



Uncovering anti-democratic narratives, mis/disinformation and propaganda in Africa, Eastern Europe, and East Asia

Disinformation and propaganda narratives are eroding democratic values around the world. From Eastern Europe to Africa and East Asia, these narratives threaten public trust and undermine civic participation.

To address this challenge, INFOtegrity Group 3, a collaboration between three NGOs - WatchDog.MD Community (Eastern Europe), Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (Africa), and Cofacts (East Asia) - embarked on a project to identify, expose, and counter these harmful messages.

Throughout this project, we focused on the platforms used to spread these narratives, the actors behind them, and the development of effective counter-narratives and communication strategies. By sharing insights across regions, we aimed to reveal cross-regional patterns in the methods and content of anti-democratic propaganda.

This report highlights a critical issue: even in established democracies, disinformation can be a weapon against democratic principles. We believe by exposing these narratives and offering counter-strategies, we can help safeguard democratic values globally.

Anti democratic messages about Moldova

I. Summary

Between October 22 and November 19, 2023, the WatchDog.MD Community team monitored 10 sources distributing anti-democratic messages about Moldova. The primary sources of propaganda were Telegram channels and Facebook pages of controversial politicians and opinion leaders affiliated with the Kremlin. The exercise aimed to identify anti-democratic messages about Moldova promoted during the electoral campaign for the general local elections. The monitoring exercise revealed 349 relevant posts categorized into nine disinformation narratives. The most circulated narratives were:

1. PAS/Sandu government is failing (164 posts);
2. Independence, sovereignty and democracy of Moldova - a failed project (102 posts);
3. Moldova slips into Nazism and persecutes national minorities/Russophobia (25 posts).

These three narratives accounted for 83% (290 posts) of all identified messages. Most were dedicated to excluding candidates affiliated with the fugitive oligarch Ilan Șor from the electoral race, suspending the broadcasting license of six TV stations, and contesting the decree to dismiss former Prosecutor General Alexandr Stoianoglo. Additionally, the exclusion of a candidate for the position of Mayor General of Chișinău from the electoral debates on the national television station for violating the regulation requiring debates to be conducted in Romanian played a significant role in fueling the narrative that "Moldova derails into 'Nazism' and persecutes national minorities / Russophobia."

The most active sources that promoted 55% (193 posts) of the total identified posts in spreading false and manipulative messages were:

1. Omniapres (88 posts);
2. KP.MD (59 posts);
3. WTF Moldova (4 posts).

The monitoring conducted by the WatchDog.MD team from October 22 to November 19, 2023, shows that the Republic of Moldova is the target of a constant disinformation campaign regarding the rule of law and democratic principles. The primary goal of this campaign is to suggest that Moldova cannot develop democratically, does not have a future as a functional state, and should not approach the West. Additionally, these anti-democratic messages aim to undermine trust in the current government, divide society, and negatively influence perceptions about European integration and democratic values.

II. Key observations

Between October 22 and November 19, 2023, the WatchDog.MD Community team monitored 10 sources distributing anti-democratic messages about the Republic of Moldova. Five Telegram channels ([Bogdan Țirdea](#), [Kp.md](#), [WTF Moldova](#), [Igor Dodon](#), [Ilan Șor](#)) and five Facebook pages ([Diana Caraman](#), [Adrian Albu](#), [Morari Live](#), [Вечерний Буймистру](#), [Omniapres.md](#)) were monitored. The exercise aimed to identify anti-democratic messages about the Republic of Moldova promoted during the electoral campaign for the general local elections.

Statistics

The monitoring exercise identified 349 relevant posts categorized into nine disinformation narratives.

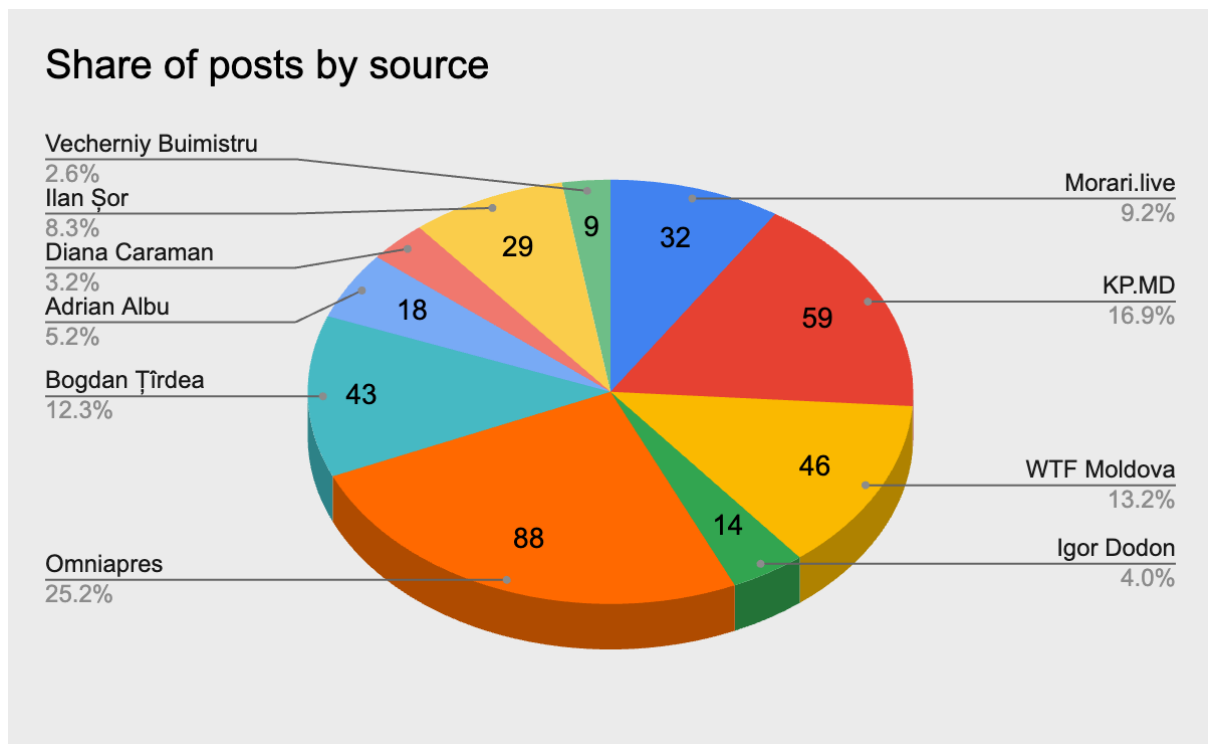
Top most circulated narratives:

4. PAS/Sandu government is failing (163 posts);
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Top most active sources in spreading false and manipulative messages:

1. Omniapres (88 posts);
2. KP.MD (59 posts);
3. WTF Moldova (46 posts).

Fig.1 Share of posts by source

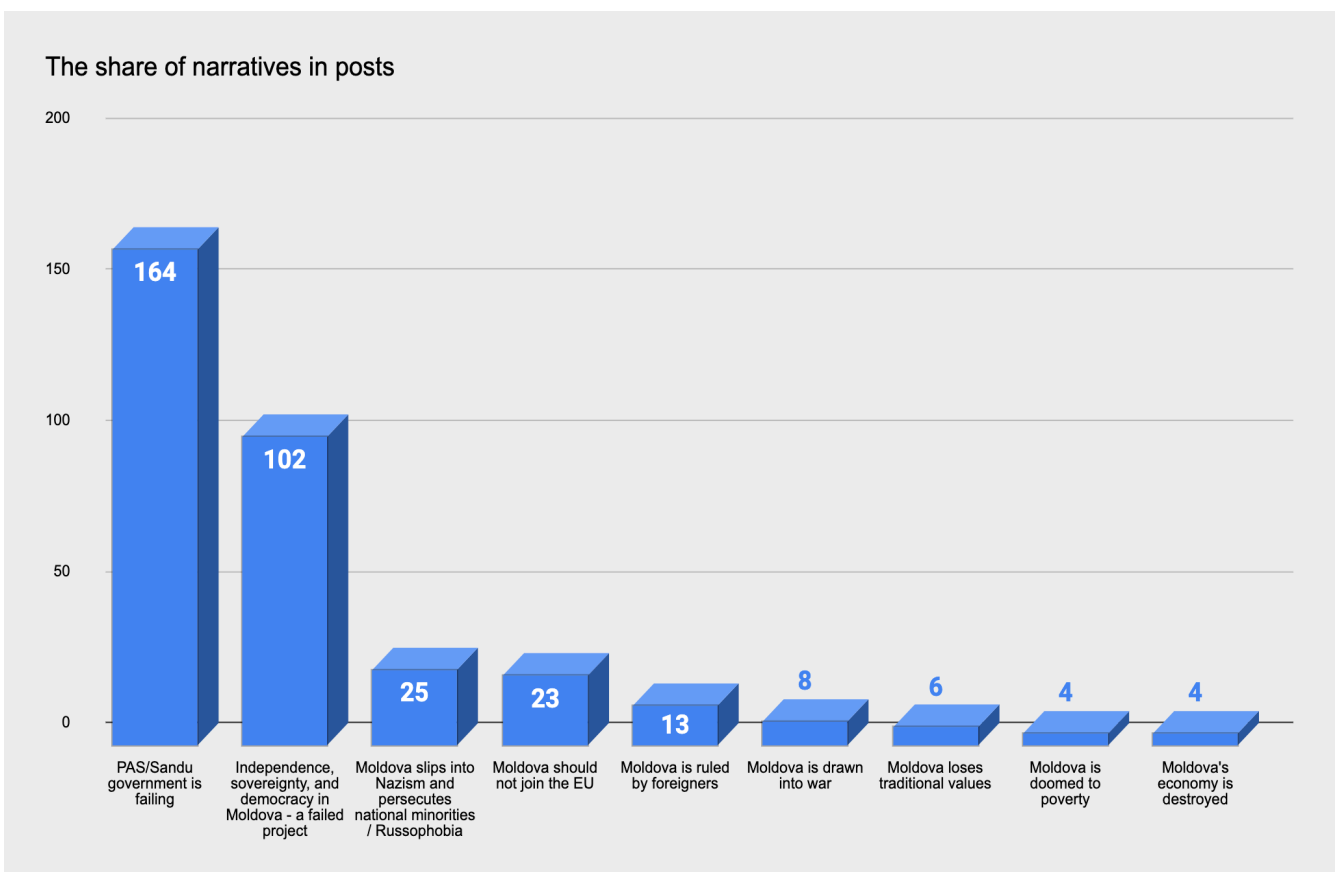


III. Analysis of the most popular disinformation narratives

The 349 posts identified during the monitoring exercise were categorized into nine disinformation narratives as follows::

1. PAS/Sandu government is failing - 163 posts;
2. Independence, sovereignty and democracy of Moldova - a failed project (102 posts);
3. Moldova slips into Nazism and persecutes national minorities/Russophobia (25 posts);
4. Moldova should not join the EU - 23 posts;
5. Moldova is ruled by foreigners - 13 posts;
6. Moldova is being drawn into the war - 9 posts;
7. Moldova loses traditional values - 6 posts;
8. Moldova is doomed to poverty - 4 posts;
9. Moldova's economy is being destroyed - 4 posts.

Fig.2 Share of narrative in posts



PAS/Sandu government is failing

The "PAS/Sandu government is failing" narrative appeared in 163 posts and was heavily promoted by sources such as Omniapres, Morari.live, KD.MD, and Ilan Șor. This theme is popular because any party/politician aims to come to power, and the one in power is criticized to be replaced. Thus, the "governance failure" narrative will be just as popular for any political party in power.

The narrative was a result caused by the following events: [the exclusion of candidates](#) affiliated with the fugitive oligarch Ilan Șor from the electoral race, the suspension of the broadcasting license of [six TV stations](#), and the contestation of the decree to dismiss former Prosecutor General [Alexandr Stoianoglo](#).

The Action and Solidarity Party (PAS) [was accused of abusive use of administrative resources](#) through the electoral campaign by top state officials such as [Prime Minister Recean](#) or [President Sandu](#) during the general local elections. Propaganda sources declared that despite this, PAS did not manage to win in [any municipality in the country](#), and PAS's victory in the remaining villages was achieved through "[threats and bribery](#)." Additionally, the government program "European Village" was labeled by some sources as an "[illegality in European style](#)" and "an element of blackmail against mayors disloyal to PAS."

The exclusion of the "Chance" Party from the electoral race was interpreted as a "[violation of the Constitution by Maia Sandu's fascist regime](#)." Furthermore, the suspension of the licenses of the six TV stations fueled the falsehood that there is [censorship and dictatorship](#) in Moldova.

In this context, the candidate of the Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova declared that Maia Sandu's three-year term boils down to "[dictatorship, paranoia, and degradation](#)." Maia Sandu is also accused of [usurping power](#) in the state and "[establishing a monopoly on breaking the law](#)."

Independence, sovereignty and democracy of Moldova - a failed project

The "Independence, sovereignty, and democracy in Moldova - a failed project" narrative was the second most popular narrative (102 out of 349 posts) and was heavily promoted by sources such as WTF Moldova, KP.MD, Bogdan Țîrdea, and Ilan Șor. This subject became popular due to the failures of all the governments in power in the Republic of Moldova. This narrative is also fueled by the society's disappointments with the rulers who do not fulfill their promises to transform Moldova into a stable state.

The narrative was caused by [the exclusion of the "Chance" Party](#), officially supported by the fugitive oligarch Ilan Șor, from the electoral race due to voter bribery with the financial

support of the Russian Federation. [The opposition](#) affiliated with the Kremlin, as well as [the leaders of some pro-European parties](#), accused the government of electoral fraud.

The criminal group Şor actively used this narrative to victimize itself in front of the voters, launching a falsehood that the government fights the opposition through state institutions. Ilan Şor claims that the exclusion of the "Chance" Party means "a return to the times of the Plahotniuc regime." In fact, the actions of the state institutions [were aimed at countering the actions](#) of electoral fraud in the interest of the Şor criminal group, all to undermine the entire system of democratic governance in the country and to bring it into the sphere of influence of the Russian Federation.

The suspension of the licenses of the six TV stations affiliated with Ilan Şor was the second most popular event that fueled the narrative. The Socialist Party's candidate for Mayor of Chişinău, [Adrian Albu](#), accused European ambassadors of complicity for not criticizing the government's actions.

Largely, disinformation sources criticized the current government for establishing an authoritarian regime comparable to that of Hitler or Mussolini. Additionally, sources declared that for [Maia Sandu](#) "Western values are dictatorship, totalitarianism, and unity of power, and ordinary people only hinder this process." Some opinion leaders suggested that "the diaspora [should not participate](#) in elections because they do not know the realities inside the country."

Moldova slips into Nazism and persecutes national minorities/Russophobia (25 posts)

This narrative appeared in 25 posts out of the 349 posts and ranks third in popularity. The theme of Russophobia and the persecution of national minorities, as well as the theme of Nazism, represents a central narrative of Russian propaganda. This could be observed in the case of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The Kremlin justified what they erroneously call a "special operation" by the "need to liberate the oppressed population from the Nazi regime." In the Republic of Moldova, this narrative is frequently used against the authorities and the population. The primary goal is to divide society to destabilize the situation in the country.

The main topic that contributed to this narrative during the monitoring period was [the exclusion](#) of a candidate for Mayor General of Chişinău from the electoral debates on the national television station for violating the regulation that debates should be conducted in Romanian. The theme of insinuations that the government persecutes Russian speakers was addressed in 12 posts. Monitored sources brought the most serious accusations of Russophobia and Nazism/Fascism against both the authorities and the media. The aim of the

posts was to discredit national television by accusing it of playing the government's game and favoring certain candidates.

In addition, in six posts, propaganda sources claim that [fascism is glorified](#) in the Republic of Moldova, and in the other seven posts, [the authorities](#) and/or [journalists](#) allegedly affiliated with the government are accused of promoting fascism and Russophobia.

Moldova should not join the EU

The narrative "Moldova should not join the EU" was attributed to 23 posts out of 349. The goal of this narrative is to show that Moldova is not ready for European integration and that the EU is a danger to the country. Additionally, this narrative tries to create a false perception that Moldova is not expected in the EU and that Moldovans do not support European integration, which is allegedly a project of Maia Sandu/PAS

The WTF Moldova channel suggests that Moldovans do not want to join the EU because Europe "[encourages militarization, anti-democratic actions, dictatorship, and censorship.](#)" In this context, Ilan Șor positions himself against European integration, claiming that the EU only brought [poverty](#). Thus, the EU is accused of [putting Moldova in debt](#) and supporting the government's illegalities. Igor Dodon declares that European integration means "[closing the press, corruption, eliminating the opposition.](#)" and that "[approaching the EU brings nothing good to the citizens.](#)" Additionally, WTF Moldova distributed a post stating that countries that approached the EU had to give up part of their economy and sovereignty.

Moldova is ruled by foreigners

The narrative "Moldova is led by foreigners" was attributed to 13 posts. The goal is to discredit the authorities and the pro-European vector of the Republic of Moldova. This narrative has been used against all pro-European governments in Chișinău, which, according to pro-Russian propaganda, are subordinated to the West. The theme is a basic idea used by Russian propaganda in the ex-Soviet space.

Most posts supporting the narrative that "Moldova is ruled by foreigners" were distributed by Bogdan Țîrdea (4), KP.MD (3), Igor Dodon, and WTF Moldova (2 each). During the monitoring period, propaganda sources claimed that the head of state Maia Sandu is "[a puppet](#) in foreign hands," Moldova is a "[colony](#)" of the EU or/and the USA, "[Romanian citizens lead our country.](#)" Additionally, there were falsehoods such as that the European Union requires the government to make Moldovans buy houses and cars through bank transfers or that the European Union ordered Moldova to intensify sanctions against the Russian Federation in 2024.

Moldova is being drawn into the war

The narrative "Moldova drawn into war" was attributed to 9 posts. The goal of this narrative is to generate panic and fear in society. Russian propaganda increasingly suggests that "Moldova is following the scenario of Ukraine."

Eight out of nine posts promote [the false](#) idea that the country's neutrality is not respected by the USA, EU, and NATO. Another [post](#) claims that Moldova is used in an arms trafficking scheme for Ukraine.

During the monitoring period, most falsehoods were distributed by Socialist Deputy Bogdan Țîrdea (4 posts). Țîrdea insinuates that "the EU and the USA are [militarizing](#) our country and contributing to Moldova giving up neutrality" and that "NATO [does not respect our neutrality](#)."

Moldova loses traditional values

The narrative "Moldova loses traditional values" was attributed to six posts out of 349. The goal of this sub-narrative is to instill fear among the conservative electorate, supporters of traditional values.

Of the six identified posts promoting the narrative "Moldova losing traditional values," three claim that "[LGBT propaganda](#) is promoted in Moldova," two claim that "[Moldovans are deprived of their identity](#)" and one post mentions that "the government actively participates in the [disintegration of the Orthodox Church](#)."

Moldova is doomed to poverty

The narrative "Moldova doomed to poverty" was identified in four posts out of 349. The goal of this narrative is to discredit the authorities' ability to improve the country's economic situation and the living standards of citizens,

All posts in the current monitoring were distributed by Omniapres. These present Ilan Șor in a positive light, claiming that [Șor wants to help people](#) but the government hinders him.

Moldova's economy is being destroyed

The narrative "Moldova's economy is being destroyed" was identified in four posts out of 349. The goal of this narrative is to promote the idea that Moldova is an agricultural country and that the Russian Federation is the main export market for Moldovan agricultural products, without which Moldova's economy will suffer.

One of the analyzed posts quotes [Igor Dodon](#), who claims that "Ion Ceban closes agricultural markets because he plays for Soros and the West." Another post tried to present the authorities' incompetence in managing the economic crisis. [According to the author](#),

Moldova ranks at the bottom of the regional investment ranking, while in Ukraine, a country at war, the value of net foreign direct investment inflows was higher.

IV. Conclusions

The monitoring conducted by the WatchDog.MD team from October 22 to November 19, 2023, demonstrates that the Republic of Moldova is the target of a constant disinformation campaign regarding the rule of law and democratic principles. The main goal of this campaign is to suggest that Moldova cannot develop democratically, has no future, and should not approach the West. Additionally, these anti-democratic messages aim to undermine trust in the current government, divide society, and negatively influence perceptions about European integration and democratic values.

The main disinformation narratives include questioning the country's independence and sovereignty and accusations of Nazism and Russophobia. The primary sources of propaganda are Telegram channels and Facebook pages of controversial politicians and opinion leaders affiliated with the Kremlin. This disinformation campaign reflects the concerted efforts of internal and external actors to influence public opinion and electoral outcomes in their favor.

Methodology

The goal of the exercise is to identify the main anti-democratic messages about the Republic of Moldova in a joint project with partners from Taiwan and Nigeria. In the case of Moldova, the content will be monitored on Facebook and Telegram platforms from October 22 to November 19, 2023 (two weeks before the general local elections and two weeks post-elections).

Objective

- Comparing disinformation narratives on social networks in the Republic of Moldova, Nigeria, and Taiwan during different types of elections that took place in 2023. In the case of the Republic of Moldova, messages that appeared during the electoral campaign for the general local elections were monitored.

Keywords and definitions

Anti-democratic messages - messages aimed at undermining the democracy of a state, the fundamental rights of citizens, including the right to vote and be elected; speeches that promote or support ideas, principles, or actions contrary to the fundamental values of democracy. These messages may include calls for authoritarianism, coups, suppression of civil rights, discrimination, incitement to violence, or any other forms of expression that undermine democratic principles such as civic participation, pluralism, respect for human rights, and the rule of law.

Monitored Keywords:

Dictatorship, authoritarianism (авторитаризм), illegalities (незаконный), xenophobia, nazism, fascism, junta, corruption, puppet, lack of sovereignty (суверенитет), colonialism (колониализм), captured justice, lack of rule of law (правовое государство), lack of neutrality, undermining human rights, limiting the right to elections, election fraud (сфальсифицированы фальсификация).

Monitored sources:

Telegram: [Bogdan Țirdea](#), [Kp.md](#), [WTF Moldova](#), [Igor Dodon](#), [Ilan Shor](#)

Facebook: [Diana Caraman](#), [Adrian Albu](#), [Morari Live](#), [Вечерний Буймистру](#), [Omniapres.md](#)

Selected channels for monitoring are characterized by:

- predominantly critical content towards democratic and European institutions;
- support or affiliation with corrupt or controversial individuals;
- strong support/sympathy for the Russian Federation.

The monitored content will be in both Romanian and Russian, written and video, with a duration of up to 10 minutes. The information will be analyzed both from the primary source and the source referred to

Project stages

1. Selecting posts
2. Attributing disinformation narratives
3. Data analysis

Recommendations

Based on current trends in combating disinformation, the following measures are proposed:

1. Continuous monitoring: Regular publication of reports on disinformation and the use of advanced data science tools to quickly detect and label harmful content. This helps prevent the spread of disinformation in search engine results and on social media platforms.
2. Media Education: Media education programs are becoming increasingly essential. Organizing workshops and online courses for students can teach them to recognize and combat disinformation. Partnerships with academic and civic organizations are vital to enhance media literacy and promote critical thinking.
3. International Collaboration: Intensifying collaboration with international organizations and partners from other countries affected by disinformation. Cross-border initiatives are essential to address disinformation phenomena that do not respect national borders.

4. **Regulating social media platforms:** Proposing and implementing strict regulations for social media platforms. This can include obliging platforms to remove false and manipulative content quickly, relying on advanced artificial intelligence capabilities to identify and address these issues on a large scale.
5. **Support for independent media:** Providing financial and logistical support for independent media and investigative journalism. Projects like Elections24Check, which aggregates the efforts of over 40 fact-checking organizations, are crucial for ensuring transparency and integrity of election-related information.
6. **Awareness campaigns:** Launching public awareness campaigns and "prebunking" initiatives that teach citizens to recognize common manipulation techniques to improve their ability to detect and reject disinformation before it spreads.
7. **Improving government communication:** Enhancing government communication to provide accurate and up-to-date information to citizens, including operationalizing the Center for Strategic Communication and Combating Disinformation as a key element of the national communication strategy.

Anti democratic messages about Taiwan

I. Summary

We will compare the 2022 local election and 2024 presidential election disseminated contents. In both elections, messages that could lead to the weakening of democracy include attacks on democratic systems, attacks on democratic countries, and criticism of the existing political system. These messages, which influence public opinion, often attack prominent political figures, the current ruling party, and criticize policies. For instance, the themes of war and geopolitical relations were extensively mentioned in both elections. Additionally, political figures have made disinformation and fake news topics key points in their election strategies. By comparing with countries in different regions, we can see that these anti-democratic narratives and strategies are very similar. We are glad to identify these methods of information attacks and comparisons, as they represent common challenges we face in defending democracy.

II. Key observations

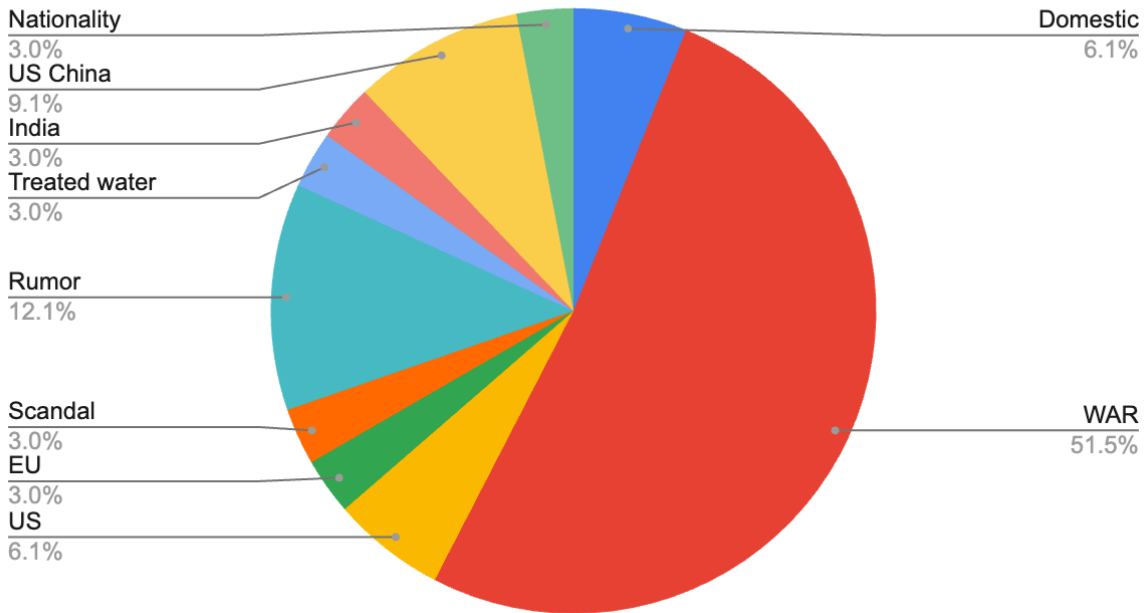
Between the 2022 local election and the 2024 presidential election, we observed all the controversial information related to democracy between local elections and presidential elections. Based on past records, presidential elections tend to be more associated with nationality and war issues. However, compared to the 2022 local elections, this time there are still war-related issues entering the election agenda. This might be due to the Russia-Ukraine war in 2022, making the public perceive that war is indeed a possibility. Anti-democratic narratives can also leverage this, attempting to influence public opinion.

Data

After organizing hundreds of messages received on the LINE platform from closed groups, we have compiled about 28 key messages during two election periods. We analyzed these data to categorize popular topics as top most circulated narratives. The elections

extracted narratives of the discussions are summarized below:

Category



We extracted data from hundreds of entries and requests in our database, focusing on the most important topics during 2022 and 2024 election periods. Due to the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war in 2022, recent topics have heavily concentrated on different countries, influencing discussions on democracy and spreading disinformation related to the war. More than half of the topics in the selected data directly pertain to “war.” The primary reason is that people are filled with fear about war, and war-related fears can alter voting intentions during elections, leading to a significant amount of political propaganda related to war. U.S.-China relations are also a crucial topic in the Asia-Pacific region. When comparing with Europe, we observe many similarities between Chinese political propaganda and Russian narratives. However, discussions on U.S.-China relations often highlight the failures of Western democracies and China's success in its competition with the U.S., using state and authoritarian forms of political propaganda to influence Asians and gain international influence.

Top most circulated narratives:

1. The war between Taiwan strait is happening;
2. Democracy is a failure in East Asia;
3. Taiwan is manipulated by other countries.

Top most active sources in spreading false and manipulative messages:

Election Narratives



A sprawling fictional tale making rounds on the internet delves into the life of Tsai Ing-wen, employing sensational language to depict various aspects. Within its narrative, it suggests illicit gains by her parents during the Japanese colonial era in Taiwan, portrays her educational pursuits in a disparaging manner, and delves into her personal affairs with a touch of third-party sentimentality. The overall tone of the story casts Tsai Ing-wen in a negative light, employing the allure of "secret history" to captivate readers.



The fake news claims that DPP(the ruling party) party's representative, Tsai Ing-wen, is colluding with the United States, sacrificing the interests of the Taiwanese people for the benefit of the United States, and portrays her as an extremely malicious ally in warfare.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Manipulated contents mentioned: Lai Ching-te's descendants are all in the United States, and they are American citizens, all Americans. Lai Ching-te has responded, saying that they are working there or something similar. However, Lai Ching-te did not say that if a war broke out between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, he would call them back. He couldn't say that, because they are already American citizens. The real uncomfortable issue is privilege. Why should others stay and fight, but your own children don't come back? In this situation, what face do you have, what explanation can you give to ask everyone to support you or to fight for the country, when your own children won't come? This reveals a very interesting and subtle mentality.</p> |
|---|---|

III. Analysis of the most popular disinformation narratives

1. The war between Taiwan strait is happening
2. a failed project Democracy is a failure in East Asia
3. Russophobia China is better than Taiwan. China is better than USA
4. Taiwan is manipulated by other countries
5. Taiwan is take advantage by foreigners
6. Taiwan will be in war
7. Culture in Taiwan is losing Chinese classical culture, losing traditional values
8. The ruling party is making people poverty
9. Taiwan economy is destroyed by DPP and western countries

The war between Taiwan strait is happening

The narrative that the war situations occurring in other countries will also happen in Taiwan for several reasons. Taiwan will be abandoned by the world; Taiwan's national status is not recognized by many countries. This will lead to Taiwan being exploited and becoming a place for Western countries to gain military profits during a war, but unable to defend itself. These war-promoting statements are, on the other hand, used to advocate surrender to China, arguing that Taiwan will be unable to resist an attack from China. Ordinary people do not have the privilege and wealth to immigrate; in the event of government abandonment, civilians will not have the power to choose whether to go to war. Therefore, so-called anti-war sentiment equates to surrendering to authoritarianism.

2022 local elections extracted narratives

1. French President Macron threatened to send troops to Ukraine to help in the war
2. Ukraine has ignored the blood relationship between the two ethnic groups. After the pro-Western regime came to power, it launched a massive "anti-Russian" movement and even treated Russian-speaking Ukrainians hostilely, forcing the pro-Russian forces in Eastern Ukraine to declare independence.
3. President Zelianand and his driver and his family are all British, Defense Minister Reznikov is American, Finance Minister is American, Health Minister is a former American doctor, and Economy Minister is Lithuanian.
4. Does Taiwan understand? Biden shouts every day that Russia is about to invade Ukraine, inciting and provoking Russia-Ukraine to go to war, raising tensions.
5. The German Bundestag voted 476 against, 179 in favor and one abstention to reject the bill to increase military aid to Ukraine.
6. Tsai Ing-wen's fake doctor is controlled by the United States, allowing the United States to take what it want
7. If China attack Taiwan, they can obtain TSMC's chips; the US does not care of Taiwan
8. The United States will follow the Ukraine model and engage in a war, Taiwan and Taiwanese are the ones who suffer.
9. Politician of CCP, Nanxian Zhang, has integrity while people in republic of china might not have that
10. all the war is caused by Western countries. Without their intervention, there would be no war at all.
11. The United States puts the United States above international organizations and above all mankind. It seems that only they themselves are credible. But can the United States really be trusted? Iraq and Venezuela are examples of this.
12. The United States cannot even dream of believing that China has spent 500 billion to greatly improve the environment in the north that has been worsened by water shortages.
13. The first place in the European 2023 Mathematics Competition is China, the second place is the United States, the third place is Australia, and the fourth place is the United Kingdom. They are all Chinese children!
14. The trade war is essentially China's strategic attack on the United States. Whether it is

initiated by the United States or not, it is actually a strategic decision made by China to "force" the United States. The United States is not sure of victory in launching a trade war, or even certain of it.

15. Russia has no shortage of food and energy, makes its own military weapons, and has a strong and brave army. Let alone a year and a half, Russia can afford to accompany it even if it lasts three or five years. Given the current situation of inflation, energy shortages, and the EU's centrifugation in European countries, Europe is the one that can't afford to be held back the most.

2024 presidential elections extracted narratives

1. The advanced democratic countries in Europe and the United States all spend their national budgets on people's livelihood interests. The Democratic Progressive Party in power in Taiwan spends money on diplomatic relations. Even Lithuania, which has no diplomatic relations, gave US\$1.2 billion. No wonder the Danes want to drink bubble tea makes me laugh that Taiwanese people are really rich!

2. Ukrainian female soldiers sacrificed for their country.

3. The biggest threat to the United States is not China, but peace. World peace will end the evil American Empire based on war and war economy. When there is world peace, the United States will lose its way.

4. Tsai Ing-wen has spent a trillion dollars in military recent years, the situation in the Taiwan Strait is becoming increasingly tense, with invasion attacks by China

5. The Taiwan Strait is in danger due to the manipulation of the United States and Taiwan independence.

6. When former presidents Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian were in power, they both intervened in the human resource of the director of National Taiwan University Hospital.

7. The United States will not be "safe". China has the ability and strength to attack the United States!

China's move will definitely put tremendous pressure on the US military and make the world soberly aware that China really has the strength to maintain world peace.

8. Because weather weapons are too scary, the United Nations issued a contract in 1977 prohibiting the development of weather weapons. However, the United States and Russia are still studying this technology. Eisenhower also publicly stated that weather control is more important than atomic bombs and nuclear bombs.

9. China has prepared for Japan's discharge of nuclear wastewater. No matter how heinous behaviors some countries do, the Chinese have never given up on protecting the country and the world.

10. The number of migrant workers in India has increased again, and fraud groups have new forces.

11. China is our home, but it is isolated from us by the United States and the United States provokes confrontation between China and Taiwan.

12. China and Brazil sign an agreement. In the future, trade between the two countries will no longer use the U.S. dollars. Everybody no longer trusts the U.S. dollar

13. No one in Taiwan cares about doing the right thing and thinking about decisions that are beneficial to the country.

14. A vice president candidate said: We no longer identify ourselves as the Republic of China. She only wants Taiwan independence.

IV. Conclusions

During the 2022 local election and the 2024 presidential election, online public opinion compared the war situation in Ukraine and used it as material to attack the political situation in Taiwan. In addition to attacking the current ruling party, they also used the risks of the European war to intimidate the candidates of the ruling party. Furthermore, they imitated Eastern European political propaganda, using the loss of traditional or Chinese culture as a comparison, to suggest that it would be unwise for Taiwan to distance itself from China. They even framed Taiwan's close relations with Japan as a risk, criticizing democracy as unreliable.

In comparison with the text from Moldova, it can be seen that being abandoned by developed countries, turning into a land of war, and the ruling party making the country poor are political narratives present in both places. These similar statements may have versions in different languages, but they all serve as powerful political propaganda influencing local public opinion.

V. Methodology

For establishing a common research methodology, it is necessary to compare different regions to find similarities between them and compile these similar cases together. We will gather contents that spread Mandarin disinformation in the group database, and analyze collected data around elections. It is evident that in the realm of political propaganda, similar language and content are used to influence democracy.

The goal:

The exercise is to identify the contents and strategies when malign attackers are going to influence democracy and regional peace.

Objective:

Comparing disinformation narratives on social networks in the Republic of Moldova, Nigeria, and Taiwan during different types of elections that took place in 2023. We may show the contents among East Asia, messages that appeared during the electoral campaign for the local elections and the presidential election were monitored.

Monitored Keywords:

Democracy (民主), war(戰爭), presidential election(總統大選), freedom of speech(言論自由), corruption(貪腐), government corruption(政府貪污), sovereignty(主權), China(中國), US-China trade war(中美貿易戰).

Monitored sources:

LINE: closing chat rooms

Facebook: public posts, posts in groups

Selected channels for monitoring are characterized by:

- critical content towards democracy and anti-USA;
- support conservative politician and pro-China individuals;
- anti-war(which means to surrender to China).

Anti-democratic narratives about the 2023 elections in Nigeria: before, during and post elections

I. Introduction

This analysis delves into the spread of anti-democratic narratives on social media before, during, and after [Nigeria's 2023 elections](#). The CJID team focused on three key platforms: Twitter, Facebook, and TikTok. These platforms are widely used in Nigeria and serve as significant arenas for political discourse. The Presidential and National Assembly (NASS) elections were held on February 25, 2023, followed by the Governorship and State Assembly elections on March 18, 2023.

This analysis identifies the major platforms utilised for disseminating these narratives, the actors involved and the specific types of narratives that gained traction. In total, the study captured 234 social media posts—78 from the pre-election period, 93 during the elections, and 63 post-election—linked to 13 distinct anti-democratic narratives: 4 before, 5 during, and 4 after the elections.

Key Findings

The analysis uncovered several critical issues:

- **Alleged Foreign Influence:** Some narratives focused on alleged connections between key political candidates and foreign powers, notably Russia. These claims were designed to undermine the legitimacy of these candidates and sway voter opinions.
- **Religious and Ethnic Manipulation:** Hateful narratives exploited religious and ethnic divides, aiming to disenfranchise voters and foment division among the populace.
- **False Allegations:** Candidates were falsely accused of ties to separatist movements and terrorist organisations, narratives intended to delegitimize their candidacies and create fear.
- **Election Integrity:** False election results and calls for military intervention were widespread, challenging the credibility of the electoral process and threatening democratic stability.

Actors and Platforms

The narratives were propagated by a diverse array of actors, including prominent political figures, social media influencers, separatist blogs, and ordinary citizens. These individuals and groups utilized the reach and anonymity of social media to spread disinformation rapidly and widely.

Although the elections were conducted over a year ago, the persistence of these narratives remains a significant concern. Events like the recent "**End Bad Governance**" protests have given rise to new anti-democratic narratives. During these protests, the sight of demonstrators waving Russian flags and advocating for military intervention highlighted the ongoing influence of these disruptive narratives.

I. Methodology

The data collection and social media monitoring were organized into three distinct periods:

- 1. Before the Elections (March 1, 2022 – February 24, 2023):** This period aligns with the timetable and schedule of activities for the 2023 general elections released by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).
- 2. During the Elections (February 25, 2023 – March 18, 2023):** This phase covers the dates of the Presidential and National Assembly (NASS) elections on February 25, 2023, and the Governorship and State Assembly elections on March 18, 2023.
- 3. After the Elections (March 19, 2023 – August 2024):** This extended period was chosen to account for ongoing issues and emerging narratives that continued to threaten Nigeria's democratic stability long after the official election results were announced.

The analysis focused on 234 social media posts from Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok, platforms that are crucial for political discourse in Nigeria and have millions of active users. These posts were meticulously categorized into 13 distinct anti-democratic narratives.

II. Social Media Monitoring Overview

Posts Monitored Across Election Phases

Total Number of Post Monitored By Period of the Elections

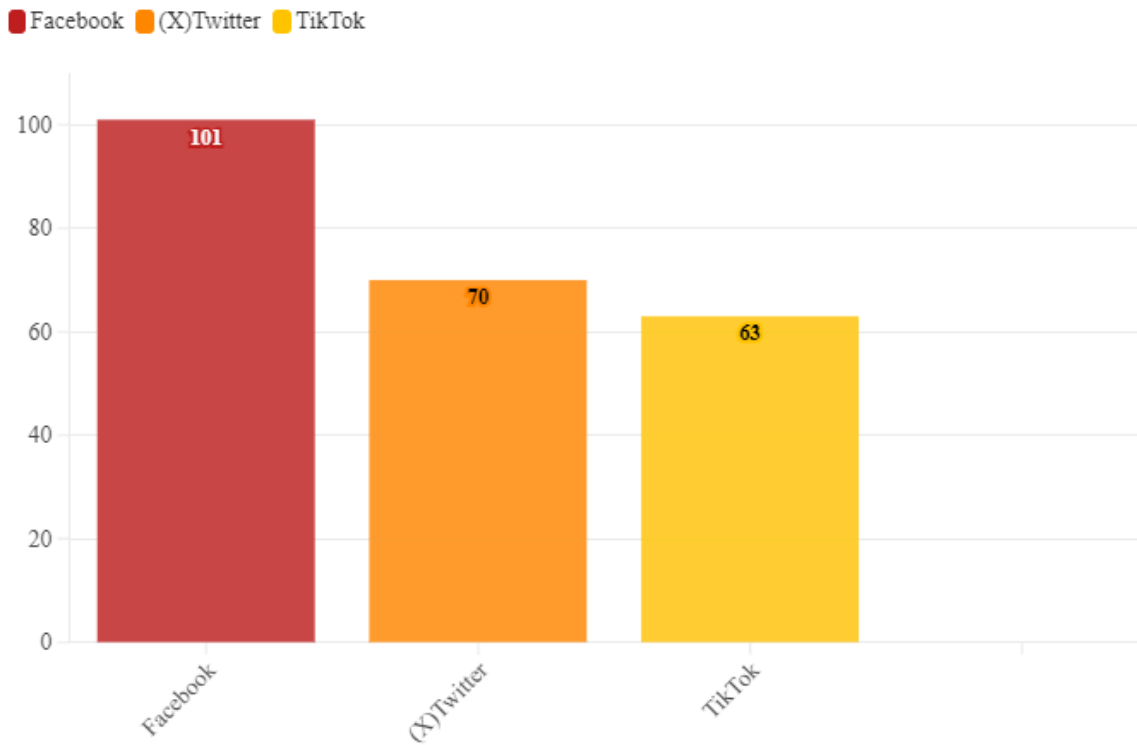


Source: CJID CJID

Figure 1: The pie chart above illustrates the distribution of 234 social media posts analyzed across three critical phases: before, during, and after the 2023 Nigerian elections. Out of the total, 63 posts were monitored before the elections, 93 during the elections, and 78 after the elections. The heightened number of posts during the elections can be attributed to the increased media coverage and public interest as the nation focused on the electoral process.

Posts Distribution by Social Media Platform

Total Number of Post Monitored by Platform



Source: CJID CJID

Figure 2: The chart above reveals that Facebook had the highest number of posts monitored during the analysis period. This is unsurprising given that Facebook is the largest social media platform in Nigeria, boasting nearly 41.6 million active users. Following Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) ranks next, reflecting its status as the leading platform for political discourse in the country. TikTok, being a more recent entrant into the social media landscape, had all its monitored posts appear after the elections. These posts predominantly featured narratives involving Russia, which is concerning as the platform increasingly becomes a source of anti-democratic narratives, including calls for military intervention in Nigeria and Russian involvement in the country's affairs.

Anti-Democratic Narratives: A Breakdown

| S/N | Narrative | Period | Post |
|-----|---|------------------|------|
| 1. | Atiku, a key presidential opposition candidate, has connections with Russia and plans to rig the general elections. | Before Elections | 25 |
| 2. | The ruling party, APC, intends to Islamize Nigeria by having both a Muslim president and vice president. | | 21 |

| | | | |
|-----|---|-------------------------|------------|
| 3. | Peter Obi, the Labour Party's presidential candidate, plans to secede Biafra from Nigeria if he wins the elections. | | 18 |
| 4. | Citizens should not vote because their votes will not count and Peter Obi has supported the sit-at-home order. | | 14 |
| 5. | The Presidential election result from Lagos State has been compromised and rigged in favour of the Labour Party. | During Elections | 25 |
| 6. | The voting process is massively rigged in favour of the ruling party | | 17 |
| 7. | Boko Haram terrorists have taken over INEC offices in Kano and Kaduna. | | 19 |
| 8. | The elections portal has been compromised by certain actors in favour of the ruling party. | | 16 |
| 9. | Electoral violence has erupted in most parts of the country, and no one should go out to vote. | | 16 |
| 10. | Democracy has failed, and the military is planning to take over the country. | After Elections | 21 |
| 11. | Russia is planning to intervene in Nigeria and change the current government. | | 12 |
| 12. | Nigerian leaders are Western puppets controlled to do the West's bidding. | | 12 |
| 13. | Russia is the only way for Nigeria to improve and do better since democracy has failed. | | 18 |
| | Total: | | 234 |

IV. Anti-democratic Narratives Spread Before the Elections:

- **Atiku's Alleged Russian Connections and Election Rigging Plans:**

This narrative suggests that Atiku Abubakar, the presidential candidate for the People's Democratic Party (PDP), had connections with Russia and was planning to rig the 2023 elections. These claims were circulated by outlets like IgboTimesMagazine, [alleging that Atiku](#) was deeply indebted to Russia due to past dealings. Furthermore, his intentions to privatize certain government sectors and [alleged plans](#) to legalize LGBTQ rights if elected were also heavily criticized. These narratives had a significant anti-democratic impact, damaging Atiku's reputation, affecting his electoral chances, and discouraging potential voters who might have supported him.

- **The APC's Alleged Agenda to Islamize Nigeria:** Before the 2023 elections, claims circulated widely that the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) harboured an [agenda to Islamize Nigeria](#), spurred by the selection of both a Muslim presidential and vice-presidential candidate. This narrative suggested that President Bola Tinubu, once elected, would use his position to [impose Islamic policies](#) across the nation. This sensitive religious issue almost incited chaos in certain regions, where interfaith relations have historically been tense. For [instance](#), the Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) accused the APC of plotting to advance a "Muslim-Muslim" ticket, alleging it was part of a broader plan to Islamicize the country. This narrative spread rapidly across various social media platforms, [triggering a wave of misinformation](#) and sowing distrust in the electoral process.

- **Secessionist Allegations Against Peter Obi:** Another potent narrative during the election period was the claim that Peter Obi, the Labour Party's presidential candidate, had a [hidden agenda](#) to secede the southeastern region of Biafra from Nigeria if elected. This misinformation [stemmed largely](#) from Simon Ekpa, a pro-Biafran separatist residing in Finland, and played on [longstanding ethnic](#) tensions and the memory of the Nigerian Civil War in the 1960s. As the first Igbo candidate with a serious chance at winning the presidency since the war, Obi's candidacy [reignited concerns](#) about secession, [creating fear among voters](#) and raising questions about his loyalty to the Nigerian state.

- **Discouraging Voter Participation: Peter Obi and the Sit-at-Home Order:** Misinformation also targeted voter turnout, particularly in the southeastern part of the country. Claims surfaced that Peter Obi supported the Indigenous People of Biafra's (IPOB) sit-at-home order, which demanded that residents refrain from voting during the elections. These claims discouraged potential voters by suggesting that Obi was implicitly backing this anti-democratic mandate, further demoralizing the electorate and diminishing trust in the election's integrity.


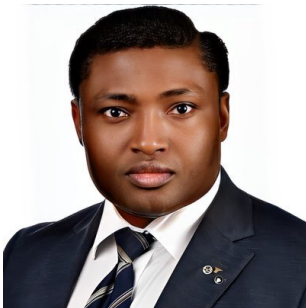

V. Narratives spread during the elections

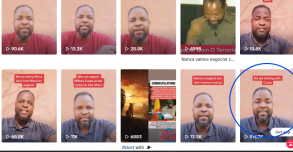
- **Allegations of Electoral Rigging in Lagos:** In Lagos State, claims of electoral rigging were rampant during and after the presidential election. Allegations emerged that results had been falsified to favour the Labour Party, which many saw as an attempt by APC supporters to undermine the perceived victory of Peter Obi in the region. Fake results were spread online, fostering confusion and deepening political tensions. These claims contributed to a broader narrative that the election was not only flawed but rigged in favour of the ruling party.
- **Rigging Accusations Against INEC Officials:** Social media was also rife with [accusations that officials](#) from Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) were caught on film rigging ballots in favour of the APC during the presidential polls. These allegations were amplified when Bola Tinubu was declared the winner, with rival parties threatening to challenge the results in court. Videos of supposed election malpractice, whether doctored or taken out of context, fueled public distrust in the electoral process.
- **False Claims of Boko Haram Terrorists Seizing INEC Offices:** During the elections, another [dangerous narrative claimed](#) that Boko Haram terrorists had taken over INEC offices in Kaduna and Kano states. This misinformation was primarily aimed at dissuading citizens from voting, by presenting the elections as too dangerous to participate in due to security concerns. Although these claims were false, they managed to exploit the real fears of terrorist activity in northern Nigeria, further complicating the electoral environment.
- **Russian Hackers and Alleged Compromises of the INEC Portal:** Another widely circulated narrative alleged that [Russian hackers had compromised](#) the INEC election portal, [altering the results](#) to favour the APC. This claim, first spread by IgboTimesMagazine and other online platforms, [suggested](#) that a hacker from Russia had released "authentic" results, showing Peter Obi leading by 10 million votes. This misinformation further eroded public trust in the electoral system and sought to portray the Nigerian government as susceptible to foreign interference.
- **Misinformation About Widespread Electoral Violence:** Social media was also flooded with reports of [widespread](#) electoral violence during the elections. While some violence did occur, particularly in flashpoints of political rivalry, the extent of these incidents was exaggerated. These false reports were used to deter voters, particularly in areas where turnout was expected to be high, further suppressing the democratic process.

VI. Post-Election Anti-Democratic Narratives

- **Claims of Military Intervention in Nigeria’s Democracy:** Following the declaration of the election results, [rumours spread online](#) suggesting that Nigeria's military was planning a coup to oust the elected president. Some narratives alleged that democracy had failed in Nigeria, and the military had the support of certain political figures for this [undemocratic action](#). While these claims were unsubstantiated, they stirred significant anxiety among Nigerians and perpetuated the idea that democracy in the country was fragile.
- **Russia as the Savior for Nigeria:** A more recent narrative portrays Russia as the solution to Nigeria's political woes. Influencers on platforms such as TikTok and Twitter have suggested that Russian intervention could restore order in Nigeria, where democracy has allegedly failed. These voices glorify the idea of a military takeover, aligning it with broader pro-Russia sentiments and portraying elected Nigerian leaders as mere puppets of the West.
- **Nigerian Leaders as Western Puppets Controlled by Foreign Powers:** A pervasive narrative on platforms like TikTok is the claim that Nigerian leaders are merely puppets controlled by the West. Figures like Mutapabere, aka @shimmerbere, have actively pushed this idea, asserting that African leaders take orders from Western powers, thus stifling genuine progress in the region. In a video series discussing the coup in Niger, Mutapabere criticized African leaders and suggested that voting is ineffective in addressing Africa's problems. Instead, he advocated for military coups as a means of liberation from Western influence, presenting democracy as a failed system in the African context. This rhetoric taps into broader frustrations with governance and a growing distrust of Western powers, particularly within younger generations.
- **Russia as the Solution for Nigeria’s Problems:** More recently, narratives promoting Russia as the only viable solution for Nigeria have gained traction, particularly during the End Bad Governance Protest, where protesters were seen waving Russian flags and calling for military intervention. This messaging has also spread online through influencers like umarjustice_ on TikTok and J. C. Okechukwu, who argue that Russian intervention is the answer to Nigeria's political crisis. These narratives assert that democracy has failed, and Russia represents an alternative model capable of restoring order and prosperity in Nigeria, encouraging further military takeovers as a means to achieve this goal.

VII. Key Actors in Propagating Anti-Democratic Narratives

| S/N | Key actors | Narratives |
|-----|---|---|
| 1. | Igbotimesmagazine | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Democracy has failed, and the military is planning to take over the country. Russia is the only way for Nigeria to improve and do better since democracy has failed. Boko Haram terrorists have taken over INEC offices in Kano and Kaduna. |
| 2. | J. C. Okechukwu  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russia is planning to intervene in Nigeria and change the current government. Nigerian leaders are Western puppets controlled to do the West's bidding. Russia is the only way for Nigeria to improve and do better since democracy has failed. |
| 3. | Simon Ekpa  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ruling party, APC, intends to Islamize Nigeria by having both a Muslim president and vice president. Peter Obi, the Labour Party's presidential candidate, plans to secede Biafra from Nigeria if he wins the elections. Citizens should not vote because their votes will not count and Peter Obi has supported the sit-at-home order. |
| 4. | umarjustice umar_justice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russia is the only way for Nigeria to improve and do better since democracy has failed. |
| 5. | Biafran Government (BRGIE)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ruling party, APC, intends to Islamize Nigeria by having both a Muslim president and vice president. |
| 6. | Mutapabere | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nigerian leaders are Western puppets controlled to do the West's bidding. |

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| |  | |
| 7. | <p>Others. I.e. influencers, political figures, groups and pages on Facebook.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Presidential election result from Lagos State has been compromised and rigged in favour of the Labour Party. ● The voting process is massively rigged in favour of the ruling party. ● The elections portal has been compromised by certain actors in favour of the ruling party. ● Electoral violence has erupted in most parts of the country, and no one should go out to vote. |

Discussion Analysis: Key Actors and Narratives

The "Key Actors and Narratives" table highlights the significant players involved in spreading misinformation during Nigeria's 2023 elections. It sheds light on how various influencers, political figures, and groups have propagated false or misleading narratives that erode public trust in democratic institutions and processes. This analysis delves deeper into the role of each actor and the impact of their narratives on the political landscape.

1. Igbotimesmagazine

Narratives:

- Democracy has failed; military takeover imminent.
- Russia is the solution to Nigeria's problems.
- Boko Haram has taken over INEC offices in Kano and Kaduna.

Analysis:

Igbotimesmagazine serves as a significant conduit for anti-democratic sentiments, particularly through the amplification of the idea that democracy has failed in Nigeria. By asserting that a military takeover is imminent and framing Russia as the solution, Igbotimesmagazine taps into dissatisfaction with governance, presenting military intervention as the only alternative. Additionally, the narrative that Boko Haram had taken over INEC offices aimed to stoke fear and suppress voter turnout by portraying certain regions as unsafe.

The magazine's role in spreading such content is particularly impactful because it leverages the existing fears and frustrations of a population already distrustful of democratic processes, further driving the potential for civil unrest.

2 J. C. Okechukwu

Narratives:

- Russia will intervene in Nigeria to change the government.
- Nigerian leaders are Western puppets.
- Democracy has failed; Russia offers the only solution.

Analysis:

J. C. Okechukwu stands out for his strong pro-Russian rhetoric. His messages have a twofold aim: to delegitimize Nigeria's democratic leaders by branding them as mere puppets of the West and to present Russia as a liberating force that can break these supposed Western chains. Okechukwu's position as a social media influencer allows him to reach a vast audience, many of whom may already harbour scepticism towards Western countries.

His narratives align with a broader pan-African sentiment of rejecting neocolonial influence. However, by romanticising Russian intervention, Okechukwu promotes external interference as a form of neo-imperialism, paradoxically encouraging a foreign power to influence Nigeria's sovereignty. This contradiction highlights the manipulation of anti-Western feelings to push a different foreign agenda.

3. Simon Ekpa

Narratives:

- **APC intends to Islamize Nigeria with Muslim-Muslim leadership.**
- **Peter Obi plans to secede Biafra.**
- **Citizens should boycott elections; their votes won't count.***

Analysis:

Simon Ekpa's influence is particularly dangerous due to his involvement in heightening religious and ethnic tensions. By pushing the narrative that the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) intends to Islamize Nigeria, Ekpa plays into fears of religious domination in a country already divided along religious lines. His claim that Peter Obi, the Labour Party's candidate, would secede Biafra from Nigeria taps into the traumatic legacy of the Nigerian Civil War, potentially stoking new tensions between the north and the southeast.

His encouragement of election boycotts and the notion that votes would not count further undermines the legitimacy of Nigeria's electoral process. Ekpa effectively uses disinformation to discourage political participation, particularly in the southeast, where separatist sentiments are already strong.

4. umarjustice_

Narratives:

- **Russia is the only way for Nigeria to improve since democracy has failed.**

Analysis:

Umarjustice_ is a TikTok influencer who, like J. C. Okechukwu, promotes Russian intervention as a solution to Nigeria's political woes. His focus on the supposed failure of democracy in Nigeria echoes a growing frustration with the government, particularly among younger, more tech-savvy Nigerians. His use of social media as a platform to spread these ideas reflects how disinformation and foreign influence narratives are penetrating digital spaces where younger voters are more active.

The use of Russian flags and pro-Russian rhetoric at protests signal a shift in the public discourse, with some segments of the population openly calling for non-democratic interventions. Umarjustice_ plays a key role in normalising this discourse among Nigerian youths, who may be more susceptible to these narratives due to their disillusionment with the status quo.

5. Biafran government (BRGIE)

Narratives:

- **APC's Muslim-Muslim ticket is part of a plot to Islamize Nigeria.**

Analysis:

The Biafran Government in Exile (BRGIE) is another actor that exploits Nigeria's religious fault lines. By framing the APC's Muslim-Muslim ticket as part of a broader plan to Islamize the country, BRGIE appeals to fears of religious marginalization, particularly among non-Muslim communities. This narrative fits within the broader Biafran separatist agenda, further polarizing Nigeria and weakening national unity.

The BRGIE's influence lies in its ability to exploit historical grievances, particularly among the Igbo people, using misinformation to deepen divisions and rally support for its cause. This tactic hinders efforts at reconciliation and promotes a cycle of distrust between different ethnic and religious groups.

6. Mutapabere (@shimmerbere)

Narratives:

- **Nigerian leaders are Western puppets.**
- **Voting will not solve Africa's problems; military coups are the way forward.**

Analysis:

Mutapabere's narratives glorify military coups and frame them as necessary to free African nations from Western control. His depiction of African leaders as puppets reinforces anti-democratic sentiments and promotes the idea that elections are inherently flawed. His influence, particularly on TikTok, speaks to the broader disillusionment among younger Nigerians with democratic processes and the appeal of radical solutions.

By calling for military coups, Mutapabere is not just spreading disinformation but also actively promoting anti-democratic ideas that could lead to real-world consequences, such as political instability or even violence.

7. Other influencers, political figures, and pages on Facebook

Narratives:

- **The election in Lagos State was rigged in favour of the Labour Party**
- **The voting process is manipulated to favour the ruling party.**
- **Widespread electoral violence justifies staying away from the polls.***

Analysis:

A range of other influencers and figures on platforms like Facebook contributed to the overall climate of suspicion during the elections by amplifying claims of rigging and violence. By portraying the electoral process as fundamentally corrupt and violent, these actors discouraged voter turnout and undermined the legitimacy of the eventual results. These narratives, while varying in their specifics, collectively eroded public trust in the election's integrity.

VII. Recommendations

- **Strengthen media literacy programs:** Launch nationwide programs to teach citizens to critically assess information and recognise misinformation, particularly on social media. These campaigns should be accessible to various demographics, including students, rural populations, and urban dwellers.
- **Training for journalists and influencers:** Equip journalists and social media influencers with the skills to verify information, understand the impact of their reporting, and maintain ethical standards, especially during sensitive periods like elections.
- **Collaboration with social media platforms:** Strengthen partnerships between social media companies and fact-checking organizations to ensure quicker identification and removal of false narratives. Algorithms should be improved to automatically flag content linked to identified misinformation.
- **Accessible Fact-Checking Resources:** Develop databases and tools that allow the public to verify the accuracy of information. These resources should be

well-publicized and user-friendly to encourage widespread usage. Like the Spike tool by NewShip.

- **Strengthen real-time social media monitoring:** Form coalitions of civil society organizations to monitor and report anti-democratic narratives as they spread online. This monitoring can help identify trends and direct resources to counter
- **Tailored counter-narratives:** Craft messages that resonate with the cultural and religious diversity of Nigeria. Counter-narratives should be sensitive to local contexts and avoid alienating specific groups while promoting national unity.
- **Involve local influencers:** Partner with local influencers and community leaders who have a deep understanding of the cultural and political landscape. These influencers can help spread accurate information and combat misinformation in ways that resonate with their communities.
- **Continuous research and strategy development:** Encourage ongoing research into the nature and evolution of misinformation, particularly during elections. This research will inform future strategies and help identify new threats to democratic processes.

Cross Regional Similarities in anti-democracy Narratives

I. Comparative Analysis

Thematic Comparison:

From the chapter report, we can observe that the topics in Asia are related to war and the U.S.-China relations. We may see how the disinformation is specifically targeting the individualities of everyday voters. With Nigeria, it's the idea that with the president and the vice president both being Muslim, they would try to convert everyone in Nigeria to Islam. This narrative sparked some violence within areas that had a lot of religious tension. With Moldova, the disinformation is claiming that Moldova will lose its traditional values along with Moldovan people losing their sense of identity. With Taiwan, the situation in Taiwan reflects both the fear of war and reflections on the Russia-Ukraine conflict, as well as China's ambitions in the East Asian region. China's disinformation not only highlights its fear of Taiwan's democracy but also seeks to increase its influence by referencing the conditions in various other countries.

Platform Analysis:

Besides Facebook and LINE, videos are also major channels of dissemination. On social platforms, videos directly uploaded to LINE or YouTube are highly influential, and videos that have been repeatedly shared and saved make it even more difficult to trace their origins. This is because the creators of fake videos and political propaganda can easily create new accounts to evade detection of the sources of disinformation. We have talked about how social media played a large part in how false information was spread, with Facebook being the primary platform for people to post on. Taiwanese would have talks on LINE. Nigeria also had posts from Twitter (X) and TikTok, while Moldova had TV channels that were attributed to spreading false information (at least 6 channels' broadcasting licenses were suspended.)

II. Regional Analysis

Contextual Factors:

In the social environment, the Asia-Pacific region is greatly influenced by China. In both South Korea and Japan, the use of Chinese characters and the competitive relationship with China have made related disinformation easier to spread. In places like Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Macau, and Taiwan, where there are Chinese-speaking populations, misinformation produced by China can more easily penetrate Chinese-speaking communities. As for New Zealand and Australia, the large influx of Chinese immigrants has led to the spread of false information within immigrant communities, altering diaspora political intentions. Surrounding countries like India, the Philippines, and other Southeast Asian nations are also susceptible to the influence of money diplomacy and war, especially regarding issues related to China, due to immigrant workers and social divides. These observations are based on an analysis of the content and themes of Chinese political propaganda, with inferences drawn from the mentions of Asia-Pacific countries to understand their intentions and the challenges to democracy.

Actor Profiles:

With Nigeria, it's the idea that with the president and the vice president both being



Muslim, they would try to convert everyone in Nigeria to Islam. This narrative sparked some violence within areas that had a lot of religious tension. With Moldova, the disinformation is claiming that Moldova will lose its traditional values along with Moldovan people losing their sense of identity. Asian countries tend to use the racial minorities in Asia and traditional Eastern values as methods of identity formation and criticism.

III. Impact Assessment

Short-Term Effects:

In the short term, the disinformation can influence people's electoral decisions, such as growing weary of the existing ruling party or opposing pro-American parties, leading them to choose more pro-China parties. This is because people may believe that only pro-China parties can bring peace, while U.S.-led democratic governments will only lead to war. elections and public opinion.

Long-Term Effects:

The long-term negative impact is that people may become distrustful of democracy, believing that democratic politics is inefficient, corrupt, and influenced by foreign manipulation. The idea that domestic public affairs are under foreign influence is also a widely spread conspiracy theory, leading people to mistakenly believe that democracy is a negative system imposed from abroad, and that democracy is either unreliable or unnecessary for Asians.

Regional Variations:

We discussed a narrative that said the government was failing because democracy isn't working, or that democracy is the problem as to why the government isn't working. (The narrative thinks that the government is actively failing.) Although not a super prominent narrative within Moldova's article, examples in Moldova and Africa talk about how the respective country's citizens feel as though their government is run by foreigners, more notably by the west. (Nigeria has a really big thing about wanting to be saved/run by Russia, while Moldova does not; Taiwan would put China and Russia as a group, but they would never think of being rescued by Russia.) The influence of geopolitics and China's assertiveness have significantly impacted the region, with many Asia-Pacific countries being heavily influenced by China. Relations between these countries and China are not particularly good; despite diplomatic ties, the political tensions and mutual distrust can be seen in their cultural and social dynamics. China's ambitions and attempts to assert control over the region have caused concern among Asia-Pacific nations. The misinformation seen online often targets democratic systems, with China aiming to make countries in the region mistakenly believe that democracy is a negative system, leading them to abandon their defenses and cooperation with the United States.



IV. Countermeasure Evaluation

We may see candidates or officials in power were targeted by specific accusations trying to undermine the person themselves, or the government as a whole. The accusations thrown at Nigerian candidates felt more geared toward the agenda that the candidate held, with some accusations going from “he's going to secede the southeastern region of Biafra from Nigeria!” in order to make the individual candidate look less popular, to “this person is a puppet of the west/Russia, and if they're elected we're doomed!”, which is more trying to make the government itself look bad. While in Moldova, the main accusation is that Moldova is delving into more Nazism and Russophobia. This accusation gained some traction when a Moldovan official said that a candidate for Mayor General was disqualified due to not conducting the debate in Romanian, thus making people less trusting of the Moldovan government. Since Russians are a minority within Moldova, only using Romanian within these debates could be looked at by voters as excluding people who want to participate in these debates but can only speak Russian, or another non-Romanian language. While in Taiwan, China also uses traditional culture and shared language as tools for political propaganda, for instance, by conveying to Chinese-speaking individuals that people who share the same ethnicity and language belong to the same nation. Another narrative is that Taiwan, influenced by Western culture, has abandoned traditional Chinese values. These messages reflect how different countries use similar methods to influence societal views on democracy.

Common Strategies:

Through conferences and educational activities, policies that foster trust in democratic systems can be shared, strengthening the democratic alliance. For example, activities with NDI (National Democratic Institute) can help build a vision of sharing accurate information and fostering mutual trust. These discussions and activities can deepen cooperation between nations.

Region-Specific Solutions:

To prevent the Asia-Pacific region from being influenced by China's political propaganda and social control, regional forums and sharing sessions can be organized to amplify the voice of democracy in the region. Actively debunking disinformation will empower advocates in the Asia-Pacific to resist challenges from China.