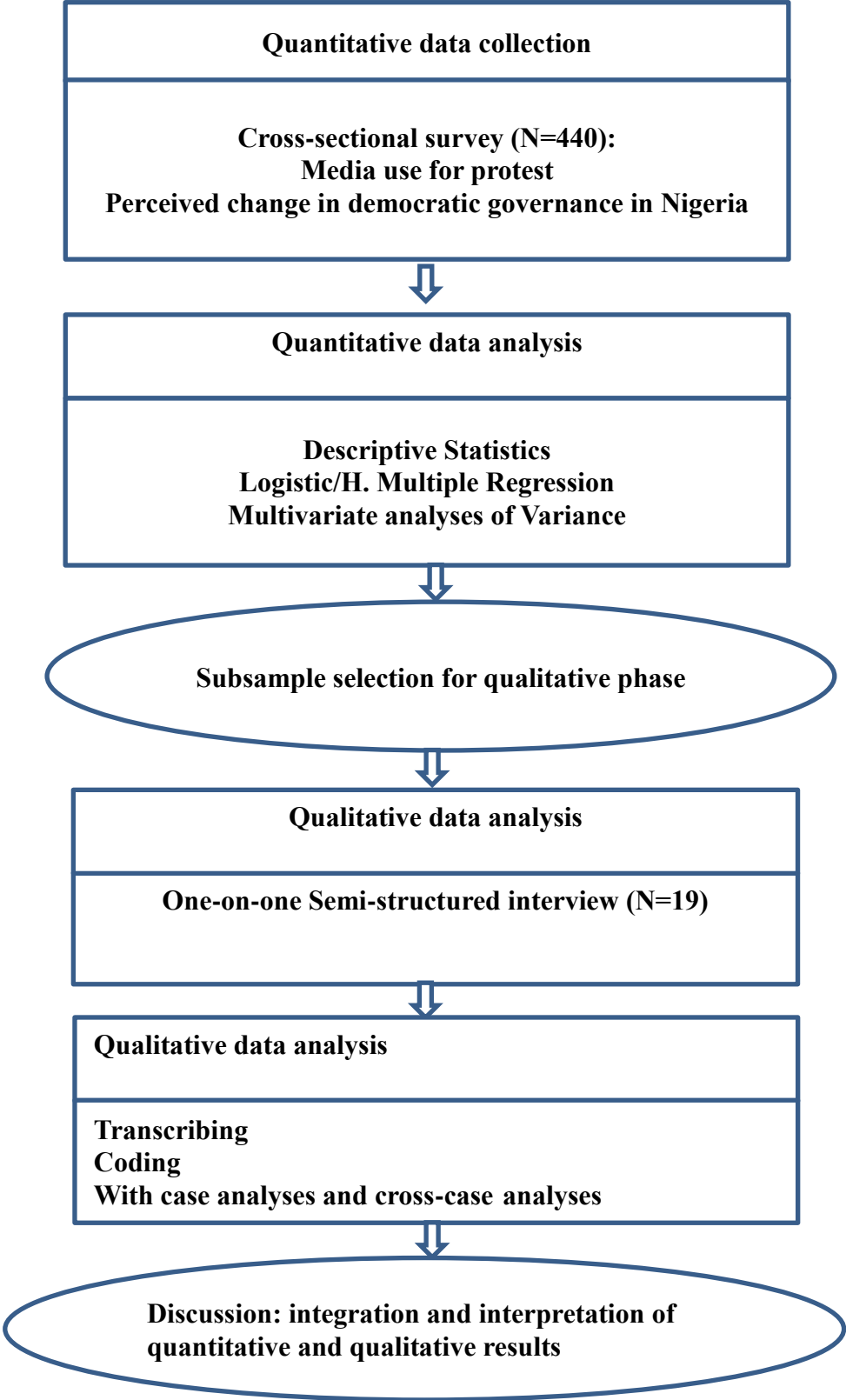


Figure 6.1. Flowchart of sequential explanatory mixed methods procedure (modelled on that of Clark & Creswell, 2008)

## **6.6. Sites of investigation**

The following three sections set out the context within which the study took place by providing information on the participating institutions and, importantly, the participating students. Before discussing specific details of the institutions and students participating in the study, a brief outline of the general context is provided. The project was situated in Nigeria and focused specifically on Nigerian students at the university level. Sections 6.7.1 and 6.7.2 outline the rationale behind the selection of the context.

The process of selecting institutions to participate in the study hinged primarily on two factors. Firstly, as the study's focus was on the political participation of the Nigerian students during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest, the only institutions that were approached were universities. Two large public universities were chosen. The major considerations in making this choice concerned geographic location and the related factors of security at the time of conducting the research, the level of protest participation during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest, the ethnic mix of the location and the number of students in the university.

Two universities one in Lagos and one in Port Harcourt were approached regarding their potential involvement in the project. These universities were chosen because they held logistical benefits in relation to travel convenience, not offered in other locations, and they are located in large heterogeneous cities. Also, the two universities are large and have diverse student populations. The student population is fifty seven thousand (57,000) for the University of Lagos (University of Lagos, 2016) and twenty thousand students (20, 000) for the Rivers State University of Science and Technology (Rivers State University of Science and Technology, 2016) in Port Harcourt. The two universities are located in relatively secured cities in Nigeria as opposed to other states in Nigeria, and the researcher is an alumnus of one of the participating institutions, Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt.

In order to achieve appropriate representation (ethnic mix alongside participation status of participants), a purposive sampling technique was adopted. While the two sites of investigation are in universities in the southern part of Nigeria, they however, have students that cut across ethnic nationalities. Port Harcourt, Lagos and Abuja are the three most diverse cities in Nigeria, but for Boko Haram insurgency in the Northern part of Nigeria, Abuja would have been chosen as one of the sites of this project. The researcher considered the

University of Abuja as a site of investigation but the idea was rejected due to ethical concerns of researcher safety. There have been at least eleven bombing incidents in Abuja since 2010. Some of the bombings are as follows: 31 December, 2010 Abuja bombing; 26 August, 2011 UN Headquarters bombing in Abuja; 14 April, 2014 Nyanya bombing in Abuja; 25 June, 2014 Kuje bombing in Abuja; 2 August, 2015 bombing in Abuja (The Guardian, 2015). The participating universities and student participants are listed below in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1. Total participants in QUAN and QUAL phases of the research**

Location	University	QUAN Participants	QUAL Participants
Lagos	University of Lagos	240	10
Port Harcourt	RSUST	200	9
<b>Total</b>		<b>440</b>	<b>19</b>

In order to enlist the participating universities, a letter describing the research project and outlining the goals was sent out to the Deans of Students’ Affairs asking for their support for the project and then consent for the researcher to approach the students regarding their participation (see Appendices 1, 2 and 3).

**6.6.1. Participating students**

The following sections outline the manner in which the student sample was determined in the quantitative and also the qualitative phases of the study.

**6. 6.1.1. Quantitative phase - sampling**

Participants involved in this phase of the study were undergraduate and postgraduate students of either the University of Lagos or Rivers State Universities of Science and Technology (RSUST) Port Harcourt in Nigeria.

University students were selected for this study because they could read and write. They also possessed computer/ICT skills so are more likely to participate in political protest than those who were older (Altbach, 1989; Ikelegbe, 2006). Furthermore, youths and students would generally not have an association that urged them to be involved in the protest as would some others, such as: teachers, lecturers, lawyers, civil servants, and doctors, who were given directives ‘offline’ to participate by their respective unions and associations.

The researcher pasted the research flyers on walls at the university campuses through his research assistants a week before the commencement of the project (see Appendix 4). After

one week, the researcher distributed the Participant's Information form and Consent form, to potential participants (see Appendix 5 and Appendix 6). All students who agreed to participate in the quantitative phase, indicated by the return of the consent forms signed by the students, became the participants of this study. Together with the researcher's two volunteers – one from each university - the researcher administered the survey to the participants.

To make sure that the participants understood the items in the questionnaire, the researcher, encouraged the participants to ask for clarification. The completed surveys were returned to the researcher at the help desk of the University of Lagos library and at the office of the secretary to the Head of Department, Mass Communication, Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt.

All students were invited to take part in the study (see Table 6.2). The students who gave consent and took part in the study totalled 460, consisting of 226 males and 234 females, or 49.2% and 50.9% respectively. However, 20 participants were excluded from the dataset because of large incomplete sections or wildly inconsistent answers, resulting in 440 participants. Of the 440 valid surveys, 220 participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest while the remaining 220 did not participate in the protest.

In undertaking the sampling process, the three key concepts outlined by Bruce (2010) and Bryman (2012) of sample, population, and representativeness were dutifully considered. The sample is the actual group of participants in a study, whilst the population refers to the people about whom the study is being conducted. To clarify, for this study, the population was university students in Nigeria. The notion of representativeness is concerned with whether or not the sample is actually representative of the student population. As the participants were drawn from two of the most liberal, populated and heterogeneous cities in Nigeria, the University of Lagos is the largest university in Nigeria in terms of student population, while the Rivers State University of Science and Technology is also a large university in Nigeria. Other large universities in Nigeria such as Aminu Kano University, Kano, Usman Dan-Fodio University, Sokoto were affected by the Boko Haram terrorism activities and hence were not considered safe places for the conduct of this research project. While it may be difficult to assess the representativeness of the sample, at least it can be said that the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample is consistent with university student-wide characteristics in Nigeria. Similar studies, such as that of Tufekci and Wilson (2012), have used this method successfully.

In building a sample frame of adequate size, participants were selected based primarily on their willingness to volunteer and whether they fit the criteria of being a university student from the university of Lagos or Rivers State University of Science and Technology. Also, given the study’s purposes, there was a need to achieve a balance between the number of participants who participated in the protest from those that did not participate. The final sample was comprised of 220 students who participated in the protest and a further 220 who did not participate in the protest, giving a total number of 440.

A total of 460 questionnaire was distributed, but not all of these were completed. About 440 questionnaires were fully completed with the other 20 being started, but not close to being completed. It was beyond a situation of a missing data – in these questionnaires generally less than one quarter of the questions were completed, and thus these questionnaires were deemed of no use to the project. In all, there was a questionnaire completion rate of 95%, which is usually considered very satisfactory level.

**Table 6.2. Information on participants for survey data collections**

<b>Gender</b>	<b># participants</b>	<b># participants with complete survey data</b>
Male	226	214
Female	234	226
Total	460	440

**6.5.2.2. Qualitative Phase – Sampling**

‘One aim of qualitative research is to describe the aspects of an idiosyncratic experience rather than determine the most likely, or mean experience in a group’ (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 126). It is then important that the sample selected for the study be able to deliver relevant, rich and varied insights into the phenomenon in question. The most suitable sampling approach for achieving the aims of a qualitative research project or the qualitative phase of one is purposive sampling. The origins of this approach can be found in grounded theory, which means important decisions need to be made when selecting the participants, including,

decision on who is selected and why, when participants should be added to the project, and when the data collection process should cease.

In terms of the specific sampling strategies adopted in the process of participant recruitment for the qualitative phase of this project, purposive sampling was adopted as the main sampling technique. The researcher was required to carefully decide how participants would be approached and who would be selected. Participants needed to be University students in Nigeria who had participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. This allowed the researcher to assume that the data gathered would provide a profile of protesters at this particular level in both mobile internet use and protest mobilization.

For this study, 19 participants were purposively selected for interview from the 220 participants in the quantitative phase, and who participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. The participants were selected based on their academic level (year of study) to ensure that students who were in years 1 and 2 were purposively excluded because they would not have been in the university at the time of the protest.

Of the 19 participants who were interviewed, 10 were from the University of Lagos and 9 from the Rivers State University of Science and Technology. There were 8 female and 11 male participants. One of the interviewees was unable to finish the interview because of an impromptu test. Basic information regarding each of the interview participants is provided below in Table 6.3.

**Table 6.3. Demographic information for interview participants**

<b>Name*</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Level of Study</b>	<b>Length of Interview</b>
Edet	24	Male	Undergrad	28:09
Ngozi	23	Female	Undergrad	32:15
Okon	24	Male	Undergrad	29:51
Nengi	25	Male	Undergrad	23:07
Kunle	22	Male	Undergrad	35:15
Hassan	24	Male	Undergrad	10:02 (incomplete)
Unchenna	26	Female	Postgrad	40:02
Amadi	26	Male	Undergrad	30:05
Godwin	27	Male	Undergrad	32:10
Bisi	26	Female	Undergrad	25:45
Yusuf	25	Male	Undergrad	31:08
Victoria	26	Female	Undergrad	28:51
King	24	Male	Undergrad	38:03
Blessing	23	Female	Undergrad	34:51
Vincent	27	Male	Postgrad	30:12
Jay	26	Female	Postgrad	28:08
Kate	27	Female	Postgrad	27:58
Kingsley	24	Male	Undergrad	32:09
Beauty	25	Female	Undergrad	25:45

\*These names are pseudonyms. They are used to differentiate interviewees.

## **6.7. Data collection**

In this section, the development and the features of the instruments that were adopted for the data collection are described in detail.

### **6.7.1. The Quantitative phase – questionnaires**

A structured questionnaire in English was distributed in hard copy to the selected students, regardless of, whether they participated in the protest or not (see Appendix 7 for the questionnaire). The questionnaire consisted of 82 mixed questions and took about 40-45 minutes to complete. It had two parts. Part A consisted of 5 sections, that looked for general information, media use, documentation, media comparison, and engagement in the protest group, while part B consisted of 7 sections covering perceived government accountability, perceived corruption level, perceived competitiveness of political participation, political knowledge, political efficacy, intention to participate in political affairs and traditional participation.

The researcher used a mix of dichotomous (yes –no) answers and five point Likert scale (rate 1-5) responses in part A of the questionnaire, and a five point Likert type scale in all of part B of the questionnaire. Although there were variations to suit a particular question, some of the frequent notations were “1=not at all”, “2=not much”, “3=neutral”, “4=somewhat” and “5=very much”. In part B “1=strongly disagree”, “2=Disagree”, “3=neutral”, “4=agree”, and “5=strongly agree”. The questionnaire was reviewed by the researcher’s supervisors and the ethics committee of the University of Canberra to enhance its accuracy and ensure its appropriacy.

The researcher used a five point Likert scale in part B of the questionnaire again to reduce the common method bias (Miller, 1956; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Also, the researcher checked for and reduced common method variance by mixing positive and negatively worded items in the questionnaire. The negatively worded items were re-coded during the data coding period to make constructs symmetric, a procedure that satisfied the statistical contention of common method bias variance. For example, to ascertain the perceived federal government accountability and corruption level of the participants, the research mixed both positive and negative questions. Table 6.4 provides sample questions (see Appendix 7 for the complete questionnaire)



**Table 6.4: Sample questionnaire questions**

No	Statements	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
20	From 2012 onwards, I feel that the government thinks about the people before making a decision					
21	I think that the police treats Nigerians better nowadays than prior to 2012					
22	I think that between 2012 to the present, the government tries to explain their actions more than governments prior to this period.					
23	I think that the police brutalize Nigerians more nowadays					
24	I think that from 2012 onwards, politicians have become more autocratic than prior to this period					
25	To me, federal governments after 2010 are more corrupt than the ones prior to 2010					
26	I think that a federal government official before 2010 would more likely collect a bribe than one after 2010					
27	I think that because of camera phone and internet, police officers since 2010 are afraid to collect “egunje” than police officers prior to 2010					
28	I think that nowadays people resist giving and taking bribes because you never can tell who will snap and send to the internet					

The part A questionnaire was adapted from the engine room’s (<https://www.theengineroom.org/>) questionnaire that was used during the Egyptian revolution. Other studies (Tufekci, 2014; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Dunn, 2011) have previously adopted and modified this questionnaire. The questionnaire was modified to suit the context of the study. Also, to answer research questions Four and Five theoretical constructs concerning democracy were adopted and modified to suit the current study. For example, perceived competitiveness of participation was adopted and modified from The Polity IV Democracy Index (Marshall, Gurr, & Jaggers, 2013) and Vanhanen (2000); perceived government accountability and corruption were adapted from Freedom House

democracy score questions (Freedom House, 2011) and Levan and Utaka (2012); political knowledge, efficacy and intention to participate in political affairs were adopted from the work of Kenski and Stroud (2006), Munck and Verkuilen (2002) and Scheufele and Nisbet (2002).

### **6.7.2. Operationalizing the research questions**

Internet access at home or on the phone, use of media for general or specifically for communicating about the protests (SMS, newspaper, television and radio, face-to-face communication, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, 2go, Eskimi and Badoo), and previous protest participation were measured dichotomously as yes or no. Respondents were asked how they first heard of the protests (in person, SMS, newspaper, television and radio, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, 2go, Eskimi and Badoo); also, they were asked if they produced or disseminated visuals from the protests and, if they did so, through what method. In addition, respondents were asked the day that they joined the protests (2 January was coded as ‘participating on first day of the protests’).

Besides applying descriptive statistics, a series of logistic regression models were conducted to estimate respondents’ media use for protest purposes, and the likelihood they participated on the first day of the protests. Although the researcher did not assess respondents’ overall degree of participation in the protests, he is confident that participating on the first day is a crucial indicator of degree of participation. Conventional wisdom suggests that the riskiest kind of dissent is that which fails, and the most dangerous protest is one that is small. According to Tufekci and Wilson (2012) ‘smaller protests have a higher likelihood of being effectively censored, isolated, or repressed in authoritarian regimes’ (p. 375). Consequently, a high level of participation on the first day is often essential to initiating the larger cascade that eventually results in a protest’s success. The nerve and resolve required in attending the first day of protests displays bravery and a commitment to change. Using this thinking, the researcher attempted to understand the impact of the media choice on the likelihood that respondents would report that they participated on the first day of the protest, and it was measured as a dichotomous variable (joined the protest on the first day = 1; joined subsequent days = 0).

The subsequent research questions except for Research Question Three, were answered using responses from part B of the questionnaire. The responses in each section of part B were

aggregated and then divided by the number of questions to arrive at a value that represented the overall value for that participant. This was done through the SPSS.

In the logistic regression analysis, the different media platforms used were coded as the dependent variable (DV) while protest participation was coded as the independent variable (IV). When considering Research Question One, since all respondents participated in the protests, protest participation was adjudged to be independent. More important here, was to find out if media platform used before, during and after the protest was dependent on the day the respondent joined the protest (first day or subsequent days). This logic is similar to those of related digital activism studies (Breuer et al., 2015; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012).

To answer the research question Three, the researcher used intention to participate in political affairs as the dependent variable while internet use type, protest participation status (joined/did not join the protest), and political efficacy were the independent variables.

**Table 6.5: Description of quantitative instrumentation**

<b>Questionnaire Parts</b>	<b>Research Question Number</b>	<b>Type and Number of Participants</b>
A (5 sections)	RQ1(a, b, c, and d) and 2	220 Protesters
B (7 sections)	RQ 4 and 5	220 Protesters + 220 Non-Protesters  Total of 440 participants

**6.7.3. Validity and reliability of the questionnaire**

Prior to administering the questionnaire in the main study, its content and face validity were examined by expert reviewers. Two reviewers were selected based on their educational background and research expertise in communication research. The reviewers were an associate professor in communication and an assistant professor in communication and both served in the supervisory panel of the researcher. Their feedback was added to the survey for the improvement of the instrument. The questionnaire was also pilot tested with 7 undergraduate students of the University of Lagos, who were not participants in the study but purposively selected from years 1 and 2. They would not have participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest prior to gaining admission into the university and the researcher assumed that they had the ability to interpret the instrument and therefore this process would

validate the instrument which was mainly for years 3-6 students. Also, the selection of pilot participants was on 'first come, first served' basis, that is, the first 7 students who indicated their interest and satisfied the above criteria were chosen. The pilot-testing was mainly intended to measure the reliability of the questions. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire and to suggest ways of improving the questionnaire for ease of interpretation. The results of the pilot testing were then followed up by revising the questionnaire. The researcher checked and reduced common method variance by mixing positive and negatively worded items in the questionnaire.

The internal consistency of reliability of the instrument was also measured. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .89 for the whole instrument, which is higher than the minimum acceptable value of 0.7 (Pallant, 2013). Also, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to evaluate the Nigerian students' perceived change in government's unidimensionality and test construct validity. Construct validity is the core validity issue of a questionnaire (Westen & Rosenthal, 2003). A self-report questionnaire which is administered to participants of a different culture must be rigorously assessed for its validity (Gi-Pyo, 2011; Mohammadi & Alizadeh, 2014). This is because a questionnaire which is valid based on one sample may not necessarily be valid based on another sample.

The Principal Axial factor extraction method with Promax rotation was run through SPSS on 24 items from the perceived change in democratic government section. Low, moderate and high correlations were found among the items; with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.18 to 0.96. The result of the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) measure was excellent, with the value of 0.891. This was supported by the individual values of measures of sampling adequacy (MSA) which ranged from .882 to .957. Likewise, Barlett's Test was significant,  $X^2(424 = 5732.338, p < .000)$ , suggesting that the correlation matrix was different from the identity matrix. Both KMO and Barlett's Tests indicated that the data was appropriate for a factor analysis.

An initial rotation resulted in a four-factor solution that was neatly patterned. However, the pattern showed that 3 items loaded insignificantly on any of the factors ( $< .30$ ). The low loading items (items 20, 22, 25) were then removed through repeated exercises in subsequent rotations to discover a better factor solution. With regard to extant theories in democracy, the contents of the items, and the item loadings, a four-factor solution was obtained (see Table 6.6).

For the four-factor solution, the number of factors extracted was based on eigenvalues. Four factors were extracted with the rule of eigenvalue of  $>1$ , in which the eigenvalue of the factors 1, 2, 3, and 4 were 8.880, 2.595, 1.841, and 1.285 respectively. Table 6.6 below displays the rotated factor loading matrix for the Nigerian students' perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria. Items SBQ 6,7,8,9, 23, and 24 were assigned to factor 1. These items came from the Scheufele and Nisbet (2002) political efficacy variable questions. The factor was labelled political efficacy (Pol.Efficacy). Items 11, 12,13,14,15, 16 fell into factor 2. The six items consisted of intention to participate in political discussions, and participating in the election to elect representatives. Therefore, factor 2 was named intention to participate in political affairs (IPPA). Items 29, 30, 32, 33 which dealt with competitiveness of political parties loaded in factor 3. Factor 3 was named perceived competitiveness of political participation. Items 21, 26, 27, 28 fell into factor 4. These items dealt with government accountability and perceived corruption level. Factor 4 was named perceived corruption level (PCL).

All items in each factor had pattern coefficients higher than .30, which is the required factor loading (Allen & Bennett, 2012; Pallant, 2013). Thus, the four-factor solution seemed to be adequate and theoretically valid. In addition, the reliability coefficients were 0.880 for political efficacy, .883 for intention to participate in political affairs, 0.879 for perceived competitiveness of political participation, and .725 for perceived corruption level, all of which were above the criteria of .6 for acceptance (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006; Pallant, 2013; Pett, Lackey, & Sullivan, 2003; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Also, the moderate correlation among the factors and no cross-loadings suggested that discriminant validity was established.

**Table 6.6. Internal consistency reliability, communalities, cumulative extraction sums of squared loading (CESSL), and final exploratory factor analysis results**

Item No	Reproduced Communalities	Pol. Efficacy	IPPA	PCPP	PCL
<b>Eigenvalues</b>		8.440	2.595	1.841	1.285
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>		.880	.883	.879	.725
<b>CESSL (%)</b>		33.44	42.59	48.76	52.57
<b>6</b>	.637	.891			
<b>7</b>	.565	.681			
<b>8</b>	.702	.830			
<b>9</b>	.615	.970			
<b>23</b>	.561	.440			
<b>24</b>	.561	.470			
<b>11</b>	.761		.582		
<b>12</b>	.743		.596		
<b>13</b>	.519		.715		
<b>14</b>	.670		.841		
<b>15</b>	.602		.817		
<b>16</b>	.699		.851		
<b>29</b>	.380			.513	
<b>30</b>	.679			.698	
<b>31</b>	.651			.842	
<b>32</b>	.680			.915	
<b>33</b>	.578			.815	
<b>21</b>	.558				.497
<b>26</b>	.173				.310
<b>27</b>	.688				.883
<b>28</b>	.629				.961

**Note:** Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation method: Promax. Rotation converged in 6 iterations. Cumulative extraction sums of squared loadings (CESSL).

#### **6.7.4. The qualitative phase – interviews**

In order to collect the qualitative data that could reveal how the nature of protesters' media use would help explain how protesters gained knowledge of the protests, planned their participation and documented their participation, the interview would also provide insight on other aspects of the protest coordination that the researcher may not have known. An interview was conducted with nineteen students, who participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest in May, 2015. The interviews were semi-structured to open in nature depending on the interviewee's answers to questions, and they were directly informed by the quantitative results. Having said that, it is important to note that while the quantitative results were used to draw up the interview protocols, interview participants also had the latitude to digress, or add

something that was not covered in the interview protocol. This did happen during the interviews. Prior to the interviews, the participants were informed of the purpose of the study, advised that their identity would be kept confidential and anonymous, and that they were allowed to end the interview at any time or refuse to answer particular questions. The interviews were conducted in English and were audio recorded with the consent of the participants. Each interview lasted approximately 35 minutes.

During the interview process, the interviews attempted to:

1. Gain a general overview of a participant's experience of using the mass media and the internet;
2. Understand a participant's experience during the 2012 'Occupy Nigeria' protest;
3. Elicit the media platforms participants used to plan, and document their involvement during the 'Occupy Nigeria' protest participation.

All the interviews were conducted in a comfortable environment for the participants. The interviews were recorded in an audio file. The interviews were conducted in a section of the University of Lagos Library and at the radio studio of the Mass Communication Department of Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt. For the interviews, a rough plan was developed (see Appendix 8 for an interview protocol), with room to stray from it if this was deemed useful or necessary. During the interviews, interviewees were given an opportunity to think and recall the protest as it was in January 2012 and the research field work was conducted June, 2015.

Prior to transcription and analysis of the interview data, initial impressions and observations were noted. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim by a transcription company based in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The transcribed interviews were proofread by the researcher to check for mistakes in concepts, oversights and typographical errors, a process through which I was able to enmesh myself in the data. The final transcribed interviews, though still verbatim, do not have all the pauses or audible discourse markers included as the focus was not conversation or discourse analysis (see Appendix 9 for a brief sample of a transcribed interview).

Consideration was given to having focus group discussions in addition to the qualitative semi-structured interviews. Information from these would have enriched the study, however, the

culture of shame in Nigeria and the delicate nature of the Occupy Nigeria protests, made it imperative to utilize other forms of qualitative data collection. While in some cultures, a focus group interview would elicit great conversation, and so lead to the collection of quality data in Nigeria, bringing participants together might de-motivate them from sharing as much as they would share with the researcher alone. In addition, the issue of security and anonymity of the participants could not have been guaranteed. Conducting one-to-one interviews were difficult, but the researcher still adopted one-to-one interviews believing it to be the best means of collecting the best data possible. This issue of culture and the role of culture in the selection of interview participants are well known. For example in their study, Wulf, Misaki, Atam, Randall, and Rohde (2013) faced a similar cultural dilemma. They however, used one-to-one in-depth interviews in order to get the best data possible.

## **6.8. Approaches to analysis of the data**

In the subsections that follow, the approaches taken to the analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the research will be outlined in detail, including both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

### **6.8.1. Analysis of the quantitative data**

The quantitative data in the project all comes from the survey instrument. The data analysis processes that the data went through are quite complex, and as such require careful explanation, which will be provided in the following sections. All data were refined and processed using SPSS 21.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

### **6.8.2. Preliminary steps – descriptive statistics**

After the data had been collected from the questionnaire, it underwent the data cleaning process in which the data were entered into an SPSS. Upon being entered into the SPSS software, the data underwent descriptive analysis in order to gain an overall picture of the data pattern before progressing to further stages in the analysis. Due to the nature of this project, particularly, regarding variable types (mainly dichotomous) in section A of the instrument, descriptive statistics produced by the questionnaire were important and bore great significance to the process of answering research questions 1a, b, c and d of the project.

### **6.8.3. Selection of data analytical approach**

Given that the primary purpose of the research was to identify the extent to which mobile internet use impacted how protesters learned about, planned and documented their participation during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest and to examine how this has brought about perceived changes to democratic governance in Nigeria. There were two related but



separate purposes for the research analysis. Firstly, to identify how the protesters participated in the protest (RQ1a), to identify the extent to which mobile internet use impacted/influenced how the protesters participated in the protest (RQ1a), learned about the protest (RQ1b), how protesters planned their participation during the protest (RQ1c), how the protesters documented their participation (RQ1d), and the interplay between protesters' media use, previous protest experience and participation on the first day of the protest (RQ 2). Secondly, to examine the extent to which students' protest participation status, type of internet use and political efficacy can be used as predictors of their intention to participate in political affairs (RQ4), and the differences between students who did or did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest with regards to how they perceive changes in democratic governance in Nigeria? (RQ5) (See Section 6.7.4 for the analytical technique for RQ3). The choice of the analytical approach was derived from its suitability to the research questions (RQs), the types of variables that were measured in the questionnaire and previous study on the internet and political participation. Hence, the researcher adopted logistic regression to answer RQ 1a, b, c and d, MANOVA for RQ2 and RQ5 and hierarchical regression for RQ4. Recall that the data for perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria to be analysed resulted from the EFA. This sub-section therefore highlights both descriptive statistics and the logistic regression and multivariate analysis procedures, but first there are brief explanatory notes about the statistical approaches adopted.

#### **6.7.3.1. Logistic Regression**

A popular method in general for establishing a dichotomous variable is the use of logistic regression analysis (Pallant, 2013; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) and this is the case in communication studies in particular. Due to the nature of the protests, dichotomous variables (categorical questions) were used to examine the role of the internet, social media and mainstream media in protest mobilization and participation. Logistic regression is a statistical technique used to predict categorical outcomes with two or more categories (Hair et al., 2006; Pallant, 2013). Tufekci and Wilson (2012) used logistic regression in their study on the Egyptian Revolution while other researchers have used other analytical techniques that relate to logistic regression. For example Howard and Hussain (2013) and Howard, Duffy, et al. (2011) used fuzzy logic while Breuer et al. (2015) used probit-ordered regression.

These stepwise procedures have been criticised in both logistic and multiple regression because they can be heavily influenced by random variation in the data, with variables being included or removed from the model on statistical grounds (Pallant, 2013; Tabachnick &

Fidell, 2013). Thus, a forced entry method was used in this analysis. The forced entry method allows all predictor variables to be tested in one block to assess their predictive ability while controlling for the effects of other predictors in the model. The objective was to see, when all the predictor variables were controlled which variables were significant in independently associating with protest participation on the first day.

### **6.7.3.2. Multivariate Analysis of Variance**

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) is an extension of simple analysis of variance used when the researcher has more than one dependent variable. MANOVA compares the groups and tells the researcher, whether the mean differences between the groups with the combination of dependent variables are likely to have occurred by chance.

The merits of using MANOVA rather than conducting a series of ANOVA tests, is that MANOVA tells the researcher if there is any significant difference between the groups of interest on the composite dependent variable. It also provides separate univariate results for each of the researcher's dependent variables. Finally, it reduces type 1 errors - the error that occurs when it is thought there is a difference between the groups of interest, but really there is no difference (Allen & Bennett, 2012; Pallant, 2013; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

The MANOVA analytical tool was adopted in the analysis of this project because it allowed for a categorical dependent variable that would show if there was a significant difference between students who participated in the protests and those who did not in terms of their perception of subsequent change in democratic governance in Nigeria.

### **6.7.3.3. Hierarchical Multiple Regression**

Hierarchical multiple regression is a form of multiple regression that can be used to explore the relationship between one continuous dependent variable and a number of independent variables or predictors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Multiple regressions are based on correlation, but allow a more sophisticated exploration of the interrelationship among a set of variables than simple regression.

A hierarchical regression procedure was as a means of examining the effect of a set of predictors sequentially, so that the predictive power of an individual predictor can be estimated above and beyond what other predictors explain (Petrocelli, 2003). In this type of multiple regressions, the independent variables are entered into the equation in the order specified by the researcher and based on theoretical grounds. Variables are entered in blocks, with each independent variable being assessed in terms of what it adds to the prediction of the

dependent variable after the previous variables have been controlled (Pallant, 2013). In a nutshell, with this procedure, the possible effects of the control variables (i.e. age, fixed and mobile internet) can be accounted for, and separated out from the primary predictor variables and the relative importance of each primary predictor can be explained separately.

This type of multiple regressions was adopted because it allowed for categorical predictors and helped the researcher to control for additions that demographic variables such as age, gender, level of study and ethnic nationality to the prediction of the dependent variable – intention to participate in political affairs.

To address the research question 1a, b, c, d and 2, to what extent did mobile internet use: ‘impact how protesters participated in the protest?’, ‘influence how protesters learned about the protest?’, ‘influence how protesters planned their participation in the protest?’, ‘impact how protesters documented their participation in the protest?’, and ‘What was the interplay between protesters’ media use, protest experience, and participation on the first day of the protests?’, the researcher used descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics which included means and standard deviations provided the summary statistics of the data set. Logistic regression was employed to test models to predict categorical outcomes in the research question 1a, b, and c. While multivariate analysis of variance was used to test the interplay among the different media used by protesters, prior protest experience.

Furthermore, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was employed to deal with research question five, ‘Are there differences between students who did or did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest with regards to how they perceive changes in democratic governance in Nigeria??’ This multivariate statistical technique provided information on whether there was a significant difference between the groups of students who participated in the protest and those that did not participate in the protest. MANOVA was preferred instead of a series of analysis of variance as stated above because it controls or adjusts the risk of a type 1 error (Pallant, 2013, p. 283). It also provides tests of the effect of one or more independent variables on a set of dependent variables within a single analysis. The one-way MANOVA was initially preceded by a preliminary analysis to detect outliers and evaluate multivariate assumptions.

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to answer the third research question, ‘To what extent do students’ ethnicity, protest participation and political efficacy predict their intention to participate in political affairs?’ It is worth mentioning that the

relationship yielded by regression analysis does not suggest causality (Hair *et al.*, 2006; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In this study, ethnicity, protest participation and political efficacy were used to predict the dependent variable, intention to participate in political affairs. See Table 6.7 for an analytical method overview.

Also, the use of the parametric tests on ordinal Likert scale data, which comprised most of the study's data, is justified (Brown, 2011; Carifio & Perla, 2007; Larson-Hall & Herrington, 2010). This is because parametric tests are statistically robust to skewness and non-normality which commonly occurs in ordinal Likert scale data (Norman, 2010).

**Table 6.7. Analytical method overview<sup>7</sup>**

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Analytical Technique</b>
<b>1. To what extent did mobile internet use:</b>	
<b>a. Impact how protesters participated in the protest?</b>	Logistic Regression Analysis
<b>b. Influence how protesters learned about the protest?</b>	Logistic Regression Analysis
<b>c. Influence how protesters planned their participation in the protest?</b>	Logistic Regression Analysis
<b>d. Impact how protesters documented their participation in the protest?</b>	Logistic Regression Analysis
<b>2. What was the interplay between protesters' media use, protest experience, and participation on the first day of the protests?</b>	MANOVA
<b>3. How does the protesters' media use help explain the interplay between knowledge, planning and documentation of protest participation?</b>	Qualitative (Thematic Analysis)
<b>4. To what extent do students' protest participation status, internet use type and political efficacy predict their intention to participate in political affairs?</b>	Hierarchical multiple regression
<b>5. Are there differences between students who did or did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest with regards to how they perceive changes in democratic governance in Nigeria?</b>	MANOVA

#### **6.8.4. Qualitative data analysis**

The researcher will provide some brief background of this approach before describing in more detail on how the 'meaning condensation' approach was employed.

<sup>7</sup> The qualitative interviews answered research question 2 and also provided a deeper understanding of the findings of the other research questions.

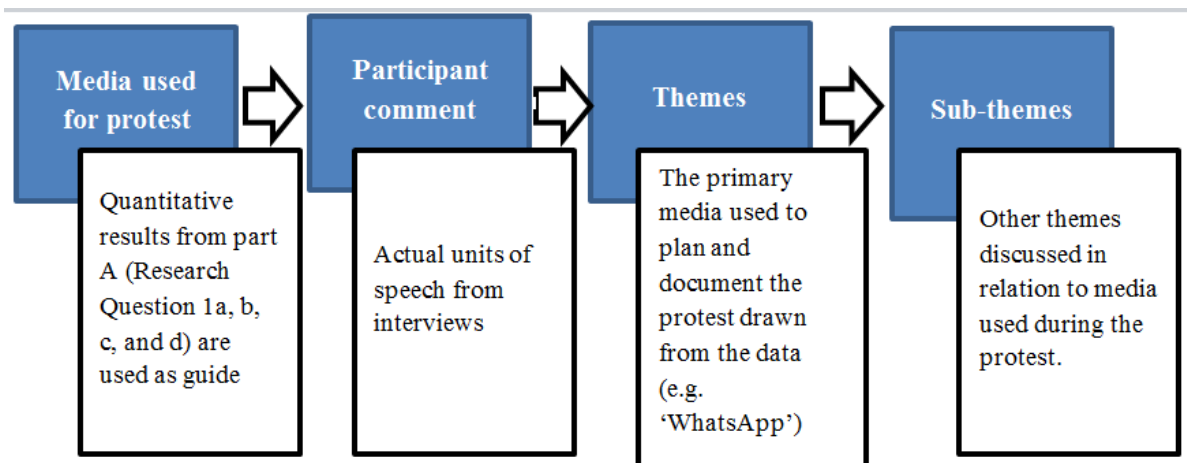
Content analysis is essentially ‘a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from text’ (Krippendorp, 2004, p. 18) and acts as a strict set of procedures to follow in the process of analysing, examining and verifying written data (Mayring, 2000). It is the fact that the emphasis in a content analysis approach lies on written data that made it attractive as an analysis technique. There are several steps associated with content analysis beginning with the development of research questions and deciding on the sample, but as these (especially sampling) have been discussed earlier, this description will begin at the coding stage. With the significant amount of interview data that was collected in the qualitative phase, it was important to develop a systematic and workable approach to data analysis. The primary approach adopted in the conversion of the student responses to a more meaningful units is that of Kvale’s (1996) ‘meaning condensation’ approach. However, it should be noted that similarities were found with other approaches to analysis and one other approach proved a strong influence in the shaping of my own approach to analysis using Kvale’s method.

Coding of the data is tremendously important and necessary step. At its core, the coding process is the act of the researcher assigning a label to a particular segment of text that contains or presents an idea or a piece of information (Louis et al., 2011) . Once a code has been decided upon, throughout the rest of the text, the same code will be given to any segment of text that says, or is about, the same thing. The actual size of the piece of text being coded is unlimited, but must of course be manageable. However, due to the fact that upon revising the codes it is quite possible that they may be read in isolation, it is important to include enough context in the coded text as is necessary to retain its meaning, and for the researcher not to forget its significance. A coded text can lightly or densely be coded in a way that collate the same segment of text and the text can either be assigned a single, or multiple codes respectively. In the current project, some aspects of transcripts required dense coding because what was actually said by the participants held some weight in different categories. An example of this is that an interviewee may have talked about reason of learning about the protest on Facebook – in such an instance, the text could be coded to highlight the interviewee’s emphasis on ‘learning about the protest from an online platform’ as well as to show ‘dissatisfaction with mainstream media platforms’. This is an example of two codes being applied to a text segment, but of course, it is possible that more than two codes maybe necessary.

It can be seen that content analysis bears a great deal of relevance to the current project, and eventually proved influential in the overall approach adopted. It was however, Kvale's (1996) 'meaning condensation' approach which formed the primary tool in the analysis of the qualitative data. As with other qualitative analysis, the meaning condensation approach requires data to be coded before beginning the analysis and interpretation in earnest.

Of course, from such a large amount of interview data, the codes drawn from it were large in number and it was still necessary to submit them to some form of analysis that would consolidate meaning. As a result, it was meaning condensation approach that was most useful. This approach 'entails an abridgement of the meanings expressed by the interviewees into shorter formulations' (Kvale, 1996, p. 192). At its essence, the approach rephrases what is said by participants into just few words of a more succinct nature, but in which the meaning is not lost. Meaning condensation itself is one of a series of data analytical steps to be applied to the data. Following this is meaning categorization, in which the text is coded with the aid of several symbols to emphasise the importance of certain segments or to show repetition. Narrative structuring is the next step in the meaning condensation approach and encourages the text to be organized in such a manner to show the temporal or social organization aspects that would, in turn, bring out the meaning. Meaning interpretation is another analytical technique that was adopted, and its purpose is to allow the researcher to go "beyond what is directly said to work out structures and relations of meaning not immediately apparent in a text" (Kvale, 1996, p. 201). In short it allows the researcher to add subjective interpretation based on what the meaning is perceived to be from the experience undergone during the interview and with the knowledge of the participant.

At first, the researcher felt that analysing and discussing the qualitative interview data on a case-by-case basis would be the approach taken, but it became apparent very quickly that this would become quite repetitive and could also potentially miss many important insights gained into how the protesters learned, planned and documented their participation, or other aspects of their participation that could be gained from a cross-examination of the data. That is to say that instead of a case-by-case approach, the interview data was analysed according to themes and sub-themes. The themes were the primary aspects of protest participation that emerged from the interviews, and the development of themes began with the part A (research question 1a,b, c, and d) results as has been mentioned earlier.



**Figure 6.2. Steps in the qualitative data analysis**

This approach ruled out the possibility of great repetition as well as giving the opportunity for comments and statements from several of the participants, depending on whether they had said anything of relevance or that was deemed important or to provide insight into the how the participants learned, planned and documented their participation. The flowchart in figure 6.2 above is intended to clarify the process through which the qualitative analysis progressed.

In order to illuminate the coding process further, it is helpful to actually see an example of coding in action, and to do this, a segment of speech from the participants needs to be observed. A comment offered by an interview participant, Edet is useful here (see Section 7.4.4):

I did take pictures that I shared on both my Facebook walls and that of the protest group wall. I used it as an evidence to motivate other persons who have not joined the protest to join. I also used it to communicate and update my group members in the Occupy Nigeria protest group about what is happening in my area and how we were doing. I also used these pictures to indict any misconduct of the police during the protest. (Edet/ Turn 74)

This is the actual segment of speech Edet offered, and as such represents the first step in the coding process as outlined in Figure 6.2 This segment was then analysed for theme, and the theme that emerges from this particular segment is that of media used for ‘protest participation documentation’, so it was coded for this theme. On further analysis of the segment, a sub-theme also emerges, and in this case, it was the sub-theme of ‘Facebook’ as the media platform that was used for documentation of protest participation. This three-step process was enacted throughout the entire coding process.

Overall, the approach adopted for the current project can be said to be based most heavily on the approach described and outlined by Kvale (1996) as the ‘meaning condensation’

approach, but with significant influence from ‘computer-assisted qualitative methods’ via computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), in this case, Nvivo. Computer-assisted qualitative methods charts the development of ‘computer approaches’ used in appraising the processes of qualitative data and evaluating them (Spencer, Ritchie, & O'Connor, 2003, p. 206). NVivo software helped to text retrieve code and build a conceptual network that supported ‘meaning condensation’.

#### **6.8.5. Integrated analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data**

Being a mixed methods study, it is not enough to merely conduct the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative phases independently of each other. They also need to be analysed together, to see how they validate one another. This analysis was done by connecting aspects of logistic regression and MANOVA analyses and the qualitative interviews and vice versa – supporting regression models with examples from the comments made by participants in the interviews, as well as with further support from the literature. This integrated analysis becomes clearer in Chapter Eight when the discussion of the findings is conducted along with the implications of the study.

Comments from the interview participants were compared with the quantitative findings to see if there was confirmation of the results, particularly as it concerns how participants learnt about, planned, coordinated and documented their participation during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. Furthermore, data from the interviews were analysed to seek understanding of the reason protesters joined the protest, and their take on policy making in Nigeria after the protests. These analyses provide a harmonious methodological ‘marriage’ in this project.

#### **6.9. Limitations of the research design**

To an extent, all research studies present their own set of limitations. Therefore, this study, too, has some limitations. Firstly, recall of a 2012 event is another limitation. The 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests occurred in 2012 and the respondents were tasked with recollecting what transpired then, and the ability of the participants to recollect quickly and correctly is tasking if not daunting.

Secondly, sampling difficulty is yet another limitation to the study. As well as the lack of a student email system in most Nigeria universities making it difficult to contact students directly, the issue of security also impacted the sampling of this research. There are states in South Eastern Nigeria with a security malaise of kidnapping and extortion. In Northern



Nigeria and particularly North-Eastern Nigeria the threat of the Boko Haram terrorist group made it difficult to access universities in these regions of Nigeria.

The final limitation of this study comes from its sampling technique (purposive sampling). This means that the sampling population may not exactly represent the population as in the case purposive sampling, the participants characteristics may differ to that of the population. In this project purposive sampling was adopted to achieve appropriate representation by considering ethnic mix alongside participation status of participants. While the two sites of investigation are in universities in the southern part of Nigeria, they however, have students that cut across ethnicities. Port Harcourt, Lagos and Abuja are three most diverse cities in Nigeria, but for Boko Haram insurgency in the Northern part of Nigeria, Abuja would have been chosen as one of the sites of this project. Consistent with Kerlinger (1986), this study used sampling number (440 participants) to limit any adverse effect that may arise from this sampling technique.

#### **6.10. Position of the researcher and reflexivity**

Reflexivity is “the process of reflecting critically on the self as a researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 182) and acknowledging “that the relationship among the researchers, the research topic and subjects may have on results” (Kitto *et al.*, 2008, p. 245). Reflexivity can also be defined as ‘viewing the self and the processes of data collection and interpretation in a critical and detached manner’ through internal dialogue and constant scrutiny of ‘what I know’ and ‘how I know it’ in the development of knowledge claims (Grbich, 2004, p. 71).

There are different ways that the researcher may want to position him or herself in a research project. One is becoming a participant in a group of his/her study. For example, Karp (1996) and Fisher (2014) had experience of the topic at the centre of their study but this researcher did not have any experience of the phenomenon alluded here, did not participate in the protests. This is because the researcher was studying in South Korea at the time of the protest. Even though researchers have found (Charmaz, 2009; Fisher, 2014; Karp, 1996) that the role of the participant researcher presents many opportunities, being a participant-researcher means one has both personal experience of the topic under study as well as a deeper knowledge of the topic of the research than without the experience. In the context of this research, the researcher’s lack of personal experience of the protest meant he had no urge to impose his own beliefs and assumptions on any of the various stages of the research.

In this project, the researcher positioned himself as ‘behind-the-scene facilitator of others’ voices (Grbich, 2004, p. 74). In this type of positioning, the researcher is a ‘mediator’ or ‘relator’ and it is the language that speaks and not the author. The author is ‘dead’ in the text but as a result, it is the voice of the participants that narrate the event.

For example, Krieger (1983) hid her voice completely in order to display more accurately the interacting voices of her participants. As Krieger (1983) did, the researcher allowed the voices of my participants to tell the story.

### **6.11. Chapter summary**

This chapter serves a number of functions that are both necessary and important in gaining an understanding of the methodological choices and processes used in the project.

Firstly, the statement of the research questions and an overview of the arguments for both the quantitative and qualitative approaches were provided, followed by a discussion of the benefits associated with a mixed methods approach. Secondly, the rationale for the research design was outlined, and the research steps described. An overview of the context and participants of the study was also presented with a detailed explanation of the data collection process at the quantitative and also the qualitative stages.

The final purpose of the chapter was to outline the analytical processes involved in dealing with the quantitative and qualitative data obtained and using the results to describe how these were carried out. Also, any decisions that were made during the entire data collection and analysis process were defined. The next chapter presents the results of the research. In particular, Chapter Seven presents the results and a degree of interpretive analysis for this project.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

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#### **7.1. Introduction**

The broad research question that this project attempts to answer concerns the impact of mobile internet use on how Nigerian university students who participated in the protest, learned about, planned, and documented their participation in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest, and what impact their mobile internet use had on their perception of democratic change in Nigeria.

In the previous chapter, the research design for this project was delineated and justified. This chapter moves on reporting the results of the project. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first section discusses the results from the quantitative phase and reports the quantitative data analysis from the initial analysis using descriptive statistics, through to the more sophisticated analysis using logistic regression, MANOVA and hierarchical regressions of targeted variables.

The second section presents the results from the qualitative phase: there is a detailed analysis of the comments, observations, and experiences of the participants taken from the interviews and a focus on the media platforms that participants used for learning about, planning and documenting their participation during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest.

The third section integrates the results from the quantitative and qualitative phases and presents a focussed discussion for the purpose of better understanding of the phenomenon under examination (see Sections 7.1 -7.2).

#### **7.2. The quantitative results**

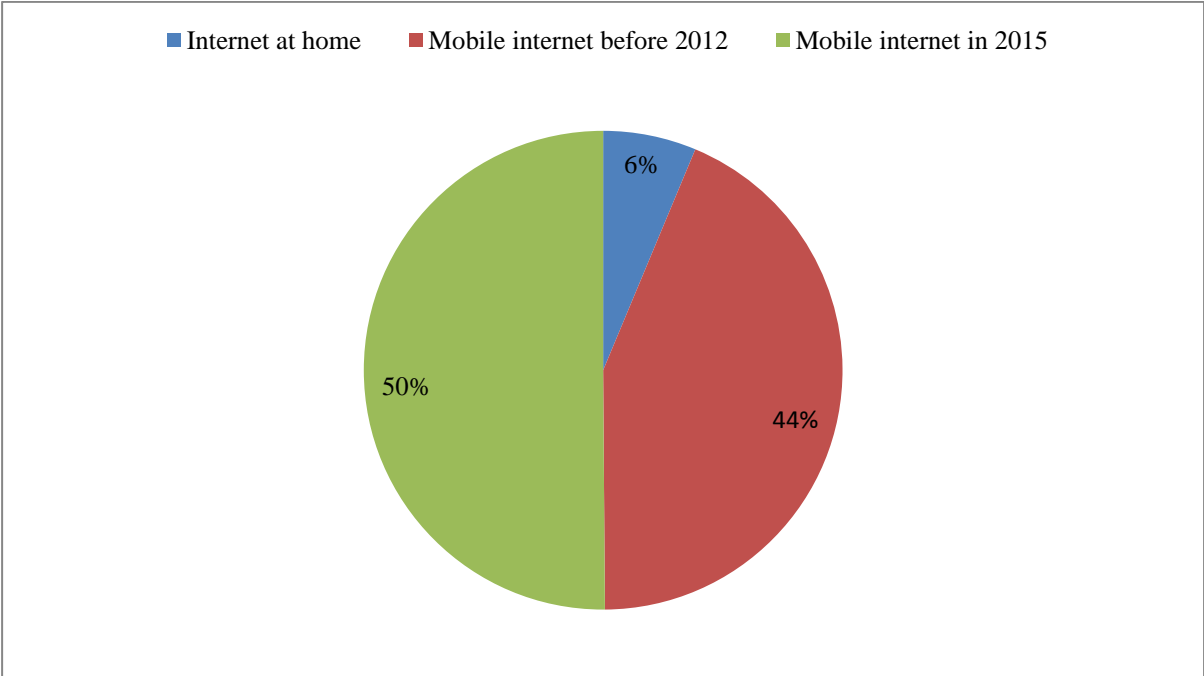
The results of the quantitative phase of the study are reported here along with analyses using statistical methods of logistic regression, multivariate analysis of variance, and hierarchical multiple regressions. However, it begins by reporting useful descriptive statistics regarding the research questions before the testing of the assumptions of multiple regressions. This is done in two stages. Stage one reports the findings for research questions 1a, b , c, d and 2, that is, to what extent mobile internet use had an impact on how protesters participated in the protest, learned about the protest, planned their participation, documented their participation, and the interplay of media use, protest experience and participation during the first day of the

protest. Stage two is concerned with the findings of research questions 4 and 5, ‘To what extent do students’ ethnicity, protest participation and political efficacy predict their intention to participate in political affairs?’ and ‘Are there differences between students who did or did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest with regards to how they perceive changes in democratic governance in Nigeria?’

**7.2.1. Mobile internet use**

**7.2.1.1. Internet access type**

An initial review of the frequencies of internet access and type of respondents that participated in the protest supports the understanding of mobile internet access and how it is changing online behaviour of Nigerian students. From the survey data, it is evident that fixed internet access was poor with only 6% of respondents reporting that they had fixed internet. As can be seen in Figure 7.1, there is a significant difference between the percentage of those who had reported having internet at home, the percentage of those who had reported having mobile internet prior to 2012, and the percentage of those who had reported having mobile internet in 2015. Of the students responding to the survey questions, 50% said they had mobile internet access in 2015<sup>8</sup>



**Figure. 7.1. Respondents’ internet access type. % represents percentage of respondents n=440**

<sup>8</sup> There is likelihood that respondents who reported having internet at home may also have reported having access to mobile internet both before 2012 and in 2015. In this project, the researcher did not count this because the data is used to indicate the general trend other than the specific number. Also, internet at home (fixed) was not time based in this current study.

### 7.2.1.2. Who participated in the project?

For the sample of protestors responding to the survey, as shown in Table 7.1, students were unlikely to have a fixed internet connection at home as about 88 percent of the protestors reported not having fixed internet access at home. Also, they used more mobile internet in 2015 than in 2012. Almost a half (45.4%) of the protestors in this sample had not previously been involved in politically active organizations.

**Table 7.1. Participants sample characteristics, N=440 (% in bracket)**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
<b>Age</b>	17-20	52 (11.8)
	21-24	165 (37.5)
	25-29	184 (41.8)
	30 and above	39 (8.9)
<b>Level of study</b>	Undergraduate	354 (80.5)
	Postgraduate	86 (19.5)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	225 (51.1)
	Female	215 (48.9)
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	Ibo	128 (29)
	Hausa	92 (21)
	Yoruba	101 (23)
	Others	119 (27)
<b>Political Group</b>	Student Union	210 (47.8)
	None	185 (42)
	Political Party	45 (10.2)

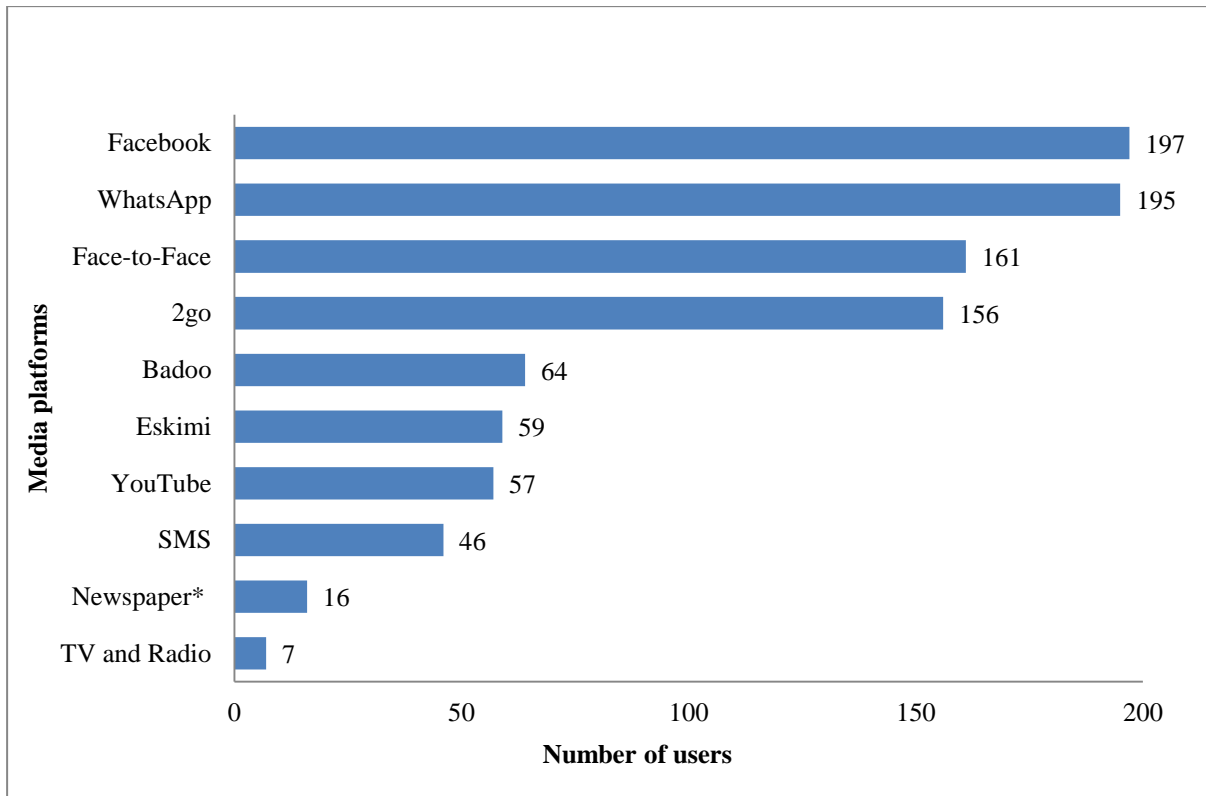
The participants in this study were mainly between 21 to 29 years old: about 79.3 percent (79.3%) belonged to this age group. Male participants were slightly in the majority as about 51.1 percent (51.1%) of the participants in the study were male while 48.9 percent (48.9%) were female. Undergraduate students had a higher representation in the study as 80.5 percent (80.5%) of the participants in the study were undergraduate students while the remaining 19.5 percent were postgraduate students. While this may look a little uneven, in fact, it represents the student intake pattern in Nigerian universities. For example, out of the fifty seven thousand (57,000) students of the University of Lagos for the year 2013, only twelve thousand

(12,000) among them were postgraduate students while the rest were undergraduates (University of Lagos, 2013, 2016).

The sample represented the different ethnic groups in Nigeria, particularly the three major groups. Ibo, Hausa and Yoruba constituted some 79 percent (79%) of the participants being 29 percent (29%), 27 percent (27%) and 23 percent (23%) respectively. Some 21 percent (21%) of the participants came from other minority ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. It is surprising to see that even though this research was set in South Western and South-South Nigeria, the sample had more Ibos (predominantly South-Eastern Nigerians) and a respectable number of Hausas (predominantly Northern Nigerians), Yorubas and other minority groups. With President Jonathan, coming from an ethnic minority in Nigeria and the first person to be president of Nigeria from a minority ethnic group, capturing the ethnic make-up of this sample is important due to the ethnic rivalry in Nigeria and the persistent distrust among ethnic groups, and the data from this sample shows such biases and tensions (Anugwom, 2000; Diamond, 1988; G. Onuoha, 2016). For example, the percentage of the researcher's respondents that identified as Hausa is high and the Hausas in Nigeria are not known for public protest as much as the Yorubas and the Igbos. The question that arises from this information is: what drove the Hausas into joining the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest? In terms of politics, the majority of the participants were either members of the student union government or had no political group. Only 10.2 percent (10.2%) of the participants reported being members of a political party while about 89.8 (89.8%) were either members of the student union government or had no political group allegiance. This means that participants in this study have not previously been involved in politically active organizations.

#### **7.2.1.3. Frequency of Media Use**

About 90% of the protest respondents frequently used Facebook to communicate about the protest. Respondents indicated that Facebook (90%), WhatsApp (87%), Face-to-face (73%) and 2go (71%) were also media platforms they used frequently before, during and after the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. All other communication options barely registered as a means of communicating at any time. Thus, it can be said that traditional mass media such as newspapers, radio and television were far less frequently used for communication than were the interpersonal means of communication. Figure 6.3 below shows frequency of media use.



**Figure. 7.2. Respondents' frequency of media use (N=220)**

#### **7.2.1.4. Media Used for Protest Purposes**

Respondents were asked to identify the types of media they used for news and updates, as well as coordination and documentation before, during and after the protest. The chosen media types for all tasks, maintained a similar pattern as Facebook, WhatsApp, 2go and Face-to-Face were the media choice for news and updates and coordination of the protest. However, documentation of protest activities peaked with Facebook. See Figure 7.3 for media types by respondents used for protest purposes.

#### **Learning about the protest**

Quite clearly defying widespread media use, nearly half (47%) of those in this sample reported that they learned about the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests through face-to-face communication. Mainstream social media platforms such as Facebook (82%) and YouTube (11%) and mobile social networking applications such as WhatsApp (66%), 2go (47%), Badoo (18%), SMS (16%) and Eskimi (16%) were the most common sources of how the protesters learned about the protests. Very few used the mainstream media – TV and radio 13% and newspapers 4% as the common media sources for learning the protests.

### **Planning for the protest**

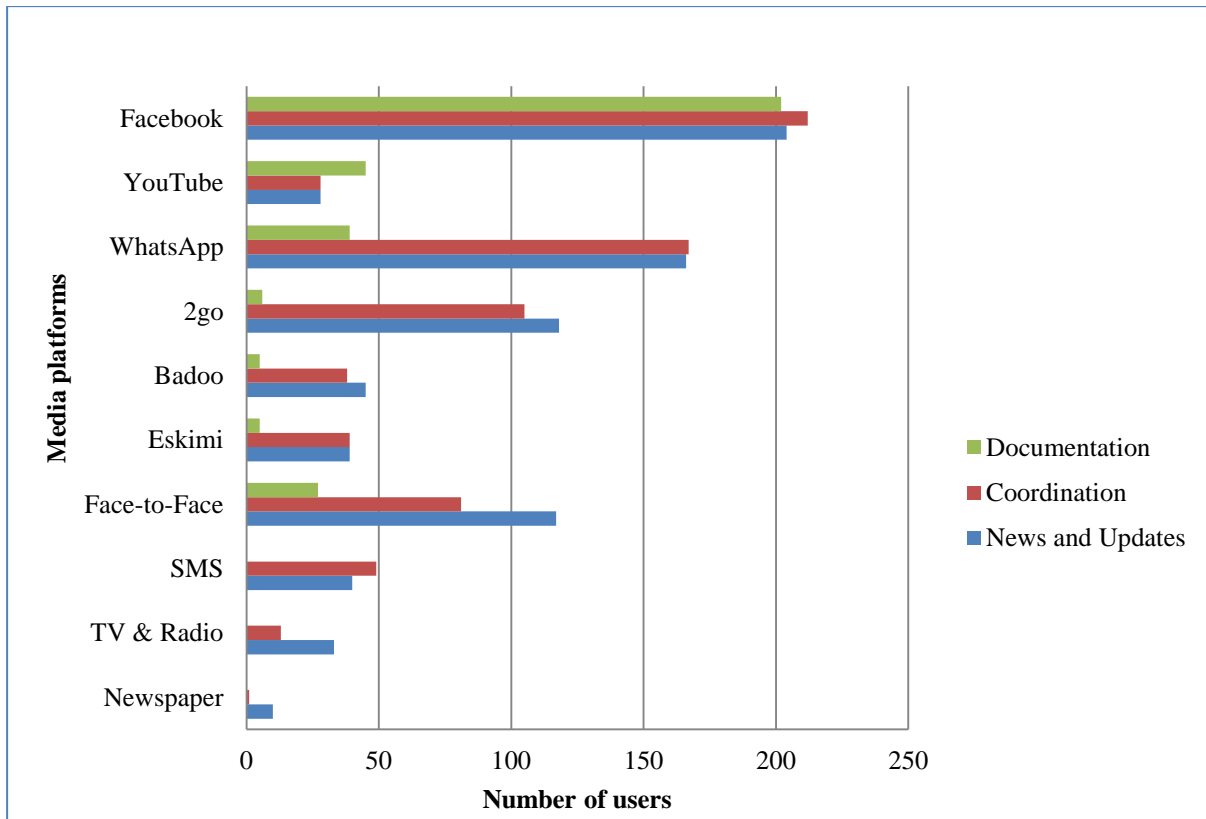
Some 85% of the respondents used Facebook to plan, and coordinate their participation in the protests. Above half (67%) used WhatsApp to plan and coordinate their participation in the protest while 2go (42%), face-to-face communication (32%), SMS (20%) and YouTube (11%) were also relied upon to plan and coordinate their participation in the protest. Also, about a quarter used Eskimi (16%) and Badoo (15%) to plan and coordinate for the protest.

### **Documenting their participation**

One of the most remarkable consequences of the new system of political communication has been the rise of the citizen journalist. A citizen journalist is a person ‘who may or may not have a history of activism, but suddenly appears to convey critical information to the public at a crucial moment’ (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012, p. 373). To evaluate the level of participation in such citizen journalism during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest, respondents were asked whether they produced pictures or videos of the protests, and if so, what their means of production and dissemination was.

Over three quarters (77%) of the respondents acknowledged that they produced and disseminated videos or pictures of the protests. The foremost platform for producing and disseminating visuals was Facebook (81%), with YouTube a distant second, by 18% of the respondents. Some 16% of the sample used WhatsApp to share images during the protest, while others used 2go (3%), Badoo (2%) and Eskimi (2%) for documenting participants’ involvement. Television and radio as well as newspapers were not media that were used by the respondents to document their participation.





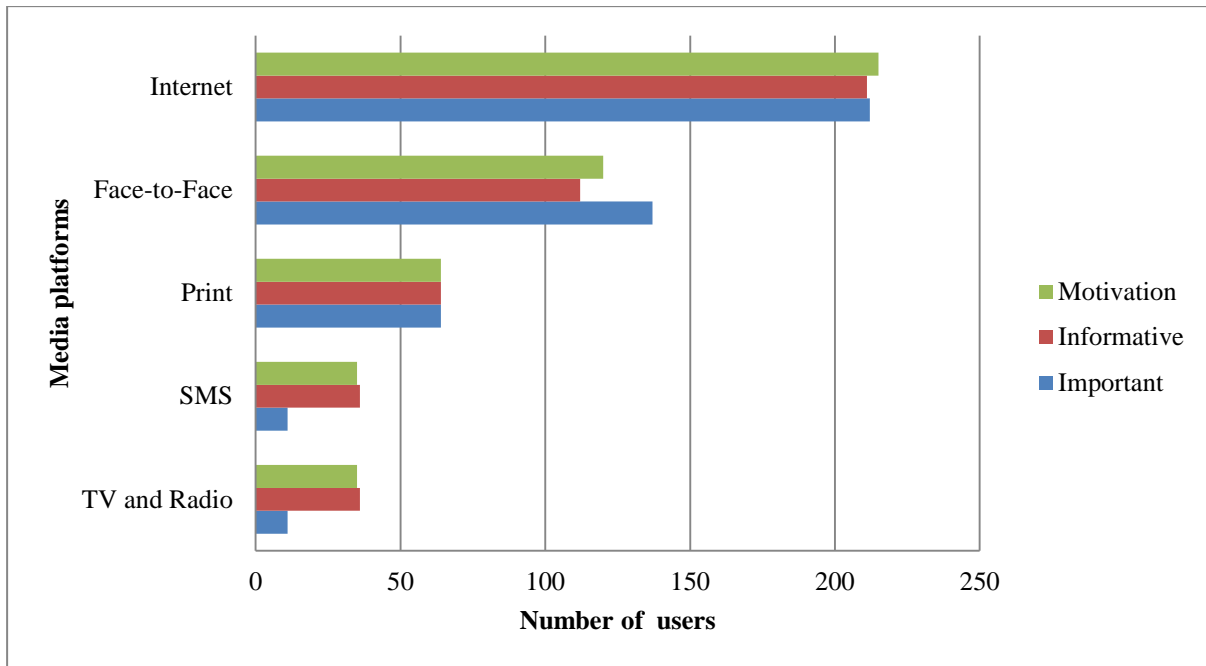
**Fig 7.3. Media used by respondents for protest purposes (N=220)**

#### **7.2.1.5. Protesters' media use comparison**

Respondents were asked to rank the media that (a) were most important to their protest activity; (b) were most informative regarding the protest; and (c) most motivated them to participate in the protests. Specifically, they were to rank the top two media for each of the three categories, from their personal experience. The information provided is given in Figure 7.4 below as aggregate media rankings.

The internet (social media platforms and mobile social networking applications), was clearly the leader in all the rankings. It was the most important means of communication to the protest activity, the most informative and had the most motivational content. About 96% of the respondents reported that the internet was the most important means of communicating their protest activity. Also, 96% reported that the internet was the most informative resource while 98% reported that the internet had the content that most motivated them to participate in the protest.

Face-to face and printed materials were both reported by the respondents as having some importance, being informative and motivating them to participate in the protest. In contrast, television and radio were rarely ranked by the respondents.



**Figure 7.4. Respondents' media ranking (N=220)**

### **7.2.2. Relationship between Respondents' demographic characteristics and joining the protest on the first day**

The results of the model containing demographic characteristics of protesters and comparing this with participation on the first day of the protest were significant at  $X^2(10, N=220) = 52.72, p < .001$ . This indicates that the model was able to distinguish between respondents who reported and respondents who did not report participating on the first day of protest based on their demographic information. The model as a whole explained between 24.4% (Cox and Snell R squared) and 39.6% (Nagelkerke R squared) of the variance in the day respondents joined the protest and correctly classified 80.4 of cases.

As shown in Table 7.2 below, in terms of direct association with joining the protest on the first day, the results indicate that age, ethnic group and level of study were significant. This suggests that participants of 21-24 years of age were more likely to report joining the protest on the first day than any other age group when all factors in the model were controlled. Also, the odd ratio of 0.012 for levels of study (1) - undergraduate students with a negative Beta ( $\beta$ ) indicates that participants who were undergraduates were 0.12 less likely to report joining the protest on the first day. The Beta values in logistic regression are equivalent to the B values obtained in a multiple regression analysis. These are the values that researchers use in equations to calculate the probability of a case falling into a specific category. Crucially, it tells the direction of the relationship. A negative B value indicates that an increase in the

independent categorical variable score will result in a decreased probability of the case recording a score of 1 in the dependent variable (Pallant, 2013, p. 177). This result indicates therefore that a participant who reported being an undergraduate was more likely to also report joining on the first day of the protests.

**Table 7.2. Demographic characteristics and joining the protest on the first day.**

	B	S.E	Exp(B)
<b>Age</b>			
Age (1)	-1.617	.978	.198
Age (2)	-2.806*	1.091	.60
Age (3)	16.701	9444.651	17907004
<b>Ethnic group</b>			
Ethnic group	-1.751**	.487	.174
<b>Level of study (1)</b>			
Level of study (1)	-4.284*	1.706	.014
<b>Year of study</b>			
Year of study	.151	.274	1.163
<b>Desktop internet</b>			
Desktop internet	-.400	.798	.670
<b>Mobile internet</b>			
Mobile internet	-18.859	15226.804	.000
<b>Prior protest experience</b>			
Prior protest experience	-.388	.811	.678
<b>Gender</b>			
Gender	-.215	.470	.806
<b>Constant</b>			
Constant	51.003	16803.717	1413082421
<b>Nagelkerke R Square</b>			
Nagelkerke R Square	.396		
<b>Cox &amp; Snell R Square</b>			
Cox & Snell R Square	.244		
<b>-2 Log likelihood</b>			
-2 Log likelihood	131.769		
<b>Chi-square</b>			
Chi-square	54.4**		

**Note:** Logistic regression coefficient \* p<.05, \*\* p<001

### 7.2.3. Mobile internet and how protesters learned about the protests

A direct logistic regression was performed to assess the impact of a number of factors on the likelihood that respondents would report participating in the first day of the protests. The model of the first direct logistic regression contained ten independent variables (Media used for news and updates about the protest: SMS, Newspaper, Television and radio, Face-to-face, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, 2go, Eskimi and Badoo). The full model containing all the predictors was statistically significant,  $X^2 (10, N=220) = 136.80, p < .001$ , indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents who reported and did not report participating on the first day of the protests. The model as a whole explained between 47.5% (Cox and Snell R square) and 75.4% (Nagelkerke R squared) of the variance in day of joining the protest and correctly classified 94.3% of cases. As shown in Table 7.3 below, only two of the independent variables made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model

(Media used for news and updates Facebook and Media used for news and updates Eskimi). The strongest predictor of reporting protest participation on the first day was using Eskimi for news and updates before, during and after the protest, recording an odds ratio of 65.54. This indicated that respondents who used Eskimi as a source of news and updates before, during and after the protest were over sixty five (65) times more likely to report participating on the first day of the protest, controlling for all other factors in the model. The odd ratio of 12.43 for the use of Facebook for news and updates before, during and after the protest indicates that respondents who used Facebook for news and updates were 12.43 more likely to report participating on the first day of the protest.

**Table 7.3. Media used to learn about the protests and joining the protest on the first day.**

	B	S.E	Exp (B)
<b>SMS</b>	.636	.903	1.890
<b>TV and radio</b>	1.863	3.089	6.442
<b>Newspaper</b>	.270	3.037	1.309
<b>Face-to-Face</b>	2.302	1.174	9.995
<b>Facebook</b>	2.520*	1.200	12.425
<b>YouTube</b>	15.792	7725.905	7219369.872
<b>WhatsApp</b>	-1.713	1.500	.180
<b>2go</b>	.403	.895	1.496
<b>Eskimi</b>	4.183***	1.201	65.544
<b>Badoo</b>	2.475	1.555	11.886
<b>Constant</b>	-5.444**	1.673	.004
<b>Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup></b>	.754		
<b>Cox and Snell R<sup>2</sup></b>	.475		
<b>-2 Log Likelihood</b>	74.254		
<b>No. of Observation</b>	220		
<b>Chi-Square</b>	136.862***		

**Note:** Logistic regression coefficient \*p<.05, \*\*p< .005, \*\*\*p < .001

#### 7.2.4. Mobile internet and how protesters planned their participation

The model containing all predictors was statistically significant,  $X^2(10, N=220) = 142.92$ ,  $p < .001$ , indicating that the model was able to distinguish between the respondents who reported and those who did not report participating on the first day of protest. The model as a whole explained between 49.2% (Cox and Snell R squared) and 67.7% (Nagelkerke R squared) of the variance in the day respondents joined the protest and correctly classified 95.3 of cases.

**Table 7.4. Media used to plan for the protest and joining on the first day of the protest**

	B	S.E	Exp (B)
<b>SMS</b>	1.342	.884	3.825
<b>TV and radio</b>	.617	41013	1.854
<b>Newspaper</b>	-1.906	1.080	.149
<b>Face-to-Face</b>	1.583	.889	4.872
<b>Facebook</b>	2.997	1.701	20.18
<b>YouTube</b>	17.866	8161	57.42
<b>WhatsApp</b>	-.219	1.754	.803
<b>2go</b>	-1.029	.973	.357
<b>Eskimi</b>	-6.488*	1.116	.002
<b>Badoo</b>	28.294	40192	193.974
<b>Constant</b>	-1.001*	41013	.367
<b>Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup></b>	.779		
<b>Cox and Snell R<sup>2</sup></b>	.492		
<b>-2 Log Likelihood</b>	67.693		
<b>No. of Observation</b>	220		
<b>Chi-Square</b>	142.921*		

**Note:** Logistic regression coefficient \* $p < .001$

As shown in Table 7.4 above, only one of the independent variables made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model (media used to plan and coordinate for the protests Eskimi). The odds ratio of 0.002 for Eskimi with a negative Beta ( $\beta$ ) indicated that participants who reported using Ekimi to plan and coordinate their participation in the protests

were 0.002 less likely to report joining the protest on the first day. This result revealed that majority of the participants who used Eskimi to plan and coordinate the protest also joined the protest on the first day.

While this result looks surprising at a glance, an understanding of the context and the history of social media and mobile social networking applications in general in Nigeria adds clarity to this result. Eskimi - a mobile social networking application that mainly covers job vacancies, music, chat-forums was a realistic choice for the students wanting to communicate about the protest. Eskimi has about 12 million users in 2012 (AfricaPractice, 2014), and the majority of them are young educated job seekers and music fans.

#### **7.2.5. Mobile internet and how protesters documented their participation**

To examine if there were any significant differences in the type of media used by protesters to document their participation in the protests and participating on the first day of the protests, another direct logistic regression was conducted. The model contained ten independent variables (type of media used to document participation in the protests: SMS, Television and radio, Newspaper, Face-to-face, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, 2go, Eskimi and Badoo). The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant,  $X^2(11, N=220)=100.29$ ,  $p<.001$ , indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents who reported and respondents who did not report participating on the first day of protests based on how they documented their participation. The model as a whole explained between 39.3% (Cox and Snell R squared) and 67% (Nagelkerke R squared) of the variance in the day respondents joined the protest and correctly classified 88.6 of cases.

Not surprising, the three independent variables that made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model were Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp. The strongest predictor of reporting documentation of the participation was Facebook as respondents who reported using Facebook to document their participation during the protest were 0.10 less likely to report joining the protests on the first day, controlling for other factors in the model. Also, the odds ratio of .021 for YouTube was less than 1 and with a negative beta ( $\beta$ ), indicated that respondents who reported using YouTube to document their participation during the protest were 0.21 less likely to report joining the protest on the first day, controlling for other factors in the model; WhatsApp recorded an odds ratio of 33.6 which indicated that respondents who used WhatsApp to document their participation during the protest were over 36 times more likely to have joined the protest on the first day, controlling for all other factors in the model.

It is worth noting about this result that while WhatsApp may appear to be the strongest predictor of reporting documentation and participating on the first day of the protest based on its odds ratio of 33.6, Facebook actually was the strongest predictor followed by YouTube – with odds ratios of 0.10 and 0.21 respectively, meaning that participants who reported using these two media platforms for documentation were more likely to have joined the protests on the first day (see Table 7.5 below).

**Table 7.5. Media used to document participation and joining on the first day of the protests**

	B	S.E	Exp (B)
<b>SMS</b>	.436	1.008	2.303
<b>TV and radio</b>	1.563	2.089	6.002
<b>Newspaper</b>	.570	6.026	1.284
<b>Face-to-Face</b>	1.88	.737	3.280
<b>Facebook</b>	-4.599*	1.423	.010
<b>YouTube</b>	-3.881*	1.112	0.21
<b>WhatsApp</b>	3.513*	1.274	33.552
<b>2go</b>	22.960	19384	93.63
<b>Eskimi</b>	16.873	40192	2127322
<b>Badoo</b>	8.736	18.743	10.234
<b>Constant</b>	46.058	5505.638	1006110372
<b>Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup></b>	.67		
<b>Cox and Snell R<sup>2</sup></b>	.393		
<b>-2 Log Likelihood</b>	97.503		
<b>No. of Observation</b>	220		
<b>Chi-Square</b>	100.287*		

**Note:** Logistic regression coefficient \*p< .001

This result is similar to the results of Tufekci and Wilson (2012) who reported that Facebook and phones were the two dominant platforms used to produce and disseminate visuals during the protest. According to them, these two platforms were not mutually exclusive options. They argued however that those who used phones to produce visuals also used Facebook, ‘presumably uploading videos and pictures taken on their phones to Facebook’ (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012, p. 373).

### **7.2.6. The interplay between media use and joining the protest on the first day**

A one-way between group multivariate analysis of variance was run to examine the mean differences in ten media used by protesters between participation on the first day of protest and participating other days. In this case, the ten media type used were dependent variables, whereas, protest participation days were independent variables.

Prior to conducting the one-way MANOVA, outlier detection and assumption evaluations were performed. No univariate outliers were detected in the dataset. With Mahalanobis  $D^2$  measure at  $p < .001$ , four observations were identified as multivariate outliers and were deleted, leaving 216 observations. Based on the histograms, the ten dependent variables in the two groups showed normal distribution. The scatterplots did not indicate any curvilinear shapes and all pairs of the dependent variables were reasonably linearly related. Finally, Box's M was non-significant at  $\alpha = .001$ , indicating that homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices could be assumed.

As all the underlying assumptions were reasonably supported by the data, a one-way MANOVA was conducted. Findings showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the protest variable (joining the protest on the first day versus joining on subsequent days) on the combined dependent variables,  $F(9, 163) = 26.42$ ,  $p = .001$ , Pillai's Trace = .59, partial  $\eta^2 = .598$  (see Appendix 10). When the results for the dependent variables were considered separately, five differences reached statistical significance, using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .005, were SMS,  $F(1, 171) = 16.251$ ,  $p = .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .087$ ; TV and radio,  $F(1, 171) = 14.066$ ,  $p = .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .076$ ; 2go,  $F(1, 171) = 16.251$ ,  $p = .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .087$ ; Eskimi,  $F(1, 171) = 197.165$ ,  $p = .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .536$  and Badoo,  $F(1, 171) = 86.928$ ,  $p = .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .337$  (see Appendix 11).

An inspection of the various mean scores for the two groups in SMS, TV and radio, 2go, Eskimi and Badoo indicated that there are no significant differences in the mean scores of the two groups for SMS, TV and radio and 2go. However, those who joined the protest on the first day reported slightly higher use (more than 2 scale point) of Eskimi ( $M = 3.333$ ) than those who joined on subsequent days ( $M = 1.369$ ), and Badoo ( $M = 3.260$ ) and ( $M = 1.480$ ) respectively (see Table 7.6 below).



**Table 7.6. Individual dependent variable means scores**

Media Types	Protest Participation Day	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
SMS	Subsequent Days	4.805	.483	.169	4.470	5.139
	First Day	4.023	1.211	.94	3.836	4.209
Newspaper	Subsequent Days	1.187	.511	.082	1.024	1.350
	First Day	1.343	.532	.046	1.253	1.434
TV & Radio	Subsequent Days	1.236	.593	.124	.991	1.480
	First Day	1.768	.845	.069	1.631	1.904
Face-to-face	Subsequent Days	4.041	1.059	.135	3.774	4.307
	First Day	4.265	.799	.075	4.117	4.414
Facebook	Subsequent Days	4.967	.208	.031	4.905	5.030
	First Days	4.970	.199	.018	4.935	5.004
YouTube	Subsequent Days	2.008	1.151	.131	1.750	2.266
	First Day	1.636	.714	.073	1.493	1.780
WhatsApp	Subsequent Days	4.927	.242	.042	.4845	5.009
	First Day	4.922	.273	.023	4.876	4.967
2go	Subsequent Days	4.805	.483	.169	4.470	5.139
	First Day	4.922	1.211	.094	3.836	4.209
Eskimi	Subsequent Days	3.333	1.147	.122	3.092	3.575
	First Day	1.369*	.630	.068	1.234	1.503
Badoo	Subsequent Days	3.260	1.292	.167	2.931	3.589
	First Day	1.480*	.990	.093	1.296	1.663

### 7.3. Predicting intention to participate in political affairs

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to address research question 4, that is, whether the intention to participate in political affairs could be predicted as a function of political participation status, political efficacy and type of internet use while gender, age, and ethnicity variables were controlled. In this multiple regression analysis, intention to participate in political affairs was the criterion variable while gender, age, ethnicity, internet use type and political efficacy were predictors. Gender, age, and ethnicity were entered into model 1 of the regression as control variables. Internet use types (fixed and mobile internet), political efficacy and protest participation variables were entered into model 2. The order of entering the variables of interest was not based on theoretical consideration as the researcher could not find theories explaining how this is done.

Prior to the multiple regression analysis, preliminary analyses were conducted to check for outliers and evaluate assumptions. No observations were identified as outliers, meaning that all 440 cases were involved in further analyses. That all variance inflation factor (VIF) values were well below the threshold of 10 the highest value of VIF was 1.12 - means that no values were indicative of problematic collinearity. The residuals scatterplot revealed that most residuals randomly scattered along the zero (0) point and formed an appropriate rectangle, suggesting that normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity assumptions were deemed to have been met.

**Table 7.7. Regression for Intention to Participate in Political Affairs**

Model	Variables	B	SE b	Beta	T	Sig	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>
<b>1</b>	Constant	4.384	.352		12.453	.000***	.042	.033
	Age	-.144	.068	-.107	-2.118	.035*		
	Gender	-.073	.108	-.033	-.675	.500		
	Level of study	-.372	.180	-.107	-2.071	0.039*		
	Ethnicity	.149	.059	.127	2.532	0.12*		
<b>2</b>	Constant	4.480	.515		8.692	.000***	.218	.201
	Age	-.127	.062	-.094	-2.041	.042*		
	Gender	-.103	.098	-.047	-1.052	.293		
	Level of study	.100	.171	.029	.584	.560		
	Ethnicity	-.037	.058	-.032	-.639	.523		
	Protest participation	-.797	.123	-.361	-.6487	.000***		
	Political Efficacy	.146	.052	.149	2.822	.005*		
	Mobile internet in 2015	-.092	.309	-.013	-.297	.767		
	Mobile internet in 2012	-.099	.144	-.030	-.690	.491		
	Fixed internet	-.035	.144	-.011	-.241			

**Note:** Summary of Each Step of Hierarchical Regression Predicting IPPA

In model 1 of the hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA), gender, age, and ethnicity accounted for 4.2% of variance in intention to participate in political affairs, R<sup>2</sup> =.042, adjusted R<sup>2</sup> =.033, F (4, 423) =4.68, p<.005. Age, level of study, and ethnicity each made a unique significant contribution to the model, age,  $\beta = -.107$ , t (423) = -2.118, p<.05;

level of study,  $\beta = -.107$ ,  $t(423) = -2.071$ ,  $p < .05$ , and ethnicity,  $\beta = .127$ ,  $t(423) = 2.532$ ,  $p < .05$ . These results suggest that young people, 21 – 29 years, are less likely to have an intention to participate in political affairs, and students from the major ethnic groups, For example Igbo are more likely to join in political affairs. However, gender made no significant individual contribution to the model,  $\beta = -.033$ ,  $t(423) = -.675$ ,  $P > .05$  (see Table 6.7 above).

In model 2, protest participation status, political efficacy and internet use type were added to the regression equation, and they accounted for an additional 17.6% of the variance in intention to participate in political affairs: change in  $R^2 = .176$ , change in  $F(5, 418) = 18.79$ ,  $p < .001$ . In combination, the ten predictor variables explained 21.8% of the variance in intention to participate in political affairs,  $R^2 = .218$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .201$ ,  $F(9, 418) = 12.95$ ,  $p < .001$ . By Cohen's (1988) conventions, a combined effect of this magnitude can be considered "medium" ( $f^2 = .218/1-.218 = .22$ ).

Just as in the first model, age as the control variable had an individual effects on intention to participate in political affairs despite a slight decrease and  $\beta = -.094$ ,  $t(418) = -2.041$ ,  $p < .05$ . Gender, level of study and ethnicity had no individual effect in the model. Of the five primary predictor variables, only protest participation status and political efficacy uniquely contributed to the second model: protest participation status with  $\beta = -.361$ ,  $t(418) = -6.487$ ,  $p < .001$ , and political efficacy,  $\beta = .149$ ,  $t(418) = 2.822$ ,  $p < .05$ . The standardized beta values ( $\beta$ ) of the significant predictors show that political efficacy had a greater impact on intention to participate in political affairs than protest participation, status and age.

#### **7.4. Perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria**

A one-way between group multivariate analysis of variance was run to examine the mean differences in four perceived change in democracy variables involving political efficacy, intention to participate in political affairs, perceived competitiveness of political parties and perceived change in corruption level between the students who participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests and those who did not participate in the protest. In this case, the four democracy variables were dependent variables, whereas, protest participation was independent variable.

Prior to conducting the one-way MANOVA, outlier detection and assumption evaluations were performed. No univariate outliers were detected in the dataset. With Mahalanobis  $D^2$  measure at  $p < .001$ , one observation was identified as a multivariate outlier. However, the outlier was not deleted because it was close to the value, leaving non-protesters ( $n=218$ ) and

protesters (n=209) with 427 as total observations. Based on the histograms, some of the dependent variables in the two groups were somewhat normally distributed whereas, others, particularly, the protest participant group in the intention to participate in political affairs (IPPA) were skewed. However, with respect to roughly equal sample size in each group and group sizes, MANOVA test were still robust to the violation of normality (Pallant, 2013; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The scatterplots did not indicate any curvilinear shapes and all pairs of the dependent variables were reasonably linearly related. Finally, Box's M value of 42.187 at  $p < .001$ , which was significant, showed the entire variance-covariance matrices were not equal across groups, meaning that the assumption was violated. However, regarding the fairly equal sample sizes in this study, with the largest sample size being no more than 1.5 of the smallest, the violation of this assumption did not raise any serious concern nor invalidate the use of MANOVA (Hair *et al.*, 2006).

With respect to the violation of the homogeneity of variance-covariance assumption, Pillai's Trace criterion was employed for significance testing because of its robustness to this violation (Allen & Bennett, 2012; Hair *et al.*, 2006; Pallant, 2013; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the Protest variable (Participating in the protest versus not participating in the protest) and the combined dependent variables (political efficacy, intention to participate in political affairs, perceived competitiveness of political parties and perceived corruption level),  $F(4, 422) = 224.724$ ,  $p < .0001$ , Pillai's Trace = .681, partial  $\eta^2 = .681$  (see table 6.8 below).

Analysis of the dependent variables individually showed effects for all the four dependent variables. The dependent variables were statistically significant at the Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .012 (.05/4), political efficacy (PE) at  $F(1, 425) = 586.55$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .580$ ; intention to participate in political affairs (IPPA),  $F(1, 425) = 112.52$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .209$ ; perceived competition of political parties (PCPP),  $F(1, 425) = 217.02$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .338$ , and perceived corruption level (PCL),  $F(1, 425) = 325.60$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .434$  (see appendix 12 and 13).

An inspection of the various mean scores of the dependent variables of the two groups indicated that students who participated in the protest reported slightly higher levels of political efficacy ( $M = 4.26$ ) than students who did not participate in the protests ( $M = 2.904$ ). Also, students who participated in the protests reported higher levels of intention to participate in political affairs ( $M = 4.498$ ) than students who did not participate in the protests

(M =3.482). Students who participated in the protests reported significantly higher (i.e., more positive) perceived competitiveness of political parties (M =4.587) than those who did not (M =3.361). The trend continued in perceived corruption level as students who participated in the protests reported a slightly lower perceived corruption level (M =4.441) than those that did not (M =3.023).

**Table 7.8. Individual dependent variable means scores**

Dependent variables	Protest Participation Day	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
<b>Political Efficacy</b>	Protested	4.620	.361	.051	4.521	4.720
	Did not protest	2.904	.961	.051	2.806	3.001
<b>Intention to participate in political Affairs</b>	Protested	4.498	.578	.068	4.363	4.632
	Did not protested	3.482	.1.264	.067	3.350	3.613
<b>Perceived Competitiveness of Political parties</b>	Protested	4.587	.653	.059	4.470	4.703
	Did not protest	3.361	.1.018	.058	3.247	3.3476
<b>Perceived Corruption Level</b>	Protested	4.441	.531	.056	4.331	4.552
	Did not protest	3.023	.011	.055	2.915	3.131

#### 7.4.1. Summary of quantitative analysis

This section has described the results of the quantitative data analyses. It shows the media that respondents used for protest purposes, and how these media platforms can be used to predict their day of joining the protest. Furthermore, the section also revealed that political efficacy and participating in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests are useful in predicting the intention to participate in political affairs. Also, the section evaluated if there were differences between how Nigerian students that participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria compared to those who did not participate in the protests. The results showed that participants who participated in the protest reported a slightly higher level of political efficacy, intention to participate in political affairs and

perceived competitiveness of political parties than those who did not participate in the protests. The next section presents the analysis of the results from the qualitative interviews.

### **7.5. Results of the qualitative data analysis**

This section discusses and reflects on the comments made by the participants in the study in relation to how they learned about, planned and participated in the protest. A by-product of the discussions held with the participants was that, whilst discussing their knowledge, plan and documentation of the protests, numerous other aspects of protest mobilization and participation were also drawn out, including leadership and government decision making patterns after the protest. These are included where relevant and they provide illuminating insight.

#### **7.5.1. Setting the scene – why participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests**

Participants' responses to the interview question relating to their reason for participating in the protest were varied, as one would expect due to their different cultural and educational backgrounds. To begin, there were those responses that indicated that the reason they joined the protest was the increase in the price of goods and services occasioned by the removal of the fuel subsidy. A case in point is that of Victoria, who spoke of her recollection of the increase in the price of goods and services as a result of the removal of the fuel subsidy. Her comments made it clear that the price increase and hardship affected many people. The following extract shows what she felt:

We were celebrating the New Year then, when I saw the post on Facebook that President Goodluck Jonathan has removed the oil subsidy. I think, I really did not feel it immediately until when it started affecting transport fare, price of food and every other thing. It wasn't really easy on us and we could not survive in that situation. I was not really happy with the whole thing. So, when I saw this group in Facebook called Nigeria Awakening Day movement, I decided to join them as I interested in the protest because we were not happy with the removal of oil subsidy. If you go to the market, to buy something like garri, the price was double the normal price. There was an increase in practically everything and we needed to end that suffering. So that was how I joined the group when I saw them on Facebook and the protest. (Victoria/Turn322)

Victoria's response implies that the removal of fuel subsidy brought hardship to the people and that the protest was a reaction to end the hardship. This is something that was reiterated by several other respondents.

In his reply to the same question regarding the reason for participating in the protests, King revealed that the reason he joined the protest was because of the hardship that he faced caused by the rise in the price of goods and services, which in turn was caused by the removal of subsidy from fuel:

You know that the Nigerian problems are intertwined. When we talk about the protest, the dominant issue then was the increment of fuel prices because of the removal of subsidy. However, because they are interrelated, when there is no fuel, how would market women go to the market? How can they transport goods and service? So we need fuel for virtually everything. For example, how are we going to power our generators for electricity? As you know that individuals generate power here as a result of low level of electricity provided by the government? So, we generate electricity for ourselves. There are several variables that the fuel subsidy removal was affecting. So, we are talking about cases about starvation, People could not get food, could not pay transport fares. So, people were trekking during that period. So, we talked about a lot of issues that were affecting us on Facebook and decided to take action. (King/Turn 367)

From this comment, King seems to be alluding to the fact that it is the hardship created from the removal of fuel subsidy by the government that convinced him to participate in the protests. The fact that he rhetorically asked ‘when there is no fuel, how would market women go to the market’ explains the important role that a subsidized fuel price plays in helping the poor. King also seems to have joined the protest because of other ills in the society such as poor power supply and lack of transport scheme from the government as ‘individuals generate power’ in Nigeria as a result of infrequent power supply from the government corporation, the National Power Holding Company (PHCN). To King and other participants, the protest was as a result of an accumulation of suffering.

According to Table 7.9 below, 53% of the interview participants, King and Victoria included reported that the hike in the price of goods and services was the reason for their participation in the protest. The comments from 53% of the interview participants, including King, and Victoria seem to illuminate why the people were angry. The Nigerian dictum: ‘a hungry man is an angry man’ seems to be at play here, and may describe what happened in Nigeria then. With an increase in the price of goods and services, the hardship and hunger had driven the people out of their ‘comfort zones’ into the street, and thereby helping them not to worry about the consequences of joining the protest.

The other responses to this question about why the participants joined the protest were not focussed on the hardship occasioned by the removal of the fuel subsidy, but rather, it was a protest against the mainstream media outlets that reported biased news in favour of the

government. These responses proved to be just the beginning of a vast number of comments on the conventional media representation of the protest.

When talking about why she joined the protest, Blessing narrated how the failure of traditional journalists to exercise their watchdog function diligently was her reason for joining the protests. The following excerpt explains her reason:

I joined the protest because I was really disappointed with the mainstream media; you know they ought to be our spokes-people when it comes to the business of holding government accountable. But they always disappoint us. Even the broadcast stations, could not broadcast the video clips from the protest. All they did was to present the protest with analysis that favoured the views of those in government. We actually went to some broadcast stations like the AIT for them to play some video clips that we made to expose the level of corruption and bad governance in the country. However, such videos were not projected for Nigerians to see. So we had to act to save ourselves. (Blessing/ Turn 400)

As Blessing talked about joining the protest because of her disappointment with the mainstream media for their inability to speak-up for the masses and holding the government accountable', it was easy to get the sense that it was this situation that persuaded her to join the protest and the same can be said for other participants. When Edet recalled what made him choose online platforms to coordinate the protest, he, like Blessing, was disappointed with the mainstream media with their failure to criticize the government. He reacted angrily when talking about his disappointment with traditional journalists: they 'did not want to offend the government' and this was what prompted him into communicating with 'internet websites' and, ultimately, led to them protesting:

Like I mentioned earlier, they (mainstream media) did not want to offend the government. It is like chop, I chop. Cut, I cut. It is we; the common people that get affected the most. Newspapers and TV did not stand with the masses. They were silent and reported the story of the protest lightly. They did not help us and that is why we used internet websites such as Facebook and WhatsApp for our communication and coordination of the protest. (Edet/ Turn 71)

Edet's comments here are interesting as they make specific mention of the lack of critical analysis of the government's policies from the mainstream media apparently, occasioned by the relationship between those in government and the media outlets. He was of the view that the mainstream media received scraps from those in government and so, they (the media outlets), became quiet and overlooked news stories that painted the government in a bad light. These comments from Edet and Blessing support what is said in Chapter Two Section 2.2 of this thesis, namely that the protesters were furious about the inability of the news media to cover the protests. Consequently, the protesters took their protests to the local media outlets



and this culminated in the protesters forcing the journalists to broadcast the protests live (Keita, 2012; Punch, 2012).

Some participants such as Blessing and Edet, who did not joined the protests at its inception, finally did so mainly for solidarity against the mainstream media as they believed that the lack of reporting of the protests was a ‘sell-out’ on the part media practitioners. The people considered the quietness of the mainstream media outlets about the protests as tacit support for the government. Blessing and Edet’s comments confirms a tweet from a Twitter User encouraging protesters to take action against mainstream media, ‘It’s time we #Occupy NTA ...they aint carrying the news’. As stated in Chapter Two, such calls, and subsequent protests in the media houses, was the only way the protesters could force the media channels to air news about the protests.

This section has served to present the comments of participants regarding ‘why they joined the protest’ as a means of gradually moving into deeper and more focused comments from the interviews concerning participants’ protest knowledge, plan and documentation. The following section sees the focus shift to ‘protest knowledge’.

### **7.5.2. Knowledge of the protest**

This section focuses on how the protesters came to know about the protest. Knowledge of the protest is one of the themes targeted in the qualitative interviews to obtain and extend the understanding of the quantitative results relevant to research question one (RQ1a) and two. The purpose of the interview questions was to ascertain whether social media platforms and mobile social networking applications or other media platforms were the media platforms from which the participants learned about the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.

The comments made by the respondents regarding their knowledge of the protests followed a similar pattern to those regarding the reason for joining the protests: they reflected the situation of a people, angry with those in government and frustrated at the mainstream media for its inability to perform its watchdog function. The interviewees were unanimous in answering the question relating to the media from which they gained knowledge of the protests. While majority of the interview participants’ comments from the interview credited the traditional media outlets as the platforms from which they heard of the President’s announcement (the removal of subsidy from fuel), they reflected that it was their engagement online that educated them on the consequences of such policies and the protest mobilization.

According to Table 7.9 below, 74% of the interview participants reported learning about the protest (but not the announcement), through social media and mobile social networking applications, while 26% of the participants reported learning about the protest via face-to-face communication.

Edet drew attention to learning about the protest through social media platforms when talking about this – how he heard the presidential announcement from the mainstream media, but came to understand the enormity of the announcement and protests through online media platforms. After stating he had heard of the protest online and I had asked him to elaborate on exactly how. He commented:

I did hear about the presidential declaration through the television channel NTA. However, after the announcement, NTA continued with other news stories. The declaration on NTA could not sustain me. We started discussing the presidential declaration on Facebook and WhatsApp, trying to understand what it means and how it will affect us on the first day. However, as we were discussing and trying to understand the effect of oil subsidy removal, things went out of hand fast. At almost the same time, friends and people from all over Nigeria started complaining about hike in the prices of almost everything. It was then that it became clear the impact of subsidy removal. Also, while posting some comments about the presidential declaration, I saw a group on Facebook called the ‘Occupy Nigeria 2012’ asking us to sign online petition, I did and that is how I joined the group. (Edet/Turn 66)

It was not only Edet who heard about the protest through social media platforms and mobile social networking applications. When Kate spoke of how she heard about the protest, she echoed these feelings of Facebook and WhatsApp being the media platforms that were used to communicate and understand the consequence of the fuel subsidy removal and for knowledge of the protest. She credited Facebook as the platform ‘where people started writing and raising concerns about the subsidy removal’. She stated that:

The protest, I think, started from Facebook. Where people started writing and raising concerns about the subsidy removal. The anger spread to everywhere that it motivated people to protest telling the government that the policy has to be reversed because it wasn’t helping the people. You actually ask how I knew about the protest. I knew about the protest through the social media. The Facebook group which was created was mainly how I come to know about the protest. So, there, we arranged that there have to be a protest and the time and venues were fixed and all the rest. So that's how I knew about it. (Kate/ Turn 512)

Vincent was yet another to convey this point. He talked about how he knew about the protest through a group that he joined on Facebook and how the group was not only the

first place he heard about the protest, but also the first place he heard of the presidential announcement. When asked to explain further how he got to know about that the protest, he said "... I got to know about the protest through Facebook. I joined the group, Abia Awakening, so, I got to know about the protest through this group" (Vincent/ Turn 431).

As with Edet, Kate and Vincent, Ngozi conveyed that she heard of the protest through a Facebook page, 'Nigeria Awakening Day'. She reported that she was sleeping due to a hangover from a New Year's Eve celebration and approached the internet to understand the impact of the removal of fuel subsidy on hearing about the announcement. Ngozi's comments are interesting as they narrate precisely how she heard of the protest and how the protest metamorphosed in her own group. She succinctly put her knowledge of the protest this way:

I did not hear the announcement first hand as I was not watching television that morning. I was sleeping as a result of hangover of the 31<sup>st</sup> night celebration. I was told that President Jonathan made the announcement. So, I quickly turned to my online friends for the effect of the removal of subsidy. My frequent presence in Facebook helped me see the group Nigeria Awakening Day that was formed to educate members about the effect of Subsidy removal and also provide platform for critical debate on the issue. The more the conversation increased and with updates from various parts of the country about price increase, the more the members get angrier and angrier. Like play members starts suggesting that we do what the Egyptians did and why we need to tell the government that enough is enough. It was then that a member posted an update about other groups particularly the 'Occupy Nigeria movement' group. It was from that update that we noticed that they have started planning with venues on how to protest against the removal of oil subsidy. I joined those in Ojota because it is closer to my house and kept following updates from other parts of the country. (Ngozi/ Turn 35)

These four interviewees were not alone: the majority of the interview participants (74%) conveyed a similar narrative of learning about the protest from social media and mobile social networking applications while it was a minority that heard of the presidential announcement via mainstream broadcast media.

This section looked at how the participants learned of the protest and identified the media that was dominant. These findings support the findings of some digital media studies. For example, most participants in Hari (2014) reported to have become aware of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests 'through Facebook, Twitter, Blackberry messenger and YouTube and text messages' (p.37). According to this 2014 study, and much like the results from my interviewees, protesters used social media to disseminate information on such as venues for

the protests, gaffes by paid supporters of the fuel subsidy removal, and caricatures, images and videos portraying the President as a villain (Hari, 2014).

### **7.5.3. Planning, coordinating and mobilizing for the protest**

One of the many issues relating to a successful protest organization/mobilization is about planning. How was such a protest planned and which media were used to communicate these plans? The 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests were no different. When talking about planning of the protest, Godwin noted how a member of his Facebook group, the ‘Nigeria Awakening Day’, had consistently begged group members to speak up and that they ‘should not allow it to end online’. The same person encouraged them to “march in the street to show the government that we are angry with the removal of fuel subsidy and bad leadership in the country” (Godwin/Turn 220). He concluded that this was how he joined the protest. As the interviewer, the researcher inquired further to understand how they really planned the protest:

**I:** So how did you guys plan it?

**Godwin:** Like I said that there was a guy that was really serious about it. So, we just like if you are in Lagos, this is the place you have to meet and by this time you have to meet. If you are in Port Harcourt, this is where you have to meet. There was even a timetable that was published stating when and where protests will hold. In Lagos, we had more than three protest venues and they all carried out simultaneously. (Godwin/ Turns 221-222)

This statement from Godwin showed that the protesters used online media platforms to communicate date of protest, and its time and place. This reinforced the point made by Ngozi in Section 7.5.2 about how there was already a timeline published in other Facebook groups about the protests. In the same vein, Okon indicated how online discussions in a Facebook group, ‘Occupy Nigeria Movement’ spurred them into participating in the protest offline and how they used ‘Facebook in agreeing to register their displeasure to the government’. He recalled:

In my mobile device then and now, I do have a wide range of internet platforms such as Facebook, 2go, WhatsApp and email. However, my online participation during the protest was mainly through Facebook and this is because I have better reach and a wide reach of friends that I can cover for effective discussion. For instance, when I visited Facebook during the protest and saw a suggestion for me to join the group and I did. I saw interesting comments and posts from those who were already in the group that spurred me to share my views. It was not a one way stuff you know. So many comments and argument were pouring into this group during that period. It was here that we agreed to go and register our displeasure to the government by engaging in a civil protest. I joined the protest on the third day

as the venues were far from my house and there was no means of transportation to go to the agreed protest venues until the third day. (Okon/ Turn 13)

Okon's comments here show that Facebook not only helped in educating the protesters but also helped the protesters plan how to participate in the street protest. This theme resonates with other digital activism studies (Hari, 2014; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Dunn, 2011) as the use of social media platforms, for both 'general information and communicating about the protest were more likely to attend on the first day of the protest' (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012, p. 375).

In his study, Hari (2014) argued that social media gave protesters the opportunity to report and give updates to co-protesters and it also helped the protesters to mobilize people to join the protest as they (protesters) used their social media pages and that of their online protest groups to keep track of how the protests were going. The comments from my interviewees aptly support the argument presented by Hari (2014): For example, the comments from Godwin and Okon delineate how they used social media platforms and mobile social networking applications to plan, coordinate and mobilize for the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.

The following two sub-sections (7.5.3.1 and 7.5.3.2), presents sub-themes coming from the data and so help provide more information and further commentary on aspects relating to respondents protest participation, coordination and mobilization. Although some of these may have already been touched on above, a more specific focus will aid in demonstrating these sub-themes and how they exist within the theme of protest plan, coordination and mobilization.

**Table 7.9. Interview participants code frequency**

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Reason for participating in the protest</b>		
Hike in the price of commodities	10	53
Disappointment with mainstream media	6	32
Others	3	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Knowledge of the protest</b>		
Social media	14	74
Face-to-face	5	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Planning for the protest</b>		
Social media	15	80
Face-to-face	4	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Protest documentation</b>		
Social media	14	74
CNN iReport	3	16
Other	2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

### **7.5.3.1. Leadership during the Protest**

When talking about how the participants planned, coordinated and mobilized for the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests in relation to their participation, it is, of course, not surprising that on many occasions the planning, coordination and mobilization were drawn from the influence of other people or the participant influenced some others as a leader. Leadership is an essential factor in social movements or any purposeful gathering. It is even more essential when planning an activity like the protests in Nigeria, because one can easily be punished for such actions. The comments of the participants indicated that there were two levels of leadership during the protest. Those who helped influence the participants online through the online groups were seen as the online leaders, while others who helped during the street protests were seen as offline leaders.

When Jay spoke about how she planned and coordinated the protest, she noted how she was motivated from the dedication and support of those who created the online protest groups. She recalled moments that she would be lost as to what the next step or information was but constantly received helpful information about the protests from her Facebook protest group. I asked her to elaborate on this. She said:

...The group actually was created by someone. I don't know if you understand that the group was actually created by someone and we had people that were always working on the group. When anything is happening, they give us information like, sometimes there are some developments that I will not know but the moment I go to the group I get information and people were actually writing those things, so I think when you see someone that is actually being dedicated to something, you can take such person to be a leader. We took those people as our leaders. They actually helped during the protest. (Jay/Turn489)

Jay's comments here reveal how much she trusted the administrators of the group and how much help or leadership they provided. These opinions expressed by Jay were supported by those given by Hassan, who recounted how organizing a group online is a sign of leadership "...there were leaders online, particularly in my Facebook group. Although, they did not say that they were leaders but their actions helped us to organize the protest. I see that as leadership" (Hassan/ Turn 153). What Hassan said here is of great relevance and import, as he suggests 'their actions' prove them to be leaders; it is not the organizers claiming to be leaders.

Reference was made by some of the participants, Kingsley among them, to types of leadership that helped them plan and mobilize for the protest. Specifically, Kingsley stated that leadership both online and offline was good:

Nobody came up to be called a leader during the protest, but we protesters looked at those that created the Facebook group as our leaders because they had the foresight and were advising us on how to go about our business during the protest. They also, acted as organizers and disseminated information about venues in Port Harcourt, Lagos, Abuja, Kano and other places to help people locate a protest venue that is closer to them. We also had ground leaders who were helping us move from one place to another particularly after the police had started brutalizing protesters. The leadership was good both online and in the street. (Kingsley/Turn 569)

Kingsley's comments here correlate with the comments of Jay and Hassan but detailed a little further to separate the online and offline protest leadership. He talked about how the online leaders' consistently 'disseminated' information about the venues of the protest. Also, he was happy with the leadership be it online or offline. He acknowledged these sets of leaders' input to the success of the protest. Edet and Okon were two other participants who differentiated between the two leadership patterns during the protest. However, unlike Kingsley who did not differentiate these two leadership groups other than highlighting their duties, Edet and Okon differentiated them and evaluated the performances of each. For Edet, friends from WhatsApp started sending text messages (SMS) on how to participate in the protest. He praised such an attitude as a mark of leadership:

We had people particularly from my WhatsApp contact that used our mobile numbers to send text messages to us. Although we did not make them leaders, they acted as leaders and without them, coordinating the protest would have been difficult. Also, the administrative staff or those who created the Occupy Nigeria group on Facebook did not say that they were leaders, but I feel that they were the brain behind the success of the protest. However, the leadership of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) took over the protest offline and became the leaders. (Edet/ Turn 78)

Edet's comments here are interesting as they stress the value that he placed on the leadership process and how such coordination helped in the protest. His comments were kind to both those who sent him text messages and the administrative staff of the 'Occupy Nigeria' protest group. However, he alluded to the likelihood that the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) forcefully arrogated leadership to itself offline. This part of his comment showed that he was not happy or in support of the NLC becoming the protest leaders, offline.

As with Edet, Okon was another respondent who stated that the coming of the NLC 'cut short' their expectation of the protest.

The group that I joined on Facebook had some leaders. This people are not like elected leaders, they acted as leaders by regulating the discursions in the group. They assumed leadership and really did great job because without them, we would not have planned the protest effectively. They gave guidelines, communicated the venues for all the major cities in Nigeria with the names of popular activists, celebrities and politicians that will be joining in the protest in those areas. On the venue level, we had members who were sending SMS to us during the protest as we moved from one venue to another as a result of police blockade. ... I would like to add that the protest was a success until when the NLC took it upon theirself and it became something of NLC versus the government and not the protest of the people again. The NLC went into negotiation and cut our expectations short and made it go the way NLC strikes normally go. It is painful. (Okon/ Turn 21-23)

Okon's comments above show that participants held the online protest group creators in high esteem. They were loved and trusted. Okon recognized the role the online leaders played in planning the protest as well as the protest centre leaders and the NLC. He saw those who sent SMS about the protest or those who created the Facebook protest groups as leaders. However, he berated the contributions of the NLC.

Another point about leadership that arises from the data concerns 'no leadership' online. Some participants stated that they were all participants, and that there were no leaders online. The first to mention this was Kunle, who believed that they were all participants and no specific leaders were assigned online:



We had no leader online. We were all participants even though some people were pointing to us on how to go about the protest. This changed in the protest venues when NLC joined us. They automatically became the leaders. Like you may have known, they were the ones that negotiated with the Federal Government. (Kunle/Turn 132)

What is most interesting here is that Kunle's comments indicate an acceptance of the NLC and did not seem to take into account that people can lead without overtly showing it. Also, his comments in no way reflect any lack of appreciation of the help of those who created the Facebook protest groups. He simply wanted a 'Figure Head' type of a leader and NLC provided that for him. However, a consideration of his comments shows that there was leadership online.

Some of the participants were leaders themselves during the protest, and they provided us with insight on what it looked like being a leader in one of the Facebook protest Groups. One such participant was Vincent, who was a leader for the Facebook protest group, 'Abia Awakening'. He explained what they did as the leaders and the impact it had on them and the protest:

As a leader in Abia Awakening, we made sure that we passed messages around about the protest. In the group, constructive ideas were welcomed but ideas that will distract were deleted. If we see such comment that is not encouraging or that was bias, we make sure that we delete such comments so that we don't encourage bias commentary. (Vincent/Turn 451)

After talking further with Vincent about this, it became clear that he was part of the Abia Awakening Facebook group and that they moderated deliberations leading to the protest itself. He also was not happy with the NLC's involvement and negotiations, stating that the NLC did not 'fight for common Nigerians' when they held talks with the government. He revealed that he was astounded with the turn of things to involve the NLC as it was not in their original plan.

There was also leadership provided offline by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC). From the interviewee comments above, there was some discomfort with this leadership and some respondents accused the NLC of sabotaging their efforts. This is in contrast to the results of some digital activism studies in Nigeria (Hari, 2014; Kombol, 2014) that ascribe the success of the protest to organized labour such as the NLC and the Trade Union Congress. Such conclusions from these studies may be flawed since the NLC and TUC did not join the protest until 09 January – seven days after the first protest in Lagos (see Table 2.1 for the timeline of the protest). This organizationally brokered collective action leadership from the NLC can be

understood as the type of ‘forced’ leadership that some protesters hate and resist and it is not the leadership they (the protesters) ascribe to their fellow protesters.

This online type of leadership – Cybertizen – a colloquial word for internet nerds and innovators in Nigeria is in agreement with types of leaderships online found by other researchers. For example, to Gerbaudo (2014) ‘soft-leaders’ were leaders who provided an essential element to the collaboration that made their respective protests possible. In their protest group pages, participants making the comments above gave authority to members based on a member’s superior personal arguments, and their technological savviness or what is called ‘technology mediated charismatic brilliance’ (O’Neil, 2009, p. 169). This technology mediated charismatic brilliance is what co-protesters online saw when ascribing leadership to these persons.

### **7.5.3.2. Media Representation of the Protest**

Of the many issues related to the planning, coordination and mobilization before and during the protest, was the action or inaction of the traditional or mainstream media. The actions and inactions of the mainstream media is in evidence through their representation of the protest. As mentioned earlier (see Section 7.5.1), some of the perceived inaction of the traditional media became sources of motivation for some to participate in the protest and forced participants to criticize the mainstream media, particularly the local mainstream media.

However, some participants had a different understanding of the situation of the journalists given the media ownership pattern in the country: while also there were some who were satisfied with the representation of the protest in the mainstream media. Considering first those who perceived the traditional media to have performed well, Bisi conveyed very strongly just how well mainstream media represented the protests although she acknowledged that it was simply her perception. However, she noted that the international media or satellite television networks had better coverage than the local mainstream media:

The mainstream media covered the protest the much that they can cover. Newspapers published the stories consistently and posted some online pictures as well. Traditional media particularly the newspapers played a role in educating the people on how the protest was progressing and the locations, and talks between the government and the NLC. It was also through the traditional media that the president made the announcement. So they tried their best and whether that is good enough is open to debate.

I: What about the international media?

B: They had better coverage I must say. They had nothing to lose, so they covered the protest real time with some ground-breaking footage. They covered the protest better than the Nigerian broadcast station. (Bisi/ Turn 264-266)

It is apparent from these comments that Bisi had sympathy with the mainstream media or was at least satisfied with their coverage of the protests, even though she accepted that the international media represented the protest better. Bisi's satisfactions with the local mainstream media outlets may well have come from Bisi's sympathy for journalists who work for the local mainstream media as she is a mass communication student. Nengi has similar view to Bisi but the issue of sympathy for the local journalists is even more clearly evident in Nengi's comments:

To be sincere, I think that they did not side the government. I think it affected them also, so they didn't side the government, just some newspapers that were owned by some influential people. Journalists that work for these newspapers did not write in details but if you look down at their work, you will know that they were not happy. ... I wouldn't know a lot about that because I was not opportune to have a satellite television then. So I was using the local television stations. (Nengi/ Turn 100)

For Nengi, the journalists were handicapped based on the ownership pattern of these media platforms for which they worked and consequently they were unable to carry-out their fourth estate duties. Although he absolved them of any blame, Nengi's comments showed that he did not believe the local mainstream media platforms represented the protest properly; additionally, he had no satellite television at that time to compare international coverage which would have given him a yardstick by which to evaluate the performance of the local media.

When Kingsley was asked about media platforms that he used to plan for the protest and how the mainstream media represented the protest, his response specifically referred to how media ownership stopped the local mainstream media from providing in-depth coverage of the protests. He captured vividly how ownership affected the local mainstream media representation of the protest:

In media ownership and control, we find out that majority of the traditional media are owned by the hegemonic class and if they are not owned by the hegemony class, they have the connection with the hegemony class. I give you a typical example, NTA is a government owned media, RSTV is a state owned, government media, AIT tilts and has political connection with the PDP; Channels TV tilts towards the APC. So, who would want to bite the finger that feeds him? The mainstream media covered the events half-heartedly. In the other hand, Broadcast stations like CNN and BBC - you find them in America and Britain

have and practice the libertarian media ideology. So, they projected the protest and their coverage was from the perspective of the citizens. They projected the views and yearnings of the Nigerian citizens. (Kingsley/ Turn 369)

Kingsley's comments point directly to media ownership impinging on the coverage of the protests provided by the local mainstream media. While this was his suspicion, his comments drift into anger when compares the quality of coverage from the local mainstream media to that of international media outlets such as CNN and the BBC. His comments suggest that local media coverage or representation of the protest just cannot be compared to the representation of the protest by international media platforms.

Kingsley was not alone among the participants who were satisfied with the international media stations' representation of the protest. Godwin was another who was satisfied with their coverage. He described the opportunity in a similar way to Kingsley noting that:

The mainstream media tried but they did not put in so much effort because they don't want to visibly be against the government. Both the private and government owned media channels were afraid not to get punishment from the government and as a result, they only highlighted the protest and not real live coverage... In contrast, you know when ever CNN and BBC come into a situation like this, the government will really put their eye there because CNN and BBC have wide audience and they report live updates with their camera in the protest venue. The CNN covered the protest. The channel was interviewing us, showing our banners and the cartoons. They did very well. (Godwin/ Turn 228-230)

Godwin's comments reveal that while the journalists of the local mainstream media may have sympathy with the people, they did not show their discontent for fear of being punished. He also lauded the international media not just their extensive coverage, but also for their provision of platforms from which the participants could air their views, namely on the spot interviews.

Another of the participants to evaluate the local mainstream media and compare their efforts to their international media counterparts was Ngozi. She emphasized that majority of the Nigerian newspapers and television stations ignored the protest until the international media coverage began:

The newspapers and television stations reported it scantily. Outside one or two newspapers that reported it, particularly at the beginning, other newspapers did not give it attention. However, the story started to get huge coverage when international media outlets like CNN, BBC and Al-Jazeera started covering it. Majority of Nigerian newspapers and television stations ignored the protest until the international media started covering the protests. The low coverage from the Nigerian press did not come as a shock though as many of these media are owned

my friends of the government and will not like to dissatisfy their masters. Thank God for the internet and international media organizations such as CNN and BBC. Can you imagine that it was CNN that covered police brutality in Ilorin, Kwara State, Kano, Kano State and here in Lagos? While our television channels such as NTA Lagos were busy showing church programs. You know that this international media channels do not have personal interest or anything to gain from the Nigerian government, so they just covered the protest and even had sections in the websites where we can upload videos or pictures of the protest. (Ngozi/ Turn 38)

Although, in a cheerful mood at the beginning of the interview, Ngozi did get overcome by seriousness and concern when she began talking about the enormity of the ‘foreign’ media taking the protest seriously while local media outlets chose to cover religious programs. Ngozi considered the advent of the internet and its technologies a blessing as they did not wait for local mainstream media take the lead in covering events. They helped themselves to information – this was obviously in reference to citizen journalism or the fifth estate.

Amadi was yet another participant who praised the role of the international media channels for their coverage of the protests. He notes that those who are granted access to the local mainstream media in Nigeria are those in government or who are wealthy:

We had to go online because we did not have access to the mainstream media. You cannot have access to the mainstream media in this country if you are not an important person in the country. Like, it’s only public figures that can go to mainstream media to air their views. So we ordinary Nigerians we use social media like WhatsApp, Facebook and 2go to disseminate any information we’ve got... The international media covered the protest. They were not supporting anyone and as a result, they projected what was happening in the country to the outside world... They really helped us in distributing information, like uploading videos on YouTube and to the media channels websites for example CNN’s iReport helped us to submit news story about the protest with pictures and videos to CNN’s website. This massive coverage from the international media handicapped the government from punishing protesters or even shooting indiscriminately on protesters as they knew that the world was watching. (Amadi/ Turn 199-201)

Amadi’s statement point firstly, to only the powerful having access to the mainstream media in Nigeria; secondly, they tell how the international media channels helped in the protest coverage and indirectly prevented the government from killing more protesters. One other matter he raised here is that of documentation (see Section 7.5.4 below). Amadi stated that the webpages of the international media channels such as the CNN served as a platform for protest documentation as protesters were encouraged to post personal reports to the websites.

Some participants were unable to read newspaper because they were seen as being expensive. One such participant was Hassan, who said that he listened to the radio and watched television to listen to the government position, “I listened to radio and watched TV to hear the government points. I did not read the newspaper because it is expensive” (Hassan/ Turn 149). Without directly accusing the local mainstream media, particularly radio and television stations, of being a megaphone of the government, it is possible to infer from the comments he made that this was his thinking. Such thinking, have been proved to be valid through the comments of other participants stated earlier in this section (see comments of Kingsley, Godwin, Ngozi and Amadi).

From these comments from the interviews, it becomes clear that Facebook and other social media platforms and mobile social networking applications as well as international media channels such as the CNN, and the BBC were integral on how the participants planned, coordinated and mobilized for the protest. International broadcast media and satellite television stations were also important to the Arab Spring protests during which satellite stations played a significant role in organizing the protests where the local mainstream media avoided coverage (Breuer *et al.*, 2015; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Dunn, 2011).

#### **7.5.4. Protest participation documentation**

One of the key aspects to emerge from the above accounts of the data provided through the interviews relates to how the participants documented their participation in the protest. This draws attention to the fact that it is essentially through documentation that the participants could show their participation to those in other protest venues and to those who did not protest. At times they documented their participation in order to motivate others who were not participating to join the protest; at other times; they used their documentation as a subtle means of coercing of the government to remove the subsidy. In addition, they used their documentation as evidence of police brutality.

The majority of the participants, about 74%, stated that they documented their participation in online platforms such as their Facebook protest group, WhatsApp and 2go. However, some others (16%) indicated that they documented their participation through websites of international media such as CNN. For example, Amadi spoke about “...media channels website for example, CNN’s iReport helped us to submit news stories about the protest with pictures and videos to CNN’s website” (Amadi/ Turn 201). Amadi’s comments reveal that

CNN's iReport served as a channel through which he documented his participation in the protest.

Ngozi was another participant who talked of using the CNN's iReport section as a channel of documentation in addition to his contributions on Facebook, WhatsApp and 2go:

I took pictures during the protest with my phone but was unable to record a video. Some of my friends who were fast enough recorded incidents but I did not record a video. However, I did download videos from other people's album online. I uploaded some pictures that I took to CNN's iReport, and did share some of the pictures I took in my Facebook wall, and the Nigeria Awakening Day Facebook group. I also shared and liked pictures from this group. I downloaded some of the pictures and used them as my profile picture in my WhatsApp and 2go accounts. This was to encourage others to join the protest and to put pressure on the government. I remember downloading the picture of Ademola, a protesters who was shot to death in Ogba, here in Lagos by a riot police man as a mark of solidarity. You know as people see your DP, it may motivate them to join or continue in the protest amidst growing challenges. (Ngozi/ Turn 43)

From Ngozi's comment above, it is apparent that she used different ways to document her participation in the protest. First, she used the CNN's iReport as did Amadi. This was in a reporting form. She was a citizen journalist. Second, she shared her pictures on Facebook, and used some of the pictures that she took as well as others that she downloaded from the Facebook page as display pictures (DP) in her WhatsApp and 2go accounts.

Another participant who documented his participation on Facebook was Edet, who told how he used the pictures to update members of the Facebook protest group about the events and progress at his protest venue. He also used the pictures to 'indict' police of misconduct during the protests:

I did take pictures that I shared on both my Facebook walls and that of the protest group wall. I used it as an evidence to motivate other persons who have not joined the protest to join. I also used it to communicate and update my group members in the Occupy Nigeria protest group about what is happening in my area and how we were doing. I also used these pictures to indict any misconduct of the police during the protest. (Edet/ Turn 74)

Similarly, Kingsley recalled that he documented his story via WhatsApp, 2go and Facebook. He said that he took pictures, particularly when the police were brutalizing protesters:

We took pictures and videos. You know in arena of protesters, we used our mobile phones to take pictures mainly when the police are beating up fellow protesters. I shared mine through WhatsApp, 2go and Facebook. That was how I shared my own pictures and videos of my activities in the protest. (Kingsley/Turn 565)

Unchenna documented her participation by posting the pictures and videos she took on Facebook, but she also downloaded videos that were uploaded on YouTube by fellow protesters and she suggested that these videos were helpful to her during the protest because they kept her updated on issues in other protest venues “I took pictures and videos and posted them on our Facebook group. However, I got many videos that were uploaded to YouTube. These YouTube videos really helped during the protest to know what happened in other venues” (Uchenna/ Turn 177).

From these examples, it is evident that the participants documented their participation narrative through online platforms, such as websites of international broadcast stations like the CNN, but also on Facebook protest groups and the profile page of participants as well as on a variety of mobile social networking applications such as WhatsApp and 2go.

#### **7.5.5. The role of the internet to the success of the Protest**

As mentioned above, the participants’ comments, for the most part, related the role the internet played in the successful organization of the protest. Most of the comments are positive and optimistic, but also, to some extent, technologically deterministic in nature as some of the interview participants tried to ascribe some kind of power to the internet. The participants lauded the spontaneity of the internet as well as its reach and security.

Given that the participants applauded the role of the internet during the protests, the question was raised with them during the interview about the impact of the internet’s diffusion to the organization of the protest. This was not an attempt at leading the question for a specific response but was intended to stimulate the interviewees into talking about planning, coordinating and mobilizing for the protest. The first to have the opportunity to respond to this question was Bisi. Her response was expressed with great emphasis and excitement, perhaps as a means of conveying just how important she thought the internet truly was for the protest organization – or perhaps even to admonish the researcher for asking such a silly question! Consider the manner in which she expresses the idea of the internet being secured and tie the matter of security to why she is participating in the protest:

You know the society that we are into; we don’t need to show our face for our safety. So, personally, I wanted to keep my safety and to participate without being noticed. This is why I decided to use the online platforms so that I will not be easily traced or punished. This is why I used online media... Our voices were heard through those platforms and subsequently street protest because people like me, who could not initially come out and air our views publicly, had the chance and place to air our views without bias and without being afraid of our lives. So, I



think that it actually helped us to express our views and contribute our part in the debate... I don't think that the protest would have been a success without the internet because people like myself wouldn't have come out to participate initially because of the fear of being brutalized. The internet eased us into the protest culture as we became angrier and willing to openly talk about the issue and damn the consequences. So, without the internet, it would have been nearly impossible for me to follow and participate in the protest. (Bisi/ Turns 262, 268 and 274)

It is clearly apparent that the internet did two interrelated things for her: it provided a secure platform by which to join the debate and it encouraged her through the online comments to join the street protests. It is worth remembering that Bisi's situation is slightly different from that of her fellow participants as she said she would not have participated in the protest through fear of being hurt. This makes sense, of why she praised the diffusion of the internet and saw this as part of the success of the protest.

To further reinforce the role that the internet played in the mobilization and planning of the protests, the comments of Blessing in response to an interview question about the role of the internet in the success of the protest are pertinent:

Fine, people say okay before this thing came into being we had our way of doing things. Everybody can actually testify of the great benefit of the invention of the internet and its technologies. When it comes to coverage, it's magnificent. You can be where you are and reach thousands of people in just a click and at an interval of seconds. So for me, I'm very grateful for the invention of the internet and social media. They really helped us during the Occupy Nigeria protest. We're able to receive messages, video clips, pictures, of what's actually happening in other protest centres of the country and how people are reacting to the fuel subsidy removal. So, for me if not for the social media platforms, I think that our work would not have been good as we would have wanted it to be. It was of great helped and contributed immensely to the little success that we had. (Blessing/ Turn 404)

These comments are of great interest due to the connection the comments make, with the organization of the protest. First, in direct response to the question, Blessing immediately spoke of the reach of the internet and its ease of use: why their work was good and it helped them 'to achieve the little success' that they had.

Similarly, Beauty talked about how the internet helped them to plan and coordinate the protest and how it made it problematic for the government to force them to stop talking about the subsidy removal:

Without the internet, the protest could not have been that successful, for example, the internet helped to educate the masses, made us to plan and coordinate and so, without the internet, someone like me would not have known the effect of subsidy

removal and therefore, would not have participated in the protest. Secondly, the internet made it difficult to coerce the people to stop talking about the protest or stop them from participating in the protest because the whole world was watching and reading what was happening in Nigeria. Therefore, the coming of the internet helped in organizing the protest and even made the protest a success. (Beauty/ Turn 598)

From her comments here, Beauty alluded to the security of the internet, its reach and the technical skills required censoring the activities of the protesters online. Thus, Beauty's comments reveal that the internet contributed to the success of the protest.

As with Bisi, Blessing and Beauty, Godwin eulogized the role of the internet and attributed the protests success to it. She revealed that it served as the medium used to 'ginger the people' to participate in the protest and motivated everyone to see to it that 'their grievances are made public through civil disobedience' (Godwin/Turn 232).

From these comments and examples, the role of the internet to the success of the protest is clearly apparent and an analysis of how participants conveyed that the internet played a leading role in the protest organization. The internet was frequently eulogized and indicated to have contributed immensely to the success of the protest. According to the findings of Hari (2014), when the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest started, social media platforms popularized the protest and drew more people into participating in protests. He further argued that the use of social media platforms was the 'tipping point' of the war against government impunity and the beginning of a new dawn of social and political activism. Furthermore, the use of social media platforms during the protests brought about a level of mobilization and solidarity among Nigerians that was unprecedented. To summarise the analysis here, just as the findings of Hari (2014) the use of internet technologies were salient for the coordination of the protest.

#### **7.5.6. Government decision making style after the protest**

Almost all participants I spoke to during the interviews, mentioned, both implicitly and explicitly, the importance of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest and how this protest has changed the government's decision-making style. This sub-theme of government decision-making style after the protest is of particular relevance in the project relating not just to the importance of the protest, but also to perceived changes in democratic governance (see Research Questions Four and Five). A perceived change in the government's decision-making style after the protest would increase political efficacy and perceived government accountability, and decrease the perceptions of corruption. All these can lead to an intention to participate in political affairs.

Participants spoke about government decision-making style when answering the question about the role of the internet and the success of the protest. There was a considerable overlap between the participants' comments about the role in the success internet to the success of the protest and that of the government's decision-making style after the protest. To avoid repetition, only respondents' comments that specifically referred to the government decision making style after the protest will be drawn on here. Government decision-making style after the protest puts the citizenry first and shows respect to the people. King was one participant who relayed his feelings about government decision making after the protest in one particular response:

... Example is the presidential chat that was conducted before the recent presidential election. That alone has given us an idea that they take the citizens very seriously now. The Occupy Nigeria protest was an eye opener on the fact that government officials doesn't govern themselves, rather that they govern the citizens of the country and, if they govern the citizens of the country, then the yearnings of the citizens should be heard. This was exactly what the Occupy Nigeria protest did for us as it made those in government to understand that governance is not about embezzlement of public fund but rather to deliver the yearnings and aspiration of the citizens. (King/ Turn 381)

King's comment here alludes to the presidential media chat and pledges for a bloodless elections in 2015 and a respect for the voice of Nigerians through the ballot box between the presidential candidate of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), the then incumbent president and the presidential candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC), the incumbent president and the winner of the election. As with the majority of his comments, King is elated that the protest in 2012 shaped the presidential media chat, a first of its kind as a mark of respect to the Nigerian people (the electorate) and a sign of change in how the leaders perceive the people.

Jay was another participant who conveyed a similar view. She explained how the then president conceded defeat to the incumbent, the first time this has happened in the history of Nigeria:

I think that that impression has changed unlike before when the government can do whatever they feel like without considering the people's mind. You know, after that protest, they now consider the people. They don't just take their decision without considering aspects that will affect the people negatively or positively. So they think that way now like what recently happened. I don't know if you heard it concerning our president, you know, when he conceded defeat. So when he was conceding, he mentioned that he was trying to consider the lives of the people in Nigeria. Those actually made me feel better because I came to realize that now the

government can think about Nigerians and their good. This was not there before.  
(Jay/ Turn 493)

In the above comments, Jay pointed that the then president, in his conceding speech, acknowledged that for the safety of the people and as a mark of respect to the electorate that he would not challenge the result of the election as such a gesture would lead to ethnic war and bloodshed. Jay ended her comments with an appreciation of this type of attitude as being new and good and it 'was not there before'.

As was the case with King and Jay, Kingsley perceived a change in how the government approaches policy making now compared to the way it was done before the protest. He remarked that government does not take decisions in haste now as they consult with the people to receive feedback:

After the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest, I think that the government does not make decisions in haste as they used to do. The government cannot wake up one morning and make a decision. They now consult widely to know how Nigerians will react to such a policy. I think that we have a bit of a change in the aspect of making laws in Nigeria. (Kingsley/ Turn 571)

Kingsley's comments convey an understanding that things have improved. His comments are important because one of the issues that led to the 2012 protests was the government's inability to consult widely and the suddenness of the announcement. With Kingsley's comments noting that sudden decisions have given way to a more consultative approach, there is evidence for why they perceive there has been a positive change in the government's decision making style since the protest.

Beauty is another participant who conveyed a similar view. She stated that the protest has made Nigerian leaders to respecting Nigerians and putting the common man into the affairs of the state. She went further saying that 'Today, unlike before, government and leaders consult the people before making a law or a piece of policy. Occupy Nigeria has changed how Nigeria is run' (Beauty/ Turn 601). Beauty's comments lend credence to the comments of Kingsley and even to those of Jay and King. They all perceive there to have been a change of governing style from the government and believe that the government now has some amount of respect for the people that was previously not present.

#### **7.6. Interpretations of the combined data: How do the qualitative findings support and expand on the quantitative findings?**

The combining of the results of the quantitative and the qualitative data obtained as part of the project, show confirmation of a number of significant findings. These are discussed here and

are related to the individual research questions. However, it is useful to first indicate exactly where the project was situated, with the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. To begin with, the qualitative data confirmed that social media platforms and mobile social networking applications were in fact the media platforms where participants learned about the protests and these media were used to plan and coordinate their participation in the protests. This view resonated strongly among participants: the interview participants confirmed and in some cases explicated the findings of the survey results. Whilst other media platforms were mentioned and played a reasonable part, for example, local versus international media, media used for protest purposes revolved around the target media platforms.

At the conclusion of the qualitative analysis, two particular elements were evident, both of which are interesting to the current project, but also future research that may be carried out in the area of digital activism and communication. The qualitative research showed just how different the outcomes of the (the qualitative research and quantitative) approaches in researching the concept of media and protest participation. This is to say, the use of interviews to delve into the media use patterns allowed for question repetitions and, explaining, re-visiting, clarifying, and narrating experiences. The qualitative analysis allowed the researcher to effectively isolate specific media platforms with the participants, and then home-in, on the rest for deeper observation and understanding. The quantitative approach was not able to accommodate the researcher's need for this. From the qualitative data, what eventuated was that some media platforms were not clearly distinguishable. For example, the reference to newspaper in the quantitative phase did not expressly indicate whether online newspapers were included or not. However, in the interviews, online newspapers were not treated as mainstream media. One good aspect of the quantitative phase though was that it generated a high number of responses. Together, these two methods provided enriched data and that they could 'offset' each other (Bryman, 2012, 2016) leading to a rich data and findings that give a deep understanding of the phenomenon under study.

That being said, after concluding the qualitative analysis, it was apparent that the qualitative data supported the quantitative data in many respects. Firstly, the interviews showed that Facebook, WhatsApp and EskiMi were the media platforms used by the participants to learn about the protest. This information was expanded by the qualitative results as interviewees clarified that, though many of them learned about the announcement of the removal of the fuel subsidy on national television, they, first learn about the protests online although there were some others who became aware through friends in face-to-face communications. For

example, when Edet spoke of how he learned about the protest (see Section 7.5.2), he clearly differentiated hearing about the removal of the subsidy from petroleum products on NTA, and how he learned about the protests.

Another example that provides clear evidence of the quantitative data being enhanced by the qualitative data is seen in the documentation aspect of the protest. Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube were the major platforms that the respondents reported using to document their participation. The comments of Uchenna and Ngozi support the quantitative results as they talked about how they used Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube to document and share their participation (see Section 6.5.4). Also, the qualitative data, expanded aspects of the survey by showing that participants not only used Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube to document their participation, but also used international media channels' websites such as CNN and the BBC as media to document their participation.

Beyond supporting the quantitative results, the qualitative results provided additional detail on media representations of the protests, and showed how international media organizations were seen to give better coverage of the protests than the local media. The participants' comments were generally full of praise for the international media channels while at the same time, were full of scorn and disappointment regarding the national media channels including the newspapers. One indication of such scorn for the national media and praise for the international media was Kingsley's comment, in which he accused the national media of having sympathies for those in government and abandoning the people, thereby failing in their fourth estate duty (see Section 7.5.3.2). The interview participants overwhelmingly perceived the internet to have greatly contributed to the success of the protests as well as perceiving that there had been a change in the government's attitude towards the people after the protest.

The qualitative data also lend credence to the findings of other parts of the project. For example, the MANOVA analysis showed that participating in the 2012 protests increased the participants' political efficacy, intention to participate in political affairs and the perceived corruption level and competitiveness of political parties. Comments from Kingsley and King about the government's decision making style after the protest (see Section 7.5.6) support the MANOVA result. They conveyed that the government's respect for the citizens now was greater than before the protest; that policies were well thought through now, and were not haphazardly done; and, that citizens were now considered and informed of many of the government's policies. This is a show of political efficacy. The respondents were convinced

that their actions during the protest changed how the country is governed: they believe that ‘power now belongs to the people’. This is a surprising result from this project, one that the researcher did not envisage at the planning stage; the qualitative phase was conducted only for research question one, but it was found to support the findings of both research questions Four and Five.

As can be seen with the support of examples drawn from and references to both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the research, the combined data from the project integrated well together; the structured questions of the survey provided larger participation and broad insight into how the protesters learned about, planned and documented their participation in the protest. From the interview participants, there was confirmation of the quantitative results.

### **7.7. Chapter summary**

This chapter has presented the results of both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. The research questions at the heart of the study were dealt with directly, as were the themes that arose from the comments, and then attention was directed towards the sub-themes that emerged from the conversations that were part of the qualitative interviews.

While it cannot be said that the quantitative and qualitative phases of the research project went exactly as envisaged from the beginning to end, the results from both still disclose valuable data on the relationships between participants’ mobile social networking applications, and social media platform use and learning about, planning and documenting their participation in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.

Also, the chapter integrated the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the research; the qualitative research confirmed most of the quantitative findings, and in some cases, enhanced the information and understanding of the quantitative results. The following chapter (Chapter Eight) delves more deeply into the discussion of the findings from this chapter.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

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#### **8.1. Introduction**

The aim of this project was to empirically evaluate the effect (if any) of mobile internet on the rise of digital activism among university students in Nigeria, and, analyse if this rise impacts on students' perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria. In order for these aims to be achieved, it was essential that the research project be guided by focused research questions. The research questions that this project attempted to answer were to examine the extent to which mobile internet use impacted how protesters learned about, planned, and documented their participation during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests, to evaluate Nigerian university students' mobile internet use, and their perceptions of change in democratic governance in Nigeria.

Following from the detailed data analysis of the study provided in Chapter Seven, this chapter provides a discussion of the findings that emerged from the study and its implications for digital activism and communication literature. The first section (Section 8.2) addresses the key interpretations that can be drawn from the quantitative and qualitative results.

The next section of the chapter (Section 8.3) discusses the findings from both phases of the project that serve to answer the research questions of the project. Thus, each of the subsections focuses on a specific research question and attempts to show how the findings illuminate the question and provide insights into the issue. The first three subsections draw out the results of descriptive statistics, logistic regression analysis and participants' interview comments that describe their participation in the protest and how the protesters learned about, planned and documented their participation.

The discussion then progresses into the interplay between media use and joining the protest on the first day; and aspects that relate to the protest that the participants described such as leadership during the protest, the role of internet technologies in the success of the protest and the government's decision making style after the protest.



Then, the final two research questions, the intention to participate in political affairs and perceived change in governance in Nigeria between participants that protested during the protest and those that did not protest during the protest are discussed.

The last section of this chapter discusses the theoretical and methodological contributions of the project to digital activism and communication literature in Nigeria and globally. Combined with this is a discussion of the implications for protest mobilization and participation as well as citizen participation in political affairs.

The chapter concludes with a brief reflection on the project. There is mention of some of the limitations inherent in the project - it cannot be denied that some of these limitations had significant impact on certain areas, but rather than weaken the project, act as indicators of where future research can make more rapid inroads and experience fewer obstacles.

## **8.2. Interpretations of the findings**

This section deals with interpretations drawn from both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the project and considers how both findings fit together to answer research questions 1a-d and 2 as well as how they fit together in the overall project. This section is an important one in this chapter as it establishes continuity between pure statistical results from the quantitative data presented in the previous chapter and move to more detailed discussion of what the regression models have presented.

### **8.2.1. Quantitative data – interpretations**

The purpose of this section is to provide some rationale for the regression models and to discuss the statistical outcomes within the overall context of the literature and the researcher's own theoretical interpretation. To do this, important aspects of the descriptive statistics and regression models are looked at and discussed and the relevance of the statistical results contextualized. It should be noted that particular attention will be paid to two areas: the relationship between different media platforms used for protests purposes and joining on the first day of the protest; and, the difference or lack of perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria between students who participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests and those that did not participate in the protest.

### **8.2.2. Descriptive statistics**

The results of the descriptive statistics in Chapter Seven show that the majority of participants in this study used mobile internet prior to 2012 and 2015. About 94% of the participants indicated that they access the internet through their mobile phones. This shows that

participants in this study overwhelmingly use mobile internet for accessing the internet and other internet needs.

Also, the descriptive statistics results reveal that traditional mass media were far less frequently used for communication before, during and after the protest than were interpersonal means of communication: participants indicated that they used Facebook (90%) and mobile social networking applications such as WhatsApp (87%) and 2go (71%) as well as face-to-face communication (73%) frequently to communicate about the protest.

Similarly, social media platforms (Facebook and YouTube) and mobile social networking applications (WhatsApp, 2go, Badoo, and Eskimi) as well as Face-to-Face communication were the most common sources of how the participants first learned about the protest. This result agrees with the result of some social media and social movement studies. For example, more than a quarter of the sample of Tufekci and Wilson (2012, p. 35) study first heard of the 2011 Egyptian protests on Facebook. This result like other results (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Dunn, 2011) shows participants' unease with the mass media such as newspaper and radio, for protest communication. Unlike these studies, a significant number of participants (47%) in this project indicated first learning about the protest through face-to-face communication. This illustrates that personal relationships were as important as other internet induced interpersonal communication.

Participants maintained a similar pattern in that Facebook, WhatsApp, 2go and face-to-face communication were the most used media for planning, coordinating and mobilizing for the protest. The result indeed shows that mobile social networking applications were the popular media platforms for protesters' protest coordination and mobilization with WhatsApp (67%), 2go (42%), Eskimi (16%) and, Badoo (15%), all recording significant use.

Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp were overwhelmingly used to document participation in the protest. Excluding WhatsApp, all other mobile social networking applications were used minimally for documentation of participation in the protest, which may be due to lack of motivation or encouragement occasioned by the lack of motivating features such as 'like' and 'comment' on the pictures. This may have 'forced' participants to share their images on Facebook, where they can receive peer 'likes' and 'comments'.

These results are in most cases similar to results from other studies such as that of Tufekci and Wilson (2012) who found that their respondents used their Facebook to disseminate

pictures and videos about the demonstrations as they unfolded. Similarly, Wilson and Dunn (2011) found Facebook to be compellingly the media with the least differential when it comes to general media use and media used for protest. What this means is that the number who used Facebook for protest purposes was also the same as those that used it more generally for news and updates. These are significant pointers to the importance of social media platforms, particularly Facebook, to the overall media use for protest purposes. This becomes obvious in this project when participants were asked to rank the media that motivated them the most, the internet was indicated the most informative and the most important to them during the protest. This result supports the understanding of the internet's role in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests as participants ranked the internet highest in all the three points.

The results indicate participants' trust in internet technologies and reinforce the findings of Breuer et al. (2015) who found that respondents agreed strongly with what they saw on the internet, and they came to believe that the protest movement would achieve its goal of bringing down the Ben Ali government. The findings from this project and findings from similar studies show that the participants trust the internet and its related technologies and through this trust to plan and document their participation in the protest.

### **8.2.3. Logistic regression models**

Although this study did not assess respondents' overall degree of participation in the protests during the fortnight following the 1 January announcement, the assumption was that participation on the first day is a crucial indicator. It has been argued that the riskiest kind of dissent is that which fails and the most dangerous protest is one that is small (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). According to Tufekci and Wilson (2012) 'smaller protests have a higher likelihood of being effectively censored, isolated, or repressed in authoritarian regimes' (p. 375). Consequently, high participation on the first day is often essential to the initiation of a larger cascade that eventually results in the success of the protest. The nerve and resolve required in attending the first day of the protests displays bravery and a commitment for change and this is why the researcher tried to understand the impact of the media choice on the likelihood that respondents would report participating on the first day of the protest.

Considering where and how the participants learned about the protest, mobile social networking sites, Eskimi in particular and social media platforms, especially Facebook were the predictors of reporting participating in the protest on the first day. With odd-ratio of 65

and 12.43 respectively, this means that participants that reported using these two platforms are more likely to join the protest on the first day.

Also, in seeking to understand where and how the participants planned and coordinated their participation, it became evident that only Eskimi made a statistically significant contribution to the model. The odds ratio of 0.002 for Eskimi with a negative B (Beta) value (-6.488) indicates that participants who reported using Ekimi to plan and coordinate their participation in the protest were 0.002 more likely to report joining the protest on subsequent days than the first day. While the B (Beta) value is used to calculate the probability of a case falling into a specific category, the odds ratio (OR) represents the change in odds of being in one of the categories of outcome when the value of a predictor increases by one unit (Pallant, 2013; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Consequently, one additional respondent that reports using Eskimi and participating in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest has 0.002 probability of joining the protest days other than the first day (subsequent days), meaning that he/she has above 99% chance of joining the protest on the first day. This result revealed that majority of those who used Eskimi to plan and coordinate their participation in the protest also joined the protest on the first day.

This is similar to the findings of Tufekci and Wilson (2012). They reported that those who used blogs and Twitter for both general purposes and for communicating about the protests were more likely to attend on the first day, than were those who used the telephone, Email, and Facebook to communicate about the protests. The findings from this project are similar to theirs in that those who used social media and mobile social networking applications to learn about, plan or coordinate and document their participation were more likely to report participating on the first day of the protest.

Furthermore, on examining how and where they documented their participation in the protest, the findings unsurprisingly revealed that participants who reported using Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp for documentation were also more likely to join the protests on the first day. Something to note about this result is that, while WhatsApp appeared to have the strongest predictor of reporting documentation and participating on the first day of the protest based on its odds ratio of 33.6, Facebook actually was the strongest predictor followed by YouTube – with odds ratios of 0.10 and 0.21 and a negative Beta (-4.599 and -3.881) respectively. Participants who reported using these two media platforms for documentation are over 99 percent more likely to have joined the protest on the first day.

In addition, a significant difference was found between joining the protest on the first day and joining the protest on subsequent days, depending on the media used for protest purposes. While some media showed minimal differences between those who joined the protest on the first day and those who joined on subsequent days, mobile social networking applications such as Eskimi and Badoo recorded above 2 scale points. Those who joined the protest on the first day reported higher use of Eskimi and Badoo than those who joined the protest on subsequent days. These results reveal that mobile social networking applications, Eskimi and WhatsApp in particular and social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, were of the highest importance more so than the rest when it came to participating on the first day of the protest. In addition, Eskimi was of higher importance than Facebook when it came to the proportion of users joining the protest on the first day even though Facebook was the most widely used media platform.

#### **8.2.4. Hierarchical regression model and MANOVA analysis**

In using this model, the researcher wanted to know if the internet (mobile or internet at home), or protest participation status (participating or not in the 2012 protest) or political efficacy impact on the intention to participate in political affairs. The internet - mobile or internet at home - did not impact on respondents' intention to participate in political affairs; rather, political efficacy and participating in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests did. This result is important as it shows that having access to the internet, whether internet at home or on a mobile phone, does not increase/decrease Nigerian university students' intention to participate in political affairs. Rather, being politically efficacious and participating in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests increased Nigerian university students' intention to participate in political affairs. Within these two significant variables, political efficacy is more important when considering whether a student intends to participate in political affairs or not, more than any amount of participation in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.

In simple terms, this means that a politically efficacious student who also participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests is more likely to have an intention to participate in political affairs. This is contrary to the results of Nisbet et al. (2012) who found that the internet was associated with a greater citizen commitment to democratic governance.

Those who participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests perceived positive changes in democratic governance in Nigeria more than those who did not participate in the protest. The protest participants were more efficacious politically, had greater intention to participate in

political affairs, perceived the country to have had an increased competitiveness among political parties and, perceived the corruption level to be lower after the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests than those who did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. In evaluating the magnitude of the difference, an eta of over 68% for the test indicated that students who participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest have positive perception of changes in democratic governance in Nigeria over 68% greater than those who did not participate in the protest. Among the dependent variables, participating in the protest had an impact on political efficacy, (eta 58%), perceived corruption level (eta 43%), perceived competitiveness of political parties (eta 33%) and intention to participate in political affairs (20%). These findings reveal that participating in the 2012 protest increases the dependent variables with the impact being mainly on political efficacy.

### **8.2.5. Qualitative data – interpretations**

The qualitative data is mainly relevant to the first part of the project (RQ1 and 2) and is drawn into the general objective of the project in subsequent sections. In this section, the researcher focuses on interpreting the data.

Overall, the qualitative data proved to be important in better revealing aspects of the quantitative results and explicating the quantitative data, particularly the logistic regression models – and it should be reiterated here that this was indeed what was envisaged in the planning stages.

In terms of a general overarching summary of what was gained from the qualitative interview phase of the project, it must be said that the protesters' comments confirmed that social media platforms such as Facebook and mobile social networking applications such as WhatsApp, Eskimi, 2go and Badoo were indeed the media platforms that protesters learned about, and planned, coordinated and mobilized for the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.

The interviews revealed the vast range of protest documentation platforms that were within the domains of their participation in the protest and of their everyday lives. The contextualization produced important revelations that there were clear differences and tactics the media used to learn, plan and document their participation during the protest. Overall, the most salient media platforms were Facebook, WhatsApp and transnational digital media channels such as CNN and the BBC.

Certainly, it has to be said that the qualitative data produced by the participants were extremely rich and revealing and stretched the frontiers of the initial design to explain leadership types and structures during the protests, and how they helped in coordinating the protest. Furthermore, the role of the mainstream media was highlighted in the qualitative interviews. Participants revealed that international broadcast channels such as BBC and the CNN not local or national broadcast channels, helped in coordinating and documenting the protest. Their comments revealed that the presence and representation of the protest in transnational broadcast stations subtly and indirectly ‘forced’ the government not to punish protesters. The comments of the protesters show that transnational broadcast stations’ representation of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest was people centred rather than government centred. From the participants’ comments, it was apparent that the transnational media platforms reported their news and provided a live coverage on the importance of cheap petroleum products in Nigeria by acknowledging the depth of poverty in the country. In contrast to the praise participants lavished on transnational broadcast stations, the local and national broadcast channels and newspapers were criticised by participants. The majority of the interview participants were critical of the performance of local and national media platforms and accused these media platforms of having sympathies with those in government.

Also, comments from the interview participants confirmed the widely accepted main catalyst for the protest. Anger that was spread through social media platforms (e.g. Facebook) and mobile social networking applications (e.g. WhatsApp, Eskimi, 2go and Badoo) enlightened the people on the impact of fuel subsidy removal and advising them on how it added to the hardship that they faced. According to comments from the researcher’s interview participants this was why they protested. Some other participants joined the protests in dissatisfaction of the mainstream media as the mainstream media were seen as being ‘ineptitude’ in their duties and harbours ‘sympathies’ with those in power. Some interview participants stated that they joined the protests as a way of taking their destinies into their own hands alleging that the mainstream media failed in their role as the fourth estate of the realm.

In terms of the organisational structure of the protest groups online and in the streets, the comments from the participants showed that there were leaders on their online platforms, protest group pages and in the street. They remarked that they had ‘Cybertizens’ - techno-savvy and techno-enthusiasts, who acted as leaders of these protest groups. These Cybertizen used their distinct technological skill set to achieve legitimacy as the participants explained that these Cybertizens technologically mediated charismatic brilliance (O’Neil, 2009) as well

as their superior personal arguments enabled them to gain authority in the protest group online. In addition, there was another form of leadership during the protests in the street evident as well. While some of the online leaders – Cybertizens - continued their people entrusted leadership offline during the protests, the civil society type of leadership through the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) came in, swept up the leadership of the protest, and became their mouthpiece and negotiated with the Federal Government. The interview participants' comments show that they were unhappy that the NLC took over the leadership of the protest and negotiated with the government, but they were happy with their online leaders, Cybertizens, as these people neither solicited nor forced their way into leadership positions. Rather their personal skills helped in organising the protests. These comments about leadership buttressed the submissions of Gerbaudo (2012) that the 2011 social movements had soft leaders and also are dissimilar to the arguments of some scholars (Bennett, 2012; Bennett & Segerberg, 2014; Bennett *et al.*, 2014; Castells, 2012; Margetts *et al.*, 2013) that contemporary social movements are 'organic', 'leaderless' and have 'horizontal' structures.

Interview participants' described Cybertizens' leadership in much the same way as O'Neil (2009) 'cyberchiefs'. O'Neil argues that 'it is not enough to say that the internet, because it is a "horizontal" or "many-to-many" systems abolishes authority' (p.169). He explains that authority of some kind is an essential element to the distributed collaboration that makes collective online action possible. The interview comments revealed that the technological savvy most often referred to as 'admins' or page creators' or 'Cybertizens' by the participants were entrusted with the leadership of these groups by their followers even without asking for it; this illuminates O'Neil's (2009) individual axis of technology-mediated charismatic brilliance. It suggests as do many comments from the participants, that those who are technologically savvy receive the respect and honour of leading these online groups based on their 'technology-mediated charismatic brilliance' (O'Neil, 2009).

Comments from the interview participants showed that the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests has changed how the Nigerian government perceives the people. Participants opined that after the protests, the government saw Nigerians as proactive and thus they now consult widely before making a policy. The participants reported also that government policies were becoming people centred compared to the policy made prior to the protests.

Finally, another significant finding of the qualitative phase is that online protest participation increased the chance of offline protest participation. Comments from many participants



suggested that their online involvement helped ease them into the streets. This result is important in that it will add to the ongoing debate about the significance of online activism. Participants perceived the use of the internet to have had an impact on the success of the protest.

### **8.3. Addressing the research questions**

This section directly links the findings of the project to the research questions and also provides support from related literature. The research questions dealt with in subsections 8.2.1 - 8.2.4 are informed by the data gathered from both the qualitative and quantitative phases (i.e RQs 1a, b, c, d, and 2, while the questions focused on in subsection 8.2.5 and 8.2.6 are answered through the quantitative phase alone although with insights and anecdotal evidence drawn from the comments of the interview participants. The primary focus of the project was to examine the impact of mobile internet on the rise of digital activism among students in Nigeria, and to evaluate how the rise in digital activism impacts on the students' perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria and intention to participate in political affairs.

Specifically, the aims of the research were:

1. To examine the extent to which mobile internet use impacted how protesters learned about, planned, and documented their participation during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests; and
2. To evaluate Nigerian university students' mobile internet use and perceived changes in democratic governance in Nigeria.

#### **8.3.1. RQ 1a, b and 3. To what extent did mobile internet use influence how protesters learned about and participated in the protest?**

With an overwhelming majority of the participants in this project using mobile internet and 6 percent using internet at home, it is apparent that the majority of the participants used mobile internet and this shifted the impetus from mobile internet use generally to specific platforms of internet technologies. This is because mobile internet technologies are accessed via specific internet platforms on mobile phones.

The results of the frequencies of use showed that social media platforms and mobile social networking applications, particularly Facebook, WhatsApp, 2go, Eskimi, Badoo and face-to-face communication are the media platforms that protesters used to learn about the protest. Of

these, Facebook recorded the highest frequency of being used to learn about the protest followed by WhatsApp, 2go and face-to-face communication.

However, when the researcher tried to evaluate the media platform used that would predict the day of joining the protest, the result revealed that participants who reported using Eskimi and Facebook for news and updates were more likely to have joined on the first day of the protest than those reporting using other media platforms. This means that many of those reporting using Eskimi and Facebook for news and updates reported joining on the first day of the protest. The result from the qualitative data supported this finding. Interview participants mentioned Facebook, Eskimi and WhatsApp as being how they learned about the protest. One such participant is Vincent, a 27 year old postgraduate student and a technology enthusiast who happened to be a leader in the Abia Awakening group on Facebook. Using his profile and the fact that Eskimi only arrived in Nigeria in early 2011, this study proposes that those who used Eskimi in 2012 are 'techno savvy' and maybe versed with online communities, hence their joining the protest on the first day. This result supports the findings of some related studies (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Dunn, 2011).

### **8.3.2. RQ 1c and 3. To what extent did mobile internet use influence how protesters planned their participation in the protest?**

The results of the frequencies of use showed that the majority of the participants in this part of the study did use social media platforms, particularly Facebook and mobile social networking applications such as WhatsApp, 2go; Eskimi and Badoo to plan, coordinate and mobilize for the 2012 protests. The qualitative data confirmed this analysis: participants' comments and experiences revealed that they primarily used Facebook (see Section 7.2.1.3) to plan, coordinate and mobilize for the protest.

However, only Eskimi made any statistically significant impact, according to the results of the logistic regression analysis. This finding reveals that participants who reported using Eskimi to coordinate the participation in the protest were more likely to join the protest on the first day. This result may seem surprising, since a far greater number of participants reported using Facebook to plan, coordinate and mobilize for the protest. The point here is that even though Facebook was the most used platform to plan, coordinate and mobilize for the protest; Eskimi was of higher importance than any other media in regards to participating on the first day of the protest.

In conformity with research that has supported the use of social media in enhancing protest knowledge, coordination and mobilization (Breuer *et al.*, 2015; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Dunn, 2011; Wolover, 2016), this project found that online platforms, particularly, mobile social networking applications (e.g. Eskimi) were the media platforms the protesters used to plan, coordinate and mobilize for the protests as they were associated with significantly higher odds of participating on the crucial first day of the protest.

### **8.3.3. RQ 1c and 3. To what extent did mobile internet use influence how protesters documented their participation?**

To evaluate the level of participation in citizen journalism during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests, respondents were asked whether they produced pictures or videos of the protests, and their means of production and dissemination was. The frequencies result showed that the majority of the respondents used social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube as well as WhatsApp, Badoo, 2go and Eskimi to document their participation during the protest.

Comments from the interview participants confirmed the descriptive results and even expanded on them. The interview participants conveyed that they used Facebook mainly to document their participation as well as WhatsApp, YouTube and websites of transnational news channels such as CNN's iReport page. The qualitative data, expanded on the results of the frequencies in that it differentiated between local and international media outlets and the separate roles they played. The comments of some of the participants such as Ngozi (see Section 7.5.4) revealed that international media organizations encouraged the protesters to send their stories and Ngozi stated that such platforms helped them in documenting their participation. Furthermore, results from the logistic regressions further suggest that respondents who used Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp to share (document) their participation during the protest were more likely to report joining the protest on the first day. This is not surprising as the frequencies and qualitative results confirmed this as well. One thing about the result of the logistic regression here is that with a negative Beta value, the results are to be interpreted in a reverse order. For example, the odds ratio of 0.10 for Facebook was less than 1 and with a negative beta, indicating that respondents who reported using Facebook to document their participation during the protest were 0.10 more likely to report joining the protest on subsequent days, controlling for other factors in the model. This means that an additional respondent that reported using Facebook for protest purposes has 0.10 probability of reporting joining the protest on days other than the first day. This, in effect, suggests that the likeliest that will happen with an additional respondent that reported

using Facebook for protest purpose is that the person will report joining the protest on the first day, controlling for other factors in the model. A look at this result reveals that respondents that reported using Facebook to document their participation in the protest were in a far greater majority and reported participating on the first day, meaning that only a few of the respondents reported using Facebook to document their participation, and joining the protest on subsequent days. Consequently, the strongest predictor of reporting documentation of participation and joining the protest on the first day is in this order: Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp.

Such an order is confirmed from comments from the qualitative data as participants overwhelmingly conveyed that Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp as well as international media websites were the platforms that they used to document their participation during the protest.

#### **8.3.4. RQ 2. What was the interplay between protesters' media use, protest experience, and participation on the first day of the protests?**

The comprehensive details of the participants' media use for protest purposes were outlined in Chapter Seven, however, a summary is provided here to help with in the discussion of how protesters' media use explains the interplay between knowledge of the protest, planning and documentation of protest participation.

Hearing, knowledge of and learning about the protest, planning or coordinating the protest, and documenting protest participation have been used to evaluate media platforms that play a key role in social movements (See Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). In responding to the research question, however, it is interesting to observe that whilst the participants did of course speak of how they used Facebook and WhatsApp to learn about the protest, plan and document their participation, they also added the actions, and lack of action of the traditional media and such points as leadership during the protest, and the government decision making after the protest.

Another aspect that needs to be considered when discussing the manner in which the participants reacted to national media in both phases of the research is from their comments about the mainstream media and how they perceived mainstream media's ownership pattern to affect their reportage. From the interview data, the participants were disappointed at the national mainstream media's inability to broadcast the events during the early days of the protest. This, as well as the national mainstream media ownership pattern the respondents

reported, caused distrust between the people and the media. Consequently, the people sought refuge online and this arguably led to the street protests.

Also, a multivariate analysis of variance was run to examine the mean differences in media platforms used by protesters between those participating on the first day of protests and those participating on subsequent days. The findings show that respondents who joined the protest on the first day reported slightly higher use of Eskimi and Badoo than those who joined on subsequent days of the protests. This shows that there is a significant difference between the protest variable (joining the protest on the first day versus joining the protest on subsequent days) on media platforms.

The model containing demographic characteristics of protesters and participation on the first day of protests, gave significant result, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents who reported, and those who did not report participating on the first day of protest based on their demographic information. In terms of direct association with joining the protest on the first day, the results indicated that age, ethnic group and levels of study were significant, suggesting that participants aged 21-24 were more likely to report joining the protest on the first day than any age group cohort, controlling for all other factors in the model. The odds ratio of .012 for levels of study (1) - undergraduate students with a negative Beta ( $\beta$ ) indicated that participants who were undergraduates were 0.12 more likely to report joining the protest on subsequent days. As with other cases, this means that an additional respondent who reported as an undergraduate student has a higher probability of reporting joining the protests on the first day.

#### **8.3.5. RQ 4. To what extent do students' protest participation status, internet use type and political efficacy predict their intention to participate in political affairs?**

As has been shown already in the interpretation of the quantitative results (Section 8.1.1), the internet did not impact on respondents' intention to participate in political affairs, rather, political efficacy and participating in the 2012 protests did.

This shows that the internet, whether at home or in a mobile phone, does not increase/decrease Nigerian university students' intention to participate in political affairs. Rather, being politically efficacious and participating in the 2012 'Occupy Nigeria' protests had the impact on their intention to participate in political affairs.

As mentioned earlier, this means that a student who participated in the 2012 protests is likely to be politically efficacious and more likely intends to participate in political affairs than others. This is contrary to the results of Nisbet et al. (2012) who found that the internet was associated with greater citizen commitment to democratic governance. Other studies have had mixed results about the impact of the internet to political knowledge, efficacy and participation.

Although Kenski and Stroud (2006) found that internet access and online exposure to information are significantly associated with the important political variables of political efficacy, knowledge and participation, they cautioned that, even though they are statistically significant, these associations are quite small. The findings from this project show that access to the internet does not impact intention to participate in political affairs, but joining the protests in 2012 increases political efficacy which in turns increase the urge of the students to participate in political affairs.

### **8.3.6. RQ 5. Are there differences between students who did or did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest with regards to how they perceive changes in democratic governance in Nigeria?**

Those who participated in the 2012 protests perceived positive changes in democratic governance in Nigeria more than those who did not participate in the protest. Those who participated in the protest were politically more efficacious, had greater intention to participate in political affairs, perceived the country to have had increased competitiveness among political parties and, perceived the corruption level to be lower after 2012 than those who did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. In evaluating the magnitude of the difference, an eta of over 68% for the test indicated that students who participated in the 2012 protests had over 68% difference in positive perception on changes in democratic governance in Nigeria, compared to those who did not participate in the protest. Among the dependent variables, participating in the protest impacts on political efficacy, (eta 58%), then perceived corruption level (eta 43%), then perceived competitiveness of political parties (eta 33%) and intention to participate in political affairs (20%). These findings reveal that participating in the 2012 protest increased the dependent variables with the impact being more on political efficacy and less on intention to participate in political affairs.

This finding confirms the findings in section 7.2.5 in that it reveals that political efficacy and joining the 2012 protests predict intention to participate in political affairs. This means that

those who are political efficacious and participated in the 2012 protests are more likely to intend to participate in political affairs. Surprisingly, the result in this subsection can be interpreted to mean that students who participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests have an increased political efficacy and those who did not participate in the protest remained inefficacious politically. In summary, joining the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests resulted in higher political efficacy of the participants, something which is understandable owing to the history of the digital activism environment in Nigeria. With the history of repressive military regimes in Nigeria that made it impossible for Nigerians to visibly criticise the government (Amadi, 2006; Ogbondah, 1991, 2000), the ‘death’ of civil society and public sphere in Nigeria (Obadare, 2005, 2007, 2010), and Nigeria only sixteen years ago (twelve at the time of the protests), it is likely that Nigerians lacked the confidence that would have enabled them, believe that the people had the power to dethrone bad leaders. This is why the 2012 Occupy Nigeria is important.

From the foregoing, it would be interesting to ask ‘what then motivated the people into joining the protest if not political efficacy’. The comments of the interview participants shed light on this question. It was anger and hopelessness made public by internet technologies such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Eskimi, 2go and Badoo as well as international broadcast stations such as CNN and the BBC. These platforms created a sphere where critical debate was carried out about the removal of the fuel subsidy as well as other problems affecting the country, by the people, and a public opinion formed against the perceived evils of the government.

The insights from the interviews on the government’s policy making style after the protest support this line of argument, namely, that participating in the protest enhanced political efficacy. The fact that interview participants (those who joined the protest) overwhelmingly accepted that the protest that they participated in had changed how the government behaved towards the people is a testament to increased belief in self being able to affect change in the political environment of the country. This increased self-belief or ‘people power’ in a democratic setting is an evidence of political efficacy. Political efficacy is divided into two parts, internal and external political efficacy. Internal political efficacy refers “to beliefs about one’s own competence to understand, and to participate effectively in politics (Niemi, Craig, & Mattei, 1991, p. 1407) whereas external political efficacy refers “to beliefs about responsiveness of government authorities and institutions to citizen demands” (Niemi et al.,

1991, p. 1408). From this definition, both the internal and external political efficacies were touched on by the interview participants.

The following subsection evaluates how these results impact digital media and communication literature and outline the contributions of this study.

#### **8.4. Implications for digital activism and communication and media studies literature**

The project explored the impact of mobile internet on the rise of digital activism among Nigerian university students, and how the rise of this activism impacts democratic governance in Nigeria. A face-to-face purposive survey and semi-structured interviews were conducted in two heterogeneous universities in Nigeria. A research project such as this would not be complete without, some discussion around the implications that exist for digital activism and communication and media studies literature. So this is what is done here.

Results reveal that social media platforms (Facebook and YouTube) and mobile social networking applications (WhatsApp, 2go, Eskimi and Badoo) were the platforms used by the participants to learn, coordinate, plan, and mobilize for the protest as well as document their participation. Although Facebook is the most used media platform for protest purposes, Eskimi was of higher importance when it comes to the media used to learn, plan, coordinate and mobilize for the protest and joining the protest on the first day.

In conformity with some research that have supported social media role in enhancing protest knowledge (Breuer *et al.*, 2015; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Dunn, 2011; Wolover, 2016), this project found that online platforms, particularly, mobile social networking applications (e.g. Eskimi) were the media platforms that the protesters used in learning about, planning, coordinating and mobilizing for the protests. Eskimi was associated with significantly higher odds of participating on the crucial first day of the protest compared to any other media platform.

This study also explored the influence of citizen journalism to the organization of the protests, and how mobile social networking applications and social media platforms used for documentation impact joining on the first day of the protests. Undoubtedly, the high level of documentation undertaken by about a third of a quarter of the sample showed that at least many people were documenting the protest and were functioning as citizen journalists. These citizen journalists apparently made it difficult to subdue the protests or overtly punish protesters.



These findings demonstrate a remarkable intertwining of multiple media platforms' role in the organization of the protest. For example, mobile social networking applications and social media platforms as well as offline spheres such as Facebook, WhatsApp, 2go, Eskimi, Badoo and face-to-face were the media platforms where the respondents first heard the news about the protest. Mobile social networking applications and social media platforms were, of course, built on existing social ties between friends and families. In contrast to arguments about the limit of online platforms (Fenton & Barassi, 2011; Gladwell, 2010, 2011; Morozov, 2009a, 2009b, 2012, 2014; Putnam, 1996, 2000), this project finds that mobile social networking applications such as Eskimi and Facebook in Nigeria mediate many kind of ties and brings individuals, news, information, social support and, 'emotional contagion' (Gerbaudo, 2016) or 'anger contagion', needed to spur political protest.

Also, when grouped, the internet, in both the qualitative and quantitative results was reported to be the most important, most informative and the platform that motivated the participants the most into joining the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. This finding is similar to the findings of other digital activism studies. For example, 'Twitter and Facebook are both clear and anomalous leaders for motivational content when ranking is expressed as a function of protest user' (Wilson & Dunn, 2011, p. 1260). The findings from this project confirm and buttress the importance of the internet during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest.

One of the areas of continued variance in digital activism studies is in the area of leadership in online networks, particularly as it pertains to social movements. Gerbaudo (2012) has challenged suggestions from some studies about lack of leadership in online social movement. He argue that the Occupy movements had 'soft-leaders' (Gerbaudo, 2012, 2014). Similar to Gerbaudo's argument, results from this project revealed that there were leadership, both online and in the street during the protest. The interview participants remarked that they had leaders online. According to the participants, the online leaders in their respective protest groups are 'Cybertizens' – they are techno-savvy and techno-enthusiasts who initiated the online protest groups. These Cybertizens command respect and authority among their peers based solely on their superior viewpoints and technological skills. They are described as 'admins', 'organisers' and 'leaders'. They did not arrogate leadership to themselves, but leadership was entrusted to them by general consent of their group members.

This is in contrast to the arguments in some studies. For example, Castells (2012) assumption that social movement online are 'organic and leaderless', 'self-organizing networks that

loathe the idea of a spokesperson' (Bennett & Segerberg, 2014), and 'leadership without leaders' (Margetts et al., 2013). The findings of this project showed that there were leaders in the protest group pages during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. The leadership pattern in these online protest groups' pages according to the comments from the interview participants is flat with the people ascribing leadership to its members. The results of this project support O'Neil's (2009) premise that it is not enough to say that 'the internet, because it is horizontal or many-to-many system, abolishes authority' (p.169). Authority (leadership) was an essential element to the collaboration that made the protest possible. In their protest pages, participants gave authority to members based on the member's superior personal arguments and 'technology mediated charismatic brilliance' (O'Neil, 2009). This technology mediated charismatic brilliance is what sets the Cybertizens apart from the rest and why they were made the leaders in their respective online protest groups.

The second type of leadership identified in this study is the civil society- activism type where the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) assumed leadership in the street. This leadership type is like an 'organizationally brokered 'collective action. Unlike the online leadership that was from brilliant personal action frames, the street leadership was organizationally imposed on the protesters. From the results of this project, it is this type of leadership that protesters frowned at as they accused the NLC of 'gbaza-queen' – acting without legitimacy, and some of the participants argued that this coercive leadership in the part of NLC was the reason the success was not as much as the protesters demanded.

Extant literature in digital activism and communication understands politics as a collective enterprise which involves the development of strong, thick, deliberative ties between citizens (Hay, 2007, 2014; Stoker, 2006). In contrast, our data showed that mobile social networking applications such as Eskimi and Facebook acted as enablers of personal action frames. These loosely interconnected, interpersonal networks created outcomes that 'resemble collective action, yet without the same role played by formal organizations or the need for exclusive, collective actions frames' (Bennett & Segerberg, 2014, p. 35). This point is critical as it highlights how digital activism can mirror the function of its traditional counterpart.

Although much debate about the hypothetical limits of online activism subtly dismiss digital activism as mere 'slacktivism' (Morozov, 2009a, 2014) but given the overwhelming use of online platforms by the researcher's respondents, it could be argued that participants' actions are not much the passive intake of information, rather the consumption, aggregation and

distribution of information as a step towards political engagement. Digital activism reflects and embodies the atomization and individualization of contemporary political action (Halupka, 2016) as the consumption, aggregation, and distribution of information is conceivably now, a solitary action. Beck and his colleagues (Beck, 1994, 1997; Beck *et al.*, 1994) made similar point when argued that sub-politics indicate a weakening of bureaucratic and state oriented politics. This is what Bennett and Segerberg (2014) are referring to when they talk about personal action frames in the logic of connective actions. It involves individual people taking lead at the way they engage and with whom they engage. It confirms the argument that ‘politics has migrated away from parliament towards single-issue groups in the society’ (Giddens, 1999, p. 49) As a result of the move away from the strong solidarity type of activism and towards personal action frames, some scholars (Fenton & Barassi, 2011; Gladwell, 2010, 2011; Morozov, 2009a, 2009b, 2012, 2014; Putnam, 1996, 2000) see digital activism as an aberration, a selfish and lazy attitude to political engagement.

However, digital activists in Nigeria acted as mediators within the socio-political community as they engaged at the individual basis during the protest and yet contributed to the protest goals in a broader sense. Although these protesters acted on an individual basis, the common concern of re-stating fuel subsidy brought them together. Their togetherness was not built through ideological ties and strong, thick networks, but through project acknowledgement, anger and common concern. Their innovative communication pattern for the protests support Bennett and Segerberg (2014) processes of connective action. These communication practices of digital activists do indeed function as organizational structures. However, because they were situated around a common concern, they helped ‘stimulate feelings of collective togetherness’ (Halupka, 2016) that provided an invaluable information platform upon which the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests was developed and organised. Socio-political camaraderie was forged through common action, irrespective of the routes and perceptions that they took to get there. Through this, a sense of comradeship and of collectiveness was derived from personal action frames. This data reveals that the protest became a form of social movement without a shared ideology, but with an understanding of a common concern.

Digital activists in Nigeria embodied some of the characteristics of information activists and arguably engaged in some form of ‘information activism’ (Halupka, 2016, p. 7). Digital activists’ ability to stimulate commonality through decentralized and loose networks while allowing for solidarity building during the protest demonstrates the personalization of politics,

the appropriation of issues once reserved for ideological groups, drawn together through a shared understanding of the common concern.

Interestingly, digital enthusiasm facilitated by emotional communication on protest social media platforms such as Facebook and mobile social networking applications (e.g. WhatsApp, Eskimi, 2go and Badoo) eventuated a process of emotional contagion (or anger contagion in the case of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests) via connective repertoires that helped establish ‘propitious psychological conditions’ (Gerbaudo, 2016, p. 254) for a mass collective protest actions. Joining the protest in the street can be argued to be a hallmark of boldness. However, information activists were the champions of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. This is because their innovative use of digital media platforms created digital enthusiasm that roused the people into joining the protest. Convincing people to join a protest in Nigeria after decades of repressive military regimes that forced Nigerians not to overtly express dissenting views would have been a monumental task without digital technologies as Nigerians keep hidden preferences because they erroneously believed themselves to be a small minority as a result of previous repression and self-censorship, hence, causing pluralistic ignorance (Kurzman, 2009; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012).

Results from the second part of the project revealed that political efficacy and participating in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests influence the intention to participate in political affairs and not the internet. The result further showed that those who participated in the 2012 protests were more politically efficacious, had greater intention to participate in political affairs, perceived the country to have increased competition in political parties, and perceived corruption level to be lower than it was prior to the protests in 2012 than those that did not participate in the protest. These results showed that using the internet or its technologies for protest purposes in 2012 increased the chance of joining the protest and that joining the protests further increase the chance of becoming politically efficacious (Uwalaka, 2017b). However, those that shunned the protest missed the chance to see evidence of ‘people’s power’ thus, their low political efficacy. Figure 8.1 below shows a proposed flowchart of political efficacy formation of Nigerian university students.

Actively participating in the communication process of political information online has been found to ‘positively impact internal efficacy’ (Moeller et al., 2013, p. 1); seeking information via social networking sites is a positive and significant predictor of people’s social capital and civic and political participatory behaviours, online and offline (de-Zúñiga et al., 2012), and

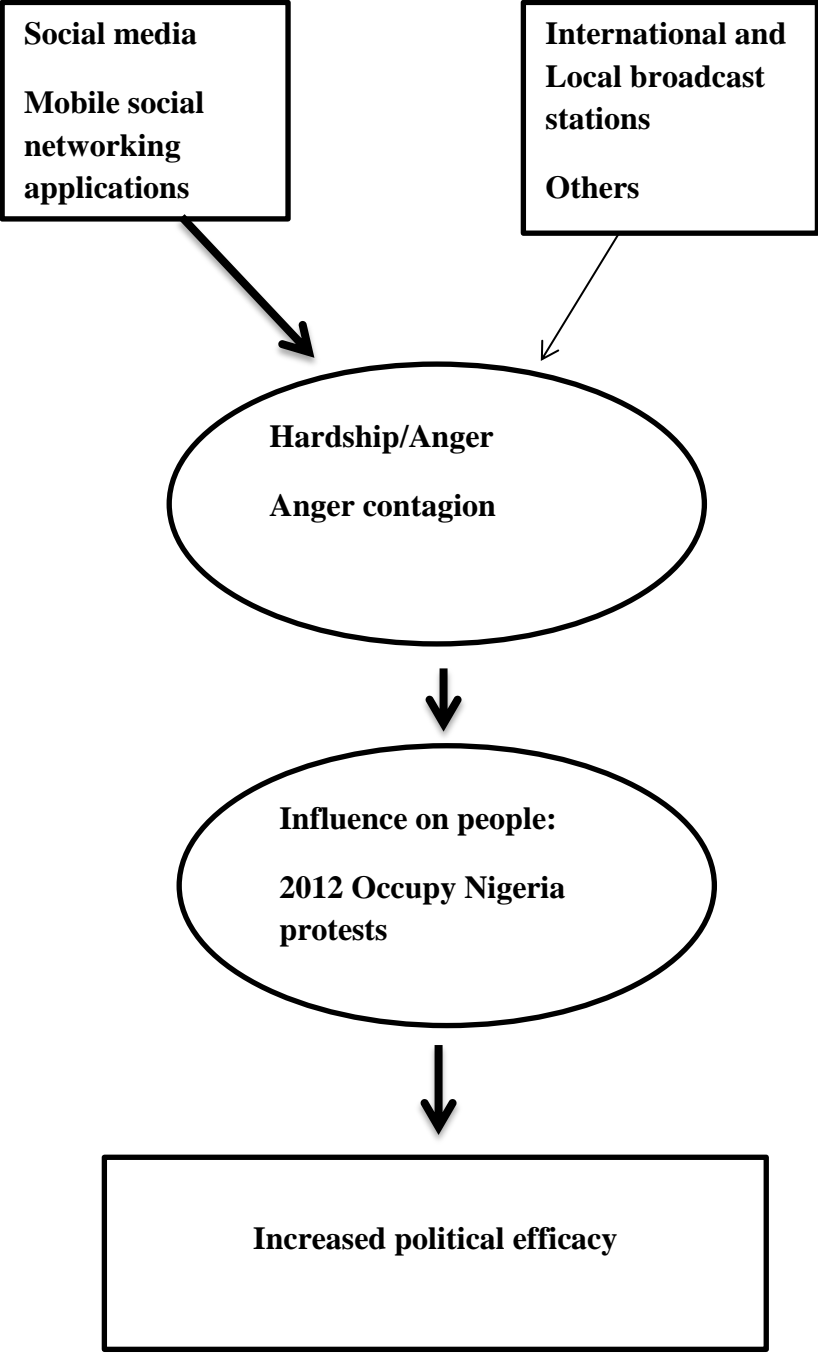
that the internet helps mobilize a sizable segment of the population not engaged in political affairs in any ways outside of the virtual world, to engage in these traditional activities and that the internet has a positive impact on the quantitative aspect of citizenship, helping increase their level of participation (Christensen & Bengtsson, 2011). These results, unlike the result of this study, found a positive relationship between the internet and its technologies and political participation and engagement. However, the variance that exists between these studies and the result of this project maybe more contextual than anything else. This is because some of these studies were conducted in advance democracies such as Finland that has established democratic culture and infrastructure. Unlike these countries, Nigeria's democracy is a nascent democracy and only recently returned to civil rule from long repressive military dictatorship that eroded any democratic infrastructure in Nigeria prior to the military intervention.

The participants perceived that there is a positive change on how the government treat the people after the 2012 protests. These comments unconsciously revealed political efficacy. Although the internet may not have been found to influence intention to participate in political affairs in this project, it however played a crucial role in spreading the people's anger in 2012 leading to the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. The protest on its own increased the participants' political efficacy. This means that using internet technologies to deliberate about the protests increased political efficacy. The findings of Vitak et al. (2011) resonate in the finding of this project in that using online platforms for politics related issues predict other forms of political participation. These two findings support that of Kenski and Stroud (2006) in that internet access and online exposure to political information are significantly associated with political efficacy, knowledge and participation.

In summary, using social media and mobile social network applications allowed citizens in Nigeria to relate and coordinate the 2012 protest. The results gained from the protest emboldened the protest participants who then perceive positive changes to democratic governance in Nigeria. This explains the model on the typology of political efficacy formation among Nigerian students. In this model, the assumption is that Nigerian university students and Nigerian youths in generally were not politically efficacious as a result of 'pluralistic ignorance' (Kurzman, 2009; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012) caused by previous repressive regimes in Nigeria. However, hardship witnessed and campaigned through social media platforms and mobile social networking application on the hardship that Nigerians will witness as a results of the removal of subsidy from petroleum products in Nigeria lead to anger contagion that

'coerce the people into joining the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. During the protests, the protest participants witnessed firsthand how powerful the voice of the people is in a democracy as 'tough' speaking government official started begging and asking for dialogue. This brought the realization to the participants that they (the people) have had power all along without knowing it, and this realization increase the protest participants' political efficacy. In equal measure, those who did not participate in the protest are still to see the reason to believe that they have the power to oust any bad leader or make a change in Nigeria politically, thus, their continuous low political efficacy.

Fig. 8.1. Flowchart of political efficacy formation among Nigeria students



Note: Bold arrows mean strong relationship while light arrow means light relationship

**8.5. Contributions**

This project explored the impact of mobile internet on the rise of digital activism among Nigerian university students, and how this rise impacts their perceived change in democratic governance. A research project such as this would be incomplete without clearly stating its contribution in the relevant field of study.

### **8.5.1. Contribution – digital activism and communication and media studies literature**

This project makes important contributions to digital activism and communication and media studies literature: The project reveals that mobile social networking applications such as Eskimi and WhatsApp played crucial roles in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. This project accepts that social media as well as mobile social networking applications were ‘drivers of the protest’ (Hari, 2014) with the insignificant use of newspapers and television channels illuminating the ‘eroded trust in the main stream media’ (Kombol, 2014) by the people. Although often neglected in digital activism studies in Nigeria, this project reveal that mobile social networking applications are eliminating the cost of initiating and coordinating collective action in Nigeria, and that mobile social networking organization, particularly Eskimi and WhatsApp together with Facebook were instrumental to the organisation and success of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.

Also, it contributes to the literature by uncovering that protests do not only eventuate by developing strong and thick solidarities, rather, through loose ties from networks of digital network. This aligns more towards ‘media hybridity’ (Chadwick, 2013) meaning that the logic of this collective action worked more as dualities other than dualism. In a nutshell, this project shows that the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests embodied aspects of collective and connective actions with protesters’ engagement conveying the fusion of these two logics.

A further finding of this study is the confirmation of the Fifth Estate role of mobile social networking applications and social media platforms. Responses to the qualitative interviews showed that one reason that many of the protesters joined the protest was because the mainstream media failed to report the protests for fear of government reprisal. Many students received protest information through their digital networks, while others joined the protests to bolster the protest against the repressive situation. It was also through mobile networks that the respondents organized a mobilisation at the major television station NTA in order to force the station to broadcast the protest.

The project clarifies the issue of leadership and organizational structure in social movement groups. Cybertizens (leaders) used their technological skill to rouse a passive generation into action. The leadership style in the online protest groups was ascribed to the leaders other than them asking for it. This ascription type of leadership was important as it helped Cybertizens to command the respect and legitimacy with any form of argument from members.



Furthermore, the project revealed deep distrust between the common Nigerians and mainstream media and journalists. Mainstream media and journalists are believed to be sympathetic to those in government and do the biddings of those in power thereby creating a hegemonic agenda. Unlike the local and national mainstream media, the transnational media channels are held in high esteem and are seen as the defenders of the people.

Finally, the project hypothesizes a typology of political efficacy formation that reveals that participating in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests helped Nigerian students to be politically more efficacious, thereby making them perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria than those who did not participated in the protest. Also, those who participated in the protest are more likely to intend participating in political affairs; they also perceived the country to have increased competition among political parties and perceived corruption level to be lower than it was prior to the 2012 protests. Consequently, those who did not participate in the protest are politically less efficacious and less likely to intend to participate in political affairs.

#### **8.5.2. Contribution – methodological**

The current study serves as a foundational mixed-methods research into the rise of digital activism among Nigerian students, and how the rise of digital activism impacts on the students' intention to participate in political affairs and perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria. This means that this is the first digital activism and communication and media studies study in Nigeria to use a mixed-methods research design. The objective was to discover if the qualitative interviews will confirm the findings of the quantitative analysis, and this was not only achieved but also extended the meaning of the results of the research relating to the protests such as leadership during the protests, the media representation of the protests, and government decision-making style after the protests. Also, the qualitative interviews extended the meaning of the results of other sections of the research, such as the political efficacy formation pattern.

The findings of this study, particularly the insights that the qualitative interviews gave to the overall achievement of this project's aim will serve as an encouragement for digital media scholars in Nigeria to start thinking about combining research designs and paradigms for improved understanding of digital activism in Nigeria. From this project, it is clear that combining qualitative and quantitative research designs gave more impetus to both the feasibility of the study and the results as variables or results that seemed surprising and difficult to interpret were interpreted and understood from the qualitative interviews even

though the interviews were not initially meant to contribute to the understanding of these research questions. As stated in Chapter Six (see Section 6.5), the beauty of a mixed method research is that there should be a need for it before it is used and not just be inserted into a research project because it is ‘fanciful’ or the ‘in-thing’. It is usually used to improve the understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny.

Finally, the current study was the first to investigate the rise of digital activism among Nigerian students, and also the first to instigate digital activism together with the participants’ current perception of their intention to participate in political affairs and change in democratic governance.

### **8.6. Chapter summary**

Overall, the data gathered and analysed during the project in the quantitative analysis and also in the qualitative interview achieved the goal that it originally set out to do. First and foremost, it must be said that although the quantitative phase of the project has added something significant to the field by demonstrating that social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube and mobile social networking applications such as WhatsApp, 2go, Eskimi and Badoo were the major media platforms that protesters used to learn about, plan, coordinate, mobilize and document their participation in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. Quantitative phase also added to the field by showing that participating in the protests increased Nigeria university students’ political efficacy. This demonstrates that Nigerian university students that participated in the protests perceived change in the democratic governance in Nigeria and are more politically efficacious compared to those who did not participate in the protests.

It must also be said that the participants opened up to the researcher in a manner that allowed him to gain a powerful and true insight into the personal experiences of the protesters and the impact media platforms had on them. The participants’ personal experiences confirmed the quantitative results and in some instances, extended them. For example, the issue of leadership in the social movement organisation did not come from the quantitative result but from the interview data.

Finally, this chapter has given the researcher the chance to discuss the findings of the project and after reviewing the literature, the insights provided by these findings are relevant in digital activism and communication and media studies literature in Nigeria and worldwide.

The next chapter summarises the purpose of the study and methodological approaches adopted while delineating key findings of the project.

## CHAPTER NINE

### CONCLUSION

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#### **9.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to draw together the major conclusions of the study. There is a summary of the purpose of the study and the methodological approaches adopted. The chapter then summarises the key findings and then follows recommendations for future research. Finally the chapter presents some reflections on the project and concludes with a commentary on the origin of the study.

#### **9.2. Summary of the aim and objectives of the study**

The aim of the research was to empirically evaluate the impact (if any) of the mobile internet on the rise of digital activism among university students in Nigeria and to determine whether this rise had an impact on the students' perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria. This aim is broken into the following two objectives:

The first objective was to examine the extent to which mobile internet use impacted how protesters learned about, planned, and documented their participation during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests by way of a mixed methods research project. The sample size was 220 students from the University of Lagos and from the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt. The quantitative phase of the project was carried out with the use of a survey type research instrument. This research instrument (Part A of the survey) was used to collect the quantitative data pertaining to the media platforms used and participation in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. The data was put through a process of analysis using SPSS. Three logistic regression models were used by the researcher to observe and predict the likelihood of using any particular media platform and participating on the first day of the protests. The descriptive statistics from these models were used to develop an overall picture of the media platforms that were used for protest purposes.

The qualitative phase of the study came second and was used to explicate the findings of the quantitative results. This phase involved semi-structured interviews with 19 of the students who participated in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests from the two universities mentioned

above. The interview data was analysed using the NVivo software following the ‘meaning condensation’ approach (Kvale, 1996).

The second objective of the project was to evaluate Nigerian university students’ mobile internet use and perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria through a quantitative questionnaire and input from the qualitative interviews. There was also unintended data that emerged from the project that is discussed and analysed in Chapter Seven. The quantitative phase was carried out with the responses from the ‘Part B’ of the research instrument and it was used to evaluate Nigerian university students’ mobile internet use and perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria. The sample size was 440 students from the two universities mentioned above. The descriptive statistics associated with the quantitative stage of the project allowed for an overall picture of the students’ profile to emerge. However, the qualitative interviews proved to be extremely revealing by producing commentary on political efficacy – even though the interviews were not intended to delve into this part of the project.

Overall, the project provided insight into mobile internet use and the rise of digital activism among Nigerian university students and how this rise impacts perception of change in democratic governance. This area of research has arguably been neglected up to this point and a large part of the focus of this project was to contribute to a greater understanding of mobile internet in digital activism in Nigeria.

### **9.3. Summary of the key findings**

The findings of this study show that the aim and objectives of this research have been fulfilled and all the research questions answered. For example, the results of the study in answering research questions One, Two and Three (research questions Four and Five are discussed below) show the fulfilment of the first objective of the research in that social media platforms (Facebook and YouTube) and mobile social networking applications (WhatsApp, 2go, Eskimi and Badoo) were the platforms used by the participants to learn, coordinate, plan, and mobilize for the protest as well as document their participation during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. Although Facebook was the most used media platform for protest purposes, Eskimi was of higher importance in terms of the media used to learn, plan, coordinate and mobilize as well as for joining the first day of the protests. Both the quantitative and qualitative data led to this result. Perhaps the most useful finding to consider is that mobile social networking applications significantly impacted how the protesters learned about, planned and documented their participation.

The qualitative interviews also revealed that it was anger and hardship that motivated the students to participate in the protest. This is crucial, as it helped the researcher uncover what motivated the protesters to participate in the protests. Furthermore, the qualitative interviews showed that there were leaders – Cybertizen - in the online protest groups.

This research project found elements of both collective and connective actions. Although for the most part, this study confirms the argument that politics ‘has migrated away from parliament towards single-issue groups in the society’ (Giddens, 1999, p. 149), the study provides evidence that digital activism frequently ‘spills-over’ into other online space - the international mainstream media webpages such as CNN’s iReport case was noted in this study as well as offline spaces (PEW, 2013). The foregoing lends credence to the argument of Marsh and Akram (2015) that connective and personal action frames are becoming increasingly important; but if the citizens are to effect change, this still usually involves collective action. Such argument shows that connective and collective actions are not dualisms but usually need to have a symbiotic relationship to effect change.

The second objective of this study is fulfilled and research questions Four and Five answered in that the findings of the project uncovered that mobile internet did not impact Nigerian students’ intention to participate in political affairs. The study also showed that social media and mobile social networking applications were the platforms that the students used to mobilize for the protest. In addition, students who participated in the protests perceived that positive change had taken place in democratic governance in Nigeria, more so than those who did not participate in the protests. A key issue is whether participating in the protest impacted how students perceive change in democratic governance in Nigeria, and it was found that those who participated in the protests were more politically efficacious, had greater intention to participate in political affairs, perceived Nigeria to have increased competition in among political parties, and perceived corruption level to be lower than their peers who did not participate in the protests.

An unintended finding from the interviews helped provide a deepening understanding of the political efficacy formation among Nigerian students. The result revealed that the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests changed how the government perceives the people. Participants of the protest suggest that after the protests, the government saw Nigerians as proactive and as a result consults the people before making an important policy decision. The self-belief showed

by the participants of the protest indirectly confirms the survey results, where participating in the protest increased both political efficacy and intention to participate in political affairs.

The study further revealed that mobile social networking applications and social media platforms give a voice to the voiceless. For example, in this project, an important outcome of the study is the Fifth Estate role of mobile social networking applications and social media platforms. The responses from the researcher's qualitative interviews showed that many of the protesters joined the protest because the mainstream media failed to report the protests, for fear of government reprisal. Many students got the information through their digital networks, while others joined the protests to bolster support against such repressive situation. It was also through such networks that the respondents organised to flock into the major television station, NTA, to force the station to broadcast the protest.

#### **9.4. Recommendation for future research**

Future research could be conducted specifically on mobile social networking applications such as Eskimi, 2go and WhatsApp, in order to enhance the understanding of the applications themselves and their communication infrastructure and why they were used so extensively during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.

A follow-up study should be conducted into the failed 2016 fuel subsidy removal protest in Nigeria in order to address the behaviour and actions of the current government of President Muhammadu Buhari. This follow-up could serve as a comparison with what went right in 2012 and what may have been different and wrong in 2016. This is particularly important as the labour unions joined the 2012 protest on the 7th day (see Table 2.1 for the timeline of the protest) while in 2016 the labour unions started the protests. Such research would help resolve some of the issues raised in this study about the impact of the labour unions during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. Comments from the interview participants showed that the protesters felt betrayed by the NLC high-jacking the protest from them. They argued that labour unions did little to organize the protests. On the other hand, scholars such as Hari (2014) and Kombol (2014) have celebrated the role of labour unions in the organization of the protests. The 2016 protest that the same unions tried to organize failed. Consequently there is a need to conduct a study that compares both protests in order to bring clarity to the roles of the labour unions and independent citizens during social movements in Nigeria.

Furthermore the findings of the current study are based on protesters' self-reported media use at a particular time rather than it being a longitudinal assessment. Future studies could be

conducted using a longitudinal approach in the area of digital activism as it concerns Nigerian students media use pattern over a period of time. This would add a worthwhile comment to digital activism literature in the area of digital activism and the area of political communication in Nigeria and so provide a better understanding of the media use of Nigerian students over a period of time.

Finally, a future longitudinal research project could be conducted to investigate the Nigerian university students' perception of change in democratic governance in Nigeria. This would help monitor changes in students' perceptions and factors that influence these changes. For example the internet was not seen as a significant predictor of the intention to participate in political affairs in this study; with a longitudinal approach, researchers could trace the progress of students and see how their perception changes over time and the different levels of impact of various media platforms.

#### **9.5. Reflection on the project**

Over the course of this project, several limitations were encountered. Some were predicted prior to the data collection while others arose during the main part of the project.

One primary limitation related to logistical difficulties associated with data collection and the unpredictable sample size of the quantitative phase. The logistical difficulties involved the participants coming from two different universities in two different cities in a country that is different from where the researcher studies and resides. Organising the qualitative interviews in the two universities after an initial data analysis of the quantitative data; the availability and willingness of participants was also a great challenge. These difficulties were largely successfully dealt with but, due to lack of time and the constant closure of these universities from industrial actions of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), the statistical analyses of the pilot study were not analysed thoroughly. So although the survey was developed, there was only enough time to conduct a brief pilot study of the questionnaire that had the aim of repairing any unclear and difficult to understand items.

Almost immediately after the troublesome questions were rewritten, the questionnaire had to be administered at the respective institutions. Had the data collection been delayed, the opportunity to access the sample would have passed as the universities closed down for industrial action a week after the researcher's data collection and it lasted for three months.



Another limitation of the project was also related to the actual sample size of the quantitative aspect of the project. An initial estimate of around 600 participants was made and early preparations worked from this assumption. As outlined in the methodology chapter, during the course of the project my assistants and I were unable to attain that number. However the questionnaire response rate and interview participants' comments are satisfactory for a research project of this scope.

Another limitation of this study is that part of the study (research question one and two) was based on an event (protest) that occurred several years back. Thus, the respondents' responses involved recollecting what happened during the period of the protests. Another choice would have been to conduct social networking text analysis or big data analysis and that was also briefly attempted (see Chapter Two, Section 2.3).

One other limitation noted here is borne out of the results from the study. The researcher did not interview students who did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests, thereby making it difficult to understand why those who did not participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest were reportedly not efficacious politically, had low intention to participate in political affairs, perceived corruption to be higher in Nigeria now than it was in 2012, and why they perceived a lack of competitiveness among the political parties in Nigeria. Interviewing them would have helped balance the qualitative data and put these results in a proper perspective that would have enhanced understanding of this phenomenon.

The final limitation of this study comes from its sampling technique (purposive sampling) and voluntary sampling technique. This means that the sampling population may not exactly represent the population as in the case of voluntary sampling, the participants maybe self-select and in purposive sampling, the participants' characteristics may differ to that of the population. In this project purposive sampling was adopted to increase the mix of the research participants. This means that to achieve appropriate representation, a purposive sampling technique was adopted in order to consider ethnic mix alongside participation status of participants. While the two sites of investigation are in universities in the southern part of Nigeria, they however, have students that cut across ethnicities. Port Harcourt, Lagos and Abuja are the three most diverse cities in Nigeria, but for Boko Haram insurgency in the Northern part of Nigeria, Abuja would have been chosen as one of the sites of this project. Consistent with Kerlinger (1986), this study used sampling number (440 participants) to limit any adverse effect that may arise from this sampling technique.

## **9.6. Commentary on the study - origins of the study**

The researcher started to understand the concept of the public sphere during his undergraduate years. The more he engaged with the works of Habermas, the more he began to understand the dire situation in which he had grown up. This situation is one of political apathy – an ‘I don’t care attitude’. He grew up in an environment filled with fear and despair as government officials were always right and their decisions and views went unchallenged. So, the researcher was astonished to read that citizens could contest a policy and that leaders were sometimes called upon to defend their policies. The researcher began to query why many people in his country were not interested in politics and were not willing to challenge those in power. Serendipitously, he discovered the works of Ogbondah and these studies helped shade some light to the phenomenon. Ogbondah explained in his studies (Ogbondah, 1986, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1997, 2000) that the seizure of political power by the military in post-colonial Nigeria stifled freedom of expression. Furthermore, Ogbondah argued that during this period Nigerians were coerced into concealing their thoughts because those who dared criticize the government publicly were tortured, incarcerated and murdered – an example being the murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the eight other Ogoni human rights and environment activists in 1995 by the government of General Sani Abacha. There was no free speech as government used brute force to coerce socio-political critics into heeding to them. This, Ogbondah reasoned, has caused Nigerians to avoid visibly participating in political discourse. Therefore civic engagement has suffered while cynicism and pessimism has flourished.

Consequently, the researcher was surprised in 2012 when Nigerians protested in large numbers against the removal of the subsidy from petroleum products by the Federal Government of Nigeria. His amazement was because of the lack of any previous experience of such action in Nigeria. In fact the protest was the first successful protest that Nigerians have carried out in post-colonial Nigeria; the last successful protest with such popularity was the ‘Aba Women’ Riot of 1929. This riot was organized by women in the old Eastern Region of Nigeria in 1929 to protest against the imposition of tax in Nigeria by the colonial government (Okafor, 2004). There have been occasional industrial actions in Nigeria, particularly from labour unions such as Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT), Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Nigerian Union of Journalist (NUJ), the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) but these industrial actions were nothing like the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests in size, scope and vehemence.

The researcher commenced a search in the communication literature to evaluate what can change a people from socio-political apathy to being fully engaged citizens. Many studies have looked at changes in citizens' engagement from the standpoint of internet and democracy with results for and against (Best & Wade, 2009; Boas & Kalathil, 2003; Groshek, 2009; Kedzie, 1997, 2002; Steele & Stein, 2002). Even though these studies gave the research some clues about what may have happened in Nigeria, they were at the macro level and just could not explain why Nigerians would have taken to the streets.

The researcher's readings from that point exposed him to the canon of literature in digital activism and the various phases of research through which it has progressed over the last few years. At present, the dominant theory of digital activism in terms of motivation to join a protest is that of the 'logic of connective actions' by Bennett and colleagues (Bennett, 2012; Bennett & Segerberg, 2011, 2014) which considers digital activism from an organizational perspective. This theory piqued the researcher's interest as he is in agreement with the idea that communication, and the means of communication, can act as a catalyst for the development of organizational structures. This means that communication can function as an organization, and in this way, allow for the development of connective action frames.

The 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests coincidentally occurred when social media platforms and mobile social networking applications were becoming popular in Nigeria. Moreover, digital activism studies from other countries were consistently finding that social media platforms had an impact in the organisation of social movements. For example, the researcher found Tufekci and Wilson's (2012) work on how social media platforms helped protesters organise their protest in Egypt. They argued that social media use 'greatly increased the odds that a respondent attended protests on the first day' (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012, p. 363). Thus, out of his curiosity, the researcher began to search for clues from digital activism literature in Nigeria about the impact that digital media may have played in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests. There was little or nothing to explain the impact of digital media in the organization of the protests.

Therefore, besides the researcher's inability to find any work of note on this protest when he commenced his study, he also noticed a seeming vacuum in the theory of the logic of connective action. What to him seemed to be missing from Bennett and colleagues' theory of connective action was the inherent ability to combine both personal action frames and thick organizational ties for the organization of social movements. This was not covered and there

was an absence of acknowledgement that these logics can be fused – that is, that connective and the more traditional collective action can be mixed. This is what inspired the researcher at first. However, what has proved of more inspiration and the foundation for this study is the failure of digital activism literature in Nigeria to establish the role that social media and mobile social networking applications use played in the organization of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.

With the protests occurring in 2012 and this research commencing about a year later, and then the level of political apathy that was prevalent in the country pre-Occupy Nigeria protest, the researcher was also interested to know how the protest itself has impacted the political psyche of Nigerian students. For example, did political apathy continue after the protests or did the protest change Nigerian students' attitude to political participation and engagement? Or was the protest a one-off event that did not have any impact on the political psyche of the people? Looking at the students' current perceptions of change in democratic governance in Nigeria enabled the researcher to evaluate the state of the students' political engagement psyche, something that was useful in assessing if the protests changed anything at all.

This project attempted to not only evaluate the impact of digital media technologies in the organisation of the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest, but also to ascertain if the protests had impacted how the students perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria.

The study did find that social media and mobile social networking applications were the media platforms that the students mainly used during the protest. The study also revealed that those who participated in the protest were politically more efficacious, had greater intention to participate in political affairs than those who did not join in the protest. Those who participated in the protest also perceived Nigeria to have experienced an increased competitiveness in political parties and perceived corruption to be lower from 2012 onwards than those who did not participate in the protest. These results addressed some of the researcher's concerns.

One of his major interests that this study has addressed is the debate between connective and collective actions. This study found elements of both connective and collective actions. This means that connective and collective actions are not mutually exclusive but, arguably, help each other in effecting change.

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## Appendix 1: Ethics approval



UNIVERSITY OF  
CANBERRA  
AUSTRALIA'S CAPITAL UNIVERSITY

26 February 2015

APPROVED - Project number 15-16

Mr Temple Uwalaka  
Faculty of Arts & Design  
University of Canberra  
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Temple,

The Human Research Ethics Committee has considered your application to conduct research with human subjects for the project titled **Mobile Internet and Democratic Governance in Nigeria**.

**Approval is granted until 4 August 2017.**

The following general conditions apply to your approval.

These requirements are determined by University policy and the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2007).

<b>Monitoring:</b>	You must, in conjunction with your supervisor, assist the Committee to monitor the conduct of approved research by completing and promptly returning project review forms, which will be sent to you at the end of your project and, in the case of extended research, at least annually during the approval period.
<b>Discontinuation of research:</b>	You must, in conjunction with your supervisor, inform the Committee, giving reasons, if the research is not conducted or is discontinued before the expected date of completion.
<b>Extension of approval:</b>	If your project will not be complete by the expiry date stated above, you must apply in writing for extension of approval. Application should be made before current approval expires; should specify a new completion date; should include reasons for your request.
<b>Retention and storage of data:</b>	University policy states that all research data must be stored securely, on University premises, for a minimum of five years. You must ensure that all records are transferred to the University when the project is complete.
<b>Contact details and notification of changes:</b>	All email contact should use the UC email address. You should advise the Committee of any change of address during or soon after the approval period including, if appropriate, email address(es).

Yours sincerely  
Human Research Ethics Committee

**Hendryk Flaegel**  
Research Ethics & Compliance Officer  
Research Services Office  
T (02) 6201 5220 F (02) 6201 5466  
E [hendryk.flael@canberra.edu.au](mailto:hendryk.flael@canberra.edu.au)

[www.canberra.edu.au](http://www.canberra.edu.au)

Postal Address:  
University of Canberra ACT 2601 Australia  
Location:  
University Drive Bruce ACT

Australian Government Higher Education Registered  
Provider Number (CRICOS): 00212K

**Appendix 2: Research site consent letter (University of Lagos)**

# UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

AKOKA, LAGOS, NIGERIA

*Professor Tunde Babawale*

**DEAN**



Students' Affairs Division  
Office of the Vice-Chancellor  
Tel:01-5820391, 5454891-3 Ext. 1027  
(GSM): 08023151008  
E-mail: tunde\_babawale@yahoo.com,  
dsa@unilag.edu.ng

Ref.No. VC/DSA/127

25<sup>th</sup> January, 2015

Mr. Temple Uwalaka,  
Faculty of Arts & Design,  
University of Canberra,  
Bruce ACT 2617,  
Australia.

Dear Sir,

## RE: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH SITE CONSENT

Please refer to your letter dated 25<sup>TH</sup> January, 2015 to the Dean of Students' Affairs Division, University of Lagos, on the above subject matter.

I write to inform you that your request for consent to conduct research in the University of Lagos titled "*Mobile Internet and Democratic Governance in Nigeria*" has been **APPROVED**.

The period of the research is from **2<sup>nd</sup> February – 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2015**.

You are kindly requested to comport yourself in an orderly manner in the course of carrying out your research.

I wish you a successful research study.

Thank You

**Dr. A. K. Adebayo**  
Deputy Dean  
For: Dean Student Affairs Division

**Appendix 3: Research site consent letter (RSUST)**

**OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR**

**DIRECTORATE OF STUDENTS' AFFAIRS**

**RIVERS STATE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
NKPOLU, OROWORUKWO, PORT HARCOURT**



PRIVATE MAIL BAG 5080  
PORT HARCOURT

RSUST/SA/34/17

4<sup>th</sup> February, 2015

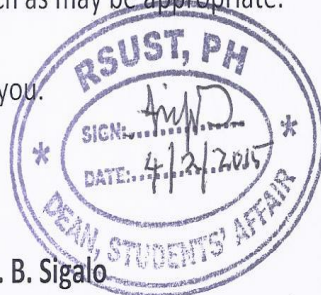
Uwalaka Temple  
University of Canberra  
Australia

**RE-REQUEST FOR RESEARCH SITE CONSENT:**

I am pleased to inform you that your request to administer your research questionnaire in our University has been approved by the Administration.

You are therefore free to interact with the students and staff to conduct your research as may be appropriate.

Thank you.



**Prof. F. B. Sigalo**  
Dean, Students' Affairs

## Appendix 4: Recruitment flyer

### Seeking research participants



Photo credit: Nairaland

#### If you:

- use mobile phone
- Are a university student

I would like to meet with you.

I am looking for students who engaged and those that did not engage in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest for a research.

If you are interested in the study,  
please text or call 08030426389.

(Researcher: Uwalaka, Temple)

## **Appendix 5: Participant information sheet**

**Project Title:** MOBILE INTERNET AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

### **DESCRIPTION**

The objective of this research is to investigate how mobile internet influenced how the protesters learned about the 2012 ‘Occupy Nigeria’ protest, and planned and documented their participation. Your responses to this survey will help us to understand the relationship between mobile internet and political participation in Nigeria.

### **Confidentiality**

Participants will not be identifiable by the data collected. All the responses will be put together into one database, so it will be impossible for any individual to be identified. The only people who will have access to the data are the researcher and the supervisory panel. Complete confidentiality is assured and the survey results will be used strictly for academic purposes.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are under no obligation to participate and there will be no negative consequences for you, or for the person who have asked you to complete this survey, if you choose not to participate. You may decline to participate in the whole survey, or choose not to answer any individual question. Also, if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw from participating at any time during the study.

### **Questions/ Further Information**

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the research by email:

**Uwalaka, Temple**

University of Canberra

Bruce, ACT 2601

Australia

Mobile: Australia: +61421259029. Nigeria: +2348030426389

Email: [temple.uwalaka@canberra.edu.au](mailto:temple.uwalaka@canberra.edu.au)

## **Concerns/Complaints**

If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of this project you should contact the researcher's University of Canberra supervisor:

A/Prof Jerry Watkins

[Jerry.watkins@canberra.edu.au](mailto:Jerry.watkins@canberra.edu.au)

Or you can send you complaint to the University of Canberra Human Research Ethics Committee:

[humanethicscommittee@canberra.edu.au](mailto:humanethicscommittee@canberra.edu.au)

**Appendix 6: Participant consent form**

I, ..... [PRINT NAME], give consent to participate in the research project.

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher.
3. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time.
4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential and no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.
5. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary –I am not under any obligation to consent.

Please check the box if you would like to receive information about the research results. If so, where do you want the information sent to? \_\_\_\_\_@\_\_\_\_\_ or postal address:

**Signed:** .....

**Name:**.....

**Date:** .....

## Appendix 7: Questionnaire

Please fill in or tick the box where appropriate

### Section 1: General Information

#	Question	Code	Answer
I would like to ask you some general questions about yourself			
1	Gender?	Male/Female	
2	Age?	1. 17-20 2. 21-24 3. 25-29 4. 30 and above	
3	What is your ethnic nationality in Nigeria?	1. Hausa 2. Yoruba 3. Ibo 4. Others	
4	What is your level of study?	a. Undergraduate b. Postgraduate	
<b>Note: if you are a postgraduate student, skip question 4</b>			
5	In which year of study are you?	A. One B. Two C. Three D. Four E. Five F. Six	
6	Between January 2012 and now did you have internet at home?	Yes/No	
7	Can you access the internet on your mobile phone before January 2012?	Yes/No	
8	Can you access the internet on your mobile phone at present?	Yes/No	
9	Did you participate in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria Protest? <b>Note: if Yes continue, if No move to Part B</b>	Yes/No	
10	When did you join the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest?	1. 1 <sup>st</sup> day of protest (Jan 2 <sup>nd</sup> ) 2. 2 <sup>nd</sup> day 3. 3 <sup>rd</sup> day 4. 4 <sup>th</sup> day 5. Other days	
11	Was this the first time you participated in a protest?	Yes/No	
12	Before the protests in 2012, can you remember being involved with any politically active organizations such as trade/student unions, political parties or social charities?	0. None 1. Student Union 2. Political parties 3. Social movement 4. Social charities 5. Other	



## Section 2: Media Use

<b>I am now going to ask you to remember if and how you used several specific media during the protests</b>							
13	<b>Did you use any of these media in 2012? (Tick all that apply)</b>						
		<b>1. Yes</b>	<b>2. No</b>			<b>Code</b>	
	SMS						
	Newspaper						
	TV & Radio						
	Face-to-face Communication						
14	<b>Can you remember how much you read, watched or listened to any of these media during the 2012 'Occupy Nigeria' protests?</b>						
		<b>1 Not at All</b>	<b>2 Not Much</b>	<b>3 Neutral</b>	<b>4 Somewhat</b>	<b>5 Very Much</b>	<b>Code</b>
	SMS						
	Newspaper						
	TV & Radio						
	Face-to-face Communication						
15	<b>Roughly, how much information about the protests did you send via any of these media?</b>						
	SMS						
	Newspaper						
	TV & Radio						
	Face-to-face Communication						
16	<b>Can you remember how reliable you found the information sent by any of these media during the Jan 2 protests? By reliable, we mean information that helped you to know the venue, themes and slogans during the protest. (Select only one for each)</b>						
	SMS						
	Newspaper						
	TV & Radio						
	Face-to-face Communication						

17	<b>Can you remember the type of relevant information you received and sent via any of these media during the 2012 'Occupy Nigeria' protest? (Select all that apply)</b>							
		<b>None</b>	<b>News and updates</b>	<b>Coordination</b>	<b>Documentation (e.g. pictures, videos)</b>	<b>Opinions or slogans</b>	<b>Jokes</b>	<b>Other</b>
	SMS							

	Newspaper							
	TV & Radio							
	Face-to-face Communication							
18	<b>Can you remember the type of information from any of these media that you passed on during the protests? (Select all that apply)</b>							
	SMS							
	Newspaper							
	TV & Radio							
	Face-to-face Communication							

19	<b>Can you remember why you used any of these media to communicate about the protests? (Select all that apply)</b>						
		Easy to use	Content seemed reliable	Number of users	Amount of information	Other media not available	Other
	SMS						
	Newspaper						
	TV & Radio						
	Face-to-face Communication						

20	<b>Can you remember roughly the frequency at which you used these social media platforms before the 2012 'Occupy Nigeria' protests?</b>		
	Facebook	<b>1. Not at All</b> <b>2. Not Much</b> <b>3. Neutral</b> <b>4. Somewhat</b> <b>5. Very Much</b>	
	YouTube		
	WhatsApp		
	2go		
	Eskimi		
	Badoo		
21	<b>Roughly, how much did you receive and send relevant information about the 2012 'Occupy Nigeria' protests via the following social media platforms?</b>		
	Facebook	<b>1. Not at All</b> <b>2. Not Much</b> <b>3. Neutral</b>	
	YouTube		
	WhatsApp		

	2go	<b>4. Somewhat</b> <b>5. Very Much</b>	
	Eskimi		
	Badoo		
22	<b>Can you remember the type of relevant information you received and sent via the following social media platforms during the 2012 ‘Occupy Nigeria’ protest? (Select all that apply)</b>		
	Facebook	<b>1. None</b> <b>2. News and Updates</b> <b>3. Coordination</b> <b>4. Documentation (e.g. pics, videos)</b> <b>5. Opinions or Slogans</b> <b>6. Jokes</b> <b>7. Other</b>	
	YouTube		
	WhatsApp		
	2go		
	Eskimi		
	Badoo		
23	<b>Can you remember how reliable you found the information in the following social media platforms during the 2012 ‘Occupy Nigeria’ protests? (Select one only for each )</b>		
	Facebook	<b>1. Not at All</b> <b>2. Not Much</b> <b>3. Neutral</b> <b>4. Somewhat</b> <b>5. Very Much</b>	
	YouTube		
	WhatsApp		
	2go		
	Eskimi		
	Badoo		

### Section 3: Documentation

#	Question	Code	Answer
<p><b>The questions will now focus on your recollections of the documentation process during the time of the protest</b></p>			
24	Can you remember if you produced any pictures or videos and if so, how did you distribute them?	<b>1. TV/Radio</b> <b>2. Print</b> <b>3. Face-to-face</b> <b>4. Facebook</b>	
25	Can you remember if you viewed any pictures or videos produced by protesters, and if so, on which media did you view them?	<b>5. YouTube</b> <b>6. WhatsApp</b> <b>7. 2go</b> <b>8. Twitter</b> <b>9. SMS</b> <b>10. Other</b>	

#### Section 4: Media Comparison

#	Question	The internet	Text Messages	TV/Radio	Newspapers / Printed Political Writing	Face to Face	Documentation material (regardless of platform)
	<p><i>NOTE:</i></p> <p><i>Mark the top two media by placing a 1 or 2 in the appropriate column, where 1 is the highest rating.</i></p>						
26	Can you remember which two of the media we discussed were most important to you during the Jan 2, 2012 protests, in order?						
27	Which two media were the most informative?						
28	Which media did you use most to send and receive information during the protests?						
29	On which media did you receive information that most motivated you to participate in the protests?						

## **PART B**

### **Section 1: Political Knowledge**

**Next, I shall ask you a few questions about local politicians and political events. Of course, there are so many issues and events taking place these days that it is impossible to keep track of all of them. But can you tell me:**

1. The name of the Governor of Edo State? \_\_\_\_\_
2. The name of a senator from Rivers State? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Can you tell me who Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who appoints the INEC Chairman? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Can you tell me what 29<sup>th</sup> May means to Nigeria? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section 2: Political Efficacy**

**Here is a list of statements people have made about politics. Please tell me how you feel about each of the following statements on a 5-point scale where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree. Answer each of the following questions by ticking the response with which you agree/disagree.**

<b>No</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>	<b>2 Disagree</b>	<b>3 Neutral</b>	<b>4 Agree</b>	<b>5 Strongly Agree</b>
6	People like me have no say in what federal government does					
7	Politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on					
8	Government officials don't care much about what people like me think or say					
9	People like me have no say over who gets to be the president					

### Section 3: Intention to Participate in Political Affairs

10. If you were asked to attend a forum where citizens discuss political problems at your LGA, State, or Federal would you attend?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

**If No jump to question 13 but if Yes, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means Not at all likely and 5 means Very likely:**

No	Statements	1 Not at all	2 Not muc h	3 Neutral	4 Somewhat	5 Very Likely
11	How likely would it be for you to speak up					
12	How likely would it be for you to express an opinion that is different from those of others at the forum					
<b>The 2015 general election is some months away. Using this same scale, how likely would you do the following:</b>						
13	Vote during the election					
14	Join a political party					
15	Support a candidate					
16	Campaign for a candidate					

### Section 4: Traditional Participation

**Now I shall ask you some questions about your participation in politics. Would you please tell me if in the past two years you have done the following:**

**(Mark X in the column that relates to your answer)**

No	Statement	Yes	No
17	Attended a political meeting		
18	Written a letter to the editor of a newspaper or called in to a radio station <b>(Note: comments in online newspapers are not included)</b>		
19	Circulated a petition for a candidate or issue		

### Section 5: Perceived Federal Government Accountability

The following questions ask you to think about how you perceive federal government accountability before and after 2012. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 mean strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree, please answer each of the following questions by ticking the response with which you agree/disagree.

No	Statements	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
20	From 2012 onwards, I feel that government think about the people before making a decision					
21	I think that the police treats Nigerians better nowadays than prior to 2012					
22	I think that between 2012 to present, government tries to explain their actions than governments prior to this period.					
23	I think that the police brutalize Nigerians more nowadays					
24	I think that from 2012 onwards, politicians are becoming more autocratic than prior to this period					

### Section 6: Perceived Corruption Level

The following questions will ask you to think about how you perceive corruption level in Nigeria before and after 2012. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 mean strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree, please answer each of the following questions by ticking the response with which you agree/disagree.

No	Statements	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
25	To me, federal governments after 2010 are more corrupt than the ones prior to 2010					
26	I think that a federal government official before 2010 will likely collect bribe than one after 2010					
27	I think that because of camera phone and internet, police officers since 2010 are afraid to collect “egunje” than police officers prior to 2010					
28	I think that nowadays people resist giving and taking bribes because you never can tell who will snap and send to the internet					



### Section 7: Perceived Competitiveness of Political Participation

The following questions will ask you to think about how you perceive the competitiveness of political participation before and after 2012. Please in a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means strongly disagree and means strongly agree, answer each of the following questions by ticking the response with which you agree/disagree.

No	Statement	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
29	I think that nowadays opposition parties have a chance of winning an election than before					
30	I feel that elections are no longer 'do or die' nowadays like before					
31	I believe that nowadays INEC is given a free hand to conduct free and fair elections than before					
32	I feel that nowadays the Supreme Court <sup>3</sup> is independent					
33	I think that nowadays one can vote for any candidate without repercussions					

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

## **Appendix 8: Interview guide**

### **PLAN FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW**

**INTRODUCTION OF INTERVIEWER** (It is assumed the interviewer and participants have met briefly and the participants have been told a little about the researcher's interests)

Hi, as you know my name is **Temple Uwalaka**, and I am here to interview about your experiences during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests, particularly, as it concerns your media use and your generally experience.

Your participation in this interview and your responses to the questions will help me understand your media use and political participation in Nigeria particularly, during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests.

**Confidentiality:** Participants will not be identifiable by the data collected. Participants' names and other means of identification will not be collected during the data collection. However, pseudonyms will be used to identify participants for easy analysis. The only people that will have access to the data are the researcher and the supervisory panel. Complete confidentiality is assured and the interview results will be used strictly for academic purposes.

**Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are under no obligation to participate and there will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate. Also, you may choose not to answer any particular question. I will also like to record this interview to enable me remember during the transcription and to analyse your responses correctly when I get back to Australia.

During this interview, I would like to talk about the following topics: your internet use type, how you come to know about the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests, how you planned your participation, if you documented your participation. I will also ask you about media coverage of the protests and your thoughts regarding leadership during the protests.

Do you have questions so far?

Are you happy to talk about these topics with me?

With these topics in mind...

Main questions	Additional questions	Clarifying questions
Do you use the internet?	How do you access the internet? How much experience do you have in using the internet	
Talking about the Occupy Nigeria protest, what really happened and how did you participate in the protest?	How did you learn about the protests? How did you plan your participation in the protests	Could you talk a bit more about the online platforms Why did you use online? Platforms?
How was the protest represented in the mainstream media?	How was the protest covered by the local mainstream media? What about the international media channels?	Can you give examples of lack of coverage/ intense coverage? Can you tell me anything else?
Do you think that the protest would have been successful without the internet?	How do you really use this social media platforms	Could you talk a bit more about that?
How did you document you participation?	Did you take pictures? Did you record videos Did you like other videos and pictures that you did not produce in the	As above

	<p>group?</p> <p>Did you comment on pictures and videos?</p>	
<p>Were there leaders during the protests?</p>	<p>What type of leaders were they?</p> <p>Why were there no leaders?</p>	<p>Please can you give an example of a leader</p> <p>Could you talk more about that?</p>
<p>Do you think after the protest that the government think about Nigerians before taking a decision?</p>	<p>Government doesn't care about Nigerians before taking decision?</p>	
<p>Is there any other thing that I miss that you really think you should add?</p>		

## **Appendix 9: Interview transcription sample**

**Interview13/ King/undergrad student/12-06-2015**

**Duration: 38 minutes 3 seconds**

**Interviewer: Temple**

**Location: University of Lagos Library**

T347 [00:03] **Question:** Welcome for today's interview and I appreciate the fact that you were able to squeeze out time from your classes to come and attend this interview tell me your experience during 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest. Thank you for coming.

T348 [00:19] **Answer:** OK

T349 (01: 51) **Question:** Do you have any question before we begin?

T350 [01:54] **Answer:** I think I'm okay.

T351 [00:11] **ANSWER:** thank you so much.

T352 [01:29] **QUESTION:** Do you use the internet?

T353 [02:09] **ANSWER:** Yes. I use the internet.

T354 [02:12] **QUESTION:** So, how do you access the internet?

T355 [02:15] **ANSWER:** You know majorly as student and as average people in Nigeria I use the internet via mobile phone. I surf the net, I browse, I do all that concerns the internet, using majorly cell phone. I know that one can access the internet through various devices like computer, laptop, and hand top but in my case I use majorly through my cell phone.

T356 [02:49] **QUESTION:** How do you normally subscribe to the internet?

T357 [02:57] **ANSWER:** Networks in Nigeria have given us varieties of options. I use Etisalat and we can do a daily plan, a weekly plan or a monthly plan, I use the daily plan mainly, But I also use the weekly plan and monthly plan depends on how much I have for the time been.

T358 [03:27] **QUESTION:** Please can you tell me about your experience in using the internet and how often do you normally use the internet?

T359 [03:35] **ANSWER:** I use the internet frequently. I told you that I do a lot of work online, so I frequently use the internet.

T360 [03:57] **QUESTION:** Are you satisfied with the speed of the internet?

T361 [04:05] **ANSWER:** No. No. No. There are lots of connectivity issues with the usage of internet here because sometimes, you know we have connectivity issues. You know that we have the EDGE, we have the 3G, but majority of the time, some of our mobile phones are not sophisticated enough to use the 3G. So, majority of the time we use EDGE and it is slow. We hear that the internet is fast in Western countries but here, it is agonizingly slow.

T362 [05:01] **QUESTION:** Now, talking about the Occupy Nigeria protest, I mean what really happened? How did you participate?

T363 [05:14] **ANSWER:** I got to know about the Occupy Nigeria protest from the internet, Facebook in particular. The Occupy Nigeria protest was at the beginning of the year, when we received a gift from the president. Some people will call a gift of hopelessness. While some will call it a gift of development. It was about the removal of fuel subsidy. I got to know about it in the internet and that there was going to be a protest. So I had to contribute my views and I did so tirelessly. I had to contribute to the increase the knowledge of people on the impact of fuel subsidy removal. I did so by throwing my ideas in conversation; comments on facts about poverty in Nigeria and engaged in discussions on how to express the views of average Nigerians on how subsidy removal is anti-Nigeria and will increase poverty.

364 [06:18] **QUESTION:** Why did you use online platform? What happened to other media platforms?

T365 [06:37] **ANSWER:** During that period I noticed that there was a high level of interactivity via the internet and, I notice that there was a high level of participation online. A good number of Nigerians were using the internet particularly the Facebook platform to communicate and to share ideas on the impact of the policy and ways to engage the government to better the lot of the country. I decided to use the platform to air my own view. This is because we may not be given so much opportunity to air our views in the main stream media. You know that the main stream media are closer to the hegemony or the dominant class. Once they notice that the people want to protest, it will be tantamount to failure because as friends of those in 'high places' they will know that such actions will diminish the

power of those in government . But in the social media because they have lower level of gatekeeping, you can post what you want and your voice, your personal voice will be heard.

T366 [08:24] **QUESTION:** what kind of messages were you guys writing in social media during the protest?

T367 [09:02] **ANSWER:** You know that the Nigerian problems are intertwined. When we talk about the protest the dominant issue then was the increment of fuel prices because of the removal of subsidy. However, because they are interrelated, when there is no fuel, how would market women go to the market? How will traders go to the market to get goods and turnover? How can they transport goods and service? So we need fuel for virtually everything. For example, how are we going to power our power generators for electricity? As you know that individuals generate power here as a result of low level of electricity provided by the government? So, we generate electricity for ourselves. So, it is intertwined. There are several variables that the fuel subsidy removal was affecting. So, we are talking about cases about starvation, how people could not get food as an average Nigerian is poor. People could not get food, could not pay transport fares. So, people were tracking actually every day during that period. So, we talked about a lot of issues that were affecting us on Facebook.

T368 [10:24] **QUESTION:** How was the protest represented in the main stream media?

T369 [10:57] **ANSWER:** In media ownership and control, we find out that majority of the traditional media are owned by the hegemonic class and if they are not owned by the hegemony class, they have the connection with the hegemony class. I give you a typical example, NTA is a government owned media, RSTV is a state owned government media, AIT tilts and has political connection with the PDP; Channels TV tilts towards the APC. So, who would want to bite the finger that feeds him? Who would want to criticize what he is found doing? So everyone wants to justify his or her actions. So, the mainstream media covered the events half-hearted. A clear example is that at that time when you go to the traditional or the mainstream media to air your view, they give you a negative reinforcement by not projecting what you have said during an interview session with them. So, this made us decide to use the internet and online platforms to air our views.

T370 [12:56] **QUESTION:** What was the role of the international media such as BBS, CNN, and Aljazeera? How did they represent the protest?

T371 [13:31] **ANSWER:** Broadcast stations like BBC and CNN - you find them in America and Britain have and practice the libertarian media ideology. So, they projected the protest and their coverage was from the perspective of the citizens. They did not join themselves to the protest politic of the country; they did not join themselves to the politic of the hegemonic or the dominant class. They projected the views and yearnings of the Nigerian citizens.



**Appendix 10: Multivariate tests for the interplay between media use and joining the protest on the first day**

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.998	9171.863 <sup>b</sup>	9.000	163.000	.000	.998
	Wilks' Lambda	.002	9171.863 <sup>b</sup>	9.000	163.000	.000	.998
	Hotelling's Trace	506.422	9171.863 <sup>b</sup>	9.000	163.000	.000	.998
	Roy's Largest Root	506.422	9171.863 <sup>b</sup>	9.000	163.000	.000	.998
Protest participation on day	Pillai's Trace	.593	26.420 <sup>b</sup>	9.000	163.000	.000	.593
	Wilks' Lambda	.407	26.420 <sup>b</sup>	9.000	163.000	.000	.593
	Hotelling's Trace	1.459	26.420 <sup>b</sup>	9.000	163.000	.000	.593
	Roy's Largest Root	1.459	26.420 <sup>b</sup>	9.000	163.000	.000	.593

**Appendix 11: Between-subjects effects tests for the interplay between media use and joining the protest on the first day**

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
<b>Corrected Model</b>	SMS	19.138 <sup>a</sup>	1	19.138	16.251	.000	.087
	Newspaper	.766 <sup>b</sup>	1	.766	2.753	.099	.016
	TV & radio	8.851 <sup>c</sup>	1	8.851	14.066	.000	.076
	F2F	1.577 <sup>d</sup>	1	1.577	2.107	.148	.012
	Facebook	.000 <sup>e</sup>	1	.000	.004	.951	.000
	YouTube	4.324 <sup>f</sup>	1	4.324	6.173	.014	.035
	WhatsApp	.001 <sup>g</sup>	1	.001	.012	.914	.000
	Zgo	19.138 <sup>g</sup>	1	19.138	16.251	.000	.087
	Eskimi	120.748 <sup>h</sup>	1	120.748	197.165	.000	.536
	Badoo	99.158 <sup>i</sup>	1	99.158	86.928	.000	.337
<b>Intercept</b>	SMS	2437.797	1	2437.797	2070.127	.000	.924
	Newspaper	200.308	1	200.308	720.307	.000	.808
	TV & radio	282.197	1	282.197	448.488	.000	.724
	F2F	2158.116	1	2158.116	2883.440	.000	.944
	Facebook	3089.141	1	3089.141	76044.072	.000	.998
	YouTube	415.514	1	415.514	593.270	.000	.776
	WhatsApp	3034.282	1	3034.282	42942.658	.000	.996
	Zgo	2437.797	1	2437.797	2070.127	.000	.924
	Eskimi	691.641	1	691.641	1129.356	.000	.868
	Badoo	702.848	1	702.848	616.154	.000	.783
<b>Protest participation day</b>	SMS	19.138	1	19.138	16.251	.000	.087
	Newspaper	.766	1	.766	2.753	.099	.016
	TV & radio	8.851	1	8.851	14.066	.000	.076
	F2F	1.577	1	1.577	2.107	.148	.012
	Facebook	.000	1	.000	.004	.951	.000
	YouTube	4.324	1	4.324	6.173	.014	.035

	WhatsApp	.001	1	.001	.012	.914	.000
	2go	19.138	1	19.138	16.251	.000	.087
	Eskimi	120.748	1	120.748	197.165	.000	.536
	Badoo	99.158	1	99.158	86.928	.000	.337
<b>Error</b>	SMS	201.371	171	1.178			
	Newspaper	47.553	171	.278			
	TV & radio	107.596	171	.629			
	F2F	127.985	171	.748			
	Facebook	6.947	171	.041			
	YouTube	119.765	171	.700			
	WhatsApp	12.083	171	.071			
	2go	201.371	171	1.178			
	Eskimi	104.724	171	.612			
	Badoo	195.060	171	1.141			
<b>Total</b>	SMS	3284.000	173				
	Newspaper	343.556	173				
	TV & radio	582.667	173				
	F2F	3198.667	173				
	Facebook	4278.778	173				
	YouTube	638.556	173				
	WhatsApp	4204.778	173				
	2go	3284.000	173				
	Eskimi	807.556	173				
	Badoo	919.889	173				
<b>Corrected Total</b>	SMS	220.509	172				
	Newspaper	48.319	172				
	TV & radio	116.447	172				
	F2F	129.562	172				
	Facebook	6.947	172				
	YouTube	124.089	172				
	WhatsApp	12.083	172				
	2go	220.509	172				
	Eskimi	225.472	172				
	Badoo	294.218	172				

**Appendix 12: Multivariate tests for perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria and participating in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests**

<b>Effect</b>		<b>Value</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Hypothesis df</b>	<b>Error df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Partial Eta Squared</b>
<b>Intercept</b>	Pillai's Trace	.984	6350.406 <sup>b</sup>	4.000	422.000	.000	.984
	Wilks'	.016	6350.406 <sup>b</sup>	4.000	422.000	.000	.984
	Lambda						
	Hotelling's Trace	60.193	6350.406 <sup>b</sup>	4.000	422.000	.000	.984
	Roy's Largest Root	60.193	6350.406 <sup>b</sup>	4.000	422.000	.000	.984
<b>Protest participation</b>	<b>Pillai's Trace</b>	<b>.681</b>	<b>224.724<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>4.000</b>	<b>422.000</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.681</b>
	Wilks'	.319	224.724 <sup>b</sup>	4.000	422.000	.000	.681
	Lambda						
	Hotelling's Trace	2.130	224.724 <sup>b</sup>	4.000	422.000	.000	.681
	Roy's Largest Root	2.130	224.724 <sup>b</sup>	4.000	422.000	.000	.681

**Appendix 13: Between-subjects effects tests for perceived change in democratic governance in Nigeria and participating in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests**

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
<b>Corrected Model</b>	Factor 1	314.475 <sup>a</sup>	1	314.475	586.545	.000	.580
	IPPA	110.135 <sup>b</sup>	1	110.135	112.515	.000	.209
	PCPP	160.156 <sup>c</sup>	1	160.156	217.021	.000	.338
	PCL	214.686 <sup>d</sup>	1	214.686	325.596	.000	.434
<b>Intercept</b>	Factor 1	6040.630	1	6040.630	11266.701	.000	.964
	IPPA	6793.601	1	6793.601	6940.432	.000	.942
	PCPP	6740.597	1	6740.597	9133.926	.000	.956
	PCL	5945.054	1	5945.054	9016.342	.000	.955
<b>Protest participation</b>	<b>Pol Efficacy</b>	<b>314.475</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>314.475</b>	<b>586.545</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.580</b>
	<b>IPPA</b>	<b>110.135</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>110.135</b>	<b>112.515</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.209</b>
	<b>PCPP</b>	<b>160.156</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>160.156</b>	<b>217.021</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.338</b>
	<b>PCL</b>	<b>214.686</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>214.686</b>	<b>325.596</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.434</b>
<b>Error</b>	Factor 1	227.863	425	.536			
	IPPA	416.009	425	.979			
	PCPP	313.639	425	.738			
	PCL	280.230	425	.659			
<b>Total</b>	Factor 1	6527.667	427				
	IPPA	7286.333	427				
	PCPP	7173.640	427				
	PCL	6395.063	427				
<b>Corrected Total</b>	Factor 1	542.339	426				
	IPPA	526.144	426				
	PCPP	473.795	426				
	PCL	494.916	426				