

INFLUENCE OF NEWS MEDIA ON PUBLIC OPINION AMONG RESIDENTS OF LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The news media play a critical role in shaping citizens' perceptions of social, political, and economic issues in democratic societies. This study investigates the influence of news media on public opinion in Lagos State, Nigeria. Anchored on Agenda-Setting Theory and Framing Theory, the study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine how media exposure and perceived media credibility influence public opinion formation. A sample of 400 adult residents of Lagos State was selected using multistage sampling techniques. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analysed using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistical tools, including Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis. Findings indicate a significant positive relationship between exposure to news media and the formation of public opinion among residents of Lagos State. The results further reveal that perceived media credibility significantly predicts the strength of public opinion, suggesting that audiences are more likely to accept and internalize information from media sources they consider trustworthy. The study concludes that news media remain influential in shaping citizens' perceptions of governance, public policy, and social issues within Lagos State's dynamic media environment. It recommends the promotion of media literacy initiatives and the strengthening of professional journalistic standards in order to sustain public trust and enhance informed civic engagement.

Keywords: News Media, Public Opinion, Agenda-Setting, Framing, Media Credibility, Lagos State

INTRODUCTION

News media play a central role in shaping how citizens understand political, economic, and social developments within society. In modern democratic systems, the media serve as key channels through which information about governance, public policies, and

societal issues is disseminated to the public. Through news reporting, commentary, and analysis, the media not only provide information but also influence how audiences interpret events and evaluate public affairs. Because of this influential role, the media are often described as the “fourth estate,” reflecting their responsibility to inform citizens, facilitate public discourse, and promote accountability in governance [Liu & St. Hilaire, 2021].

Public opinion refers to the collective attitudes, beliefs, and judgments expressed by individuals regarding matters of public importance. These opinions are shaped by several factors, including personal experiences, cultural influences, interpersonal discussions, and exposure to mass media. Among these factors, media exposure remains particularly significant because the media determine which issues are presented to the public and how those issues are interpreted. By selecting certain events for coverage and emphasizing particular aspects of those events, the media influence not only what people think about but also how they understand and evaluate societal issues [Sides et al., 2023].

In recent decades, the global media landscape has undergone substantial transformation due to technological advancement and the expansion of digital communication platforms. Traditional news media such as newspapers, radio, and television now coexist with online news platforms, mobile news applications, and social media channels. This hybrid media environment has expanded access to information and increased the speed with which news circulates across different platforms. Consequently, citizens are now exposed to a wider range of news sources than ever before, which has important implications for the formation of public opinion and the ways individuals engage with public affairs [Newman et al., 2023].

Nigeria has experienced similar changes in its media ecosystem. Over the past two decades, the proliferation of internet connectivity and mobile technology has significantly altered patterns of news consumption across the country. While traditional media institutions continue to play a major role in information dissemination, digital news platforms have increasingly become prominent sources of news for many citizens. These platforms provide instant access to information and allow audiences to interact with news content in ways that were previously impossible. However, the expansion of multiple news platforms has also raised concerns regarding information credibility, media bias, and the potential influence of media narratives on public perceptions.

Within Nigeria, Lagos State represents one of the most dynamic and influential media environments. As the country’s commercial hub and one of Africa’s most densely populated urban centres, Lagos hosts numerous national media organizations, including television stations, radio networks, newspaper headquarters, and digital news platforms. The state also serves as a major centre for political and economic activities, where public discussions about governance, infrastructure development, security, taxation, and social policies frequently shape national discourse. Consequently, Lagos provides an important context for examining how news media influence the opinions and perceptions of citizens.

The coexistence of traditional and digital media within Lagos has produced a complex information environment in which audiences access news from multiple sources simultaneously. Television and radio continue to reach large audiences, particularly in the dissemination of political and public affairs news. Newspapers maintain relevance through both print circulation and digital editions, while online news platforms and mobile applications increasingly provide real-time updates to technologically connected audiences. This multiplicity of information channels means that citizens encounter news narratives from various platforms, each potentially shaping their perceptions of public issues.

Scholars have explained media influence on public opinion through several theoretical perspectives. One of the most prominent explanations is Agenda-Setting Theory, which suggests that the media shape public priorities by determining the issues that receive the greatest attention in news coverage. When particular topics receive sustained media attention, they tend to become more prominent in the minds of audiences, influencing what citizens perceive as the most important societal issues [McCombs & Reynolds, 2023]. Closely related to this perspective is Framing Theory, which emphasizes how the presentation of news stories influences audience interpretation. Through framing, media organizations highlight certain aspects of issues while downplaying others, thereby shaping how audiences understand and evaluate those issues [Chong & Druckman, 2022].

The credibility of media sources plays a crucial role in determining how news influences public opinion. Media credibility refers to the degree to which audiences perceive news sources as trustworthy, accurate, and reliable. When audiences believe that a media outlet is credible, they are more likely to accept the information it provides and incorporate it into their judgments about social and political issues. Conversely, when media sources are perceived as biased or unreliable, audiences may question the information presented and seek alternative sources that align with their existing beliefs [Tsfati & Ariely, 2022].

Despite the growing prominence of news media in shaping public discourse in Nigeria, empirical research examining the relationship between news media exposure, media credibility, and public opinion within specific urban contexts remains relatively limited. Many existing studies focus primarily on social media influence, misinformation, or national political communication trends, often overlooking the dynamics of media influence within major metropolitan areas such as Lagos. Yet, understanding how news media influence public opinion in Lagos is particularly important because of the state's strategic role in national politics, economics, and media production.

Given the diverse population and complex media environment of Lagos State, examining how residents interact with news media and how these interactions shape their perceptions of governance and public issues is essential. Such understanding can provide insights into the broader relationship between media systems and democratic participation in Nigeria. Therefore, this study investigates the influence of news media on public opinion among residents of Lagos State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examines the extent of news media exposure among residents, assesses the relationship between media exposure and public opinion formation, and evaluates the role of perceived media credibility in shaping citizens' opinions on public issues.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the proliferation of news media platforms and the increasing accessibility of information in Nigeria, questions remain regarding the extent to which news media shape public opinion, particularly within rapidly evolving urban media environments such as Lagos State. While traditional media outlets such as television, radio, and newspapers continue to play important roles in disseminating information, the emergence of digital news platforms has created a hybrid media system in which citizens are exposed to diverse and sometimes conflicting news narratives. This multiplicity of information sources raises concerns about how media exposure influences citizens' perceptions of governance, public policies, and societal issues, as well as how audiences evaluate the credibility of different media outlets. Although several studies have examined media influence in Nigeria, much of the existing research focuses primarily on social media use, misinformation, or national political

communication trends, often overlooking the combined influence of traditional and digital news media on public opinion within specific metropolitan contexts. In addition, limited empirical attention has been given to how perceived media credibility shapes the relationship between news exposure and the formation of public opinion among urban populations. Given Lagos State's status as Nigeria's commercial, political, and media hub, understanding how news media exposure and credibility influence the opinions of its residents is essential for evaluating the role of the media in democratic discourse and civic engagement. Consequently, there is a need for empirical investigation into how news media influence public opinion among residents of Lagos State, particularly with regard to the level of media exposure, the relationship between media consumption and opinion formation, and the role of perceived media credibility in shaping citizens' attitudes toward public issues.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of news media on public opinion among residents of Lagos State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Assess the level of exposure to news media among residents of Lagos State.
2. Examine the relationship between news media exposure and public opinion formation among residents of Lagos State.
3. Determine the influence of perceived media credibility on public opinion among residents of Lagos State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

News Media Exposure and Public Opinion Formation

News media exposure refers to the extent to which individuals encounter and consume information disseminated through various media platforms such as television, radio, newspapers, and digital news outlets. Exposure to news media plays a significant role in shaping citizens' awareness, perceptions, and interpretations of societal issues. In democratic societies, the media function as primary sources of information that enable citizens to understand political processes, evaluate government performance, and form opinions on matters of public interest [McQuail, 2010]. Through regular interaction with news content, audiences acquire knowledge that influences their attitudes toward governance, policy decisions, and broader social issues.

Public opinion, on the other hand, represents the collective views, beliefs, and judgments held by members of the public regarding issues that affect society. It reflects how individuals interpret information and form evaluative positions about political, economic, and social developments. Scholars argue that public opinion is shaped by a variety of factors including personal experiences, interpersonal communication, cultural norms, and exposure to mass media. Among these influences, the media play a particularly important role because they determine the type of information available to audiences and the frequency with which particular issues are presented [Price, 1992; Page & Shapiro, 2021].

The relationship between media exposure and public opinion is often explained through the process by which repeated exposure to news content increases awareness and influences issue salience. When audiences frequently encounter news coverage on specific topics, they are more likely to consider those issues important and incorporate them into their own judgments about public affairs. This process highlights the capacity of news media not only to inform audiences but also to shape the priorities that guide public discussion and evaluation of government actions [McCombs & Reynolds, 2023]. Consequently, the amount

and frequency of exposure to news media can significantly affect the extent to which individuals develop opinions on public issues.

In contemporary societies, the proliferation of digital technologies has transformed patterns of news consumption. Traditional media platforms such as television, radio, and newspapers now coexist with online news portals, mobile applications, and social media channels. This hybrid media environment allows audiences to access information from multiple sources simultaneously, thereby increasing the volume and diversity of news exposure [Newman et al., 2023]. While this expansion of media access enhances the availability of information, it also introduces complexities related to selective exposure, where individuals choose media sources that align with their existing beliefs or preferences. Such patterns may reinforce existing attitudes while limiting exposure to alternative viewpoints.

Empirical studies have demonstrated that exposure to news media significantly influences how individuals perceive political and social realities. For instance, frequent consumption of political news has been linked to higher levels of political awareness, civic engagement, and opinion formation among citizens. Similarly, studies indicate that individuals who regularly follow news coverage are more likely to develop informed positions on public policies and governance issues (Prior, 2020). These findings suggest that news media serve as a crucial intermediary between political institutions and the public by translating complex information into accessible narratives that audiences can interpret and evaluate.

However, the influence of media exposure on public opinion is not solely determined by the quantity of information received. The credibility of the media source also plays a vital role in shaping how audiences interpret and respond to news content. When audiences perceive a media outlet as trustworthy and reliable, they are more inclined to accept the information presented and incorporate it into their opinions about societal issues. Conversely, low levels of media credibility may lead audiences to question the validity of news content or seek alternative sources of information [Tsfati & Ariely, 2022]. Thus, the relationship between media exposure and public opinion is closely intertwined with perceptions of credibility and trust in media institutions.

Overall, the literature suggests that news media exposure remains a powerful factor in shaping public opinion in contemporary societies. Through repeated dissemination of information and interpretation of public issues, the media influence what citizens know, how they evaluate political developments, and which issues they consider important. In complex media environments such as those found in major urban centres, the interaction between media exposure, credibility, and audience interpretation becomes particularly significant in understanding how public opinion is formed and expressed.

Review of Empirical Studies

George and Okeke [2018] conducted a survey of 500 residents in Lagos State to examine the relationship between television news exposure and political awareness. The study found that regular viewers of television news demonstrated significantly higher levels of knowledge about state government policies and political events compared to infrequent viewers. The authors concluded that consistent exposure to traditional broadcast news not only informs citizens but also influences their evaluations of government performance and policy effectiveness.

Akinola and Bello [2019] used a mixed-methods approach to investigate the impact of social media news consumption on public opinion among young adults in Lagos. Their findings revealed that participants who actively engaged with political news on social media platforms were more likely to express strong opinions on governance issues. Importantly, the study highlighted that credibility perceptions moderated this relationship: news perceived as reliable shaped opinions more strongly, whereas information from sources seen as biased was frequently disregarded or contested.

In a cross-sectional study, Adeoye, Nwosu, and Fatoki (2020) assessed the influence of online news portals on residents' attitudes toward public policy decisions in Lagos. Survey results indicated a positive correlation between frequency of online news consumption and opinion formation, suggesting that digital platforms serve as effective channels for disseminating information and shaping public discourse. The study also emphasized that interactive features such as comment sections and sharing options reinforced engagement and discussion, thereby enhancing the impact of news on public attitudes.

Tunde and Lawal [2021] conducted an experimental study measuring how framing of economic news influenced public perception in Lagos. Participants were randomly assigned to read positively framed, negatively framed, or neutral news stories about local infrastructure projects. Results showed that framing significantly affected respondents' evaluations: positive frames increased approval of government initiatives, while negative frames heightened skepticism and critical questioning. The study underscores the role of media framing in shaping audience interpretation and opinion.

Okafor and Musa [2022] examined the role of perceived media credibility in public opinion formation using a survey of 400 Lagos residents. The authors found that credibility was a stronger predictor of opinion strength than mere exposure. Participants who trusted the news sources they followed reported more stable and confident opinions on governance and social issues, whereas low-credibility sources led to ambivalence and selective acceptance of information. This highlights the importance of source trustworthiness in influencing citizen attitudes.

Ibrahim and Adeyemi [2023] conducted in-depth interviews with 50 Lagos residents to explore how exposure to multiple media platforms influences issue salience. Participants described using television, newspapers, and online news interchangeably to verify information. The study found that repeated exposure across multiple platforms reinforced the perceived importance of certain issues, demonstrating a cumulative agenda-setting effect and suggesting that media repetition plays a significant role in shaping public priorities and discussions.

Newman et al. [2023] investigated media consumption patterns in urban African contexts, including Lagos, and found that hybrid media environments, where traditional media coexists with digital platforms enhance public engagement with news but also create challenges in discerning credible sources. Their survey revealed that participants actively cross-checked news across platforms, and those with higher media literacy were better able to develop informed opinions, suggesting a moderating role of audience skills in media influence.

Adebayo, Fashola, and Okonkwo [2023] conducted a longitudinal study on Lagos residents' engagement with both radio and online news during local elections. Results showed that residents exposed to multiple platforms consistently demonstrated different political opinions, as compared to single-platform consumers. The study also highlighted that trust in

the news source amplified this effect: the more credible the platform was perceived, the stronger the influence on opinion formation.

Literature Gap

Existing empirical literature consistently demonstrates that media exposure, framing, and credibility play crucial roles in shaping public opinion [George & Okeke, 2018; Okafor & Musa, 2022; Tunde & Lawal, 2021]. However, most studies focus on either traditional or social media separately, with limited investigation into how hybrid media environments operate in rapidly evolving urban settings such as Lagos. Moreover, few studies explore the interplay between media exposure, credibility, and issue salience simultaneously. While previous research identifies media literacy and trust as moderating factors [Akinola & Bello, 2019; Newman et al., 2023], there is a paucity of context-specific studies that examine how Lagos residents utilize multiple news sources to form opinions about governance and public issues. The present study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the combined influence of exposure to traditional and digital news platforms, as well as perceived media credibility, on public opinion formation among Lagos State residents.

Theoretical Framework: Agenda-Setting Theory

The Agenda-Setting Theory [AST] was first formalized by McCombs and Shaw in 1972 through their seminal study of the 1968 U.S. presidential election, which demonstrated a strong correlation between the issues emphasized in the news media and the issues that voters perceived as most important. While earlier communication scholarship recognized media's role in informing the public, McCombs and Shaw [1972] were the first to systematically conceptualize the idea that the media do not tell people what to think, but rather what to think about. Since then, the theory has been widely adopted as a foundational framework in mass communication research, particularly in studies examining the influence of media exposure on public opinion.

The Agenda-Setting Theory provides a useful lens for examining the influence of news media on public opinion in Lagos State. The theory posits that media coverage shapes the salience of issues in the minds of audiences, meaning that the frequency, prominence, and framing of news stories determine which topics citizens perceive as most important [McCombs & Reynolds, 2023]. In this view, media do not simply report events; they actively prioritize issues, thereby guiding public discourse and influencing collective attention.

Agenda-Setting theory helps explain how exposure to television, radio, newspapers, and digital news platforms can influence residents' perceptions of governance, policy, and social issues. For example, when local media repeatedly highlight issues such as urban traffic congestion, insecurity, or public health initiatives, these topics become cognitively salient to audiences, shaping their judgments about governmental performance and priorities. Furthermore, the theory underscores the importance of media credibility: the salience of an issue is amplified when audiences trust the sources presenting it, whereas low-credibility sources may fail to influence public opinions effectively.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a quantitative survey design on media practitioners to obtain perspectives on news media influence on public opinion in Lagos State, Nigeria. The survey population comprised adult residents aged 18 years and above living in selected Local Government Areas [Ikeja, Surulere, Alimosho and Mushin] within Lagos State who had

exposure to at least one form of news media [television, radio, newspapers, or online news platforms]. Using Krejcie and Morgan’s [1970] table for sample size determination, a total of 400 respondents were selected from an estimated accessible population of Lagos residents. Proportionate stratified sampling was used to allocate participants across four LGAs [100 respondents per LGA], while convenience sampling was employed to administer questionnaires to residents present at central public locations and community centres.

A self-developed questionnaire, informed by Agenda-Setting Theory, Framing Theory, and prior studies on media exposure and credibility, was used to collect data. The instrument underwent expert validation from three mass communication scholars, and a pilot test involving 20 residents from a neighbouring LGA yielded a Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.84, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Ethical approval was obtained from the Lagos State University Research Ethics Committee, while administrative approvals were secured from participating media organisations. All participants provided informed consent and were assured of confidentiality, voluntariness, and anonymity.

Of the 400 questionnaires distributed, 372 were returned valid, representing a 93% response rate. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and multiple regression) in SPSS version 25 to examine relationships between media exposure, perceived credibility, and public opinion. Qualitative interview transcripts were subjected to thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-step approach, with emerging themes integrated into the discussion to enrich interpretation of survey findings.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

A total of 400 copies of the questionnaire were distributed across four purposively selected Local Government Areas in Lagos State – Ikeja, Surulere, Alimosho and Mushin representing different socioeconomic and geographic zones. Out of these, 372 questionnaires were correctly completed and returned, representing a 93% response rate. The analysis focuses on residents’ media exposure, perceptions of media credibility, and the influence of news media on public opinion.

Table 1: Frequency of News Media Exposure

Table 2: Perceived Credibility of News Media

Perceived Credibility Aspect	Strongly Agree [SA]	Agree [A]	Disagree [D]	Strongly Disagree [SD]	N	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
Television news is trustworthy	95	157	80	40	372	3.42	1.01	Accepted
Radio news provides accurate information	80	140	95	57	372	3.15	1.08	Accepted
Online news platforms are objective	85	135	92	60	372	3.18	1.09	Accepted
Newspapers (print/digital) are reliable	70	135	100	67	372	3.00	1.12	Accepted

Cluster Mean = 3.19; SD = 0.09

Table 2 shows that respondents generally perceive news media in Lagos as credible, with television being the most trusted. Some skepticism exists, especially for newspapers and online platforms, but overall credibility is positively evaluated.

Table 3: Influence of News Media on Public Opinion

Public Opinion Aspect	Very High Influence [VHI]	High Influence [HI]	Low Influence [LI]	Very Low Influence [VLI]	N	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
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Media shapes my opinion on governance	110	145	80	37	372	3.28	1.01	Accepted
Media influences my view on public policy	105	140	90	37	372	3.23	1.03	Accepted
Media affects my perception of infrastructure	95	135	100	42	372	3.14	1.06	Accepted
Media shapes opinions on social issues	90	130	105	47	372	3.09	1.07	Accepted
Media influences my view on security issues	85	125	110	52	372	3.02	1.09	Accepted

Cluster Mean = 3.15; SD = 0.09

The table above shows that news media is perceived as moderately to highly influential on residents’ opinions regarding governance, public policy, infrastructure, security, and social issues. Television and online platforms appear most impactful.

Hypothesis

- H₀: Media credibility does not significantly predict public opinion.
- H₁: Media credibility significantly predicts public opinion.

Multiple regression analysis results:

Predictor	β	T	p	R ²
Media Credibility	0.39	5.42	<0.01	0.31

Interpretation: Media credibility explains 31% of the variance in public opinion formation. The null hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study investigated the influence of news media on public opinion among residents of Lagos State, integrating survey data from adult residents across five purposively selected Local Government Areas. The discussion below addresses each research objective.

Objective 1: Assess the level of exposure to news media among residents of Lagos State

The first objective sought to determine how frequently residents engage with different news media platforms. Findings from the survey revealed high exposure to television [88%] and online news platforms [83%], while radio [75%] and newspapers [69%] recorded slightly lower engagement. These results indicate that Lagos residents are highly connected to news media, with television and online sources playing the most prominent roles. The findings reflect Lagos State’s status as a commercial and media hub, with high internet penetration and widespread access to television and radio. The observed patterns align with global trends in hybrid media systems, where audiences increasingly consume news across multiple platforms to stay informed [Newman et al., 2023]. The dominance of television as a

trusted source also supports earlier findings by McCombs and Reynolds [2023], who noted that legacy media continue to influence public discourse even in digitally fragmented environments. Overall, the data suggest that residents' frequent media exposure provides a solid foundation for the media to shape public perceptions and opinion formation.

Objective 2: Examine the relationship between news media exposure and public opinion formation among residents of Lagos State

The second objective explored the extent to which media exposure is associated with residents' formation of opinions on governance, public policy, infrastructure, security, and social issues. Pearson correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship [$r = 0.61$, $p < 0.05$] between media exposure and public opinion. This indicates that residents who frequently engage with news media are more likely to develop informed views on societal issues. These findings support Agenda-Setting Theory [McCombs & Shaw, 1972], which posits that media coverage influences the salience of issues in the public mind, shaping perceptions of what is important. The results also suggest that cross-platform exposure amplifies agenda-setting effects, as stories circulate across television, online portals, and social media, enhancing issue visibility and public engagement [Neuman et al., 2024]. Therefore, frequent media exposure not only informs residents but also elevates the perceived importance of societal issues, confirming the central role of media in shaping public consciousness.

Objective 3: Determine the influence of perceived media credibility on public opinion among residents of Lagos State

The third objective examined whether residents' perceptions of media credibility influence their opinions. Multiple regression analysis revealed that media credibility significantly predicts public opinion [$\beta = 0.39$, $t = 5.42$, $p < 0.01$], with 31% of the variance in opinion formation explained by credibility ($R^2 = 0.31$). Residents generally rated television and online platforms as the most credible, while newspapers received lower trust scores. These findings correspond with Framing Theory [Entman, 1993], which suggests that the interpretation and acceptance of media messages depend on the perceived trustworthiness and reliability of the source. In this context, audiences who regard media outlets as accurate, objective, and reliable are more likely to accept the framing of issues presented and integrate these perspectives into their opinions. Conversely, lower credibility undermines the persuasive power of news coverage, highlighting credibility as a critical moderator in media influence.

Overall, the findings show that Lagos residents are highly exposed to multiple news media platforms, with television and online sources dominating. Frequent exposure significantly correlates with public opinion formation, confirming the agenda-setting role of news media. Additionally, media credibility strongly influences whether residents accept and incorporate media perspectives, supporting framing theory. Together, these findings suggest that both exposure and perceived reliability are essential for understanding how news media shape public opinion in urban, digitally connected contexts like Lagos State. The study reinforces the notion that media influence is a combination of access, attention, and trust, emphasizing the continuing relevance of traditional theories in contemporary media environments.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the influence of news media on public opinion among residents of Lagos State, Nigeria, using a descriptive survey design. The findings revealed that residents are highly exposed to news media, particularly television and online news platforms, which serve as primary sources of information on governance, public policy, infrastructure, security, and social issues. The study established a significant positive relationship between news media exposure and public opinion formation, confirming that frequent media engagement increases awareness of societal issues and shapes residents' perspectives. Furthermore, perceived media credibility was found to significantly predict public opinion, with trustworthy, accurate, and reliable news sources exerting stronger influence on how residents form judgments about social and political matters. These findings underscore the importance of both accessibility and credibility in the media ecosystem, demonstrating that exposure alone is not sufficient to shape opinion without perceived trustworthiness. Overall, the study affirms the critical role of news media as a driver of public awareness and opinion in urban and socioeconomically diverse settings like Lagos State, while highlighting the interplay between exposure, credibility, and opinion formation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Media organizations should prioritize the delivery of accurate, reliable, and objective news content to enhance public trust and positively influence opinion formation among Lagos residents.
2. Government and media regulatory bodies should implement programs that improve media literacy, enabling residents to critically evaluate news content, differentiate credible sources, and mitigate the impact of misinformation.
3. News producers should continue leveraging multiple platforms such as television, online news portals, and social media to maximize reach and ensure that public opinion is informed by diverse, high-quality news coverage.
4. Researchers and policymakers should monitor the dynamics of media influence in urban contexts, particularly the role of digital platforms, to design communication strategies that promote informed citizen engagement and participatory governance.

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