

TREND ANALYSIS OF CONSISTENCY IN LOCAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AMONG CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN JOS SOUTH LGA, PLATEAU STATE

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ABSTRACT

Trending issues on digital platforms like the social media today have shaped public discourse and narratives in the cyberspace. This presents an opportunity for Civil Society Organisations to take advantage of the social media to determine the relevance of their advocacy campaigns and public perceptions and acceptance of the same. There, however, appears to be a challenge arising from the longevity of information on social media platforms and how the social media needs to be sustained, especially by Civil Society Organisations, in the social media space. The research set out to assess the nature of the consistency of trends across social media platforms, especially as it relates to civil society organisations within Jos, South local government area of Plateau State, Nigeria. The research adopted the Social Network theory and the Uses and Gratification theory as a theoretical guide. The research analysed civil society organisations within Jos South via the use of a questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. Findings reveal that cultural issues recognisable by residents of Jos South inundate media messages of civil society organisations within the Local Government area, while media messages on social media platforms from Civil Society Organisations in Jos South reflect the values of the digital public within their domain. The research recommends that the content of messages published on social media platforms by Civil Society Organizations should characterise the acceptable communication norms of individuals, and the adoption of relevant topics that are specific to the demographic peculiarity of a target public should be explored by Civil Society Organisations. Maintenance of synergy with relevant public influencers who have the capacity through their followership on the social media was also recommended by the research.

KEYWORDS: Analysis, Audience, Civil Society Organizations, Social Media, and Trends.

INTRODUCTION

The social media has become a consequential avenue for navigating public discussions and shaping public narratives in the 21st-century society. With a myriad of active users noticeable in the plethora of social network platforms such as Facebook, X, Instagram, and TikTok, this trend has accentuated the promotion of social dialogues across divergent social groups (Zhaoyu & Dolah 2023). However, while several studies have been undertaken on the social media and its relevance to the 21st-century public, not much has been done on the issue of trend consistency, especially as it relates to the activities of civil society organisations that serve as catalysts for the advancement of policy creation and good governance advocacy. Yumasheva (2025) avers that the consistent appearance of trends on social media networks have overtime served to determine the relevance given to a public narrative that serves as a guide for public conversations on digital platforms such as the social media. The resurgence of a particular trend in society may serve to denote the nature and kind of importance accorded to the social media, borne out of societal concerns and other underlying factors that may determine its longevity (So Young & Kyung, 2022). This may be attributable to the number of people that the trend affects, the impact it has on a select group of people, and the effects it may have when discussions on social media opinion are escalated.

Access to information today has been highly revolutionized because of the emergence of digital technology. The emergence of the social media today has significantly impacted communication and public discourse (Rui, 2024). This has brought about diverse opportunities for a lot of individuals in today's society, which has, in the long run, led to the transformation of the news media. Olivia and Theodora (2024) posit that topical trends on the social media today play a dominant role in determining public discourse and fostering social mobilisations. Several empirical studies have served to determine how trends emerge from society and are transmitted on digital platforms such as the social media. Rui (2024) asserts that there lies a significant paucity of social media on the consistency of these trends on digital platforms. Several social media platforms may differ on how trends emerge and are eventually sustained, depending on the nature of the social media platform and the behavioural attitudes of its subscribers (Jaywardhan & Tushar, 2025). The need to assess the consistency of a trend can serve as a panacea for researchers across the board, especially within the realm of media research, to significantly interact with online publics, strategise their content for specific targeting, and select the right platform to interact.

Due to the proliferation of digital platforms in the 21st-century society, information that is often deemed to be consequential to society has the tendency to go viral when it is projected on social media platforms. More so, when the information relayed is accompanied by captions that elicit and provoke public sentiments on current trends (Florian & Indra, 2025). This could arise from the content of such information and the sensitivity it carries. Consequently, whenever another piece of information pops up with a higher tendency of whipping public sentiments, the former

could be overshadowed as fast as it sprang up and often, lose its relevance and fade into oblivion, regardless of the weight of relevance it possesses. Chaminda and Henrik (2025) buttressed that this could be attributable to the information overload social media audiences have to contend with in digital spaces. It is, however, noticeable that some topics gain sustained consistency regardless of what comes afterwards, against others that do not enjoy consistency in visibility.

The overwhelming nature of today's digital conversations in online environments can serve to drive the reasoning behind the need to sustain a discourse on digital platforms to stress the importance and potential impact they stand to attract on issues termed as significant for the health and overall development of a society (Barka & Najir, 2024). The study is based on trend analysis research that intends to assess the nature of the consistency of trends across social media platforms, especially as it relates to civil society organisations. The study additionally hopes to determine the reasoning behind the longevity of certain trends within the digital communities of civil society organisations in Jos, South local government area of Plateau State, Nigeria.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The social media today has become a veritable tool for a lot of civil society organisations for advocacy and awareness campaigns to attract public attention to significant societal issues. The proliferation of these digital platforms also comes with challenges for civil society organisations, especially those domiciled in Jos South of Plateau State. This is largely attributable to the lack of consistency of trending societal issues that may easily lose relevance over the emergence of another, regardless of its significance and consequence (Balabanova 2024). This is a source of concern over the inability of social media users to sustain a trend consistency for advocacy issues within the context of digital conversations that shape public narratives.

The overbearing consequence of overlapping issues on the social media that may result in inconsistency of trending issues with local significance for civil society organisations presents a challenge (Abu et al 2024). These could range from issues with strategic local importance and public attitudes towards the social media owing to limited comprehension of the need for some issues to attract long-term significance, which seem to fade away, despite concerted efforts placed on the social media by civil society organisations in Jos South, which needs to be investigated.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the nature of local characteristics (method of communication, engagement styles, network structures) of social media narratives adopted by civil society organizations within Jos South local government area of Plateau state.
2. To examine the significance of consistent social media trends on the advocacy campaigns of civil society organizations in Jos South local government area of Plateau state.

3. To understand the factors contributing to the nature of consistency of social media trends in advocacy campaigns for civil society organizations.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Trend Analysis

Data that has been investigated and used for research and reference purposes owing to its resurgence and re-emergence over time, especially on digital platforms, has, over time, been referred to as a trend. To substantiate the assertion, Kunal (2025) posits that trend analysis denotes any strategy deployed for the gleaning of data in retrospect with a bid to detect a pattern via the assessment of the historical context of the data. It suffices that the salient attributes of the above can be conveniently referred to as trend analysis.

The strategy mentioned above has been known to be applied to diverse fields of endeavours, of which media research happens not to be an exception. These identifiable patterns could be investigated on a short or long-term basis, depending on the nature and structure of the phenomenon being investigated and the intended outcome of the same (Murat, 2024). Gonepally and Narender (2025) further averred that the interpretation of trend data requires diligence and precision for the results to be specific and strategically inclined. The application of the concept to this research is anchored on the need for the scientific determination of media relevance as proffered by civil society organizations in advocacy campaigns for policy implementation.

Civil Society Organizations

These are organisations that are identifiable within societies, especially urban societies created by individuals within a social sphere whose operationalization is devoid of government intervention and whose funding often comes from interventions and grants from private sector organizations and individuals. They could be community-based or labour unions whose sole aim is to provide humanitarian interventions and advance public interests (Iwuno et al, 2025). Often, they serve as intermediaries between the government and citizens.

Civil Society organizations (CSO's) often serve to checkmate the activities of government at all levels and promote the active participation of the citizenry in development-driven initiatives by encouraging participation in the governance process and serving to hold government accountable to the people through their activities. Burlachenko (2025) asserts that their activities are mostly anchored on human rights issues, security, political participation, and advancement of people-centred policy initiation and implementation by government at all levels.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role of Social Media Narratives in Activities of Civil Society Organizations (CSO's)

The social media has, over the years, amplified the activities of Civil Society Organizations largely owing to its power of immediacy and real-time updates. Tetiana and Yurii (2025) posit that a lot of Civil Society Organizations are able to transmit their messages in real time to call for immediate action on burning societal issues. This has enabled Civil Society Organizations to use social media to shape public conversations and direct social media narratives to align with advocacy campaigns and compel government at different levels to act on issues of public concern (Athulya, 2025). A vivid example of such in Nigeria is the issue of certificate forgery by a serving Nigerian Minister who was compelled, via the mounting pressure of a lot of Civil Society Organizations on social media, to respond to allegations proffered by an online news media organization known as Premium Times. The allegation of certificate forgery drew so much attention on social media that the Federal government had to advise him to voluntarily resign his appointment as a Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Tetiana and Yurii, 2025).

The social media has also been able to engender inclusivity across all sectors of the Nigerian economy, owing to the way the medium has given a voice to the marginalised sectors of the Nigerian society by enabling them to share their stories. It has also enabled Civil Society Organizations to champion advocacy campaigns for their inclusion in the national discourse (Yueshu et al, 2025). This has not come without its downsides. Due to the information overload digital audiences have to contend with on the social media, Civil Society Organisations are often bombarded with a lot of misinformation, fake news, and biases from several individuals on social media platforms (Muhammad, 2025). This presupposes the need for effective gatekeeping approaches by CSOs and fact-checking of media content before reposing trust in the same.

The Significance of Social Media Trends in Advocacy Campaigns

Social media trends have proven to surmount the challenges of geographical barriers by enabling advocacy campaigns to reach areas where information is often controlled by government and opinion leaders whose views are often regarded as law in some environments. Rahul and Sharieff (2025) contend that the use of hashtags has enabled advocacy campaign issues by CSOs to gain wider visibility and broaden the scope of conversations. This has proven to have affected some societies positively, which, in the long run, fosters a wider engagement via contributions in comment sections, shares, and live streaming services offered by social media platforms (Jacey & Nurellezia, 2024).

Trending topics on the social media have also been facilitated by the use of attractive narratives and topics that serve to trigger the emotions of digital publics. Yusuf and Nuhu (2025) believe that this has served to engender a lot of audiences in digital spaces to be gravitated toward well-crafted stories that evoke their emotions

and sentiments, which eventually compels them to act. The downside of this is that this attention could be short-lived when another issue of national importance springs up. This presents the need for CSO's to fashion out ways of enabling their narratives to remain relevant in a way that could serve to resonate within the digital publics even when attention has been shifted to other issues (Siva & Felisiya, 2024). This could be achieved via the effective measurement of message efficacy and adjustment of strategies used in calling for attention in the digital space to sustain relevance and visibility.

Factors Contributing to the Consistency of Social Media Trends in Advocacy Campaigns

Several factors can serve to enhance the consistency of advocacy campaigns for CSOs on the social media today. When these factors are taken into consideration via scientific investigations and measurement, CSOs can leverage these factors to advance their activities in digital spaces on the social media today to attract public discussions and sentiments towards the same. Gessler and Fabrizio (2024) buttressed that when objectives are clearly defined from the on-set, social media audiences are bound to look out for the actualisation of those objectives in the advancement of discussions on the issue. This should not be taken for granted, that a lot of individuals on the social media can be quick to detect a deviation from stated objectives, especially when such issues attract wider visibility to broaden discussions on the same. Rihadatul and Sutikna (2025) surmised that the contents following the presentation of stated objectives should be engaging by the frequent posting of updates and the use of captivating videos to accompany words. This can serve to sustain a trend for longer periods of time.

Other noticeable factors could range from the optimisation of features that are unique to a story being shared on social media platforms. Kasimu and Obinna (2025) posit that this could range from the use of hashtags, as mentioned earlier, enabling the adoption of an active response mechanism in order to sustain the interest of online audiences who easily look out for missing details from information shared. This could also be followed by the presentation of advocacy themes that align with current events in public conversations that serve to shape the narrative of an objective to move toward a desired result. Consequently, actively addressing misinformation that may arise from the interpretation of the objectives of an advocacy campaign can serve to make a trend remain relevant on social media platforms (Olayiwola & Taye, 2024). These factors that can be adopted via research and investigations can serve to render relevance and consistency to social media trends in advocacy campaigns that a lot of Civil Society Organisations can take advantage of and explore to the benefit of their intended narratives, and always call for action on salient societal issues.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research took its anchorage from the Social Network Theory and the Uses and Gratifications Theory of the Mass Media. The Social Network theory is a theory

created by Mark Granovetter in the early 70's. The theory seeks to examine the relationships that exist between individuals, groups, and organizations. Mona and Adrian (2025) aver that the theory stipulates that human beings are fused in a tightly knitted or consistent web of interactions with one another and that the nature of relationships that exist between human beings is significant in comprehending behavioural patterns of individuals over other individual factors, such as age or gender attributes. The theory also assumes that individual relationships are products of social constructions shaped by beliefs and social interactions structured by these relationships (Hannah et al., 2025).

The Uses and Gratification theory, on the other hand, is a theory propounded by Elihu Katz, also in the early 70's. The theory identifies individuals as active participants who identify with certain media in a bid to gratify some of their desires. The theory assumes that the media have no significant authority over individuals, but rather, individuals determine the media they expose themselves to in order to satisfy some of their individual and social desires (Issam, 2025). The theory further assumes that media consumption is deliberate and driven by specific aims, which could range from looking out for information, social interactions, and relief from stress.

The two theories are relevant to the research in the sense that both theories are hinged on social interactions, which is what the social media is all about. Social media platforms engender interactions in various forms that transform geographical barriers and cultural limitations. It presents opportunities for people to interact with one another and create and maintain these interactions via the exchange of mutual interests via themes, topics, and trends that suit their desires. Both theories adopted for the research speak directly to the ideology behind social media interactions in no small measure.

METHODOLOGY

A survey was conducted among ten (10) civil society organizations operating in Jos South Local government of Plateau state, namely, Search for Common Ground, Nigerian Bible Translation Trust (NBTT), Christian Rural Urban Development Association of Nigeria (CRUDAN), Peach Training Centre (PTC), Social Justice and Human Development for Peace Initiative (JDPC), Advocacy for the Support of Prisoners and Indigents' support, Thinking Cap Literacy Initiative, YIAGA Africa, Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), Equity International Initiative, and Harvest Leadership Community in Africa Leadership Development.

A total of one hundred (100) questionnaires were distributed, ten each, among the civil society organizations, and a total of 96 (Ninety-six) of the questionnaires were retrieved. This gives a cumulative of a 96% confidence level with a 4% margin of error.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Section A: Demographics

Sex	Frequency	%
Males	52	54
Females	44	46
Total	96	100
Marital Status	Frequency	%
Married	43	44.8
Single	32	33.3
Divorced	7	7.2
Widowed	11	11.4
Prefer not to say	3	3.3
Total	96	100
Age Range	Frequency	%
18-25	12	12.5
26-35	31	32.2
36-45	39	40.6
46 and above	14	15
Total	96	100
Educational Level	Frequency	%
Primary School	0	0
Secondary School	16	17
Tertiary Education	57	59
Postgraduate Education	23	24
Total	96	100

Section B: To assess the nature of local characteristics (method of communication, engagement styles, and network structures) of social media narratives adopted by civil society organizations within Jos South local government area of Plateau state.

No.	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Cultural issues recognizable by residents of Jos South inundate media messages of Civil Society Organizations within the Local Government.	22 (23%)	38 (40%)	7 (7.2%)	19 (20%)	10 (10.4%)
2	Media messages on social media platforms from Civil Society Organizations in Jos South reflect the values of the digital public within their domain.	18 (19%)	41 (43%)	3 (3.1%)	15 (16%)	19 (20%)

3	The adoption of relatable media content by Civil Society Organizations in Jos South enhances digital engagement with their online public.	20 (21%)	37 (39%)	12 (13%)	16 (17%)	11 (11.4)
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The table above shows that 22 of the respondents strongly agree that cultural issues recognizable by residents of Jos South inundate media messages of civil society organizations within the local government, while 38 agreed, 7 remain neutral, 19 of them disagreed, and 10 of the respondents strongly disagreed. To determine whether media messages on social media platforms from civil society organizations in Jos south reflect the values of the digital public within their domain, 18 of the respondents strongly agreed, 41 agreed, 3 remained neutral, 15 disagreed and 19 strongly disagreed. to know whether the adoption of relatable media content by civil society organizations in Jos south enhance digital engagement with their online public, 20 of the respondents strongly agreed, 37 agreed, 12 were neutral, while 16 disagreed and 11 strongly disagreed.

Section C: To examine the significance of consistent social media trends on the advocacy campaigns of civil society organizations in Jos South local government area of Plateau state.

No.	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	A consistent social media narrative on current trends enhances the visibility of Civil Society Organizations in Jos South Local government area.	17 (18%)	44 (46%)	1 (1.0%)	18 (19%)	16 (17%)
2	The adoption of relevant trending topics encourages public engagement for Civil Society Organizations in Jos South Local Government Area.	22 (23%)	39 (41%)	14 (15%)	12 (13%)	9 (9.3%)
3	The popularity of a social media trend determines the level of attention given to Civil Society Organizations' messages on social media platforms.	13 (14%)	40 (41.6%)	6 (6.2%)	22 (23%)	15 (16%)

To understand how consistent social media narrative on current trends enhances the visibility of Civil Society Organizations in Jos South Local Government Area, 17 of the respondents strongly agreed, while 44 agreed, 1 of the respondents remained neutral, 18 disagreed, and 16 strongly disagreed. To determine whether the adoption of relevant trending topics encourages public engagement for Civil Society Organizations in Jos South Local Government Area, 22 of the respondents strongly agree, while 39 agreed, 14 maintained a neutral position, 12 disagreed, and 9 strongly

disagreed. In a bid to understand if the popularity of a social media trend determines the level of attention given to Civil Society Organizations' messages on social media platforms, 13 of the respondents strongly agreed, while 40 agreed, 6 of the respondents maintained a neutral position, 22 disagreed, and 15 strongly disagreed.

SECTION D: To understand the factors contributing to the nature of consistency of social media trends in advocacy campaigns for civil society organizations.

No.	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	The consistency of digital audience engagement enhances the sustainability of social media trends in advocacy campaigns of Civil Society Organizations in Jos South.	25 (26%)	39 (41%)	12 (13%)	11 (11.4%)	9 (9.3%)
2	Synergy between Civil Society Organizations and public influencers contributes to the consistency of trending topics for advocacy campaigns.	19 (20%)	41 (43%)	3 (3.1%)	22 (23%)	11 (11.4%)
3	The adoption of hashtags facilitates the engagement of digital audiences in advocacy campaigns within Jos South local government area.	23 (24%)	31 (32.2%)	5 (5.2%)	21 (22%)	16 (17%)

To determine that consistency of digital audience engagement enhances the sustainability of social media trends in advocacy campaigns of Civil Society Organizations in Jos South, 25 of the respondents strongly agreed, 39 of the respondents agreed, 12 remained neutral, while 11 of the respondents disagreed, and 9 of the respondents strongly disagreed. To determine that synergy between Civil Society Organizations and public influencers contributes to the consistency of trending topics for advocacy campaigns, 19 of the respondents strongly agreed, while 41 agreed, 3 were neutral, 22 of the respondents disagreed, and 11 strongly disagreed. To understand whether the adoption of hashtags facilitates the engagement of digital audiences in advocacy campaigns within Jos South local government area, 23 of the respondents strongly agreed, 31 of them agreed, while 5 of the respondents maintained a neutral position, 21 of the respondents disagreed, and 16 strongly disagreed.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first objective of the research was to assess the nature of local characteristics (method of communication, engagement styles, and network structures) of social media narratives adopted by civil society organizations within Jos South local

government area of Plateau state. Findings reveal that cultural issues recognizable by residents of Jos South inundate media messages of Civil Society Organizations within the Local Government area, while media messages on social media platforms from Civil Society Organizations in Jos South reflect the values of the digital public within their domain. Findings further revealed that the adoption of relatable media content by Civil Society Organizations in Jos South enhances digital engagement with their online public. This affirms the tenets of the Social Network theory, which stipulates that human beings are fused in a tightly knitted or consistent web of interactions with one another and that the nature of relationships that exist between human beings is significant in comprehending behavioural patterns of individuals over other individual factors, such as age or gender attributes. This implies that individuals comment and discuss information that suits their preconceived biases and beliefs, in addition to the fact that most individuals on digital platforms value information that speaks to their cultures and way of living.

The second objective of the study was to examine the significance of consistent social media trends on the advocacy campaigns of civil society organizations in Jos South local government area of Plateau state. Findings revealed that consistent social media narratives on current trends enhance the visibility of Civil Society Organizations in Jos South Local Government Area. The findings further indicate that the adoption of relevant trending topics encourages public engagement for Civil Society Organizations in Jos South Local Government Area. In addition, the popularity of a social media trend determines the level of attention given to Civil Society Organizations' messages on social media platforms. This consolidates the standpoint of the Social Network theory which assumes that individual relationships are products of social constructions shaped by beliefs and social interactions structured by these relationships. This implies that consistent projection of media messages on social media platforms determines the nature and shape of narratives it attracts.

The third objective of the study was to understand the factors contributing to the nature of consistency of social media trends in advocacy campaigns for civil society organizations. Findings revealed that the consistency of digital audience engagement enhances the sustainability of social media trends in advocacy campaigns of Civil Society Organizations in Jos South. Findings further revealed that synergy between Civil Society Organizations and public influencers contributes to the consistency of trending topics for advocacy campaigns. Consequently, the findings further affirmed that the adoption of hashtags facilitates the engagement of digital audiences in advocacy campaigns within Jos South local government area. These findings authenticate the assumption of the Uses and Gratifications theory, which proffers that the media has no significant authority over individuals, but rather, individuals determine the media they expose themselves to, geared towards satisfying some of their individual and social desires. The implication here is that when Civil Society Organisations align their narratives to that of public influencers when carrying out advocacy campaigns, it guarantees positive responses, especially from the digital social media publics.

CONCLUSION

Civil Society Organisations must take advantage of the digital age syndrome of the social media in a bid to drive conversations and curate narratives that appeal to digital publics. This presupposes the need for proficiency in the use of social media platforms by CSO's to be updated with societal trends and to key into public discussions via the injection of their advocacy campaigns on the social media. The social media today has become a significant platform for the transmission of societal trends and advocacy campaigns that enhance wider outreach and societal engagement when used in the right way. The determination of a trend today on social media platforms is consequent upon the stories that evoke public emotions, sympathy, and sentiments, which serve as a catalyst for immediate public response and action. The study hereby makes the following recommendations:

1. The content of messages published on social media platforms by Civil Society Organizations should characterize the acceptable communication norms and narratives peculiar to digital publics targeted at in a bid to guarantee the longevity of such messages and relevance to the context of advocacy it was intended for.
2. The adoption of relevant topics that are specific to the demographic peculiarity of a target public should be explored by Civil Society Organizations to determine and enhance the consistency of the same on social media platforms.
3. Civil Society Organisations should maintain a strong synergy with relevant public influencers who have the capacity through their followership on the social media to enhance the visibility of their messages on social media platforms.

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