

"FAKE NEWS" AND POLITICAL TRUST: THE NIGERIAN PREDICAMENT

BY

Abdulhafeez Taiye Oyewole¹, Tope Joseph Olorunmola², Bashir Amoda Ajijola², Temitope Seun Ibiyeye² & Zainab Bamidele-Aluko

¹Albarka 89.9 FM, BOA junction, Ganmo, Kwara State.

²Department of Mass Communication, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin

Email: Abdulhafeezoyewole1@gmail.com | temitopeolorunmola@gmail.com | topeibiyeyesage@gmail.com | zainabaluko@gmail.com

Abstract

The proliferation of fake news in Nigeria poses significant threats to political trust, a cornerstone of democratic governance. This study examines the intricate relationship between fake news and political trust within the Nigerian context, highlighting how structural issues such as weak media regulation, ethno-religious divisions, and inadequate media literacy worsen the impact of misinformation. The paper adopts a conceptual approach, drawing on media effects theories, trust and mistrust frameworks, and analyses of Nigeria's unique socio-political setting. This research understands that fake news undermines institutional credibility, amplifies societal polarisation, and perpetuates perceptions of governance failure. The study also identifies the role of social media as a catalyst for the rapid dissemination of fake news, complicating efforts to restore public confidence in political institutions. To address these challenges, the paper advocates for comprehensive strategies, including robust media regulation, digital literacy initiatives, and collaboration between policymakers, civil society, and technology platforms. This research contributes to the growing discourse on media influence, trust erosion, and democratic sustainability in Nigeria.

Keywords: Fake news, political trust, Political awareness, Political education

Introduction

In recent years, the proliferation of fake news has emerged as a critical global issue, posing substantial threats to political stability, social cohesion, and democratic governance. Fake news—characterised by intentionally fabricated information aimed at misleading or manipulating its audience—has been amplified by the rapid expansion of digital technologies and the pervasive influence of social media platforms (Friggeri et al., 2020). In Nigeria, the issue has become particularly pronounced, exacerbated by the country's complex socio-political landscape, which includes ethnic diversity, religious pluralism, and highly polarised political environments (Adeniran & Akinyemi, 2022). Political trust, defined as citizens' confidence in the capacity, fairness, and integrity of their government, remains a fundamental pillar of democratic governance (Norris, 2021). However, the widespread dissemination of fake news in Nigeria has contributed to the erosion of an already fragile political trust, deepening societal divisions and undermining the legitimacy of democratic institutions (Oluwole et al., 2023). This paper examines the relationship between fake news and political trust within the Nigerian context, highlighting how the former compromises the latter and the distinct socio-political challenges Nigeria faces in addressing this issue. Nigeria's susceptibility to fake news is heightened by several structural and systemic factors, including weak media regulation, political partisanship, and the widespread lack of media literacy among its citizens (Adeyanju, 2021). The objectives of this paper are threefold:

- 1.) To conceptualise the relationship between fake news and political trust,
- 2.) To explore the socio-political dynamics driving the prevalence of fake news in Nigeria; and
- 3.) To propose conceptual strategies for counteracting this phenomenon in order to restore political trust.

A conceptual approach is employed, drawing on existing literature, theoretical frameworks, and critical analysis. By situating the discussion within broader theoretical perspectives on media effects and trust erosion, this paper aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of a pressing issue in contemporary Nigerian politics.

Theoretical Framework

A robust theoretical framework provides a foundation for understanding the relationship between fake news and political trust. This section draws on key theories to elucidate the mechanisms through which fake news influences political trust, particularly in the Nigerian context.

Media Effects Theories

Media effects theories, particularly agenda-setting and framing, offer valuable insights into the role of media in shaping public perceptions and trust.

1. Agenda-Setting Theory

Introduced by McCombs and Shaw (1972), agenda-setting theory posits that the media does not tell people what to think but rather what to think about. In the context of fake news, the prominence of fabricated stories in digital and traditional media can influence the public's focus on specific issues, even when those issues are misrepresented. For example, during Nigeria's electoral cycles, fake news narratives often emphasise alleged electoral fraud or candidate misconduct, diverting attention from substantive policy discussions (Ojebuyi & Salawu, 2020). This distortion can erode trust in political institutions, as citizens may perceive widespread dishonesty and inefficiency.

2. Framing Theory

Framing theory, developed by Entman (1993), examines how information is presented to influence audience interpretation. Fake news leverages framing by constructing narratives that align with existing biases or stereotypes. In Nigeria, fake news often exploits ethno-religious tensions by framing events in ways that fuel division. For instance, false reports of religiously motivated violence can escalate mistrust among communities, further diminishing confidence in the government's ability to ensure peace and justice (Idris, 2022).

3. Trust and Mistrust Theory

Trust and mistrust theory focuses on the conditions under which individuals place confidence in institutions or withdraw it due to perceived failures. Hardin (2002) explains that trust is built on the expectation of competence, fairness, and alignment of interests. Conversely, repeated exposure to fake news that highlights government failures, whether factual or not, fosters cynicism and erodes trust.

In Nigeria, this erosion is compounded by the country's history of governance challenges, including corruption and poor service delivery. Fake news amplifies these existing grievances, creating a feedback loop where citizens' mistrust makes them more susceptible to believing negative narratives about political actors and institutions (Owolabi & Olabode, 2021).

The Role of Technology and Media Ecology in Spreading Fake News

The proliferation of digital media has transformed the information landscape, creating a media ecology where fake news thrives. McLuhan's (1964) concept of the "global village" highlights how digital platforms connect diverse populations, but it also underscores their potential to disseminate misinformation rapidly. Social media algorithms, which prioritise engagement over accuracy, amplify sensational or polarising content, making fake news more visible and impactful. In Nigeria, platforms such as WhatsApp are particularly influential, as they allow for the

rapid, unregulated dissemination of information within close-knit groups (Okoro & Adibe, 2020). This technological environment not only facilitates the spread of fake news but also hinders the public's ability to distinguish between credible and non-credible sources, further undermining political trust.

The theoretical insights provided by media effects theories, trust and mistrust theory, and the concept of media ecology establish a comprehensive framework for analysing how fake news affects political trust in Nigeria. These theories also underscore the urgent need for interventions targeting the structural and systemic factors enabling the proliferation of fake news.

Fake News in Nigeria: A Conceptual and Historical Context

Fake news is not a novel concept in Nigeria. While the term itself has only gained prominence in recent years, misinformation and propaganda have long been tools of manipulation in the Nigerian political landscape. Historically, during Nigeria's colonial and early post-independence years, the state-controlled media served as a primary instrument for promoting political ideologies and suppressing dissent. During the military regimes, especially between the 1970s and 1990s, the government heavily controlled media narratives, and disinformation was used to maintain authority and discredit opposition movements. These media practices, though more overt, laid the groundwork for the manipulation of public opinion through false information (Aderinoye, 2020). However, the dynamics surrounding fake news began to shift dramatically with the advent of digital media and the internet. In the 2000s, the rise of the internet and mobile phones opened up new avenues for information dissemination, allowing a wider range of voices to be heard but also creating opportunities for the spread of misinformation. Social media platforms, which became widely used in Nigeria in the 2010s, have amplified the scale and speed of fake news, as they provide an easy means to share content without significant editorial oversight (Nwabueze & Akinmoladun, 2021).

The 2015 and 2019 Nigerian general elections marked pivotal moments in the escalation of fake news, with both periods witnessing the extensive use of social media platforms to circulate fabricated stories that had political motivations. For instance, the 2015 elections saw fake news stories accusing presidential candidates of illicit activities, which were rapidly shared and amplified across social media, creating an atmosphere of distrust (Okoro & Adibe, 2020). Similarly, in the 2019 elections, false reports about political violence, electoral rigging, and accusations of political corruption were disseminated widely on platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook, exacerbating the lack of trust in the electoral process and government institutions (Ojebuyi & Salawu, 2020). More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed another dimension of the fake news problem. False claims about the virus's origin, treatment methods, and government responses spread rapidly, undermining public health efforts and creating confusion among the public. During this period, misinformation was not limited to political matters but also affected public safety, demonstrating the far-reaching impact of fake news on Nigerian society (Owolabi & Olabode, 2021).

In summary, while the concept of fake news in Nigeria may have evolved with digital technology, its roots trace back to the colonial and military eras, where media manipulation was a common tool of statecraft. The digital age, however, has provided an environment where fake news can spread unchecked, having profound implications for political trust and public order.

Socio-Political Catalysts of Fake News in Nigeria

1. Ethno-Religious Diversity: Nigeria's ethnic and religious pluralism, while a strength in its cultural richness, has also created fault lines that fake news often exploits. Politically motivated actors frequently generate or amplify fake news to deepen existing divisions, rallying support from their in-group while vilifying opponents. For instance, false

narratives during electoral campaigns often target specific ethnic groups, portraying them as threats to national unity or prosperity (Ojebuyi & Salawu, 2020).

2. Political Partisanship and Propaganda: The competitive and often adversarial nature of Nigerian politics incentivises the use of fake news as a propaganda tool. Political actors and their allies utilise fake news to discredit opponents, manipulate voter perceptions, and sway electoral outcomes. This was evident in the 2019 general elections, where fabricated stories about candidates' personal lives and alleged scandals were widely circulated (Idris & Olaniyan, 2020).

3. Weak Media Regulation: Nigeria's regulatory framework for media is inadequate to address the challenges posed by fake news. The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) focuses primarily on traditional media, leaving digital platforms largely unregulated. This regulatory gap allows for the unchecked proliferation of fake news, particularly on social media. Efforts to introduce stricter controls, such as the controversial "Social Media Bill," have faced backlash for potentially infringing on freedom of speech (Okoro & Adibe, 2020).

4. Lack of Media Literacy: Low levels of media literacy among the Nigerian populace exacerbate the spread of fake news. Many citizens lack the critical thinking skills or tools to verify the authenticity of information before sharing it. This is especially concerning in rural areas where reliance on forwarded messages via WhatsApp or SMS is common, making misinformation pervasive (Idris, 2022).

Implications of Fake News on Political Trust

The pervasive influence of fake news poses significant threats to political trust, particularly in fragile democracies like Nigeria. By distorting perceptions of political actors, institutions, and processes, fake news exacerbates mistrust and deepens societal divisions. This section examines the mechanisms through which fake news undermines political trust and the broader democratic consequences within the Nigerian context.

Mechanisms of Distrust

1. Erosion of Institutional Credibility: Repeated exposure to fake news erodes public confidence in key political institutions, including the judiciary, electoral commissions, and legislative bodies. For instance, during the 2019 Nigerian general elections, fake news narratives accusing the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) of bias in favour of certain political parties gained traction on social media. These allegations, though unfounded, contributed to widespread scepticism about the legitimacy of election results (Idris & Olaniyan, 2020).

2. Amplification of Polarisation: Fake news often exploits existing ethnic, religious, and political divides, creating an "us versus them" dynamic that exacerbates mistrust between groups. In Nigeria, fabricated stories portraying one ethnic or religious group as aggressors and another as victims are frequently disseminated, particularly during politically charged periods. For example, during the #EndSARS protests of 2020, false reports about protesters' motives and government responses heightened tensions and mistrust on all sides (Iwuoha, 2021).

3. Perception of Governance Failure: By amplifying narratives of corruption, inefficiency, and incompetence, fake news shapes public perceptions of governance. Even when such narratives are untrue, their prevalence undermines trust in leaders and institutions. For instance, a widely circulated fake news story in 2022 alleged that billions of naira allocated for COVID-19 relief were embezzled, leading many citizens to distrust government-led pandemic responses (Okoro & Adibe, 2022).

Democratic Consequences

1. Decline in Voter Participation: When fake news fosters distrust in electoral integrity, it discourages citizens from participating in democratic processes. Voter apathy becomes a significant issue, as individuals perceive their votes to be inconsequential in a corrupt system. Reports of alleged rigging and vote-buying, whether true or fabricated, have contributed to declining voter turnout in Nigeria's recent elections (Owolabi & Olabode, 2021).

2. Weakening of Governance Legitimacy: Governance legitimacy depends on public trust in the authorities' ability to govern fairly and effectively. Fake news undermines this trust by creating a pervasive sense of betrayal and incompetence. In Nigeria, instances where fake news portrays government actions as deliberately harmful or oppressive fuel mass discontent, reducing citizens' willingness to cooperate with public policies (Idris, 2022).

3. Social Unrest and Instability: Beyond political trust, the destabilising effects of fake news manifest in physical conflicts and social unrest. For example, in 2018, false reports about ethnic clashes in Plateau State led to retaliatory attacks, resulting in fatalities and the destruction of property. These incidents highlight the dangerous potential of fake news to escalate tensions and disrupt societal harmony (Iwuoha, 2021).

Addressing the Nigerian Predicament

Addressing the complex issue of fake news and its detrimental effect on political trust in Nigeria requires multi-faceted strategies. These strategies need to engage with both the structural factors that facilitate the spread of misinformation and the behavioural patterns that make citizens susceptible to believing and sharing false information. This section explores various approaches to tackling the fake news phenomenon in Nigeria, focusing on media regulation, public awareness, digital literacy, and the role of technology in mitigating misinformation.

Media Regulation and Policy Intervention

One of the central challenges in addressing fake news in Nigeria is the country's weak media regulatory environment. While traditional media in Nigeria is regulated by bodies like the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), the rapid growth of digital platforms has outpaced these regulatory mechanisms. This regulatory gap enables the unchecked spread of fake news, particularly on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter, which are largely unmonitored. Efforts to address this issue have seen mixed results. For example, the Nigerian government's introduction of the "Social Media Bill" and the "Hate Speech Bill" aimed to curb the spread of fake news and hate speech online. However, these proposals have faced significant backlash from civil society groups and critics who argue that such measures could infringe on freedom of speech and be used as tools of political repression (Idris, 2022). A more balanced approach is needed—one that involves collaboration between the government, media organisations, and civil society to establish clear guidelines and policies for online content regulation without overstepping democratic freedoms. The role of fact-checking organisations, such as Africa Check and The Cable, is also critical in holding both traditional and digital media accountable by exposing fake news and disinformation.

Public Awareness and Education

Given that many Nigerians consume news via social media without verifying its credibility, raising public awareness is key to combating the spread of fake news. Media literacy programs can equip the public with the skills needed to critically assess information sources and identify false or misleading content. In this context, educational initiatives that focus on digital literacy are crucial. These initiatives should aim not only at schoolchildren but also at adults, particularly in rural areas where access to formal education and media literacy is limited. For instance, the National

Orientation Agency (NOA) has undertaken campaigns to educate the public on the dangers of misinformation, but more can be done to create a broader and more sustained media literacy curriculum across the country (Owolabi & Olabode, 2021). Media literacy programs should teach people how to cross-check news, understand the significance of credible sources, and evaluate the intentions behind information that circulates on social media platforms. Moreover, engaging community leaders, religious figures, and local influencers in educating the masses can enhance the effectiveness of these campaigns. Their influence can be pivotal in promoting fact-based information, reducing the impact of fake news, and fostering a culture of truthfulness and accountability.

Role of Technology and Social Media Platforms in Addressing Fake News Crisis

Technology plays a dual role in both facilitating and addressing the fake news crisis. On one hand, platforms like WhatsApp, Twitter, and Facebook have been instrumental in spreading fake news in Nigeria, due to their wide accessibility and low barriers to entry for content dissemination. On the other hand, technological tools can also be used to curb the spread of misinformation.

Algorithmic Solutions and Content Moderation: Social media platforms themselves must take responsibility for curbing the spread of fake news. Algorithmic modifications can be implemented to flag or downrank content that is false or misleading, while content moderation teams can work more proactively to remove such content in real time. International tech companies like Facebook and Twitter have increasingly faced pressure to improve their content moderation practices, especially in light of fake news' impact on elections and political processes. In Nigeria, such interventions could significantly reduce the spread of harmful content, provided they are implemented in collaboration with local fact-checking bodies and are sensitive to local contexts and nuances (Okoro & Adibe, 2020).

Fact-Checking Initiatives: Platforms like Twitter have taken steps to add fact-checking labels to tweets that contain potentially misleading or disputed information. However, more localised and robust efforts are needed. Nigerian organisations like FactCheck.ng and Africa Check are leading the charge in independently verifying information and providing the public with accurate, evidence-based news. These platforms should be supported through public-private partnerships, increasing their accessibility and expanding their reach. Furthermore, encouraging social media users to report fake news or misleading posts could help create a self-regulating environment. This would involve users taking responsibility for the content they share and contributing to a more informed society.

Strengthening Trust in Political Institutions: Finally, addressing the Nigerian dilemma requires building trust in political institutions, which fake news has significantly undermined. Strengthening the transparency and accountability of government actions can reduce the fertile ground on which fake news thrives. For example, establishing independent watchdogs to oversee government activities, enhancing the quality of electoral processes, and improving the responsiveness of political leaders can help rebuild public trust. In addition, citizens must see tangible improvements in governance—such as better infrastructure, education, healthcare, and job creation—in order to regain confidence in political institutions. When people perceive their government as effective and responsive, they are less likely to fall for or spread fake news.

Multi-Stakeholder Approach: Ultimately, addressing the problem of fake news and its impact on political trust in Nigeria requires a multi-stakeholder approach. Government bodies, media organisations, fact-checking agencies, social media platforms, and civil society groups must work together to create a robust framework for combating misinformation. The aim should be not only to curb the spread of false information but also to restore the public's faith in political institutions and processes. By combining effective regulation, media literacy, technological

solutions, and institutional reforms, Nigeria can move towards a more informed and politically stable future, where citizens can engage with information critically and trust their political system to deliver on its promises.

Conclusion

Fake news in Nigeria has become a formidable obstacle to democratic engagement, public trust, and governance. The historical trajectory of media manipulation, combined with contemporary digital media challenges, has created an environment where misinformation thrives. From electoral misinformation to health-related hoaxes, the effects of fake news are far-reaching, impacting everything from political participation to social cohesion. The inability of both the government and media systems to effectively regulate or counter misinformation exacerbates this crisis, leaving the public vulnerable to manipulated narratives.

As fake news continues to undermine political trust, the consequences for Nigerian democracy are severe. When citizens lose faith in the accuracy of the information they receive, they become disengaged, disillusioned, and less likely to actively participate in the political process. The erosion of trust in political institutions, electoral processes, and governance structures threatens the very foundations of democratic life in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Strengthening Media Literacy Programmes: To combat the spread of fake news, it is crucial to enhance media literacy among Nigerians, particularly in rural areas. Educational initiatives should equip citizens with the skills to critically assess information, distinguish between credible and unreliable sources, and understand the role of media in shaping public opinion. Schools, universities, and community centres should be central to these campaigns, alongside media outreach by organisations like the National Orientation Agency (NOA). Furthermore, training journalists and content creators to prioritise ethical reporting and fact-checking is essential in fostering a more responsible media ecosystem.

Government and Institutional Collaboration for Effective Regulation: The Nigerian government must collaborate with key stakeholders, including media organisations, civil society groups, and tech companies, to create clear and fair regulations governing digital platforms. Policies should ensure that platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp are held accountable for the content shared on their networks, while respecting freedom of expression. Regulatory bodies such as the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) could extend their mandate to include the monitoring of online platforms and coordinate with fact-checking organisations to identify and combat the spread of fake news.

Enhanced Role of Fact-Checking Organisations: Fact-checking organisations such as Africa Check and FactCheck.ng should be supported through both public and private partnerships to improve the credibility and accessibility of their services. These organisations play a critical role in verifying claims, debunking myths, and providing the public with reliable information. Furthermore, the government should create frameworks to ensure that these fact-checking platforms are integrated into public health, political, and electoral communications, especially during critical times like elections or crises.

Social Media Platform Accountability: Social media companies need to take greater responsibility in curbing the spread of misinformation. In addition to improving content moderation policies and using AI tools to identify fake news, social media platforms must work with local fact-checking agencies to promote accurate information. Public awareness campaigns on these platforms can also alert users to the risks of sharing unverified content, encouraging them to be more discerning about the information they post or forward.

Promoting Transparency and Accountability in Governance: Restoring political trust requires greater transparency and accountability from Nigerian political institutions. Strengthening the independence of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), ensuring free and fair elections, and implementing measures to hold politicians accountable for their actions will help restore confidence in the political system. When citizens see that their leaders are committed to integrity and fairness, they are less likely to believe and spread false information that undermines trust in governance.

Encouraging Civic Engagement and Public Discourse: Public participation and discourse must be promoted through community-driven initiatives. Citizens should be encouraged to engage in informed discussions about political issues, using reliable sources of information. This can be facilitated through town hall meetings, debates, and discussions on both traditional and digital platforms, where the emphasis is placed on evidence-based arguments. When people are actively involved in democratic processes and have access to truthful information, the appeal of fake news is diminished.

By adopting these recommendations, Nigeria can begin to address the fake news dilemma and work towards rebuilding trust in its political system. While challenges remain, the coordinated efforts of government bodies, media, technology companies, and civil society can foster a more informed and politically engaged populace. In doing so, Nigeria can safeguard its democracy and strengthen the foundation for a more stable and prosperous future.

References

- Adeniran, A. J., & Akinyemi, B. F. (2022). *Fake news and its socio-political implications in Nigeria: A systematic review*. *African Journal of Political Science*, 15(1), 58-72.
- Aderinoye, R. (2020). *Fake news in Nigeria: A conceptual analysis*. *Journal of Political Communication*, 14(2), 56-67.
- Adeyanju, A. (2021). *Media literacy and the spread of misinformation in Nigeria*. *Journal of Communication Research*, 34(3), 29-42.
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58.
- Friggeri, A., Adamic, L. A., & Eckles, D. (2020). *Rumor cascades*. *Proceedings of the 2010 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work*, 101-110.
- Hardin, R. (2002). *Trust and trustworthiness*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Idris, A. (2022). The role of social media in the spread of fake news in Nigeria. *Media, Culture & Society*, 44(2), 213-229.
- Idris, A., & Olaniyan, O. (2020). Fake news and electoral politics in Nigeria: A case study of the 2019 general elections. *African Journal of Communication*, 13(1), 45-62.
- Idris, S. (2022). The role of media literacy in combating fake news. *Nigerian Media Studies Review*, 3(1), 101-118.

- Idris, S., & Olaniyan, R. (2020). Political partisanship and propaganda: The spread of fake news in Nigeria's 2019 elections. *African Journal of Political Science*, 8(3), 89-104.
- Iwuoha, C. (2021). *Fake news and societal impact in Nigeria: A study of social unrest*. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 15(4), 312-327.
- McCombs, M. E., & Shaw, D. L. (1972). The agenda-setting function of mass media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(2), 176-187.
- McLuhan, M. (1964). *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. MIT Press.
- Norris, P. (2021). *Political trust and the challenge of fake news*. *Journal of Political Communication*, 38(2), 124-145.
- Nwabueze, B., & Akinmoladun, J. (2021). The role of digital media in amplifying fake news in Nigeria. *Journal of Mass Communication*, 19(1), 45-58.
- Ojebuyi, B., & Salawu, A. (2020). Fake news and political trust in Nigeria's 2019 elections. *African Journal of Political Communication*, 22(1), 89-106.
- Okojie, E., & Salawu, A. (2020). The spread of misinformation during the 2019 elections: Social media's role. *International Journal of Media and Communication Studies*, 9(2), 82-97.
- Okoro, L., & Adibe, C. (2020). Social media and fake news: The impact on Nigeria's political discourse. *African Journal of New Media Studies*, 5(3), 189-201.
- Okoro, U., & Adibe, O. (2020). Fake news and the Nigerian electoral process. *Political Science and Technology Journal*, 11(2), 75-88.
- Okoro, U., & Adibe, O. (2022). The implications of fake news on political trust: Evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Political Studies*, 6(1), 120-134.
- Oluwole, D. A., Okunade, I. O., & Adebayo, I. I. (2023). *The erosion of political trust and the role of social media in Nigeria*. *Nigerian Journal of Political Science*, 48(2), 102-118.
- Owolabi, R., & Olabode, F. (2021). Social media and fake news: Impact on public health during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. *Health Communication in the Digital Age*, 4(1), 19-31.
- Owolabi, T., & Olabode, O. (2021). Disinformation, social media and political trust in Nigeria: A critical analysis. *Journal of Communication*, 72(1), 105-118.