

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTIONEERING: A STUDY OF NIGERIA 2015  
AND UNITED STATES 2016 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS**

**BY**

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**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that, this research was carried out and written by Ekwueme Marylin Chijioke under my supervision and submitted to the Department of Political Science and International Relations, School of Social Sciences, College of Leadership Developmental Studies.

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to the Almighty God for seeing me through this work successfully.

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## ABSTRACT

The 21<sup>st</sup> century can be described as the age of information technology. Technology runs almost all human endeavours, including politics. In recent times, politicians have swerved from the use of traditional media (broadcast and print) to the use of social media to carry out their political and electoral campaigns in order to realize their political ambition. One of the major challenges of electioneering in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is that, due to the faceless nature of the internet, social media spreads propaganda, false information, and hate speeches about an electoral candidate. These go viral and are used to manipulate the electorate. This paper examines the role of social media in the awareness, participation, and possible influence on the Nigerian electorate in their decision or choice of leadership during the Nigeria 2015 and United States 2016 presidential election. The method of analysis is both quantitative and descriptive and the data are drawn from secondary sources as well as the use of questionnaire. Findings show that the social media played a major role in mobilizing people, creating awareness, as well as participation and circulation of information about candidates. It therefore recommends, among other things, that practical regulatory methods on what should and should not be posted on social media should be put in place by the governing bodies of various social media platforms. This will help to censor and check information that spread on social media platforms. This way, campaigns that use and encourage hate speeches or instill violence will not be posted or published.