

Influence of Information Source on Political Participation in the 2015 Nigerian Presidential Election

Moyosore Omowonuola Alade, PhD

Department of Mass Communication
Redeemer's University, Ede, Osun State, Nigeria
adenijim@run.edu.ng

Abstract

The researcher examined the relationship between information sources and political participation of undergraduates of Redeemer's University in the 2015 Nigerian presidential election. The researcher employed the survey research design using self-administered questionnaire as the research instrument. The findings of the study revealed that, although, undergraduates of Redeemer's University sourced information about the 2015 presidential election through both traditional and social media platforms, the majority sourced political information through traditional media platforms. Also, the findings showed that both traditional and social media influenced political participation, but traditional media had a more significant influence on political participation than social media. The researcher concluded that traditional media as information sources significantly influenced political participation during the 2015 Nigerian presidential election.

Keywords: Information Source, Political Participation, 2015 Nigerian Presidential Election, Political Interest, Traditional Media, New Media

Introduction

Election is an important hallmark of enthroning and sustaining democracy in societies like ours; election is paramount and highly significant in any given society (Umechuhwu, 2004, as cited in Edegoh, Ezebuenyin & Asemah, 2013). Recent elections have seen the use of traditional and new media as sources of political information. The 2015 Nigerian presidential election broke new ground. For the first time, the combat for the government house was severely tussled equally on traditional and new media with advertisements placed in newspapers, television, radio, websites and social media platforms. Traditional media and social media were major information sources during the 2015 Nigerian presidential campaign and election. Presidential candidates seeking the electoral office of the president used the media to engage with citizens, voters and supporters for campaign purposes. On the other hand, members of the electorate turned their attention to the media as sources of information for political news during the 2015 presidential elections. For instance, the Ekiti State Governor at the time, Peter Ayodele Fayose, sponsored an advertisement on the front page of a daily newspaper against the All Progressives Congress (APC) presidential candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, warning voters not to vote for him, stating that the presidential candidate was likely to die in office if elected. In addition, African Independent Television (AIT), a private television station in Nigeria, also aired documentaries about the then APC presidential candidate and the national leader of the

APC, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, trying to hinder their political ambitions. New media platforms were also actively used in the 2015 presidential elections. The two major political parties, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and APC had Facebook and Twitter accounts used for campaign purposes, such as @PdpNigeria before it was shut down and their Facebook account: Official Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Nigeria (<https://m.facebook.com/....PDP>). APC's Twitter account @APCNIGERIA and their Facebook page: All Progressives Congress-APC (<https://m.facebook.com/APCNigeria>) and their official website apcnigeria.net, were actively used to reach the electorate.

Political parties and politicians use different media to communicate their ideas or manifestoes to the electorates during elections; one of which is interpersonal communication (Johansson, 2004, as cite in Asemah, Anum & Ogwo, 2012). Studies have indicated that young adults would most likely turn to the new media to gain political information, learn about political aspirants or candidates, share political information as well as be an active participant in the practice of political activities (Kaid, McKinney & Tedesco, 2007; Fernandes, Giurcanu, Bowers & Neely, 2010; Haridakis & Hanson 2011; Kushin & Yamamoto, 2010; Vitak, Zube, Smock, Carr, Ellison & Lampe, 2011). Therefore, with the availability of traditional and new media as political information sources, as well as the perceived notion by scholars that young adults are expected to adopt the new media as a source of information, this study examined the relationship between political information source(s) of undergraduates of Redeemer's University and their political participation in the 2015 Nigerian presidential elections.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Identify the information source(s) undergraduates of Redeemer's University used as their political information source during the 2015 Nigerian Presidential election.
2. Ascertain the influence of information source(s) on Redeemer's University undergraduates' political participation during the 2015 Nigerian Presidential elections.

Hypotheses

At a 0.05 level of significance, the following hypotheses are tested:

- H₀₁:** The use of traditional media as an information source influences Redeemer's University undergraduates' participation in the 2015 Nigerian Presidential elections.
- H₀₂:** The use of new media as a source of information influences Redeemer's University undergraduates' participation in the 2015 Nigerian Presidential elections.

Sources of Political Information

The media has become the most important political information source and channel of communication between the government and the governed (Shehata, Stromback & Monika, 2010). By providing political information to members of the society, the media

increases political knowledge and awareness, promoting civic engagement (Norris, 2002). Politically, interested citizens access political information through newspapers, magazines, television, radio (conventional media vehicles) or new media technologies (Boulianne, 2011) and interpersonal communication. Scholars have also noted that citizens learn about politics from one-on-one discussions with peers in schools, the family and their immediate environment. These social agents have been found to contribute to young citizens' political interests, knowledge, attitudes and participation (Cord, Medeiros & Jones, 1997; McDevitt & Chaffee, 2002).

Different sources of political information exist, ranging from newspapers to interpersonal communication. For newspapers, research has established a link between newspaper readership and political knowledge as citizens depend on newspapers for political information (Nisbet, 2008). Also, television, radio and other media are sources of political information that encourage political learning (Stamm, Johnson & Martin, 1997). According to O'Cass (2001), political candidates and parties have relied on advertisements to inform and influence citizens, especially electorates. The internet is also a major source of political information, and scholars have indicated that political learning occurs through access to news on the internet (Kim, 2008). Other scholars such as Brubaker (2010); Sundar, Kalyanaraman & Brown (2003) have also noted that the interactivity of political websites leads to increased citizens' political interest. Politicians and political parties constantly use Facebook and Twitter to communicate with their supporters and citizens, especially during elections (Ekine, 2010; Policy & Legal Advocacy Centre, 2012). Brubaker (2010) indicated that in America, electorate learned about political affairs through television coverage during the presidential elections. The use of social media for political reasons, to a high extent, exposes citizens to political information (Norris, 2002). Vester (2010) saw social media as an online tool fast becoming the default internet means of collaboration, interactivity and communication. Young people familiarise themselves with political personnel and establish and improve knowledge about politics by watching political news on television and reading about the political world in newspapers (Shah, Mcleod & Lee, 2009).

Political Interest, Political Participation and the Media

Political interest refers to the process whereby citizens are willing to pay attention to political activities and developments and the extent to which political activities arouse a citizens' curiosity (Arthur & Philbot, 2005). The motivation to engage in politics, which can be sub-divided into learning about and participating in politics, can be conceptualised as political interest (Shani, 2007). A citizen's political interest contributes to the possibility that he/she would participate in the political process of a country and it is centred on the citizen's exposure to a variety of political viewpoints, discussions and political information gained from the mass media (Delli, Cook & Jacobs, 2004; Mutz, 2006).

The concept of political participation can be referred to as a set of rights or duties that involve citizens' engagement in political activities or events (Diemer, 2012). Huntington & Nelson (1976) defined political participation as activities organised and executed by private citizens that play a massive role in affecting or influencing government

actions directly or indirectly, as well as influencing the selection of people who take governmental actions. In other words, political participation is usually centred on citizens' involvement in selecting potential leaders. Political participation activities include seeking information, viewing party websites, attending speeches, rallies or political campaigns, vying for a public office, voting, discussing and propelling, attending meetings of political nature and political campaigns, supervising the electoral process, reporting electoral malpractices like violence, fraudulent activities, voter registration, interest in political activities, sharing and discussing political information (Chatora, 2012).

Political participation can be practised online or offline using new or traditional media platforms. Online political participation refers to citizens using new media platforms such as websites and social networking sites (SNS) to engage in political activities that can shape or determine the structure of government, choice of governmental officials and policies. Political mobilisation can be further seen as the way in which citizens organise people to put pressure on the political representatives; it is the exchange of symbols and messages between political actors, institutions and the general public with the aim of influencing the political system in operation at any given time (Santas, Asemah & Jumbo, 2020; Nwanmuo, Edegoh & Asemah, 2013). Thus, Asemah & Edegoh (2012) observed that political advertising has become part of the political culture of most democracies and Nigeria as a democratic nation is not left out. Activities that constitute political participation online include sharing political messages on social networking sites, online campaigning, contacting politicians online, following political personalities on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and accessing political parties' and political personnel's websites (Bakker & de Vreese, 2011). On the other hand, offline political participation refers to citizens' participation in political activities such as influencing a fellow citizen's vote, attending political meetings and speeches, donating to candidates, working for a candidate and attending political campaigns and rallies.

Mass media is a major source of political information and crucial in promoting political interest and participation (Shehata *et al* 2010). In establishing the relationship between political interest, political participation, political information and the mass media, scholars have argued that the mass media has become the most important source of political information and medium of communication between the government and the governed and those who are actively engaged in politics gain political content from either traditional or the new media (Eveland & Scheufele, 2000; Lupia & Philpot, 2005; Drew & Weaver, 2006; Oskarson, 2007; Shehata & Stromback, 2010). Studies such as Oskarson (2007) concluded that consumption of news media content is an indicator of political interest among citizens. The relationship between mass media, political interest and political participation can also be based on the fact that politically interested citizens use mass media channels to gain information about politics to engage in political activities (Shehata & Stromback, 2010). According to Boulianne (2011), the mass media plays a major role in igniting citizens' interest in political matters, motivating citizens to get involved in political processes and activities. Social media has become a political information tool for connecting citizens with one another, sharing political content, would develop political participation and interest (Chu, 2010; Bruns, 2008).

Citizens' attention to political news in the media has a causal effect on citizens' political interest and participation. Linked with traditional media, the internet, with tools like cyberspace, provides an interactive platform for citizens to communicate with government officials and policymakers, seek political information or issues and share political views (Day, Janus & Davis, 2005). Citizens adopting the use of media, most especially web users, have a greater interest in politics, are more knowledgeable about politics, and have a higher possibility of being involved in politics (Chadwick, 2006; Johnson & Kaye, 2000). Lupia & Philbot (2005) concluded that the internet has become a tool for establishing and increasing political interest among citizens because it allows them to post and share information with the world at a low cost through various devices. Political engagement, such as political expression and discussion on social networking sites and blogs, is related to online political participation in the US (Vitak *et al* 2011).

Media Use in the Nigerian 2015 Presidential Election

Regarded as one of the most keenly contested presidential elections in the history of democratic rule since the end of the military regime in Nigeria, the 2015 Nigerian presidential elections took place on March 28, 2015. The race for the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria was between two major political parties and their candidates – the ruling party at the time, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and its presidential candidate Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, seeking a second term in office and the main opposition party, All Progressive Congress (APC) Major Gen. Muhammadu Buhari. The media were major tools for disseminating political information—messages, images and campaigns during the campaign and elections. Cases of media coverage in the 2015 Nigerian presidential elections on traditional and new media include:

- An advertising was sponsored on the front page of *The Punch* newspaper by the Governor of Ekiti State, Ayo Fayose, on January 19, 2015.
- On March 5, 2015, @APCNigeria tweeted, “even if PDP shows a video of Tinubu and Buhari on AIT robbing the Central Bank of Nigeria, it won't change our minds Too late- Ibadan.”
- An advertisement for the support of PDP presidential candidate in the *Daily Sun* on January 19, 2015, tagged will you allow history to repeat itself?
- AIT broadcasted a documentary on the APC presidential candidate titled “The real Buhari-man behind the mask.
- In a media briefing, Fani-Kayode alleged that the APC presidential candidate was receiving finance from terrorist organisations Boko Haram and ISIS. NTA carried these.
- On March 16, 2015, @APCNigeria tweeted, “12 things the Buhari/Osinbajo government will do for you and I: in the next 12 months of this year...”
- Rtd. Major General Buhari's Promise to turn Nigeria into a sharia nation...(Saturday Sun, Jan 27 and Jan 31. 2015).
- "Who is allowing Islamisation in Nigeria? Buhari or Jonathan (*Saturday Vanguard*, page 31).

Methodology

The researcher adopted the cross-sectional descriptive survey research method to identify the sources of information used by young adults and how these sources influenced their political interests and participation during the 2015 Nigerian presidential elections. The population of this study consists of undergraduates of Redeemer’s University. According to the Academic Affairs Unit of the University, the total number of undergraduate students at the time of the study was 2,024. Hence, the population of this study consisted of 2,500 undergraduate students of Redeemer’s University. The sample size of this study was obtained using the 10% condition, which states that sample sizes should not be more than 10% of the population (Conroy, 2018). Based on this 10% condition, this study's sample size is 250 undergraduates of Redeemer's University.

The researcher adopted the stratified random sampling technique which has to do with dividing the population into strata designed based on members’ shared characteristics or features (Tejumaiye, 2005). The population was divided into sub-groups, also known as strata, comprising respondents with similar characteristics. To select the sample, the stratified random sampling technique was used to group the population into male and female strata. Then the proportionate sampling technique was used to allot units to each stratum based on the population distribution. The total number of male students is 1059 resulting in 42% of the population and the total number of female students is 1441 resulting in 58% of the population. Since the sample size derived is 250, the sample size constituted 105 (42%) male undergraduates and 145 (58%) female undergraduates.

The questionnaire was deployed as the research instrument for the study. It contained three sections that elicited information on the following variables: Demographics, information sources and political participation. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data obtained, including frequency and percentages. Simple linear regression analysis was also used to test the hypothesis for the study. The pre-set level of significance for the hypotheses of this study was set at 0.05.

Data Presentation and Analysis

H₀₁: The use of traditional media as an information source influences undergraduates’ participation in the 2015 Nigerian presidential elections.

Table 1: Simple Linear Regression showing the Influence of Traditional Media as a Source of Information on Undergraduates’ Participation in the 2015 Nigerian Presidential Election

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	9.118	.443		20.573	.000
Traditional Media Use	.167	.050	0.209	3.341	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Political Participation

Data in the table above reveal that traditional media use as an information source significantly influenced the political participation of undergraduates during the 2015 Nigerian presidential election ($p < 0.05$). The model indicates a low positive correlation

coefficient ($\beta=0.209$) and positive slope ($B=0.167$) which are statistically significant ($p<0.05$) as assessed by a t test ($T=3.341$). Consequently, the hypothesis is accepted.

Ho₂: The Use of New Media as a Source of Information influences Undergraduates’ Participation in the 2015 Nigerian Presidential Elections

Table 2: Simple Linear Regression showing the Influence of new media as a source of information on undergraduates’ participation in the 2015 Nigerian Presidential elections

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	8.238	.590		13.975	.000
	New Media Use	.205	.068	.190	3.027	0.03

a. Dependent Variable: Political Participation

Data from the table above reveal that the use of new media as an information source significantly influenced the political participation of undergraduates during the 2015 Nigerian presidential election ($p<0.05$). The model indicates a low positive correlation coefficient ($\beta=0.190$) and positive slope ($B=0.205$) which are statistically significant ($p<0.05$) as assessed by a t test ($T=3.027$). Consequently, the hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The study sought to find out the relationship between political information source(s) of young adults and their political participation in the 2015 Nigerian presidential election. In line with the first research objective, which identified the information source(s) used by young adults during the 2015 Nigerian presidential elections, the findings showed that majority of the young adults sourced for political information during the elections on traditional media compared to social media and other media platforms. This finding is not consistent with previous findings existing research findings which revealed that the use of traditional media as a source for political information is declining (Newman *et al* 2017). A reason for this may be that as of 2015 when the study was conducted, internet and social media penetration in Nigeria was at 38% and 7% respectively (Datareportal, 2015) compared to 2022 when it is currently at 51% and 15.4% (Kemp, 2022) and the direct effects of new media cannot emerge until it becomes more deeply integrated into individuals’ everyday life (Xenos & Moy, 2007). The increased use of traditional media as a political source of information compared to social media could therefore be attributable to the low penetration of the internet and social media in 2015. Also, the unreliable attribute of online information due to the lack of online gatekeepers (Flanagin & Metzger, 2007) could be a plausible reason for the use of traditional media as a political source of information on the 2015 presidential elections.

Research objective two sought to ascertain the influence of information source(s) on the political participation of young adults during the 2015 Nigerian presidential election. Findings showed that both traditional and new media as sources of information during the election influenced young adults’ participation in the election. However, traditional media

($R^2=0.044$) as an information source had a more significant influence on young adults' participation in the 2015 Nigerian presidential elections compared to new media ($R^2=0.036$). This finding not only corroborates and complements findings in existing literature that traditional media compared to social media had a significant influence on political knowledge, it also adds that traditional media platforms influence political participation that is enhanced by political knowledge (Olaniru, Olatunji, Ayandele & Popoola, 2020). Negative information online can limit political participation and lead to political indifference (Bakker & de Vreese, 2011), hence, the reduced influence of social media as a political information source on political participation could be due to negative and agitating information that characterised political campaigns leading to the 2015 presidential elections in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendation

From the findings, it can be opined that young adults in Nigeria are interested and engaged in the political process of the nation. It is clear that young adults sourced for political information from diverse information sources that influenced their participation in the elections. Thus, it can be concluded that social media platforms have not replaced traditional media as a political source of information; rather, it complements it. Thus, the researcher recommended that political institutions, parties and actors should deploy, rather than neglect traditional media as information sources to aid political knowledge that translates to political participation among youth.

References

- Asemah, E. S., Anum, V. & Ogwo, C. (2012). Exploring the advantages of interpersonal communication in political campaigns. *Maiduguri Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 10 (2), 56- 64.
- Asemah, E. S. & Edegoh, L. O. N. (2012). New media and political advertising: Prospects and challenges. *African Research Review*, 6(4), 248-265.
- Bakker T. P. & de Vresse C. H. (2011). Good news for the future? Young people, internet use, and political participation. *Communication Research*, 38(4), 451-470.
- Boulianne, P. (2011) Stimulating or reinforcing political interest: Using panel data to examine reciprocal effects between news media and political interest. *Political Communication*, 28(2), 147-162.
- Brubaker, J. (2010). Internet and television are not substitutes for seeking political information. *Communication Research Reports*, 27(4), 298–309.
- Bruns, A. (2008). *Blogs, Wikipedia, second life and beyond: From production to produsage*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Chadwick, A. (2006). *Internet politics: States, citizens and new communication technologies*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Chatora, A. (2012). Encouraging political participation in Africa: The potentials of social media platforms. Retrieved from [https://www.scirp.org/\(S\(i43dyn45teexjx455qlt3d2q\)\)/reference/ReferencesPaper.aspx?ReferenceID=1814399](https://www.scirp.org/(S(i43dyn45teexjx455qlt3d2q))/reference/ReferencesPaper.aspx?ReferenceID=1814399).

- Chu, D. (2010). In search of presumption: Youth and the new media in Hong Kong. *First Monday*, 15(2-1).
- Cord, R.L., Medeiros, J.A. & Jones, W.S. (Eds). (1997). *Political science: Introduction*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
- Datareportal. (2015). Digital 2015: Nigeria. Slideshare. Retrieved from <https://www.slideshare.net/DataReportal/digital-2015-nigeria-january-2015>.
- Day, J. C., Janus, A. & Davis. J. (2005). Computer use and the internet use in the United States: 2003. *Special studies, Current Population Reports*. Washington, DC: U. S. Census Bureau.
- Diemer, M. A. (2012). Fostering marginalised youth's political participation: Longitudinal roles of parental political socialisation and youth sociopolitical development. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, DOI: 10.1007/s10464-012-9495-9.
- Drew, D. & Weaver, D. (2006). Voter learning in the 2004 presidential election: Did the media matter? *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 83(1), 25–42.
- Edegoh, L. O. N., Ezebuenyin, E. E. & Asemah, E. S. (2013). Television as a medium of political advertising during elections in Anambra State, Nigeria. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2 (3), 375-385.
- Eveland, W.P. & Scheufele, D.A. (2000). Connecting news media use with gaps in knowledge and participation. *Political Communication*, 17(3), 215–237.
- Fernandes, J. Giurcanu, M. Bowers, K. & Neely, J. (2010). The writing on the wall: A content analysis of college students Facebook group for the 2008 presidential elections. *Mass Communication and Society*, 13, 653-675.
- Flanagin, A. J. & Metzger, M. J. (2007). The role of site features, user attributes, and information verification behaviours on the perceived credibility of web-based information. *New Media and Society*, 9, 319-342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444807075015>.
- Haridakis, P. & Hanson, G. (2011). Comparing Youtube, social networking and other media use among younger and older voters. J. Hendricks & L. L. Kaid (Eds.). *Techno Politics in Presidential Campaigning* (pp. 61-82). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Huntington, S. P. & Nelson, J. M. (1976). *No easy choice: Political participation in developing countries*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Johnson, T. J. & Kaye, B. K. (2000). Democracy's rebirth or demise? The influence of the internet on political attitudes. In D. A. Schultz (Ed.). *It is show Time! Media, Politics, and Popular Culture* (pp. 209–228). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Kaid, L.L., McKinney, M. S. & Tedesco, J.C. (2007). Political information efficacy and young voters. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 50, 1093-1111.
- Kemp, S. (15 February, 2022). *Digital 2022: Nigeria*. Datareportal. Retrieved from [https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-nigeria#:~:text=Internet%20use%20in%20Nigeria%20in%202022&text=Nigeria's%20internet%20penetration%20rate%20stood,percent\)%20between%202021%20and%202022](https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-nigeria#:~:text=Internet%20use%20in%20Nigeria%20in%202022&text=Nigeria's%20internet%20penetration%20rate%20stood,percent)%20between%202021%20and%202022).

- Kim, S. H. (2008). Testing the knowledge hypothesis in South Korea: Traditional news media, the internet and political learning. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 20(2), 193–210.
- Kushin, M. & Yamamoto, M. (2010). Did social media really matter? College students' use of online media and potential decision making in the 2008 election. *Mass communication and Society*, 13, 608–630.
- Lupia, A. & Tasha P. (2005). Views from inside the net: How websites affect young adults' political interest. *The Journal of Politics*, 67(4), 1122–1142.
- McDevitt, M. & Chaffee. S. (2002). From top-down to trickle-up: Revisiting assumption about the family in political socialisation. *Political Communication*, 19(3), 281–302.
- Newman, N., Richard, F., Antonis, K., David, A. L. & Rasmus, K. N. (2017). *Reuters institute digital news report 2017*. Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. Retrieved from: <http://www.digitalnewsreport.org/>.
- Norris, P. (2002). Turned out voters? Media impact on campaign learning. In: Politeia Conference.
- Nisbet, E.C. (2008). Media use, democratic citizenship and communication gaps in a developing democracy. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 20(4), 444–482.
- Nwammuo, A. N., Edegoh, L. O. N. & Asemah, E. S. (2013). Role of Nigerian politicians and political communicators in the implementation of vision 20:2020. *American Communication Journal*, 15 (4), 53-64.
- Olaniru, O., Olatunji, O., Ayandele, O. & Popoola, O.A. (2020). The influence of media on political knowledge among undergraduate students in Ibadan, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Social Sciences*, 19, 13 – 24.
- Oskarson, M. (2007). Social risk, policy dissatisfaction and political alienation: A comparison of six European countries. In S. Svallfors (Ed.). *The Political Sociology of the Welfare State: Institutions, Social Cleavages and Orientations*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Santas, T., Asemah, E. S. & Jumbo, C. N. (2020). Mass media and the mobilisation of women for political participation during the 2019 gubernatorial election in Lafía, Nigeria. *The Nigerian Journal of Communication*, 17 (2), 199-217.
- Shah, D. V., McLeod, J. M. & Lee, N. J. (2009). Communication competence as a foundation for civic competence: Processes of socialisation into citizenship. *Political Communication*, 26, 102-117.
- Shani, D. (2007). Developing interest in politics: The effect of early life socialisation. Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 12-15, 2007.
- Shehata, A., Stromback, J. & Monika D. (2010). The dynamics of political interest and news media consumption: A longitudinal perspective. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 25(4), 13-23.

- Stamm, K., Johnson, M. & Martin, B. (1997). Differences among newspapers, television and radio in their knowledge of the contract with America. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 74(4), 687–702.
- Strömbäck, J. & Shehata, A. (2010). Media malaise and virtuous circle? Exploring the causal relationships between news media exposure, political news and attention and political interest. *European Journal of Political Research*, 49(5), 575–597.
- Sundar, S.S., Kalyanaraman S. & Brown, J. (2003). Explicating website interactivity: Impression formation effects in political campaigns sites. *Communication Research*, 30(1), 30–59.
- Vitak, J., Zube, P., Smock, A., Carr, C., Ellison, N. & Lampe, C. (2011). It is complicated: Facebook users' political participation in the 2006 election. *CyberPsychology, Behaviour and Social Networking*, 4, 107-114.
- Xenos, M. & Moy, P. (2007). Direct and differential effects of the internet on political and civic engagement. *Journal of Communication*, 57(4), 704–718.