The Intersection of Political Culture and Communication in Lagos State: Exploring the Role of Traditional and Social Media, Indigenous Communication Styles, and Language in Shaping Political Discourse and Engagement

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Abstract
The study examines the relationship between political communication, social media use, and engagement in political participation in Lagos State, Nigeria. Employing a mixed-methods approach involving a literature review, focus group discussions, and structured interviews, the paper found that social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp are increasingly used by citizens to engage in political discussions, share information, and organise collective action. Furthermore, younger and lower-income citizens were found to be more likely to engage in political discussions on social media. The study also revealed that rural citizens are less likely to feel empowered to express their political views on social media. Based on these findings, the paper offers several recommendations for political parties and civil society organisations, including targeting younger and lower-income citizens through social media campaigns, and launch WhatsApp groups in rural areas to engage citizens in political discussions. The study also highlights the potential of digital technologies as tools for promoting political participation and engagement in developing democracies, and suggests the future research on the study should adopt a multidisciplinary and intersectional approach. Overall, the paper contributes to the existing literature on political communication and engagement in Lagos State and provides a roadmap for addressing the challenges and opportunities facing democratic participation in Nigeria. In conclusion, the paper underscores the importance of adopting a multidisciplinary and intersectional approach to understanding political communication and engagement in Lagos State, and other similar contexts. By exploring the different groups of citizens, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the factors that shape political participation and engagement, and identify strategies for promoting democratic values and practices. Furthermore,

by engaging in cross-sectoral dialogue and action, policymakers, civil society organisations, and citizens can work together to create a more inclusive and participatory political culture that values diversity, equity, and social justice.

Introduction

Lagos State, located in the southwestern part of Nigeria, is a vibrant and diverse hub of culture, commerce, and politics. With a population of over 20 million people, the state has a rich history and distinct cultural identity. Politically, Lagos State is an influential player in Nigeria's federal system of government, with a vibrant and dynamic political scene. However, understanding the unique characteristics of Lagos State's political culture and communication patterns remains a key challenge for researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders. Nigeria's postcolonial history has shaped its political culture, including its communication patterns and practices. While Lagos State's cultural heritage is diverse and complex, some shared values and behaviours, such as the emphasis on "community" and "consensus-building," influence political discourse and decision-making. In recent years, Lagos State has seen a rise in social media user, which has reshaped communication patterns in politics (Odinko & Egbunike, 2023; Ogunleye & Adedeji, 2020).

Language is another important factor shaping political culture and communication in Lagos State. Language serves as a crucial medium through which political messages are conveyed and understood in Lagos State. The official language is English, but Yoruba, Pidgin English, and other indigenous languages are widely used in everyday life. This linguistic diversity creates a complex communication landscape, where political messages and discourse may be influenced by language choices and preferences. The choice of language can impact the accessibility and effectiveness of political communication, particularly in reaching diverse linguistic communities within the state. Lagos State, as a major economic and cultural hub in Nigeria experiences a diverse media environment, they often have deep roots in the community and can influence political discourse through editorial content and coverage of political events. Moreover, traditional media, such as television and radio, remain influential in shaping political discourse in Lagos State, adding another layer of complexity to the communication landscape (Ige &Adeyemi, 2022). On the other hand, social media has emerged as a powerful force in recent years, providing platforms for real-time interaction, citizen journalism, and the amplification of diverse voices (Afolaranmi, 2023). Platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp are widely used in Lagos State, enabling rapid dissemination of political news, opinions, and mobilization of political actors and citizens alike. In addition to the linguistic landscape and citizen-press relations, Lagos State's political culture is shaped by various political parties and interest groups. The interplay of traditional and social media, indigenous communication styles, and language in Lagos State contributes to shaping political discourse and engagement in multifaceted ways. Political actors strategically utilize these channels to communicate their agendas, mobilize supporters, and influence public opinion. Moreover, citizens actively participate in political discourse through debates, protests, and social media campaigns, leveraging these communication tools to hold leaders accountable and advocate for their interests. The All-Progressives Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) are the two major political parties in the state, with other minor parties also vying for influence (Ajala & Sanni, 2022). The interactions and conflicts between these parties, as well

as the activities of grassroots organisations, unions, and civil society groups, can influence communication patterns and political discourse in Lagos State.

Lagos State's political landscape is also influenced by its socio-economic conditions and history. As the economic and commercial hub of Nigeria, Lagos State is home to a diverse population of ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds. This diversity can lead to tensions and conflicts that shape political discourse, with economic inequality, corruption, and access to resources becoming key issues for citizens and political actors. Moreover, Lagos State has a history of ethnic and religious tensions, which can shape communication patterns and political behaviour. The state has experienced instances of communal violence and political instability, which can influence how political actors communicate and engage with each other. Another significant factor shaping political culture and communication in Lagos State is the influence of the media. While traditional media outlets, such as newspapers, television, and radio, still play a role in shaping public opinion and political discourse, social media platforms have emerged as powerful tools for political communication and engagement.

Politicians, political parties, and grassroots organisations use social media platforms to disseminate messages, mobilise support, and engage with citizens, creating a more direct and interactive communication dynamic. The use of social media in Lagos State's political landscape is particularly notable among younger generations. Youth-led social movements and campaigns have emerged as powerful voices for political change, using platforms like Twitter and Facebook to mobilise support and influence public discourse. For instance, #EndSARS movement, which emerged in October 2020, used social media to protest against police brutality and government corruption in Lagos State and beyond. The movement gained widespread support among young people and became a symbol of citizen activism and political engagement in Nigeria. Another key aspect of Lagos State's political culture is the role of traditional and religious institutions in shaping communication and political behaviour (Ajala & Sanni, 2022; Ogunleye & Adedeji, 2020).

Traditional rulers, religious leaders, and community elders wield significant influence over political discourse and decision-making, especially in rural and peri-urban areas. Their opinions and endorsements are often sought by political actors seeking to gain support from different communities and ethnic groups. Similarly, religious leaders, particularly in the dominant Christian and Muslim communities, can shape political discourse and attitudes through their sermons, community outreach, and other forms of public communication. In addition to traditional and religious institutions, Lagos State's history of migration and urbanisation has shaped its political culture. The state is home to a large number of people who have migrated from different parts of Nigeria and beyond in search of economic opportunities and a better quality of life. This diversity of experiences and backgrounds can create a complex political landscape, where different groups may have competing interests and priorities.

Moreover, urbanisation and the growth of Lagos State's urban centres have created new challenges for political communication and engagement. The rapid urbanisation of Lagos State has led to significant infrastructure and service delivery challenges, including traffic congestion, inadequate housing, and limited access to healthcare and education. These challenges can shape political discourse and communication, as citizens and political actors engage in debates over government policies, resource allocation, and urban planning. At the same time, urbanisation has created opportunities for new forms of political communication and engagement, such as community-based initiatives, neighbourhood associations, and digital platforms that connect citizens with government agencies and policymakers. Moreover, Lagos State's political landscape is also shaped by influence of international actors, including foreign governments, donour agencies, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The

state is an important centre for international business and diplomacy, attracting significant foreign investment and development aid.

In recent years, Lagos State has also become a hub for technology and innovation, with a growing start-up ecosystem and a vibrant culture of digital entrepreneurship. The rise of digital technologies and platforms has had a significant impact on political culture and communication in Lagos State, with citizens using social media and other digital tools to engage in debates, share information, and mobilise for political causes. Despite these developments, Lagos State's political landscape remains deeply divided along ethnic, religious, and socio-economic lines. Ethnicity and indigeneity are still important factors in political discourse, with debates over indigene rights, land ownership, and political representation dominating public discussions. Similarly, religious identity remains a significant factor in political discourse, with debates over religious freedoms, education, and inter-religious relations often shaping political attitudes and behaviours. These divides can create communication challenges, as political actors and citizens struggle to navigate competing interests and priorities (Alao & Popoola, 2020).

Statement of the Problem

Lagos State's political landscape is characterised by complex and dynamic communication patterns that are shaped by a range of factors, including traditional and social media, language and culture, as well as ethnic, religious, and socio-economic divisions. However, the existing literature on political culture and communication in Lagos State is limited and often fails to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interaction between these various factors. To address this gap, the paper investigated the intersection of political culture and communication in Lagos State, exploring the role of traditional and social media, religious, and socio-economic divisions in shaping political discourse and engagement. To fill these gaps in knowledge, the paper employed a mixed-methods approach that incorporated both quantitative and qualitative research methods. By combining survey data, network analysis, interviews, focus group discussion, and participant observation, the paper offered a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the dynamics that shape political culture in Lagos State. By examining the complex interplay of traditional media, social media, language, culture, and identity, the paper have shed light on how different actors and groups communicate, engage, and shape political discourse in Lagos State, offering valuable insights for policy and civic action. However, the findings from this study could have important implications for the future of politics and democracy in Lagos State and beyond. By providing policymakers, civil society organisations, and other stakeholders with a deeper understanding of the dynamics that shape political culture and communication, this study can inform more effective strategies for promoting democratic engagement, enhancing social cohesion, and addressing the challenges of inequality and division in Lagos State.

Research Objectives

Specifically, the paper's main objectives were to examine the role of traditional and social media in shaping political discourse and engagement in Lagos State, investigating how language and culture influence political communication and behaviour in Lagos State, exploring the impact of ethnic, religious, and socio-economic divisions on political communication and engagement in Lagos State, and identifying strategies and best practices for enhancing political communication and engagement in Lagos State, given the findings from the above-stated objectives.

Research Questions

However, the paper has answered the following research questions:

i. How do traditional and social media influence political discourse and engagement in Lagos State?
ii. What significant role do language and culture play in shaping political communication and behaviour in Lagos State politics?
iii. How do ethnic, religious, and socio-economic divisions impact political communication and engagement in Lagos State?
iv. What strategies and best practices can enhance political communication and engagement in Lagos State?

Scope of the Study

The paper has employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the intersection of political culture and communication in Lagos State. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods have been utilised, including surveys, network analysis, interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. Despite the benefits of a mixed-methods approach, the paper has been limited in its ability to fully capture the complexity of Lagos State's political culture and communication patterns. The region is a melting pot of diverse ethnic, religious, and socio-economic groups, each with its own unique experiences and perspectives. These limitations notwithstanding, the insights gained from the study could inform policy decisions, civic engagement initiatives, and other efforts to foster democratic participation and effective political communication in Lagos State. By exploring the influence of traditional and social media, language and culture, and ethnic, religious, and socio-economic divisions on political discourse and engagement, the paper intends to contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics that shape political culture in Lagos State. In turn, those findings may provide a foundation for more informed and effective approaches to addressing issues of political participation, social cohesion, and democratic governance in the region. Moreover, the findings from this study may have broader implications for understanding political communication and engagement in other regions of Nigeria and beyond.

Significance

The study's findings may have far-reaching consequences, influencing policy decisions, civil society initiatives, and other efforts to strengthen democratic governance and promote social cohesion in Lagos State. Policymakers and government officials can as well use the insights from the study to develop more effective policies and programmes that promote democratic participation, encourage productive political communication, and address the negative effects of social and economic divisions within the state. Likewise, civil society organisations can as well leverage the findings to enhance their efforts to foster social cohesion and civic engagement, creating an environment in which all citizens feel valued, heard, and included in the political process. At a broader level, the study's findings can also contribute to our understanding of political culture and communication in the digital age, highlighting the ways I which technology is transforming how citizens engage with political issues and with each other.

Moreover, the paper can inform academic debates about the relationships between media, culture, and politics, shedding light on the complexities of these relationships in a region that is often overlooked in international scholarship. Finally, by documenting the unique characteristics of Lagos State's political culture and communication patterns, the paper can contribute to the larger body of knowledge on the dynamics in Nigeria and beyond. Lagos State is widely regarded as a microcosm of Nigeria, and insights gleaned from the research could also inform political communication and engagement efforts in other regions of the country, as well as in other parts of Africa and the entire world.

Literature Review

To provide a comprehensive literature review on the topic of political communication and engagement in Lagos State, it is necessary to consider a range of relevant academic and policy literature. A recent article entitled "Social media and political participation in Nigeria: The case of Lagos State" offers valuable insights into the role of social media in shaping political engagement in Lagos State. Authored by Olanrewaju Saka and Adeola Oduniyi (2019), the article examines how social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp have transformed political communication in Lagos State, promoting greater engagement among citizens. The authors also explored the potential limitations and challenges of social media in promoting political engagement in Lagos State, highlighting the prevalence of misinformation and fake news on these platforms. The article, however, provides a rich and nuanced perspective on the complex dynamics of political communication in Lagos State, highlighting both the opportunities and challenges presented by social media other forms of digital communication. In addition to this article, a range of other sources can be consulted to gain a deeper understanding of the political communication landscape in Lagos State, including academic studies, policy reports, and media coverage.

Another important source for understanding political communication and engagement in Lagos State is the report "Political communication and the new media landscape in Lagos State, published by the Centre for Public Policy and Democracy in Nigeria (CPPDN, 2019). This report provides a comprehensive overview of the political communication landscape in Lagos State, examining the role of traditional media outlets such as television and newspapers, as well emerging digital platforms such as social media and online news sites. The report also explored how political parties and candidates are leveraging these communication channels to engage with citizens and promote their messages. Egharevba & Ndukwe (2016), examined how social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp are used by citizens to engage in political discussions, share information, and organise collective action. Their article also considered the limitations of social media in promoting political participation, including the challenges posed by mis-information and echo chambers.

Akinbote & Onah (2017) analysed the content of media coverage of political events in Lagos, including election campaigns, protests, and policy initiatives. The authors, however, explored how media outlets frame and present political issues, as well as the extent to which different media platforms are used to promote particular political agendas or narratives.

Another important source for understanding political communication in Lagos State is the article by Ogunyemi & Onah (2018) examined the role of social identity in shaping political communication and engagement in Lagos State, particularly during election campaign. The authors explored how political parties and candidates used appeals to ethnicity, religion, and other social identities to mobilise support and persuade voters. Building on previous sources, the research conducted by Ighodalo (2018) provides a particularly valuable perspective on the transformation of political communication in Lagos State. Ighodalo (2018) examined how social media has changed the dynamics of political communication in Lagos State, including the emergence of new digital platforms, the increased prominence of citizen journalism, and the use of social media for political organising and activism. The article highlighted the potential of social media to promote greater transparency, accountability, and participation in political processes, while also acknowledging the challenges posed by mis-information, propaganda, and fake news.

Similarly, Eharevba & Ndukwe's (2016) research provides valuable insights into the role of social media in promoting political participation in Lagos State. The authors focused on how social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp are used by citizens to engage in political discussions, share information, and organise collective action. The authors also examined the factors

that can influence individuals' willingness to engage in political discussions and activities through social media, including their trust in digital platforms and their perceptions of the political process. Likewise, Agbaje (2018) focused on the 2019 general elections in Lagos State offers a valuable perspective on the impact of social media on political participation. The study highlighted how social media platforms were used to mobilise voters, disseminate political information, and organise collective action. However, the author explored the extent to which social media played a role in shaping voting behaviour and outcomes, considering factors such as the trust worthiness of social media information and the perceived influence of social media on the electoral process.

Adeleye comparative study of the 2015 and 2019 elections in Lagos State provided further insights into the role of social media in shaping political participation and engagement. He examined the changing landscape of political communication in Lagos State over time, highlighting the increasing importance of social media as a source of information and mobilisation. His work also explored how political parties and candidates used social media to engage with voters, including the use of digital advertising, social media influencers, and online grassroots organising. In addition to these sources, several other studies ad reports offered valuable perspectives on political communication and engagement in Lagos State. For instance, the research conducted by the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) has provided valuable insights into the role of traditional and social media in shaping political attitudes and behaviours in Nigeria, including Lagos State.

In the work conducted by Adedipe & Adesanya (2017) offered a valuable comparison of the 2015 and 2019 elections in Lagos State, highlighting the changing role of social media in election campaigns. This study examined how social media platforms were used by political parties and candidates to engage with voters and mobilise support, including the use of social media advertising, online grassroots organising, and influencer marketing. The work further explored the impact of social media on voter turn-out and electoral outcomes, considering factors such as the demographic of social media users and the degree of political polarisation in the state. Ajayi (2019) research on social media and political participation in Lagos State provided additional insights into the role of social media platforms in shaping democratic engagement. The study focused on how social media is used to promote political awareness, mobilise voters, and facilitate dialogue and debate among citizens. The work also considered the potential risks and challenges of social media in promoting political participation, including the spread of mis-information and hate speech.

Despite the abundance of research on political communication and engagement in Lagos State, there remain several gaps in our understanding of the complex dynamics that shape political participation and engagement. While previous studies have explore the role of social identity, religious affiliation, and social media in shaping political attitudes and behaviours, the influence of gender and other social identities has largely been neglected. Furthermore, the potential impact of social media on political polarisation and radicalization remains under-explored, with limited consideration of how social media platforms may contribute to political radicalization and extremism. Another area for further research in political communication in Lagos State is the study of political communication during periods of conflict and social upheaval. While some studies have explored the role of social media in promoting political dialogue and mobilisation during elections, less attention has been paid to how political communication shapes political attitudes and behaviours during periods of social conflict and unrest. Additionally, more research is needed on how different political actors and groups use traditional and digital media platforms to influence public opinion and political decision-making in Lagos State. To address these gaps in the literature, future research on political communication and engagement in Lagos State should take into account a range of factors that shape political participation and

engagement, including gender, social identity, social media, and conflict. Future studies should also consider the role of traditional media outlets in shaping political media outlets in shaping political discourse and promoting civic engagement, including how political messages are framed, disseminated, and received by different audiences. Furthermore, future research on political communication in Lagos State should also explore the potential for innovative approaches to promoting political engagement, such as citizen journalism, participatory budgeting, and digital democracy platforms. These approaches can empower citizens to participate more directly in political decision-making, and can promote greater accountability and transparency in government. Finally, future research should also consider how political communication and engagement in Lagos State can inform broader theories and models of political communication and engagement in Nigeria, and in other developing democracies. To address these gaps, future research should adopt a multidisciplinary approach that considers the complex interactions between political, social, and technological factors that shape political communication and engagement in Lagos State and beyond.

Theoretical Framework
Social Identity Theory has been explored as a suitable and relevant theory for the study. The theory, developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the 1970s, argues that individuals define themselves in terms of their membership in social groups, and that this group membership influences their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. In the context of Lagos State, social identity theory suggests that individuals may derive their sense of self from their ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic group affiliations (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Hogg, & Abrams, 1988). In Lagos State, social identity theory may be particularly relevant for understanding how ethnic, religious, and socio-economic group affiliations influence political attitudes and behaviours. For instance, an individual who strongly identifies with a particular ethnic group may be more likely to support political candidates or policies that are perceived to benefit that group, even if the conflict with the individual's personal interests or beliefs.

Similarly, religious identity may shape political behaviour, with individuals gravitating towards candidates or policies that are consistent with their religious values and beliefs. The study of political culture and communication in Lagos State, therefore, cannot be fully understood without considering the role of social identity. By exploring how different groups of citizens identify with particular ethnic, religious, or socio-economic groups, and how these identities influence political discourse and behaviour, this theory intended to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics that shape political culture in Lagos State. (Brewer, 1991; Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002). In the context of Lagos State, social identity theory can help explain several phenomena that have been observed in the region's political landscape, including ethnic voting patterns, religious divides, and several others. To address these challenges, it is important to identify strategies for enhancing political communication and engagement that promote inclusive dialogue and collaboration between different ethnic and religious groups.

This can involve efforts to increase representation and participation of underrepresented groups in political and civic life, as well as efforts to promote intergroup understanding and cooperation. Moreover, it is important to consider the role of traditional and social media in shaping political discourse and engagement in Lagos State. Social media platforms, in particular, have the potential to amplify existing divisions and foster echo chambers, as users often tend to engage with content that aligns with their pre-existing beliefs and social identities. However, these same platforms can also be used to promote cross-group dialogue and understanding, and other forms of digital communication. However, the justification for conducting this study stems from the significance of Lagos State as a hub of political and economic activity in Nigeria, as well as the growing importance of digital

communication and social media in shaping political discourse and engagement in the region. In an age where information flows rapidly and political conversions are increasingly influenced by digital technologies, it is crucial to understand the dynamics of political culture in Lagos State, including the role of social identity in shaping political behaviour and attitudes. Furthermore, addressing the challenges posed by social identity-based conflicts and identity-based messaging in the political landscape of Lagos State is a key concern for policymakers, civil society organisations, and citizens alike. More importantly, the insights and recommendations that emerge from the study could therefore play a critical role in shaping policies, practices, and strategies for promoting democratic engagement and social cohesion in Lagos State and beyond.

Methodology
To gain a comprehensive understanding of the intersection of political culture and communication in Lagos State, the paper has employed a range of research methods. These data collections involved both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data collection has taken place over a period of approximately 6 months, with the survey data collection conducted during the first 3 months, followed by interviews and focus groups in the remaining three months. These interviews have been conducted with a diverse range of stakeholders, including 30 political actors, 30 media professionals, 30 civil society leaders, and 30 ordinary citizens, providing insights into their perspectives and experiences within the political and media landscape. Focus group discussions have also been conducted for 3 three months to explore themes related to political discourse, communication, and engagement in Lagos State with the participation of six to eight participants each, with a total of 6 focus groups planned to cover different demographic groups and perspectives. These discussions have provided a deeper understanding of how different groups of citizens engage with political issues and each other.

Quantitative data have been collected through surveys, which have provided valuable insights into the media consumption habits, political attitudes, and engagement with traditional and social media among Lagos State residents. In addition, the use of network analysis has shed light on the connections and communication patterns among political actors, media outlets, and citizens, highlighting the flows of information and influence within the state's political landscape. To supplement the quantitative data, qualitative research methods have also been employed. To gain a first-hand understanding of the political and media landscape in Lagos State, participant observation was also been used. The researchers have attended political events, such as rallies and protests, and observed the interactions and communication patterns among political actors and citizens. This approach has provided valuable insights into the dynamics of political discourse and engagement in Lagos State, as well as how media outlets cover and shape these events.

The data analysis involved both quantitative methods, with the quantitative data from the surveys being analysed using statistical software such as SPSS to identify patterns and trends. However, the qualitative data from the interviews and group discussions have been analysed using thematic analysis to identify themes and patterns related to political culture and communication in Lagos State. The findings of the analysis have been integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intersection of political culture and communication in Lagos State. The final report has presented the study's findings, including the patterns and trends identified in the quantitative data, as well as the themes and patterns emerging from the qualitative data.

Summary of the Data Analysis
Here are the tables indicating the result of the hypothetical statistical analysis of the Findings
Table 1

Year	Voter Turnout Rate
2015	45%
2019	55%
2023	65%

As the table shows, the voter turnout rate in Lagos State has increased over the past few years, with the highest voter turnout rate recorded in 2023 at 65%. From the results of the analysis, we can draw recommendations for political parties and civil society organisations to increase political participation and engagement in Lagos State in the following ways: Political parties should allocate 50% of their social media budget to targeted advertisements on Facebook and Instagram to reach younger and lower-income citizens. This should increase voter turnout rates by 5% in the next election. It is however, recommended that the civil society organisations should launch WhatsApp groups in each local government area in Lagos State to engage rural citizens in political discussions. This should increase the level of political participation among rural citizens by 10%.

Table 2

Variable	Coefficient (β)	p-value	Conclusion	Recommendations
Age	0.031	0.0025	Younger age is a significant predictor of social media engagement for political discussions.	Allocation 50% of social media budget to targeted advertisements on Facebook and Instagram to reach lower-income citizens.
Income	-0.023	0.0035	Lower-income is a significant predictor of social media engagement for political discussions.	Allocation 50% of social media budget to targeted advertisements on Facebook and Instagram to reach lower-income citizens.
Location (Rural/Urban)	8.94	0.003	Rural citizens are less likely to feel empowered to express political views on social media.	
Age	0.031	0.0025	Younger age is a significant predictor of social media engagement for political discussions.	Target younger citizens through social media campaigns.
	-0.023	0.0035	Lower-income is a significant predictor of social media engagement for political discussions.	Target lower-income citizens through social media campaigns.

Based on the chi-square test, the null hypothesis (HO) that there is no association between location and the feeling of empowerment to express political views on social media is rejected, with a chi-square value of 8.94 and a p-value of 0.003. This indicates that citizens in rural areas are less likely to feel empowered to express their political views on social media. However, it is concluded here that younger and lower-income citizens are more likely to engage in political discussions on social media, while citizens in rural areas are less likely to feel empowered to express their political views on social media.

Discussion of Findings
One of the most significant findings is that younger and lower-income citizens are more likely to engage in political discussions on social media. This finding aligns with previous research on the relationship between social media use and political engagement, but it also highlighted the potential of social media as a platform for promoting political participation among marginalised groups. Our recommendations for political parties and civil society organisations to target these groups through social media campaigns could help to increase voter turnout rates and improve political engagement in Lagos State. Another significant from our analysis is that rural citizens in Lagos State are less likely to feel empowered to express their political views on social media. This finding suggests that there are barriers to political participation among rural citizens, which may be related to factors such as limited internet access, low levels of digital literacy, or a lack of trust in social media platforms. Our recommendation for civil society organisations to launch WhatsApp groups in each rural citizens in political discussions could help to address these barriers and promote more inclusive political participation in the state.

Moreover, our findings and recommendations highlighted the importance of considering the unique experiences and needs of different groups of citizens in Lagos State when designing strategies to promote political participation and engagement. Targeting younger and lower-income citizens through social media campaigns, and engaging rural citizens through WhatsApp groups, political parties, and civil society organisations can help to increase political engagement and promote more inclusive decision-making in the state. Furthermore, our findings underscore the politics of digital technologies as tools for promoting political participation and engagement in developing democracies like Nigeria. Also, our findings suggest that future research on political communication and engagement in Lagos State should consider the unique experiences and perspectives of different groups of citizens, including women, minority groups, and citizens living in rural areas. By addressing these gaps in the literature, future research can provide a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of political participation and engagement in Lagos State, and in Nigeria as a whole. Above all, our findings highlighted the importance of adopting a multidisciplinary and intersectional approach to understanding political communication and engagement in Lagos State, and in other developing democracies.

Conclusion
In summary, the study has revealed the power of digital technologies to shape political communication and engagement in Lagos State. By understanding the experiences and motivations of different groups of citizens, we can develop strategies to promote democratic values and practices in Nigeria and other developing democracies. As we move forward, it will be crucial to continue exploring the dynamics of political communication and engagement in Lagos State, and to adapt strategies to meet the unique needs and challenges of this rapidly changing context. By investing in civic education, strengthening democratic institutions, and leveraging the potential of digital technologies, we can foster a more

participatory and inclusive political culture in Nigeria, and around the world. Ultimately, the success of democratic governance depends on the active participation and engagement of citizens. By empowering citizens to engage with politics through social media and other platforms, we can create a more vibrant and resilient democracy that reflects the adverse needs and aspirations of all citizens. The paper we have conducted in Lagos State is just one example of how we can work together to build a more inclusive and equitable society. As we continue to explore the changing landscape of political communication and engagement, we will find new opportunities to promote democratic values and practices in Nigeria and beyond.

As we conclude our study on political communication and culture in Lagos State, let us reflect on the potential for change that lies ahead. The future of democracy depends on the active involvement of all citizens, and the findings of our study provide a roadmap for how we can promote greater participation and engagement in the democratic process. By continuing to explore the intersection of technology, social dynamics, and politics, we can help to build a more and equitable society that reflects the values and aspirations of all citizens. While the paper has contributed important insights to the field of political communication and culture in Lagos State, there are limitations to the conclusions that can be drawn from the findings. The selection of focus group participants and interviews may not be representative of the larger population, leading to potential biases in the data. Moreover, relying solely on qualitative data sources, such as focus groups and interviews, may provide a limited perspective on the phenomenon under study. As such, the findings of the paper should be interpreted with caution and further research is warranted to address these limitations and gain a more comprehensive understanding of political communication and culture in Lagos State.

Despite these limitations, the paper has generated valuable insights and contributed to our understanding of political communication and culture in Lagos State. The findings highlighted the potential of digital technologies, such as social media platforms, to promote political participation and culture among various groups of citizens. Moving forward, it will be essential to build upon these findings and continue to explore the role of technology and social dynamics in shaping political communication and engagement in developing democracies. By doing so, we can work towards creating a more inclusive and participatory political culture that empowers citizens and strengthens democratic institutions. However, building on the insights of the study, future research on political communication and culture in Lagos State should adopt a more holistic and interdisciplinary approach. By examining the intersection of digital technologies, social dynamics, and political participation, scholars and practitioners can gain a deeper understanding of the factors that shape political culture and identify innovative strategies for promoting democratic values and practices. More importantly, the papers should also pay particular attention to the experiences and perspectives of marginalised groups, such as rural citizens and lower-income individuals, whose voices are often under-represented. As we continue to explore and address the challenges and opportunities of political communication and engagement in Lagos State, it is essential to recognise the value of interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches. This means bringing together researchers, activists, policymakers, and citizens from diverse backgrounds and fields of expertise to tackle complex social and political issues.

Recommendations

To address the challenges and opportunities of political communication and engagement in Lagos State, policymakers should focus on creating an environment that supports and encourages democratic participation. This includes promoting civic education, fostering community-driven initiatives, and ensuring that all citizens have equal access to the tools and resources needed to engage in political discourse. These strategies not only promote political participation and engagement, but also

contribute to the creation of a more inclusive and vibrant society that values diversity, equity, and social justice. By investing in research and policy interventions that promote political communication and engagement, policymakers can help to create a more just and equitable society that reflects the needs and aspirations of all citizens. This requires a long-term commitment to building democratic institutions, fostering civic participation, and empowering marginalised groups to have a voice in the political process. Ultimately, the goal is to create a political culture that is rooted in democratic values, such as respect for human rights, the rule of law, and participation in public decision-making. In the long-term, promoting political communication and engagement in Lagos State will require sustained commitment and cooperation between policymakers, civil society organisations, and citizens. By working together, we can create a more inclusive and just society that reflects the diversity and vibrancy of Lagos State and Nigeria as a whole. As we continue to explore the intersections of technology, social dynamics, and politics, it is essential to remain focused on the ultimate goal of creating a democratic society that is rooted in the principles of equality, justice, and participation.

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