

Interplay of Digital Media and Democracy: An Analysis of Politics of Twitter Ban in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper investigates the positions of state and non-state actors during the ban of Twitter by the Nigerian government between June 4, 2021 and January 13, 2022. It answers questions about whether non-state actors resisted the ban due to Twitter's contributions to democratic, civic space, and economic growth, and whether state actors considered the medium a threat to the country's unity and sovereignty with supportive evidence. Conflict theory and the Advocacy Coalition Framework are used as theoretical and analytical frameworks to explore the different beliefs and interests of the actors involved. The study found that the ban generated a series of reactions from these actors, leading to the development of three forms of narratives: dominant, alternative and metanarrative from the policy and advocacy coalition beliefs. The study concludes that examining the views of state and non-state actors during the ban period provides insights into the different interests, beliefs, and values that shape policy conflicts.

Keywords

Conflict, democracy, Twitter, Nigeria, policy actors

Introduction

In the last two decades, democracy and emerging media have found it difficult to coexist, despite the numerous benefits of the latter in ensuring participatory democracy. From Facebook to Twitter and other social networking sites, the rise of digital platforms is shaping and changing political objectives as well as the competition among many democracies in the world (Grossman, 2022). While technology developers do not stop innovating by creating features that help citizens express their democratic voices to the powerful political elites and individuals, the targets of the expressions, especially those who hold political power, do not hesitate to suppress the power of the platforms whenever they are perceived as significant threats to their personal identities and national

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sovereignty. While social media platforms have been acknowledged as significant tools for advocacy and social movement activities due to their unique features (Kareem & Akoja, 2017), opposing views suggest that these same features can be restricted by platform owners through internal policies and regulatory measures (Hestres, 2017). Consequently, members of civil society organisations, individual social commentators, activists, and politically conscious citizens face a dilemma in utilising these platforms as they had anticipated. This raises the question of alternative options. To what extent can non-technology-driven alternatives advance civic causes and contribute to fostering pragmatic democracies worldwide?

Similar to actions taken by other countries, the Nigerian government officially banned Twitter on June 4, 2021, restricting its operations within the nation. The decision followed Twitter's deletion of a tweet by President Muhammadu Buhari, which warned members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) about the insecurity they were causing in the south-east region and cautioned that they would face severe consequences if they continued to destroy critical national infrastructure. The government's irritation was also linked to the fact that the medium failed to ban the leader of the group, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, who has over the years used the platform to incite people in the region against the government (Obiaje, 2021). About five months after the ban, President Buhari stressed that the ban can only be lifted when the medium fulfills five conditions: respect for national security and cohesion; registration, physical presence, and representation in Nigeria; fair taxation; dispute resolution; and local content.

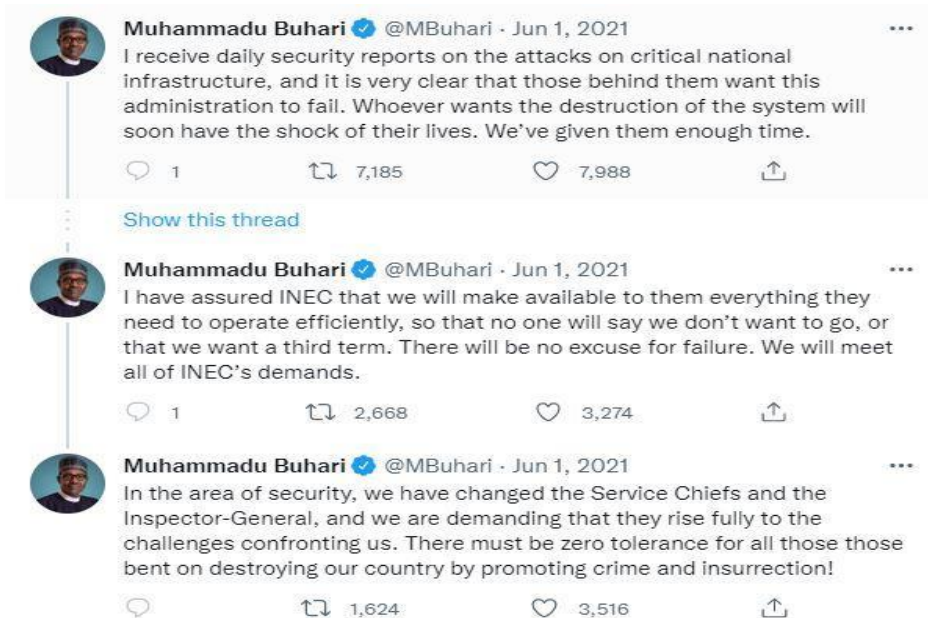


Figure 1: The screenshot of deleted tweet

The factors cited for the ban are not new because literature is replete with cases of democracies where various social media have been banned by political leaders citing spread of fake news, misinformation and disinformation and found to have contributed to polarisation of socio-political structures (Morales, Borondo, Losada & Benito, 2015; Grinberg, Joseph, Friedland, Swire-Thompson & Lazer, 2019; Anyim, 2021; Obiaje, 2021). In the study by Morales *et al.*, Twitter was identified as a powerful tool used by Venezuelans to engage in political discourse, leading to the formation of ideologically distinct groups based on retweets and mentions. Similarly, Miller's (2022) study highlights that restricting such platforms can be counterproductive, as evidenced by the strong resistance of Turkish citizens to President Erdogan's ban, which sparked widespread negative discourse.

While the political and academic debates continue on the ban spree of digital media across the world, we would like to join the conversation with an investigation of the positions of state and non-state actors during the ban period. This is necessary because the ban generated a series of reactions from these actors between June 4, 2021 and January 13, 2022. Considering the role of the medium in enhancing participatory democracy, the study asked, did non-state actors resist the ban because of its contributions to the development of democratic, civic space and economic growth? Did they consider unregulated digital media a threat to the country's unity and sovereignty? Did state actors mention the medium as a threat to the country's unity and sovereignty with supportive evidence? These questions are answered with consideration of the level of intra- and inter-conflicting positions that exist among and between the actors. These positions are employed for building three forms of narratives (dominant, alternative and metanarrative) from the policy and advocacy coalition beliefs.

Literature Review

Democratic and Advocacy Values in the Context of Digital and Social Media

Sustaining democracy in any nation requires the concerted efforts of various actors, engaged citizens, and strong institutions. While stakeholders are expected to play active, human-centered roles, the media, as one of these institutions, is often tasked with performing "oversight" functions, either directly or indirectly. This perspective highlights the media's role as a critical pillar in advocating for democratic values through collaboration with stakeholders, particularly those in the civic space and non-governmental sectors. Citizens, in turn, are expected to uphold values that promote their

appreciation of democracy, its principles, and effective implementation (Besley & Persson, 2019). The literature consistently highlights that this dynamic has been fundamental to the functioning of democracies across both the legacy and new media eras (Besley & Persson, 2019), significantly influencing areas such as civic education, public engagement, and political mobilisation (Feldman, 2003).

While debates persist on whether new or digital media should be used to describe the profound impact of emerging technologies revolutionising personal, group, and corporate communication (Dewdney & Ride, 2013), this paper positions these technologies as digital media that have brought, and continue to bring, extensive changes to socio-economic and political life since the advent of the Internet (Schroeder, 2018). Over time, the Internet and supporting technological infrastructure have facilitated the growth of numerous professional and social media platforms. As previously noted, social media has fundamentally transformed how people communicate, interact, and respond to socio-economic and political conditions. These platforms have significantly lowered barriers to political participation, enabling broader audiences to engage in political discourse and activities. Research indicates that social media enhances political participation by providing users with easier access to information and opportunities for political engagement.

Gil de Zúñiga, Jung & Valenzuela (2012) found a positive association between social media use and civic and political participation. Their study highlights how platforms such as Facebook and Twitter facilitate political activities, including signing petitions, participating in protests, and contacting public officials. These opportunities for increased access and participation contribute to a more engaged and informed electorate, which is crucial for the effective functioning of a democratic society. Similarly, Boulianne (2015), in a meta-analysis of research on social media and political participation, concluded that social media has a small but positive effect on civic and political engagement. This effect is especially significant among younger generations, who are more likely to rely on social media as a primary source of political information and involvement.

Despite these challenges, social media remains a powerful tool for political mobilisation and activism. Social movements worldwide have utilised social media to organise protests, spread awareness, and advocate for change. The Arab Spring serves as a prominent example, illustrating how social media can mobilize large populations and challenge authoritarian regimes. Howard & Hussain (2013) emphasise the role of platforms like Twitter and Facebook during the Arab Spring, noting their use in organising protests and disseminating real-time information. By bypassing state-controlled media, activists were able to coordinate efforts and amplify their voices, showcasing the potential of social media to drive democratic change. Similarly, Tufekci (2017) examines the role of social media in contemporary social movements, arguing that while it enables rapid mobilisation, it also poses challenges for

sustaining long-term activism. The phenomenon of "slacktivism," where online engagement fails to translate into real-world action, highlights a significant limitation of relying solely on social media for political mobilisation.

Framing Democratic Values in the Age of Digital and Social Media

The reviewed literature highlights that digital media has become integral to democracy, serving as a critical tool for discussing both the positive and negative outcomes of implementing democratic principles and ideals. Significantly, digital media continues to mediate relationships between citizens, political leaders, and other societal stakeholders (Schroeder, 2018). In contemporary times, platforms like Facebook and Twitter, as subsets of digital media, have created new avenues for political communication, mobilisation, and participation, thereby reshaping democratic processes in multifaceted ways. By enabling individuals to share opinions and engage in discussions, social media platforms influence the framing of political issues and the formation of public opinion. A study by Gil de Zúñiga, Molyneux & Zheng (2014) found that social media use is positively associated with increased political participation, particularly among younger demographics. This engagement manifests in various forms, including sharing political content, discussing political issues, and participating in online campaigns. Similarly, Vaccari *et al.* (2015) demonstrated that social media use enhances political knowledge and participation by making political information more accessible and reducing barriers to political engagement. The study emphasises that social media can foster a more informed and active citizenry, thereby contributing to the overall health of democratic processes.

However, their impact on public discourse is inherently dual. On one hand, social media democratises public dialogue by amplifying marginalised voices and fostering the exchange of diverse perspectives. Papacharissi (2015) asserts that social media platforms enable users to bypass traditional gatekeepers of information, such as mainstream media, and directly participate in public discussions, contributing to a more inclusive and pluralistic public sphere. Conversely, the same features that enhance democratic engagement can also facilitate the spread of misinformation and the entrenchment of echo chambers. In these echo chambers, users primarily encounter information that aligns with their preexisting beliefs, exacerbating polarization and fragmenting the public sphere (Papacharissi, 2015). Pariser (2011) discusses how algorithms on social media platforms create "filter bubbles" that restrict users' exposure to differing viewpoints, potentially undermining the quality of democratic deliberation.

One of the most significant challenges posed by social media in democratic governance is the spread of misinformation. Social media

platforms are frequently criticised for their role in disseminating false or misleading information, which can distort public perception and influence electoral outcomes. A study by Allcott & Gentzkow (2017) examined the role of social media in spreading fake news during the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Their research suggests that the rapid spread of misinformation on these platforms can erode trust in democratic institutions and processes, posing a serious threat to democratic governance. The phenomenon of echo chambers further exacerbates the problem by creating environments where users are primarily exposed to information that reinforces their pre-existing beliefs. This can lead to heightened political polarisation and the entrenchment of extreme views, making it more difficult to reach consensus on critical issues. Sunstein (2017) argues that the architecture of social media platforms, which prioritise content that generates engagement, contributes to the formation of echo chambers and filter bubbles. These dynamics undermine the deliberative aspect of democracy, where citizens are expected to engage with diverse perspectives and participate in reasoned debate.

Regulating Media in the Age of Political Discourse Polarisation

Governments worldwide are increasingly considering or implementing regulations to address the challenges posed by social media, including efforts to combat misinformation, protect personal data, and prevent harmful activities. The global nature of social media complicates regulation, as different countries adopt varying approaches, resulting in a fragmented regulatory landscape. This fragmentation creates challenges for businesses operating internationally, as they must navigate a complex set of regulations that differ by region. The need for a coordinated global approach to social media regulation is becoming more widely recognised as essential to effectively address these challenges (Flew, Martin & Suzor, 2019).

The rise of authoritarian governments using social media regulation to suppress dissent and control information poses a significant challenge to the global democratic order. In such contexts, regulation is often employed not to protect users, but to limit freedom of expression and access to information. This establishes the importance of striking a balance in regulation to safeguard both socio-economic activities and democratic values (Morozov, 2012). However, these regulations also have considerable implications for businesses and socio-economic activities. Social media regulation encompasses the policies and laws that govern the operation of social media platforms and their use by individuals and organisations. These regulations address a range of issues, including data privacy, content moderation, hate speech, misinformation, and advertising. A key example of regulatory efforts is the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which aims to protect users' privacy and data on digital platforms (Voigt & Von dem Bussche, 2017).

One of the most direct implications of social media regulation is its impact on businesses, particularly those that rely on social media for advertising and customer engagement. Social media platforms have become essential marketing tools, enabling companies to target specific demographics with personalized advertisements. Regulations such as the GDPR, which impose restrictions on data collection and usage, can significantly affect the effectiveness of these advertising strategies. Goldfarb and Tucker (2011) found that stricter privacy regulations can reduce the effectiveness of targeted advertising and decrease advertising revenues. This is because such regulations limit the amount of data that can be collected and used for personalised ads, making it harder for businesses to reach their desired audiences. Additionally, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are especially vulnerable to the effects of social media regulation. SMEs often rely on social media for cost-effective marketing and customer engagement. Stricter regulations can increase compliance costs and diminish the competitiveness of these businesses in the digital marketplace (Marthews & Tucker, 2017).

Social media regulation also influences consumer behavior, particularly in relation to privacy and trust. As consumers become more aware of data privacy concerns, their expectations regarding how companies manage their personal information are evolving. Regulations that improve data protection can enhance consumer trust in social media platforms and the businesses that operate on them (Acquisti, Brandimarte & Loewenstein, 2020). However, overly stringent regulations may risk reducing the functionality of social media platforms, potentially diminishing the user experience. For instance, regulations that restrict the use of data for personalisation could result in less relevant content and advertisements, leading to lower engagement levels (Tucker, 2014).

Beyond the direct effects on businesses and consumer behaviour, social media regulation has broader economic implications. Digital economies are increasingly reliant on the free flow of data and the ability of businesses to operate across borders. Regulations that impose data localisation requirements or restrict cross-border data flows can create barriers to trade and investment, potentially slowing down economic growth (Bauer, Lee-Makiyama, Van der Marel & Verschelde, 2014). Additionally, social media platforms themselves are significant economic players, employing thousands of people and contributing to economic activity through their operations and the services they provide. Regulations that impose heavy compliance burdens or penalties can affect the profitability and sustainability of these platforms, with potential knock-on effects on the wider economy (Castells, 2013). However, it is also argued that effective regulation can create a more stable and trustworthy digital environment, which in the long run could support economic growth by

fostering innovation and protecting consumers. For example, the GDPR has set a global standard for data protection, and businesses that comply with these regulations may be seen as more trustworthy by consumers, potentially giving them a competitive advantage in the global market (Bradford, 2020).

Theoretical and Analytical Framework

During the ban period, Nigerians, businesses and members of the international community witnessed an episode of policy conflict because the actors deployed certain cognitive and behavioural features towards establishing their positions (Heikkila & Weible, 2017). In this regard, conflict theory, which originates from Karl Marx, is appropriate for investigating issues and needs that were contested and negotiated before the ban was lifted because it proposes that humans are self-interested, societies operate under a perpetual scarcity of resources and conflict is pervasive and unavoidable within social groups and between social groups (Dahrendorf, 2022). Therefore, the power struggles between different groups have the tendency to contribute to political changes and revolutions. This leads to the adoption of the Advocacy Coalition Framework, an analytical tool propounded by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, which posits that the policy process is a space for competition between coalitions of actors who advocate beliefs about policy problems and solutions (Jenkins-Smith & Sabatier, 1994).

This framework has five hypotheses that drive how policy and coalition actors interact while contesting and negotiating interests. Coalition hypothesis 1 is about allies and opponents and states that during major controversies within a policy subsystem when policy core beliefs are in dispute, the lineup of allies and opponents tends to be rather stable over periods of a decade or so. In other words, one should expect some of the actors to be aligned on some issues over the ban. However, Coalition Hypothesis 2, which focuses on policy core beliefs, seems to suggest that substantial consensus on core policy beliefs could be reached among policy actors. With Coalition Hypothesis 3, secondary beliefs, an actor (or coalition) will give up secondary aspects of her (its) belief system before acknowledging weaknesses in the policy core. Hypotheses 4 and 5 focus on official and unofficial policy actors with the propositions that within a coalition, administrative agencies will usually advocate more moderate positions than their interest group allies and actors within purposive groups are more constrained in their expression of beliefs and policy positions than actors from material groups, respectively (Pierce, Peterson, Jones, Garrard & Vu, 2017).

From the assumptions of conflict theory to the hypothetical propositions of the ACF, it is obvious that one cannot investigate the intra- and inter-conflicts that ensued between the state actors (government officials, parliamentarians, opposition parties, opposition politicians) and non-state actors (civil society organisations/non-governmental organisations, social commentators, public affairs analysts, professional bodies, individual professionals and citizens)

without examining their views from a medium in which they have been documented during the period of the ban. This leads to the extraction of 67 relevant news reports from a national newspaper (*The Punch*). Conflict theory allows for the examination of the power struggles, differing interests, and tensions between these groups, providing insights into the dynamics of social and political interactions during the ban. It emphasises that these conflicts are driven by unequal power relations and the competing interests of various actors, making it a key tool for analysing the broader context of the ban. The ACF is useful for comparing and contrasting the narratives of different groups (state and non-state actors) regarding the Twitter ban. It helps in understanding how these groups, through their advocacy efforts, sought to shape the policy outcomes. The ACF's hypothetical propositions about belief systems, coalition formation, and policy change provide a lens to analyse how actors mobilised and interacted during the ban process.

To build the expected narratives, I used narratology, which relies heavily on "close readings" of the news stories by paying attention to the specifics of the stories towards comparing and contrasting advocacy and policy coalition narratives on the ban (Bal, 2017). Narratology's focus on story construction allows for an in-depth comparison of the dominant and alternative narratives presented by different actors, offering insights into how these stories influenced public perception and policy debates. It is particularly relevant for uncovering the ideological underpinnings of each group's position. After forming the dominant and alternative narratives, the semiotic square root proposed by Van Eeten (2007) for determining differing narratives within and between groups was adopted for establishing the metanarratives that ended the ban process and offered solutions. By applying the semiotic square to the narratives around the Twitter ban, it helps in mapping out the metanarratives that emerged from the conflict, leading to the resolution of the ban and the proposals for its end. This framework is applicable for understanding how meanings are constructed and contested in policy debates.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results derived from applying the methodological, theoretical, and analytical frameworks outlined earlier to analyse the views expressed in news stories reported by *The Punch* newspaper. These stories capture the perspectives of various stakeholders on the Twitter ban in Nigeria. The analysis revealed the emergence of dominant, alternative, and metanarratives shaped by the beliefs of policy and advocacy coalitions. The findings indicate that policy coalition actors, comprising state actors, predominantly adhered to the belief that the medium was being misused

throughout the ban period. This position substantiates existing literature that has largely established reasons for regulations of digital media, especially social media in many democracies (Marthews *et al.*, 2014; Morales *et al.*, 2015; Voigt *et al.*, 2017). In contrast, advocacy coalition actors, consisting of non-state actors, emphasised beliefs centered on the suppression of freedom of speech and the economic losses associated with the ban. One of the views that constantly resonates with existing literature and empirical evidence on how digital media banning is affecting citizens' ability to vehemently oppose anti-democratic activities of political leaders (for example, see Besley & Persson, 2019). However, while the policy coalition actors constantly expressed misuse beliefs, analysis shows that they equally frequently pointed out amicable resolutions in sight when the advocacy coalition actors stressed illegality beliefs. This suggests a possible balance of position from the policy actors in the midst of strong opposition from the advocacy coalition actors, pointing towards the existing view that digital media continues to mediate relationships between citizens, political leaders, and other societal stakeholders (Schroeder, 2018). Other beliefs are stated in Figure 1. From these beliefs, the three discussed narratives were built with consideration of the key beliefs.



Figure 2: Coalition beliefs

Dominant and Alternative Narratives

State actors emphasised the narrative that the medium is being misused by the citizens. Therefore, it should be banned before it destabilises the political system and/or structure. This position is in line with sociotechnical features of digital media, most importantly social media that enhance democratic engagement can also facilitate the spread of misinformation and the entrenchment of echo chambers (Papacharissi, 2015; Allcott & Gentzkow,

2017; Sunstein, 2017). Non-state actors considered the ban illegal and a means to gag people from heavily participating in the country's democracy. A situation that literature has vehemently opposed on the basis of restricting people from making significant contribution to effective implementation of democratic principles and ideals by uphold and appreciate values associated with democracy using digital media (Besley & Persson, 2019). These were the counter-dominant narratives from the advocacy actors and were constantly pursued during the ban period to the extent that the foreign governments, through their envoys, in most cases involved themselves in the policy change processes by expressing their support to the people and the advocacy coalition actors. When the federal government and national parliament discovered the implications of the external intervention, the government created the envoys' invitation narrative as part of its dominant narrative with the intention of informing foreign governments about the factors that necessitated the ban. Again, analysis reveals a continuous counter-dominant narrative of illegality from the advocacy coalition actors and some of the policy coalition actors, stating the implications of the ban on the country's international image. When it was clear that some prominent citizens and organisations were using the medium despite the ban, the federal government developed and spread the ban's remains and the prosecution of violators as alternative narratives, while the advocacy coalition came up with the impossible prosecution because some cabinet members were using the medium despite the ban and the need for resolution because national image and economy are at stake, in addition to compensating young entrepreneurs who lost huge revenue.

ECOWAS court hears Twitter ban suit Tuesday as Nigerians berate FG

Some Nigerians have berated the Federal Government as the ban on the micro-blogging site, Twitter, enters the 30th day today (Monday). The Federal Government had on June 5 suspended Twitter operations in the country. The suspension was announced two days after the platform deleted tweets of the President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retd.), saying they violated its rules. Despite the suspension, many Nigerians have been using Virtual Private Networks to access the micro-blogging site, forcing the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, to threaten them with prosecution. (*The Punch*, July 5, 2021; *Dominant and Alternative narratives excerpt*)

		Dominant Narrative		
State Actor		Twitter Ban in Nigeria		Non-State Actor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misuse • Summon foreign envoys • Users after ban will be prosecuted • Authoritarian leadership 		4/7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suppress freedom of speech • Illegal • Restricting civic space • Political reason • Authoritarian leadership • Misuse • Suppress freedom of the press
		Alternative Narrative		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lift the ban • Ban remains • Users after ban can't be prosecuted • No conditions for lifting the ban • Amicable resolution in sight • Poor global image • Probe the ban • Twitter negotiates with FG • Twitter agrees with the stipulated conditions 		9/11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic loss • Compensate young entrepreneurs • Lift the ban • Minister uses it after the ban • No access to Twitter • Court fines NGO • Rethink and rescind the ban • Review the ban • Speedy resolution • Users after ban can't be prosecuted • Warn against arrest and prosecution

Figure 3: Dominant and alternative narratives by actor

Metanarrative

As Figure 3 depicts, analysis reveals misuse, lifting the ban, prosecution and resolution as the metanarratives of the policy coalition actors, while the advocacy coalition actors continued their positions of illegality, freedom of speech suppression, compensation, impossible prosecution and resolution metanarratives. The idea of a semiotic square root emerges when the actors start diverging on certain issues and needing to reach an amicable resolution. Analysis suggests that the resolution metanarrative was vehemently pursued by policy coalition actors when some of their members started pushing the lifting the ban metanarrative due to economic implications and the exposure of cabinet members to the counter-metanarrative constantly pursued by the advocacy coalition actors.

Buhari orders conditional lifting of Twitter ban

The President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retd.), on Friday, said he had directed a conditional lifting of the ban placed on the operations of the micro blogging site, Twitter, in Nigeria in June. Buhari disclosed this in his nationwide broadcast to Nigerians to mark the nation's 61st independence. He described the social media as a very useful platform but regretted that some users have misused the platform to organise, coordinate, and execute criminal activities, propagate fake news, and promote ethnic and religious sentiments. (*The Punch*, October 1, 2021; *Metanarrative excerpt*)

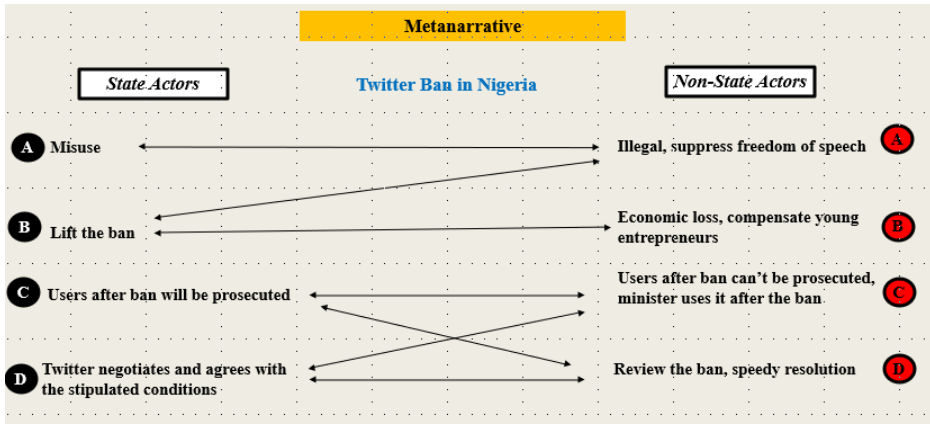


Figure 4: Metanarratives by actor

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study aimed to analyse how digital media intersects with democracy, particularly as political leaders worldwide increasingly view it as a significant threat to their ability to control citizens through authoritarian and coercive leadership styles. To explore how the regulatory power of political leaders—whether exercised personally or through political institutions—affects the activities of citizens and advocacy groups, the case of the Twitter ban in Nigeria was examined. The study sought to determine whether non-state actors resisted the ban due to its perceived contributions to democratic development, civic space, and economic growth, or whether they viewed unregulated digital media as a threat to national unity and sovereignty. It also assessed whether state actors substantiated their claims that the medium posed a threat to national unity and sovereignty with credible evidence.

Analysis reveals that both policy and advocacy coalition actors framed their narratives around the perceived benefits of digital media, particularly social media platforms. Through dominant, alternative, and metanarratives, these actors debated and negotiated the diverse consequences of the ban, stressing the complexities of regulating digital media within a democratic context. Since both groups utilized these narratives to advance their respective interests, it can be concluded that policy conflicts will persist in democratic societies as digital media continue to evolve, aiming to promote participatory democracy. This persistence arises from the inherent tendency of individuals and groups to pursue self-interests despite limited resources. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that intra- and inter-conflicts over policy changes can play a constructive role in addressing issues that might undermine citizens'

socioeconomic growth or tarnish a country's reputation within the international community.

This study has further demonstrated that the evolution of digital media will continuously play a pivotal role in shaping participatory democracy. However, this progress inevitably generates policy conflicts within democratic systems, as individuals and groups pursue their self-interests amidst limited resources. Such conflicts are an inherent feature of democracy, where diverse opinions and interests must be balanced within the governance framework. Engaging in these debates enables societies to adapt to changing circumstances and craft policies that reflect the needs and aspirations of their populations. The conflicts arising from the ban and the subsequent negotiations among stakeholders exemplify this dynamic, contributing to the maintenance of a country's reputation on the international stage. A democracy that confronts its challenges transparently and actively resolves policy disputes signals a commitment to good governance, enhancing its global image, attracting investment, and fostering international cooperation.

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