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Does Mass Media Echo Chamber Mediate on Biased Script Assimilation, Fact-Checking Journalism, And Voting Preferences?

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Abstract

In this digital era, the impact of mass media in electioneering activities cannot be underestimated in every country that practices a democratic system of government. In mass media domain, echo chamber's effect on fact-checking journalism, biased script assimilation, and voting preference appeared to lack an empirical investigation, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria. To fill this extant gap, this study aims to evaluate the mediating role of mass media echo chambers on fact-checking journalism, biased script assimilation, and voting preference in Nigeria. To realize this aim, a quantitative study was implored to ascertain the mediation mechanism and infer the study's findings. The outcomes of the study demonstrated that mass media echo chambers fully mediated the relationships between fact-checking journalism, biased script assimilation, and voting preference respectively. Thus, we strongly recommend using mass media for politicking since it provides an avenue for the preferred candidates' fact-checking and countering assimilated biased scripts on the voters' choice of candidates. Furthermore, the results on the individual factors' contribution to voting preference also established that the mass media echo chamber contributed the most to the voting preference. Consequently, it has proven to be an indispensable asset in persuading voters' choice of candidates in election.

Keywords: politicking, delegates; Nigerian presidential primary elections; mass media echo chambers; voting preference.

1. Introduction

Mass media is deemed beneficial in all facets of secular activities, this is because it is vital for the dissemination of information, dispatching of news, and as a tool for enlightening the public on government events and decisions. These were achieved through mass media such as newspapers, magazines; television; radio; and news agents before the advent of new media (Andrejevic, 2019). With the emergence of new media which comprised online news media, social media, and content websites, the roles of mass media expanded beyond conventional usage (Lee, Fong, 2021). It subsequently extends to using it for supporting business and social desires, advertisements, propaganda, public relations, and political correspondence (Hudders et al., 2021). Similarly, mass media promotes hybrid content by utilizing it for information and publicity in the marketing domain (Stürmer, Einwiller, 2023); therefore, it buttresses sponsored content (Hardy, 2021).

In other sectors such as health, mass media helps in combating health misinformation, especially in this era of a public health crisis (Peng et al., 2023). Mass media also intensifies the strength of social media in promoting democracy and public discussions by exposing people to politically diverse opinions (Terren, Borge, 2021). In the area of innovation, mass media serves as an avenue for managing the flow of knowledge in various organizations by using social media for

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projecting behavioural and resource-based perceptions (Bhimani, et al., 2019). Furthermore, it provides forums for sharing knowledge that can instigate new areas of research via social media (Ahmed, et al., 2019). Additionally, Zhao et al. (Zhao et al., 2021) projected that mass media facilitates educators' digital competencies, improves learning approaches, and offers suitable tools for enhancing education quality through virtual media platforms. Similarly, it serves as the best forum for dispatching disastrous warning information, trending information, and promoting upcoming social media influencers (Zhang, et al., 2019). Mass media reinforces online participatory journalism by providing avenues for the public to participate in the professional news creation processes (Engelke, 2019). On the other hand, Dwivedi et al. (Dwivedi et al., 2021) demonstrated that the role of mass media via social media outlets cannot be underrated in the business domain, this is because it helps to sustain customers' satisfaction, brings about value creation, improves customers' relationships, and enhances business companies' corporate credibility. Moreover, mass media paves the way for a digitalized society by bridging the digital divides that help in promoting policy measures, education groundings, and tailoring designs (Vassilakopoulou, Hustad, 2023).

From the Nigerian setting as the study's area, the impact of mass media through information and communication technology (ICT) has been felt in different professions irrespective of the challenges that impede the adoption of ICT in Nigeria, for example, in the construction firms, it serves as an avenue for dispatching interactions and tasks among individuals (Moshood et al., 2020). In the health sector domain, a study that was done in Nigeria attested that mass media plays a huge role in promoting health activities (Wogu et al., 2020). Similarly, mass media has been found to play an important role in spreading maternal health consciousness in Nigeria despite the obstacles that hinder access to communication technologies, thus the study emphasizes the need to intensify the level of maternal health awareness via other mass media forums (Igbino et al., 2020).

Moreover, Do et al. (Do et al., 2020) through one of the Nigerian studies, attested that mass media exposure makes a huge impact in encouraging partners to embrace family planning and adopt the use of modern contraceptives for minimizing unwanted pregnancies and birth rates. Olaniyan and Akpojivi (Olaniyan, Akpojivi, 2021) further demonstrated that the convergence of social media in the newsroom spectrum through the internet has widened the democratic nature of Nigeria despite the misuse of these media platforms by the public. However, in terms of factors that can impact electioneering in Nigeria, many variables such as opinion leaders' influence, religion, family, and mass media were outlined as predictors of the voting behaviour of the electorates in elections (Adeagbo et al., 2019). Other factors such as tribalism, ethnicity, corruption, sentiments, and the power of incumbency are also influencing the electorates' choice of voting in Nigeria (Ugbada, 2019; Paul, 2019).

Thus, there is still uncertainty about the power of mass media on the choice of presidential candidates by the delegates in the presidential primary elections (Uwalaka, Nwala, 2022; Adanlawo, Reddy, 2020). It is against this backdrop that we viewed this study as a worthwhile project to ascertain the role played by mass media in determining the choice of presidential candidates by the delegates of the three major political parties comprising All Progressives Congress (APC); Peoples Democratic Party (PDP); and Labour Party (LP) before 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

Consequently, our study specifically aims to look into antecedents of mass media echo chambers on voting preferences. Hence the general aim of this study is to evaluate the mediating effects of mass media echo chambers on biased script assimilation and fact-checking journalism on the delegates' voting preferences in the Nigerian 2022 presidential primary elections and examine the individual contributions of the independent variables on the voting preference. It is assumed that the findings of this study could help to highlight the need to prioritize fact-checking and the kind of information that is presented to the electorates via mass media for gaining their franchise in an election. Furthermore, it can advance the democratic system of government in Nigeria and proffer the best mass media that could be used for soliciting the electorates' mandates towards enhancing the chances of voting for better candidates in an election. To this end, our study intends to find answers to the following specific research questions:

(1) Did the mass media echo chamber mediate the relationship between biased script assimilation and delegates' voting preferences?

(2) Did the mass media echo chamber mediate the relationship between fact-checking journalism and delegates' voting preferences?

(3) What were the individual contributions of the independent and mediator variables on the delegates' voting preferences?

(4) What were the other mediums delegates got news about their preferred presidential candidates during the Nigerian 2022 presidential primary election?

2. Materials and methods

The materials used in this study comprised the earlier published media studies and political communications-related documents. Our study adopted the cultivation theory propounded by George Gerbner in the late 1960s and the rational decision-making model offered by Nigel Taylor in 1998 for ascertaining the mediating effects of mass media echo chambers on biased script assimilation and fact-checking journalism on the delegates' voting preferences. The survey quantitative method was employed in the study for quantifying the data and inferential study requirements. Hence, the descriptive part of the data was analyzed via Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) whilst the mediation mechanism was analyzed through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-AMOS). Regarding the sample size of our study, the Krejcie and Morgan (Krejcie, Morgan, 1970) sampling technique was used and determine the sample size from the 3,341 delegates' population that participated in the Nigerian 2022 presidential primary election.

Eventually, the sample size of 316 who participated in filling out the survey was used for the study. The questionnaire was proportionately administered among the major three political parties' delegates, which constituted the All Progressives Congress (APC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), and Labour Party (LP). Furthermore, the 32 questions used and measured the variables of this study were adopted from (Ackermann, Stadelmann-Steffen, 2022; Frimpong et al., 2020). However, biased script assimilation and fact-checking journalism were the independent variables of this study; the mass media echo chamber was the mediating variable while voting preference was the dependent variable. In terms of the data analyses of the study, the mediation mechanism hypotheses were analyzed via (SEM). Before arriving at the SEM analysis result, we ensured that the three stages of SEM requirements were met. We further established that three criteria for goodness of fit indices were satisfied. In other words, CMIN/DF was $<5(2.459)$, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) was $\geq .90 (.989)$ and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was $\leq .08 (.060)$ as (Hair et al., 2012) illustrated. Bootstrapping was finally run for mediation mechanism results.

3. Discussion

Voting preference has become integral in the study of election outcomes especially when people's ideas on politics are aligned. The voting preference impact in politics is one of the key factors that influence who is elected into public office in most democracies. While scholars have established the effect of election campaigns on voting preference, others contend that other factors like biased script assimilation have a direct or indirect influence on voting preference (Nagtzaam et al., 2017; Chowdhury et al., 2020; Guntermann, Persson, 2023). Establishing the relationship between biased script assimilation and voting preference, Johann et al. (Johann et al., 2018) aver that the tone of news media reporting affects citizens' party choices. Voters are more likely to vote for a candidate or party if the news media report favorably about them. Biased script assimilation deals with any opinion formed by exposure to disinformation which in turn affects voters' preference of a political candidate. Bowes et al. (Bowes et al., 2022) corroborate that people's interpretation and evaluation of information are also susceptible to bias. Biased assimilation is the tendency to readily accept confirmatory evidence as true but dismiss disconfirmatory evidence as false.

Consequently, when voters internalize biased news articles which promote specific opinions about a political candidate, they either affirm or reject that preferred candidate (Hamborg et al., 2019; Hassell et al., 2020; Rodrigo-Ginés et al., 2023; Rohrbach et al., 2023). However, arguments abound that mass media echo chambers have influences on politics (Haw, 2020). The mass media echo chamber is principally concerned with mass media audience dynamics; it is a way audience fragmentation on matters of access to information and social interaction works. Figà Talamanca and Arfini (Figà Talamanca, Arfini 2022) elaborate that an echo chamber is a social network, a community of people with social ties with one another who share a set of opinion(s) while interacting with opinions and viewpoints that would contradict them. The consequence of such a

homogenous information structure is worthy of attention especially when the scope of its influence is taken into cognizance (Dutton, Robertson, 2021; Kitchens et al., 2020).

Evidence from studies holds that the effect of mass media echo chambers in both political and communication discourse is a consequence of modern-era choice media which instigates selective exposure. Therefore, multiple media choice has been argued to be responsible for the effect of mass media echo chambers of media in matters of politics (Rabb et al., 2023).

However, Dubois and Blank (Dubois, Blank 2018) argued to the contrary, according to them, interest in politics and a diverse media diet tend to limit the extent to which people are caught in echo chambers. Conversely, others reiterate that individuals who spend more time around like-minded people do not only become more exposed to pro-attitudinal messages but decrease their exposure to counter-attitudinal information (Barberá, 2020).

Worth noting is that despite the plethora of debates surrounding the effect of mass media echo chambers, few studies abound regarding its mediating effect on the relationship between variables like biased script assimilation and voters' preference (Guo et al., 2020; Karlsen et al., 2017; Geiß et al., 2021; Modgil et al., 2021). Scholars have argued about the effect of mass media echo chambers on voting. Ackermann and Stadelmann-Steffen (Ackermann, Stadelmann-Steffen, 2022) argue that a voter wrapped up in his preferred party's "echo chamber" would probably not consider several parties as eligible and, thus, is less likely to cast a vote for a candidate from another party.

Similarly, Fredén et al. (Fredén et al., 2022) support that social networks have important effects on strategic voting, but these effects only arise when networks have the characteristics of echo chambers. While arguments about the effect of mass media echo chambers have been established, this paper contributes to existing studies on the phenomena by exploring its ability to mediate relationships between variables. Therefore, this study explores the effect of mass media echo chambers on the relationship between biased script assimilation and delegate voting preference. Thus, we hypothesize that:

H₁: The mass media echo chamber meditates on the relationship between biased script assimilation and delegates' voting preferences.

Another predictor of voting preference is fact-checking journalism. Fact-checking is symptomatic of a practice aimed at assessing the accuracy of political claims made by politicians to members of the public. Having gained momentum since 2010, fact-checking plays the key role of adjudicating truth which is integral not only in journalism but also in determining who the best political candidate may be (Chung et al., 2023; Robertson et al., 2020). Conceptualizing fact-checking Amazeen et al. (Amazeen et al., 2019) hold that the contemporary practice of political fact-checking entails publicly reporting on the accuracy of a claim or text already circulating in the media. The role of fact-checking journalism in the political sphere is premised on the need for truth especially when disinformation of electioneering is considered. Barrera et al. (Barrera et al 2020) affirm that, as alternative facts become part of modern politics in established democracies, so does fact-check; mainstream media have increasingly invested in checking politicians' claims and providing rebuttals.

However, the argument on the effect of fact-checking has aroused scholarly debate, especially regarding voting behaviour. While some scholars argue that fact-checking might have minimal effect on voters, others argue to the contrary (Robertson et al., 2020; Agadjanian et al., 2019; Oeldorf-Hirsch et al., 2023). Wintersieck et al. (Wintersieck et al., 2021) argue that beyond increasing voter knowledge, scholars have found fact-checks influenced the opinions of voters as well.

Contrary to this argument, Nyhan et al. (Nyhan et al 2020) corroborate that exposure to fact-checks can reduce misperceptions among supporters of both major party presidential candidates but did not affect attitudes toward those candidates. However, Carson et al. (Carson et al., (2022) reiterate that fact-checking can have the adverse "backfire effect" by making the journalist appear partial, which can undermine trust in the accuracy of the information or, in some examples, increase belief in the falsehood under review. A furtherance of this debate has explored other factors that can affect the influence of fact-checking (Himma-Kadakas, Ojamets, 2022; Kyriakidou et al., 2023).

In the same vein, studies have explored factors like mass media echo chamber and their effect on fact-checking journalism. While highlighting the effect of echo chambers on fact-checking, Li and Chang (Li, Chang, 2023) affirm that social media networks tend to form "echo chambers" of ideological segregation, which cloud people's judgment on what to believe or share. Diaz Ruiz and

Nilsson found that the mass media echo chamber forms a shield that resists counter information which might change people's behaviour on a subject matter. Exemplifying through Earth shape argument, Diaz Ruiz and Nilsson (Diaz Ruiz, Nilsson 2023). hold that, the flat earth echo chamber is a suitable context because of its resistance to fact-checking. Corroborating this position Karimov et al. narrowed the effect of mass media echo chambers on fact-checking to voting preference.

According to Karimov et al. (Karimov, et al., 2022), promoting fact-checking journalism, blocking access to sources of active disinformation, encouraging public dissemination of scientifically proven information, or having experts in the field appearing in mass media has little or no effect on a person inside the echo chamber.

While the arguments have established the relationship between mass media echo chambers and fact-checking, a paucity of studies on the effect of mass media echo chambers in mediating this relationship exists. Therefore, this study investigates the ability of mass media echo chambers to mediate the relationship between fact-checking and delegates' voting preference during the last presidential primary elections in Nigeria. Worthy of note remains that, this study is a furtherance of scholarly debates on the effect of mass media echo chamber and it argues that mass media echo chamber affects the relationship between fact-checking and delegates voting preference. Hence, we propose that:

H₂ Mass media echo chamber has a mediating effect on the relationship between fact-checking journalism and delegates voting preference

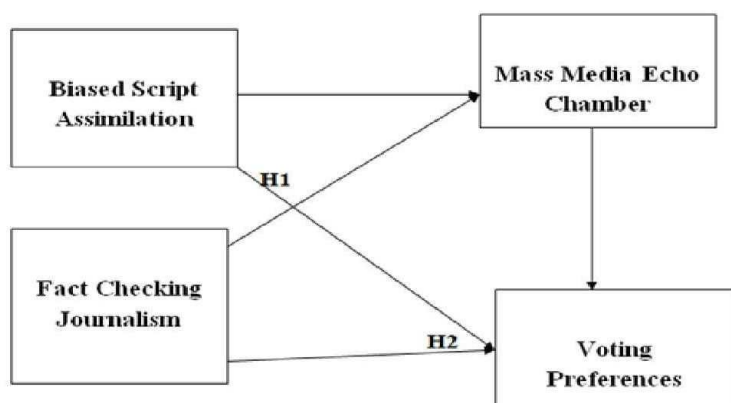


Fig. 1. The Study's conceptual framework

4. Results

This section discusses the findings of our study which explicitly evaluated the mediating effects of mass media echo chambers on biased script assimilation, fact-checking journalism, and voting preferences during the Nigerian 2022 presidential primary election, in terms of the profile of the three major political parties delegates we examined in this study,

Table 1 demonstrates that the majority of the respondents are male while the age of more than one quarter of them falls within 40 years and above. Concerning their marital status, it shows that the majority of them are married. Regarding their level of education, the majority of them had a university education. Furthermore, the data establishes that the greater numbers of respondents who participated in the study are Christians.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Participants (n=316)

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<i>Age</i>		
21 – 30	56	17.7
31 – 40	92	29.1
41 – 50	93	29.4
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	243	76.9
Female	73	23.1
<i>Marital Status</i>		

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Married	211	66.8
Single	93	29.4
Divorced	8	2.5
Widow	2	.6
Widower	2	.6
<i>Level of Education</i>		
Primary	1	.3
Secondary School	17	5.4
Diploma	47	17.9
University	251	79.4
<i>Religion</i>		
Christians	194	61.4
Muslims	116	36.7
Others	6	1.9

The findings of the first research question on whether mass media echo chamber mediates the relationship between biased script assimilation and delegates' voting preference, showed in [Table 2](#) that the direct model outcome was $\beta = 170$, $p < .05$; the mediation model result was $\beta = .150$, $p > .05$; and the standardized indirect effect outcome (SIE) was $\beta = .031$, $p < .05$. Thus, the standardized indirect effect outcomes proved that mass media echo chamber mediated significantly between biased script assimilation and delegates' voting preference.

Consequently, while previous scholars have emphasized the effect of mass media echo chambers on voting preference, this study deepened the arguments on the subject by considering it as a mediating factor between biased script assimilation and voting preference. Therefore, this study found that mass media echo chambers significantly mediated between biased script assimilation and voting preference, this result corroborates the conclusion of ([Ackermann, Stadelmann-Steffen, 2022](#)) and provides perspective to the study of ([Chan et al., 2023](#)) on ways to exploit mass media echo chamber. Considering its level of significance in mediating the relationship between the two variables, it is safe to establish mass media echo chamber as a key factor that influences voters' preference.

The answer to the second research question on whether mass media echo chamber mediates fact-checking journalism and voting preference, demonstrated in [Table 2](#) that the direct model outcome was ($\beta = 220$, $p < .05$); the mediation model result was ($\beta = .192$, $p > .05$) while the standardized indirect effect outcome (SIE) was $\beta = .035$, $p < .05$).

Therefore, standardized indirect effect findings affirmed that mass media echo chambers mediated significantly between fact-checking journalism and delegates' voting preferences. Albeit the impact of fact-checking on voting preference, the result showed that mass media echo chambers significantly mediated the relationship between fact-checking journalism and delegates' voting preference. It is a response to the recommendation of Chan et al. ([Chan et al., 2023](#)) who proposed that the relationship between trust and fact-checking or being in an echo chamber should be further studied. Consequently, this study is a successful attempt to further understand the effect of mass media echo chambers as a mediator which affects fact-checking cum voting preference. Hence, our study supports Törnberg, ([Törnberg, 2018](#)) who observes that mass media echo chambers can facilitate misinformation and increase bias and partisanship among voters. Therefore, we recommend in line with other scholars that the use of multiple media platforms as a source of information be adopted as a way to manage the mass media echo chamber effect on voting preference ([Dubois et al., 2020](#)).

Table 2. The mediating effect of Mass media echo chamber on the relationship between Biased script assimilation, Fact-checking journalism, and Voting preference

Hypothesized Path	Beta	p	95 % Bootstrap BC CI LB	UB
Direct Model				
Biased script assimilation → Voting preference	.170	.035		
Mediation Model				
Biased script assimilation → Voting preference	.150	.083		
Standardized Indirect Effect (SIE)	.031	.031	.001	.107
Direct Model				
Fact-checking journalism → Voting preference	.220	.006		
Mediation Model				
Fact-checking journalism → Voting preference	.192	.070		
Standardized Indirect Effect (SIE)	.035	.046	.001	.073

The outcomes of the third research question which aims to find the individual contributions of the independent and mediator variables on the delegates' voting preference established in [Table 3](#) that the mass media echo chamber as a mediator variable contributed most to the delegates' voting preference. This was because; it contributed 38.8 % effect on the voting preference. This result agrees with the conclusion of ([Ackermann, Stadelmann-Steffen, 2022](#)) that the mass media echo chamber is an indispensable asset to voting preference and provides perspective to the study of ([Chan et al., 2023](#)) on ways to maximize mass media echo chamber.

The next variable that made a magnitude impact was fact-checking journalism because it was able to contribute a 24.4 % effect on voting preference. Consequently, the study recommends that fact-checking journalism should be given paramount concern in studying factors that affect voting preference. The least was biased script assimilation which made a 13 % impact on the voting preference. However, all three variables were able to collectively explain 39.4 % variance in the delegates' voting preference which can be considered as a moderate effect size as demonstrated by ([Preacher, Kelley, 2011](#)).

Table 3. Individual independent and mediator variable contributions to delegates' voting preference

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig
1(Constant)	7.103	1.168	-	6.084	.000
Biased Script Assimilation	.061	.025	.130	2.476	.014
Mass Media Echo Chamber	.242	.035	.388	6.980	.000
Fact-checking Journalism	.145	.056	.244	2.614	.009
R-square .394 (39.4)					

The last research question that investigated other mediums delegates got news about their preferred presidential candidates during the Nigerian 2022 presidential primary election attested in [Table 4](#) that 33.9 % of delegates received news about their preferred presidential candidate from

media billboards and outdoor advertising. This finding ranks highest when compared with other mediums like meeting and gathering which is pegged at 22.8 %. Former school colleagues, discussion in the offices, community, public transportation system, and restaurant discussion, were the least mediums where they got information about their preferred candidates. This finding supports the conclusion of Schaub and Morisi (Schaub, Morisi, 2020) that mass media echo chambers exist not only in the online world and recent evidence indicates that they might be even stronger in offline social networks (Kofi Frimpong et al., 2022). Therefore, this study recommends that other mass media be taken into cognizance in the study of channels that can influence voting preference for subsequent elections.

Table 4. Other mediums the delegates got the news about their preferred presidential candidates

Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Discussions in the offices	22	7.0
Former school colleagues	52	16.5
Media billboards and outdoor advertising	107	33.9
Meetings and gatherings	72	22.8
Our Community	53	16.8
Public transportations	8	2.5
Restaurant Discussion	2	.6

5. Conclusion

Our study evaluated the mediating effects of mass media echo chambers on biased script assimilation, fact-checking journalism, and voting preferences from the Nigerian 2022 Presidential Primary Election Scenario. Additionally, the study examined the individual contributions of the above-mentioned predictors on voting preference and other mediums delegates got news about their preferred presidential candidates during the Nigerian 2022 presidential primary election. The findings to the first two questions on whether the mass media echo chamber mediates the relationships between biased script assimilation, fact-checking journalism, and voting preferences demonstrated that mass media echo chamber fully mediated the relationships between biased script assimilation, fact-checking journalism, and voting preferences. Consequently, while previous scholars have emphasized the effect of mass media echo chambers on voting preference, this study deepened the arguments by demonstrating that mass media echo chamber mediated the relationships between biased script assimilation and voting preference. In other words, this infers that the mass media echo chamber facilitates in contending biased script towards choosing the most preferred candidates in an election. This is because, the echo chamber on social networks, offers users the opportunity to meet people who have the same social ties as them and can share a set of opinions while interacting with viewpoints that contradict theirs (Figà Talamanca, Arfini, 2022).

Furthermore, the mediating effects of mass media echo chambers on the relationships between fact-checking journalism and voting preferences established that mass media echo chambers fully mediated their relationships. This finding supports the study of Törnberg (Törnberg, 2018) who observes that mass media echo chambers can facilitate misinformation clarifications towards choosing the preferred candidates in an election. Therefore, this study recommends that the use of multiple media platforms as sources of information be adopted as a way to manage the mass media echo chamber effect on delegates voting preference (Dubois et al., 2020).

The outcome of the independent and mediator variables' contributions to the voting preference shows that the mass media echo chamber as a mediating variable contributed most to the voting preference. This is followed by fact-checking journalism and biased script assimilation. The result agrees with the conclusion of (Ackermann, Stadelmann-Steffen, 2022) that the mass media echo chamber is an indispensable asset to voting preference and provides perspective to the study of (Chan et al., 2023) on ways to maximize mass media echo chamber.

Finally, the findings on the other mediums delegates got news about their preferred presidential candidates during the Nigerian 2022 presidential primary election revealed that the greatest numbers of delegates got news about their preferred presidential candidate from media billboards and outdoor advertising. This was followed by meetings and gathering forums. Former school colleagues, discussions in the offices, community, public transportation system, and restaurant discussion were the least mediums where they got information about their preferred

candidates. Thus, we suggest that candidates in subsequent elections should maximize using media billboards and outdoor advertising to elicit more votes in the electioneering processes. This finding supports the conclusion of Schaub and Morisi (Schaub, Morisi, 2020) that mass media echo chambers exist not only in the online world. Recent evidence also indicated that an offline echo chamber could be stronger than one on social networks (Kofi Frimpong et al., 2022).

The study also has theoretical implications because it extended cultivation theory by integrating voting preference as an element of the rational decision-making model in evaluating the antecedents of mass media echo chamber effects on voting preference in an election. Thus, it has incorporated voting preference as a factor of cultivation theory; this is because electorates can cultivate information regarding their candidates' preferences in an election via mass media and its echo chambers.

Our study equally has some limitations such as restricting the study to delegates that participated in the presidential primary election. Therefore, extending the study to the presidential general election could help to validate the outcomes of this study since the general public is expected to partake in it. Qualitative studies are also needed to conceptualize other factors that can influence voting preferences in the African continent, especially in the emerging ones.

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