

**Influence of Communication Media used by Two Major Political Parties on Social
Mobilisation and Voter Participation during the 2019 Presidential Election in Oyo
State, Nigeria**

Adebayo ALADE

LCU/PG/000450

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department Of Mass Communication and Media
Technology, Faculty of Communication and Information Science, Lead City
University, Ibadan,**

In Partial Fulfillment for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) In

Mass Communication and Media Technology

Certification

This is to certify that Adebayo Alade with the matriculation number LCU/PG/000450 carried out this research work titled Influence of Communication Media used by Two major Political Parties on Social Mobilisation and Voter Participation during the 2019 Presidential election in Oyo State, Nigeria, in the Department of Mass Communication and Media Technology, Faculty of Communication and Information Science, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Mass Communication and Media Technology and this has not been previously submitted.

..... **Signature**

Prof. L.A. Abioye

(Supervisor)

..... **Signature**

Dr. Yemi Oginni

(Head of the Department)

Dedication

This research work is dedicated to the Almighty God, the giver of life for making it a success despite initial setbacks.

DO NOT COPY: LEAD CITY UNIVERSITY, NIGERIA

Acknowledgement

My special appreciation goes to Leads City University, Ibadan, the great institution where I carried out this research work as a student. It is a great honour and opportunity to have been a student there. I also appreciate the central library of the institution, including the Nigerian Tribune library for affording me the access to the materials used in carrying out the research.

I also thank my supervisor, Professor L. Abioye for putting me through the steps of research at this level. My appreciation also goes to my Head of department, Dr. Yemi Oginni; Dr. Otunla; Prof Anjuwon Akinwande, for making the course of broadcasting attractive; Prof, Lambert Ihebuzor; Prof. Taye Babaleye, Dr Toyosi Samuel and Dr, Bayo W. Busari,

Lastly, I want to appreciate my family especially my wife, Mrs Gbemisola Alade; my brother, Prof. Wale Alade for his support and encouragement; my son, Joseph and daughters, Ifeoluwa and Oyinkansola. May God help you in all your endeavour.

Even though the above mentioned institutions and persons have assisted in the process of this research work, I alone stand responsible for the errors, if any, found in this work.

Abstract

Low voter participation in elections have become a global problem, Nigeria inclusive despite aggressive social mobilisation efforts by stakeholders through the use of the media. Therefore, this work investigated the influence of communication media on social mobilisation and voter participation during 2019 Presidential election in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population comprised of voters during the 2019 presidential election in 15 of the 33 local government areas spread across three senatorial districts in Oyo State. The local governments were determined based on their high population according to statistics released by INEC. Convenient sampling technique was used to identify and collect data for the study. Taro Yamani formula was used to arrive at a sample size of 425 respondents. Data was collected using a validated questionnaire and key personality interviews. The data obtained were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The Agenda Setting Theory of the media and Uses and Gratifications Theory were used as the theoretical framework for the study. The study established that political parties used several media to communicate with voters in the course of the election taking into consideration their demography in order to communicate with as many people as possible, but with varying degrees of success. The research also concluded that traditional media, mainly radio, remains the most influential media. It also recommended that media messages must remain persuasive and positive for a successful mobilisation efforts towards higher voter participation in future elections.

Keywords: Social Mobilisation, Voter Participation, Influence, Communication Media, Presidential Election, Oyo State

Word Count: 248

Table of Content

Title	Page
Cover Page	i
Certification	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Abstract	v
Table of Content	vi
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	viii
List of Appendices	viii
List of Acronyms	ix
Chapter One: Introduction	
1.1	Background to the Study
	1
1.2	Statement of the Problem
	11
1.3	Aim and Objectives
	12
1.4	Research Questions
	13
1.5	Hypothesis
	13
1.6	Scope of the study
	13
1.7	Significance of the Study
	14

1.8	Limitation of the Study	15
1.9	Operational Definition of Terms	17
1.10	Endnotes	19

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1.	Communication Media and Nigeria's Electoral Processes	23
2.1.2	Communication by Stakeholders during Elections	26
2.1.3	Communication Media and the role of Communication	29
2.1.4	Strategic Communication during Election	42
2.1.5	Media Marketing during Election	61
2.1.6	Means of Communicating with the Electorate	67
1.	Radio and Timeline of its Development in Nigeria	71
2.	Television	75
3.	Political rallies	78
4.	Slogan	84
5.	Propaganda	89

6.	Posters	
		95
7.	Social Media	
		98
2.1.7	Arguments For and Against Social Media	
		102
2.1.8	Traditional Communication System	
		105
2.1.9	Functions of Traditional System of Communications in Nigeria	
		107
2.1.10	Communicating with symbols	
		109
2.1.11	Artiste/Celebrity Endorsement	
		113
2.1.12	Social Mobilisation	
		115
2.2.2	Voter Participation	
		117
2.3	Review of Empirical Studies	123
2.3.1	The Barack Obama Campaign	
		123
2.3.2.	The Nigerian experience	
		127
2.3.3	Characteristics of the Nigerian Political System	
		133
2.4.	Conceptual Framework (Model)	
		139
2.5	Summary of Gaps in Literature	143
	Endnotes	
		146

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1	Research Design	156
3.2	Population of the study	156
3.3	Sample and Sampling techniques	160
3.4	Description of Research Instruments	163
3.5	Validity of the Research Instrument	166
3.6	Reliability of the Research Instrument	166
3.7	Method of Data Collection	167
3.8	Method of Data Analysis	168

Chapter Four: Results and Discussion of Findings

4.1	Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	170
4.2	Presentation of Data	174
4.2.1	Analysis of Research Questions	174
4.3	Discussion of Findings	184
	Endnotes	197

Chapter Five: Conclusion

5.1	Summary of findings	199
5.2	Conclusion	203
5.3	Recommendations	205
5.4	Contribution to knowledge	207
5.5	Suggested Areas of Further Research	210

Bibliography

Books

211

Conference Proceedings

213

Websites

214

Appendix

Questionnaire

218

DO NOT COPY: LEAD CITY UNIVERSITY, NIGERIA

List of Tables

Table 3.1 Population of voters by local government in Oyo North Senatorial District

160

Table 3.2: Distribution of voters by local government in Oyo Central Senatorial District

161

Table 3.3: Distribution of voters by local government in Oyo South Senatorial District

161

Table 3.4 Number of Questionnaire Distributed and Retrieved

168

Table 4.1 Distribution by gender

170

Table 4.2 Distribution by Age

171

Table 4.3 Distribution by Educational level

172

Table 4.4 Distribution by Respondent's Marital Status

172

Table 4.5 Distribution by Respondents' Occupation

173

Table 4.6 Distribution by Respondents' Religion

173

Table 4.7 Descriptive result of communication media used by political parties during 2019 presidential election in Oyo State

174

Table 4.8 Identifying messages contained in communication media

176

Table 4.9	Effectiveness of communication media on voters	177
Table 4.10	Extent to which communication media influenced voters	179
Table 4.11	Extent to which campaign messages influenced voters' choice	180
Table 4.12	Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient of relationship between communication media and voter participation	181
Table 4.13	Pearson moment Correlation Coefficient of Relationship between Communication media and ability to influence voter's choice	183

List of Figures

Figure 2.1:	A copy of Positive advertisement by the APC and PDP during the 2019 presidential election.	52
Figure 2.2:	A copy of contrast advertisement. Source: The Punch newspaper	54
Figure 2.3:	A copy of attack advertisement. Source: The Punch newspaper, February 13, 2019	56
Figure 2.4	Model for Influence of Communication Media used by Two Major Political Parties on Social Mobilisation and Voter Participation in the 2019 Presidential Election in Oyo State, Nigeria.	140
Figure 3.1:	Distribution of registered voters by state across the country	159
Figure 3.2:	Progression of distribution of population in Oyo State by local government in 1991, 2006 and 2016 census respectively.	159

List of Appendixes

1. Questionnaire
2. Key Personality Interviews

List of Acronyms

INEC: Independent National Electoral Commission

NOA: National Orientation Agency

APC: All Progressive Congress

PDP: Peoples Democratic Party

NTA: Nigeria Television Authority

WNTV: Western Nigeria Television

CPC: Congress for Progressive Change

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

RDS: Radio Distribution Service

CSO: Civil Society Organisations

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Elections all over the world are deeply rooted in the concept of representative democracy consisting of four key elements which are: choosing and replacing governments; active participations of citizens in politics and civil life; protection of human rights of citizens and finally a society governed by a rule of law which applies to everyone irrespective of their social standing and in which every adult has a right to vote and be voted for ¹. The definition of Democracy, which provides the basis for elections has been changing ever since it was first defined by Greek philosopher, Aristotle (384 BC-322BC) as “the rule of many” and by American president, Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) as “the government of the people for the people and by the people.” In other words, the concept of democracy which provides the basis for electoral processes around the world, has always been evolving, going through adaptations and reinvention in such a way that there may never be a conclusive definition of it².

In most part of the world today where representative democracy has become the preferred system of government, elections and political parties are the vehicles through which the citizens make their voices heard. Not only this, elections provide the platform through which individual interest groups in the society assume positions of power in a peaceful way³. In addition, it is also a means of changing governments legitimately and constitutionally through the existing political parties⁴. In essence, elections symbolise or indicate the level at which a society and any society for that matter has been able to achieve social equality as it gives every adult member therein the opportunity of using not more than one vote to choose their representatives in government.

In Nigeria, electoral processes have a chequered pattern, having been interrupted several times by military interventions in 1966, 1983 and 1993. Between 1960 when the country became independent and 2019, nine general elections have been held among several other elections at the state and local government levels⁵. Conversely, it is, however, interesting to note that since the return of democracy in 1999, and for the first time in its political history, the country has experienced an unbroken democratic experience till date. Similarly, for the first time, an opposition party, the All Progressives Congress (APC) took over the reins of government from an incumbent political party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

In all these electoral processes, communication has played a central role and the platform upon which this crucial role had stood is the media of communication. Communication media refers to the means or channels through which a message could be sent from a sender to its recipients. They represent the outlets or even the tools with which information, (or in a more recent sense of digital media), data, are stored and delivered. In other words communication media could also be regarded as a channel for transmission of information⁶. It is essential, however, to note that the media had evolved over time through different era and phases in which newer technology had redefined the way communication is done. It is an evolution in which the new incorporates the old, as we have seen in the print media today which has been incorporated into the digital space (online). In addition, with the advent of modern technology, media has become a bridge for exchange of information. Consequently, the more advanced technology becomes, the richer and more detailed the information it is capable of carrying and this is capable of influencing the means of communication, including the way that media users think and behave⁷.

In practical terms, when a medium of communication changes (for example from analogue telephone to mobile telephone), practices and experience of its users also change.

In addition, just as the written form of communication changed the hitherto face to-face experience in verbal communication thus transforming that process from inter-personal communication to mass communication, digital technology is also changing the process and experience of media users in the way communication is now done⁸. Furthermore, today, media consumers not only make use of the media, they share information that were hitherto outrageous, shocking, and easily digestible, in a much faster and wider way than contents that are complex and nuanced. In other words, shorter contents are more widely shared and consumed than longer and complex ones⁹.

Technology, which is the foundation upon which these new ways of communication stand, is always changing and having ripple effects on every area of human endeavor, the media inclusive. This constant change, as we have seen, is evident in the history and development of the media itself. From its verbal/non-verbal beginning (non-verbal being symbols/sign, pictures, gestures, action or posture), today, media has evolved into print, electronic and digital platforms, and it is still evolving and changing the way media, generally, is being used. Without the media of communication, the process of mass communication becomes disrupted and limited.

Thus, the media has become an integral part of the process of communication. However, in most part of the world today, though the media is undergoing a continuous evolution from the print to electronic and digital media, newspapers and magazines among other forms of print media, are still the preferred choices of many consumers of news or information because the contents are more detailed and permanent, as they could be preserved and be referred to many years after being first printed¹⁰. Not only this. In the process of the evolution, the role of the media and its impact also change. For example, newspaper publication in Nigeria evolved from the desire by a missionary to encourage reading culture among the local populace in their own language, to becoming a tool for de-

colonisation, through greater participation of indigenous people in the affairs of their own country which led to the attainment of independence¹¹.

In relation to communication during elections which is the focus of this work, as we have seen above, communication media play the role of opinion molders, especially in mobilising and ensuring voter participation during elections. In addition, the media provides insightful reports, analyses and comments about not only the electoral process but also a cross section of the personalities of active participants such as the candidates of political parties, and more importantly, what they have as manifestoes¹². However, due to the ownership structure of some the communication media establishments in Nigeria, and despite its aforementioned laudable role, the media's reportage of electoral events are sometimes skewed in favour of the owners, while the electoral process in itself remains far from being perfect¹³. It is important though, that this short-coming is not limited to the print media alone. It also applies to the electronic media which includes both radio and television, though this does not in any way diminish the important roles that the media generally plays during elections.

This powerful role and influence, predicated on its character of communicating to a mass audience in diverse places in real time, for example, could be seen in radio as a communication media, not only in Nigeria, but in other developing countries of the world. This, however, differs from empirical evidence in the developed world where the television is the number one choice¹⁴. The disparity in economic prosperity, among other indices, of both poor and developed societies in the world is responsible for this. For example, in developed continents of the world like Europe and America, the ratio of television sets to every home is almost 100 per cent unlike in developing countries where the percentage of homes with television sets is much lower, though urbanisation and improved economic prosperity is changing the status quo ante. In addition to economic

disparity, television is electricity-dependent, meaning that most developing societies would rather depend on radio as their major source of information and entertainment, due to its cost-effectiveness, maintainability and non-dependence on electricity¹⁵.

Apart from both the print and electronic media, the Social media as a communication tool has in no small ways reinvented the way communication is done during electoral processes all over the world. Not only has it also become an indispensable platform for political parties, individual candidates now use it extensively exploring the opportunities provided by its various platforms such as *whatsapp*, *facebook*, *instagram*, *twitter*, *blogs* and *vlogs*, among others, to communicate with potential voters, especially the younger generation who are the most ardent users of the new technology in order to mobilise them for political participation¹⁶. This is consistent with the statistics released by *statistica.com* about the most used social platforms in Nigeria for the year 2020 in which *Whatsapp*, *Facebook* and *Youtube* were the most used social media platforms. As the usage of social media including internet penetration grow in Nigeria, including the rest of Africa, political campaigns and communication are being reshaped by Information and Communication Technology, especially in the way that the electorate participate in the electoral process.

This change is not limited to developing countries. Even in developed economies of the like the United Kingdom, statistics has shown that the social media has replaced the popular British tabloid press in shaping the political mood of the nation, just as it is not in doubt that it has been an effective tool of mobilising the youths during elections and to amplify certain messages in such a way that a bandwagon effect could be created among the voting population¹⁷. This tallies with the position that though political rallies and the traditional media are still essential tools of communication during political campaigns, the entire conduct of elections around the world is evolving as the face of democratic

participation, inclusion and expression, especially among the youth who the most ardent users, have irrevocably changed with the coming of the social media¹⁸. For example *Facebook*, one of the social media tools has remarkably performed these roles especially during electioneering. In fact, communication research has proved that the most popular instrument for the dissemination of political news and especially for governments around the world is *Facebook*¹⁹.

Not only this, the Social media has become so popular and effective as a tool and provides an endless opportunity for mass communication to a vast audience by influential people in politics due to the fact that it provides better platform for engaging with an audience, than other media such as television²⁰. Similarly, communication strategists are more successful in using social media platforms such as Facebook messages to communicate with the young population who spend long hours on it and using the opportunity for instant feedback, are able to persuade them to vote for their principals²¹.

To extend the argument further on the importance of social media, before the advent of Information Communication Technology and the Internet, political campaigns were done basically relying on the traditional media as means of mass communication. However, in recent decades, political parties have discovered that the cost of mass communication during an election was increasing geometrically, just as the impact of using a single media for political campaigns began to decline²². The new media, general, therefore affords politicians and candidates the opportunity to reach out to a mass audience with their messages in a cheaper, yet more innovative ways. Thus, political campaigns have now shifted from traditional media to multimedia platforms as the social media has now become more effective at reaching a much wider audience in a more cost-effective way than the traditional media²³.

To underscore this fact, in the 2016 general election in Ghana, the smaller political parties were able to come up with creative and inexpensive campaign strategies to match the bigger political parties using the social media and it turned out that it was very effective for them²⁴. To sum it up, communication media and other forms of communication technology have an enormous influence in shaping public opinion. Its other roles includes providing a platform for accountability mechanism by putting socio-political and economic issues in the front burner, among other issues which otherwise might otherwise never be publicly debated. The media, especially the social media, has radically changed the face of inter-personal communication and connectivity. Not only this, communication media, especially the social media has provided the platform for social inclusion, thus affording them the opportunity for self-expression.

With these roles of the media well-established, it becomes therefore a vehicle for social mobilisation which in general terms, refers to the process of engaging and motivating a large number of people for participating in and or supporting a cause. It is also a process that involves several players engaged in efforts that are both inter-related and complementary, the goal of which is to bring about change in the society. Though, mobilisation is often used by grassroots movements for the above-specified goal, governments of countries also use social mobilisation to further similar causes²⁵. In the case of an election, which is the focus of this work, the stakeholders such as political parties, the electoral body organising the election (Independent National Electoral Commission in the case of Nigeria), including the government itself or its agencies, engage the target electorate to sensitise them through the process of mass mobilisation. This, they do, through public enlightenment campaigns using media advertisements including, in the case of the political parties, rallies, road shows and interpersonal communication, among others.

Furthermore, mobilisation could be seen as the process by which candidates, parties, activists and groups induce other people to participate in politics to win elections, to pass bills, and to influence policies. In essence, social mobilisation seeks to bring about change through individual group of stakeholders involved in efforts that are interconnected and which complement each other²⁶. The process of mobilisation includes key components such as sensitisation, motivation, and most importantly, information. These deliberate efforts are geared towards persuading people to take actions towards a desired and specific goal in order for the stakeholders to gain value, which in the case of an election is electoral victory for a political party²⁷. Furthermore, during an electioneering, while government agencies engage the electorate on the need to exercise the civic rights, political parties concentrate on persuading the electorate to vote for them. These efforts yield an indirect advantage, which is that there is an increase in voter participation.

It is important to establish at this juncture, however, that at the heart of social mobilisation, which is essentially to increase civic participation, is communication²⁸. This is because, sometimes, citizens need to be assisted to make informed and rational decision during and after the mobilisation process. These decisions, therefore, could only be made when they (citizens) have all the needed information, especially in the case of voters in an election, in order for them to elect the right candidates and thus ensure good governance. Yet, mobilisation could also be seen as a change in the attitude of people, including their values and expectations from those who drive the mobilisation process. Not only this, mobilisation results from sustained exposure to the mass media through increased communication process in addition to the process of urbanisation and higher literacy level. Though restrictions or censorship on conventional media including low level of literacy could limit the influence of mobilisation, however, in recent times, the internet and especially the Social media has made mobilisation much easier and far more intense in its

impact. In essence, mobilisation is a consequence of a conscious organisation of groups of people, geared towards a pre-determined course of action or activities²⁹.

In the process of mobilisation, there are both direct and indirect approaches. The direct approach to mobilisation is that which involves street canvassing coupled with individuals, television advertisements, direct mails and personal phone calls. In the case of indirect mobilisation, contact is made through the Social media networks that individuals subscribed to. People could also be indirectly mobilised by their friends, family members, members of the faiths they profess or even sports team-mates and colleagues in the office³⁰.

In essence, the extensive use of communication media during political campaigns globally is a mean to an end. As a result of its commentaries, reviews panel of discussion fora, personality interviews and editorials, awareness is created and questions are answered which help to explain knotty issues especially those that have to do with governance and government policies³¹. In other words, the communication media's all-important role in social mobilisation is focused on information, education and enlightenment of citizens, which is further geared towards engendering and ensuring an equally important aspect of the electoral process, which is voter participation.

Thus, the concept of voter participation elucidates that the media shapes the level of both the interest and attitude of citizens in an election, meaning that the information available to them determines their level of participation, which in turn is a reflection of the level of their media exposure³². So important to the electoral processes is voter participation that it is considered as one of the most important among the indices of quality citizenship and civic duties in every society. By extension, voter participation constitutes a series of activities that citizens engage in, not only to influence public policies, but also to elect those who would make policies that would benefit them as citizens³³.

However, voter participation is dependent of some factors which include, among others, the importance of the election. For example, a general election is more likely to generate more interest and participation than a local government election or a by-election. Furthermore, factors such as citizens' faith in the electoral system that would make their vote count, beliefs and personalities of candidates could increase Voter Participation. More importantly, the media's reportage of a crisis situation in a country may generate so much interest such that voter participation would increase, just as fanatical supporters of political parties are more likely to vote in an election (again, as a result of media exposure), than those who do not have serious sympathy for political parties.

Ironically, records of voter participation across the world especially in the African continent show that it is on the decline. Statistics from INEC has shown that voter participation in Nigeria has decreased from 52.3 percent in 1999 to 34.95 percent in the 2019 general election. Initially, participation increased in 2003 from 52.3 percent (1999) to 69.1 per cent, but since then it began to decline to 57.4 per cent in 2007; 53.7 per cent in 2011; 43.6 per cent in 2015 and 34.75 per cent in 2019, one of the poorest level of voter participation in Africa in about 25 years. The final result of the election released by INEC showed that President Muhammadu Buhari of the APC won with 15,191,847 votes to beat his main opponent, Atiku Abubakar, who polled 11,262,978. In other words, Buhari was elected president by just 18.5 per cent of the total number of voters, showing that voter participation was generally low.

Though the reasons for this decline are multi-dimensional and they could impact negatively on the democratic process and development of a society, yet some of the notable factors globally include large scale global socio-economic and cultural changes including the media and even the way communication is mediated during elections³⁴. In

Nigeria, factors such as violence, ethnicity and inability of politicians to deliver on their promises also mitigate against voter participation.

In conclusion, for an electoral process to fulfill its significance of being a vehicle for social change, the electorate must have adequate knowledge of the major stakeholders in the election which are the candidates, their political parties and the agency saddled with the role of organising the election through the process of social mobilisation. In the course of this, the media provides the platform for creating awareness for the entire process. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the influence of communication media used by two major political parties in the country on the process of social mobilization and voter participation during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State, Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Elections all over the world serve as a formal act of collective decision-making to choose new set of leaders. In the process of electioneering, the communication media are often used by contesting political parties to publicise their activities and manifestoes and to persuade the electorate to vote for the parties and their candidates to make it possible for them to win the election and thus produce the next crop of leadership. Unfortunately the reality of the Nigerian presidential election just after the first election in 1999 is that the level of voter participation has been dropping consistently, suggesting that the communication media used by political parties may either be inadequate or inappropriate since the electorate is made up of different demographics. Thus the problem may be that they were not communicating effectively or there may be other reasons which are not easily manifest.

To combat the problem, stakeholders such as the Independent National Electoral Commission, the National Orientation Agency, including the political parties themselves, among others, have increased their efforts at voter education and mass mobilisation in the course of several elections in the country. However the problem has persisted. Consequently, lack of interest or participation in electoral processes which is a fundamental part of civic duties of the citizens has persisted. Politicians have therefore devised different means to increase voter participation, including means such as vote-buying and giving out material things such as foodstuffs, which is popularly known as 'stomach infrastructure'. If this trend is not checked, the situation may get worse; thus the need to look at the problem so that political parties may have a review of their communication strategies, refine and improve on them, and even engage specialists if need be. Series of studies on Communication media used by political parties during elections have been conducted, but few have dwelt extensively on evaluating the influence of the communication media used by political parties on social mobilisation and voter participation despite the huge human and material resources devoted to the electoral process. This is a gap this study hopes to fill.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of communication media used by two major political parties in Nigeria on social mobilisation and voter participation during the 2019 general election in Oyo State, Nigeria.

The objectives of the study are to:

1. identify the communication media used by the political parties to persuade voters during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State.

2. find out the campaign messages contained in the communication media used by political parties prior to 2019 presidential election in Oyo State.
3. determine the effectiveness of communication media on voters.
4. find out the extent to which communication media influenced voters and
5. find out the extent to which the messages in the communication media used by political parties during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State have influenced voters.

1.4 Research questions

1. What are the communication media used by the political parties during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State?
2. What are the campaign messages contained in the communication media used by political parties during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State?
3. What is the level of effectiveness of the communication media on voters?
4. To what extent did communication media influence during the election?
5. To what extent did the campaign messages used by the political parties influence voters?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H01 There is no significant relationship between communication media and voter participation.

H02 There is no significant relationship between communication media and ability to influence voters' choice.

1.6 Scope of study

The scope of study for this work is the geographical area known as Oyo State in the South Western part of Nigeria and the political parties to be used for the study are the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The two political parties of choice are the most prominent and have produced public office holders who have occupied all political positions in the country from the presidency to the councillorship seats in local councils across the country.

1.7 Significance of the study

This study is expected to add to knowledge in the area of communication studies and further expand the scope of communication before, during and after electioneering campaigns in future elections in the country. Communicating with the right demographics in Nigeria is an ideal process, but it could be problematic or out-rightly futile. This study helps to ensure a review of the communication media used employed by stakeholders in the country's elections in view of past failures to achieve set goals. The study will also help political parties and other stakeholders like INEC, NOA and others to set up communication machineries for feedbacks from the electorate so that they could have a better understanding of how the electorates feel and what they actually want in order to help them communicate more effectively and efficiently. Not only this, it will help these two national organisations to review their vision and mission as critical stakeholders in the country's future elections.

Furthermore, party members and volunteers who publicise party manifestoes and ideologies will also benefit from this study as they, being direct influencers, will be able to communicate better and more appropriately with voters during elections. The electorate too, being the target of the communication strategies are sometimes confused when they come in contact with the myriad of messages directed at them. This study will help them

to understand better the messages that the political parties are sending to them; increase voter participation and also help voters make better-informed choices and decisions in future elections.

Apart from expanding the scope of the field of communication, communication experts and researchers will have a better understanding of the correct application of and how political stakeholders and the electorate perceive communication media during an election. Also, the media, if it must play its role as a critical stakeholder and the watchdog of the society during elections, must keep abreast of the communication media used by political parties such that when they begin to cross the red line - using fake news and hate speech against their opponents - it will not be an unwilling accomplice. It is also the hope of this study that the INEC will engage in further self-appraisal by reviewing its electoral policies and incorporate more of the many proffered but often neglected recommendations of foreign observer missions during elections in Nigeria since 1999. Finally, the study is significant in that it will also add more to the body of knowledge on how political parties in Nigeria should better organise their campaign and persuasive communication machinery to gain the support of votes during elections.

1.8 Limitation of the study

This research work focused on the influence of communication media used by two major political parties on social mobilisation and voter participation during the 2019 Presidential Election in Oyo State. Owing to the fact that not all voters in the election were literate, field work was slowed down, however, the problem was overcome by the research assistants who spend quality time with the semi-literate and illiterate voters in order for them to give appropriate answers to the questionnaire administered to them. Furthermore, due to the socio-economic situation in the country, some of the respondents would not be

bothered with a research that offered them no financial benefits. Thus research assistants had to part with some money to keep the field work going.

The INEC office in Ibadan, from which the researcher had relied on to obtain first-hand information and some documents on the election was not forth-coming as bureaucracy became the order of the day. The researcher made repeated visits to their office at Agodi, Ibadan, but it was either the state Electoral Commissioner had travelled, and he was the only one who could authorise the release of the documents, or a directive that an official letter stating the reasons for the request must be submitted. Thus, after an official letter had been written and acknowledged by the office, and repeated visits were made with no way forward, the researcher had to rely on secondary sources for the information needed, which was the official website of INEC and newspaper reports, among other sources. This actually put to the test, the Freedom of Information Act which mandates public institutions and officials to release information to any citizen who so needs it, without any hindrance.

The research work was limited to 15 out of 33 local government areas of Oyo State. The state of insecurity in the country, including the vast landmass of the state were limitations to the coverage of the entire 33 local governments. However, due to the fact that not every voter could have been covered, the research had to rely on population figures provided by INEC; thus the research focused on the most populated local governments in each of the three senatorial districts to obtain figures that were closest to and most representative of the entire population of voters in the state.

Finally the communication media focused on were mainly the print media (newspapers, posters, handbills etc.), electronic media (radio and television) and the social media. However, the focus on social media was basically on *facebook* and *whatsapp*

messages - the two social media tools being the most popular ones among the electorate in focus. *Instagram, twitter, blogs, vlogs* and other social media platforms were not dealt with in as much details as others earlier mentioned.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC): This refers to the electoral body which has been overseeing the conduct and administration of elections in Nigeria since 1999.

Communication Media: This refers to the means or channels used by political parties to communicate with the electorate. They include the traditional media (radio, television, newspapers, magazines, handbills and billboards), the internet, social media, blogs, podcasts, Facebook, twitter, among others.

Political Party: A political party is an organised group of people with same ideology and which fields candidates for elections, in order to get them elected and implement their ideology.

Voter: A voter is someone from the age of 18 and above, registered and accredited to vote and actually casts his/her vote on the day of election.

Voter Apathy: This refers to the situation in which voters refuse to perform their civic duties as a result of their disenchantment with a series of socio-economic and political issues in the society.

Voter Participation: This refers to the decision by the voter to take a conscious decision to exercise his or her civic rights by voting for his or her preferred candidate of choice on Election Day.

Election: This refers to the formal process of selecting a candidate for public office or of accepting or rejecting a political proposition through voting which is usually held at regular intervals.

Social mobilisation: This refers to the act of persuading citizens in a community through information and education in order to gear them towards a particular cause.

Spin: This refers to the interpretation given to an event or situation in order to falsify it and control its sequence.

Political rally: This refers to the gathering of party supporters and sympathisers in an open or large space to publicise the activities of the party.

Slogan: This refers to the catchy words or phrases used by supporters of political parties and their candidates.

Media advertisement: This refers to the messages packaged by political parties and their candidates to persuade their supporters through the media.

Public Relations experts: This refers to individuals engaged by political parties and their candidates to improve their level of acceptance among voters in order to win elections.

Talk show: This refers to a radio or television programme involving individuals who discuss current issues.

Motorised campaign: This refers to a style of campaign in which supporters, vehicles and motorcycles among others are branded in the colours and logo of political parties moving in a procession.

Personality interview: This refers to an interview in the media with a candidate of a political party.

National Orientation Agency: This refers to the agency saddled with the task of publicizing government policies and ensuring good citizenship among Nigerians.

DO NOT COPY: LEAD CITY UNIVERSITY, NIGERIA

Endnotes

1. Mbuseni J. Mathenjwa, *Election Deposit and Democracy in Developing Countries: A Comparative Overview in Selected Southern African Development Community Countries*, **Journal of African Elections**, vol. 16, no. 1, 2017, Pp 180-198.
2. Stephen Stockwell, *Political Campaign Strategy Doing Democracy in the 21st Century*, Australian Scholarly, Melbourne, 2005, Pages 10-13.
3. Sylvia Uchenna Agu, Vincent Onyekwelu Sunday Okeke and Adeline Nnena Idike, *Voter Apathy and Revival of Genuine Political Participation in Nigeria*, **Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences MCSER Publishing**, Rome-Italy Vol 4 No 3 September 2013, P 439.
4. Sule Babayo, *The 2019 Presidential Election in Nigeria: An analysis of the voting pattern, issues and impact*, **Geografia Malaysian Journal of Society and Space** 15 issue 2, Published 14 May, 2019, Pp 129-140.
5. Musibau Olabamiji Oyeboode, *Use and Misuse of the New Media for Political Communication in Nigeria's 4th Republic*, **International Knowledge Sharing Platform**, Vol 4, No 2, 2014, Pp 92-93.
6. Richard Campbell, Christopher R. Martin and Bettina Fabos, *Media & Culture: Mass Communication in a Digital Age*, Macmillan Learning, New York, (10th Edition), 2016 Update, Pp 1-640.
7. Lei He and Jian He, *The Revolution of Communication Media and Its Impact on Education*, **Open Journal of Social Sciences**, vol 3, 2015, Pp 123-127.
8. Paula S. Tompkins, *"Practicing Communication Ethics: Development, Discernment, and Decision-Making"*, Routledge (Second Edition), New York, 2019, Pp 1-292.

9. Richard Nordquist, *What Does Medium Mean in the Communication Process?* Feb 5, 2020, Definition and Examples of Media in Communications, <https://www.thoughtco.com/medium-communication-term-1691374>, available online.
10. Ayo Elebute, *Historicising Development of Nigerian Media from Iwe Irohin in 1859 to Modern Age of Cell Phone and the Internet*, **Idia Journal of Mass Communication, Igbinedion University, Okada**, Vol. 1, 2014, pp. 63-108.
11. Sharafa Dauda, *The Print Media Landscape In Nigeria and Reporting Conflict*, **Maiduguri Journal of Arts and Social Sciences**, Volume 8, Number 2, December 2010, P 275
12. Ibid
13. Gift Ntiwunka, Nwaodike Chibuzor and Adewale Kupoluyi, *Print Media and Electoral Process in Nigeria*, **Jurnal Studi Pemerintahan**, 2020. Vol 11 number 2, Pp 229-25
14. Robert W. McChesney, *Rich Media, Poor Democracy: Communication Politics in Dubious Times*, **The New Press**, 2015, Pp 425-443.
15. Ibid.
16. Funmilola Omotayo and Mathew B. Folorunso, *Use of Social Media for Political Participation by Youths in Oyo State, Nigeria*, **Journal of Democracy and Open Government**, Vol 12, no. 1, 2020, Pp 132-157.
17. Justin Fisher, Edward Fieldhouse and Bettina Rottwiler, *The Evolution of District Level campaign in Britain: The Resilience of Traditional Campaigning?* Paper presented at the EPOP Annual conference, Kent, September 2016, Pp 1-30.
18. Andre-Michel Essoungou, *Social media Boom begins in Africa*, *Journal of African Renewal*, <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/december-2010/social-media-boom-begins-africa>, accessed June 2021.

19. Brent Barnhart, *Social Media and Politics: 10 best Practises for Campaigns to Know*, <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-for-political-campaigns/>, accessed May 2021.

20. Shelley Boulianne, *Social media Use and Participation: A Meta-analysis of current Research*, **Journal of Information, Communication and Society**, Vol 18, Issue 5, 2015, Pp 524-538.

21. Robert Bond, Christopher J, Farris, Jason Jones and Adam D. Kramer, *A 61-million-person Experiment in Social Influence and Political Mobilization*, **Nature**, No 489, 2012, Pp 295-298.

22. Martin Ndlela and Winston Mano, *The Changing Face of Election Campaigning In Africa*, **Social media and Elections in Africa vol 1, Theoretical Perspectives and Election campaigns**, Martin Ndlela and Winston Mano (ed, Palgrave, Macmillan. 2020, Pp 1-12.

23. Kim Strandberg, *Social Media Revolution or Just a case of History Repeating Itself? The issue of Social media in the 2011 Finnish Parliamentary elections*, **New Media and Society, Sage Journal**, Vol 15, Issue 8, 2013. Pp 1-19.

24. Martin Ndlela and Winston Mano, *The Changing Face of Election Campaigning In Africa*, **Social media and Elections in Africa vol 1, Theoretical Perspectives and Election campaigns**, Martin Ndlela and Winston Mano (ed, Palgrave, Macmillan. 2020, Pp 1-12.

25. Mass mobilisation, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_mobilization, accessed June 2021.

26. Ibid.

27. Fasunwon Adebayo Folorunso, *Social Media and Political Mobilisation in Nigeria*, *International Journal of Research and Innovation In Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, Issue 12, Pp 224-230.

28. Yannis Theocharis, Will Lowe, Jan W. van Deth and Gema Garcia-Albacete, *Using twitter to Mobilise Protest Action: Online mobilization patterns and action in Occupy Wall Street, Indignados and Aganaktismenoi movements*, **Information, Communication and Society**, Vol 18, Issue 2, 2015, Page 202-220.

29. Dungse, Y., Mato, S., Makinde Opeyemi. and Chidozie, F, *Social Media, Political Mobilization and Participatory Politics in Nigeria*, Covenant University, Nigeria, Conference on e-Government In Nigeria, 2018, Pp53-66.

30. Abubakar Bappayo, Ahmad Abubakar and Yushau Haruna Kirfi, *The Impact of Mass Media on Political Mobilization Process in Plateau State Radio Television Corporation, Jos (PRTVC), Nigeria*, **KIU Journal of Humanities**, Vol 6, Issue 1, 2021, Pp 101-108.

31. Ibid

32. Olaniru Oluwatosin, Olatunji Olusoji, Ayandele Olusoji and Popoola Olugbenga, *The Influence of Media on Political Knowledge Among Undergraduate Students In Ibadan, Nigeria*, **Global Journal of Social Sciences**, Vol 19, 2020, Pp 13-24.

33. Funmilola Omotayo and Mathew B. Folorunso, *Use of Social Media for Political Participation by Youths in Oyo State, Nigeria*, **Journal of Democracy and Open Government**, Vol 12, no. 1, 2020, Pp 132-157.

34. Oniel Francisco Diaz Jimenez, *Election Campaigns , the Media and their Impact on Civic Engagement of Mexicans in the 2012 Presidential Election*, **Comunicacion y Sociedad**, No 29, 2017, Pp 123-146.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will feature an empirical, conceptual and theoretical bases on which the entire study stands. This aspect will also highlight literature review that directly relates to and support this study.

This chapter therefore covers the following:

- 1. Conceptual review**
- 2. Empirical review**
- 3. Theoretical review**
- 4. Conceptual model specification**
- 5. Appraisal of reviewed literature**

2.1 Conceptual review

2.1.1. Communication Media and Nigeria's Electoral Processes

Communication is very essential for the success of every electoral process, irrespective of the location. The reason for this is that during an electoral process, communication is a tool for citizen mobilisation, sensitisation and information. Communication during elections is a process in which persuasive messages are communicated by political institutions through the communication media to the citizenry, the desired effect of which is to switch public opinion in favour of certain candidates in order to gain power¹.

It goes without saying therefore, that politicians, and by extension political institutions and other critical stakeholders, deliberately deploy specific media of communication, language during their campaigns in order to persuade voters and mobilise

support for their candidates and political parties. Therefore, a strategic and effective deployment of the media of communication are essential for the overall success of the entire campaign. In Nigeria, public communication as a general term dates back to the colonial times when the media, especially those owned by missionary societies, nationalists, politicians and political parties served as platforms for public debates, political reforms and protests, including formation stimulation of nationalist movements to engender constitutional development. In the post-independence era, the communication media was able to build on this initial success by sustaining public debates and keeping in the front burners, current issues and discourses such as independence, state creation, revenue allocation, national census, among other national issues.

It must be noted, however, that the major political parties of the First Republic used majorly, the means of communication such as political rallies, print media of posters, billboards, handbills and opinion articles, editorial comments and paid advertisements in the Press to communicate with the electorate. Furthermore, the electronic media (which was in its infancy at his time) and the Press were used as medium of communication by the political parties not only to gain power during elections, but to also sustain political power, especially in their major support bases. During the Second Republic (1979 – 1983), the communication media used by the major political parties were not much different from those of the First Republic.

Messages and contents of advertisements in the communication media during electoral campaigns at this period were characterised by character assassination and ethnic and religious bigotry. The reason for this phenomenon was that media ownership at that time remained firmly in the hands of the political parties controlling the location of the media establishments. For example, as of 1979, the National Party of Nigeria which was in power at the federal level by then, controlled all the federal-owned radio and television

stations such as Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) and the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) stations in all the then 19 states, including the print media of Daily Times and New Nigerian Newspapers which existed side by side with other media in different states across the country².

By the Fourth Republic (1999 – date) the pattern of media ownership had changed considerably while the communication media available had also improved due to advancement in technology. Thus, political parties are now able to communicate with their target audiences unhindered by media ownership factor, time and space or by political power. Responsible for this new pattern was the Internet and especially the Social media. Thus by 2015, through effective use of the social media and the slogan of “Change”, the All Progressives Congress, an opposition party, for the first time in the history of the country defeated the party in government. Through effective use of the communication media and Public Relations and marketing strategies, Muhammadu Buhari, who was hitherto being portrayed as a harsh dictator and religious extremist lacking in positive human relations was rebranded as a reformed democrat who was now accessible to all strata of the nation’s demographic, irrespective of gender, religion or ethnicity³.

The Peoples Democratic Party during its own campaigns for elections, also used consistently various forms of communication media. Media reports, radio jingles and television advertisements and discussions, documentaries, mass rallies, bill boards and banners bearing life size images of its candidates, located at strategic junctions were among the consistent channels of communication used by the party to canvass votes from the electorate. In addition, the party used the conventional face-to-face contact, door-to-door canvassing, whistle-stop tours of several towns and cities. Furthermore, special appearances by musicians, actors and actresses, celebrities and media personalities characterised the political rallies which were fixed in advance and publicised in the media,

as well as the websites of the candidates. The colourful rallies, with flag-bearing supporters and the major players wearing special dress codes depicting the culture of the locations area where the rallies held, were also characterised by speeches laced with goodwill messages by party leaders⁴. Similar to the APC, the party also used massively communication media such as the Internet, Social media and Global System for Mobile communication which enabled it to engage a large number of youths in discussions about political issues.

2.1.2 Communication by Stakeholders during Elections

Election in Nigeria generally relies on two major legal documents which are the 1999 Constitution as Amended and the Electoral Act 2010. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is the agency saddled with the responsibility of conducting elections, registration and de-registration of political parties and regulating the conducts and activities of contestants and political parties, among other duties. As of today, Nigeria has more than 90 registered political parties, chief among which are the earlier mentioned All Progressives Congress and Peoples Democratic Party. Others include African Democratic Party, Social Democratic Party, Zenith Party, Labour Party and several others, with more political groups still seeking recognition⁵. Most of these parties claim one ideological leaning or the other for political support.

In order to underscore the role of communication in elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) often embarks on series of voter education drives in order to mobilise voters, educate them on how to vote, where to vote and why they should vote for candidates of their choice, using various communication media including the New media. It was also important for INEC to engage more in voter education through strategic use of the communication media to inform the electorate on the need for peaceful

elections and democratic transition due to the fact that electioneering processes in Nigeria have been characterised by ethnicity, religious manipulation, cases of massive frauds, violence, intimidation of opponents and potential voters, among other vices, also widely reported by the media, leading to a perception by at least two-thirds of Nigerians believing that elections do not make effective change happen⁶.

Another major stakeholder in Nigerian elections is the National Orientation Agency (NOA) and it is the body saddled with the responsibility of communicating government policies to the people and sensitising them on various national issues such as patriotism, national values and integration, health, education and environmental hygiene in order to achieve a peaceful, united and progressive society. Its political and civic roles during elections also include campaign against voter apathy, continuous Voter education, campaign on violence-free elections and education of Nigerians on their civic rights and obligations. To get the messages across to the populace, the body often uses the mass media and every available publicity material though its effectiveness may have been hampered like every other government organization due to financial constraints.

The role of opinion leaders as channels of communication in the process of an election can also not be over-emphasised. The ordinary voters, especially the barely literate ones, often look up to opinion leaders in deciding which candidate and what party to vote for. With the party and candidates already decided for the voters in an election, it is not uncommon for opinion leaders to back up their positions of influence with money and materials such as foodstuffs and souvenir.

Though both the INEC and NOA have aggressively spoken out against it, money politics in Nigerian election remains an unofficial means of communication (through vote-buying), mobilisation and persuasion between politicians and the electorate. This situation

has characterised Nigerian elections for decades and may not be easily eliminated given the pervasive poverty and socio-economic situation in the country.

Having laid this foundation, it is important to state that all stakeholders, be they political parties, candidates and even the media aim at an overall success. Especially for political parties and their candidates, the successful campaign must be that which has a knack for consistency, cohesiveness and strategic effectiveness with an overriding and centralised message⁷. The media of communication used to achieve this overarching success therefore, are the traditional media – the print media which include majorly, newspapers, news magazines, posters, billboards, handbills and journals; electronic media such as radio and television; political rallies and door-to-door political canvassing, among others.

During election period leading political parties often spend huge amount of funds on publicity in the various media. In the newspapers and magazines, political parties often advertise their political rallies to be held in different areas of the country detailing the venue and time among others in order to give their campaigns the widest publicity they could. On the electronic media, radio jingles and television commercials publicising the manifestoes of different political parties including their candidates in an entertaining manners often fill the airwaves. Documentaries detailing the antecedents of candidates and the successes recorded by political parties are often aired also during political campaigns.

In addition, fliers or handbills often complement the billboards and banners already erected at major junctions and other strategic places when the political campaigns move to the streets. The newspaper, radio and television for example have been used for mass mobilisation during electoral campaigns in the country even before independence.

2.1.3 Communication Media and the role of Communication

Communication takes place in all areas of human endeavor, be it in commerce, politics or even religion. In fact, groups, organisations and societies cannot function optimally without the use of communication. As long as there is interaction between one person and the other, or between groups and organisations, communication must take place. For example, during an electioneering campaign, with its different levels of activities and involving different actors at different levels, playing different roles, communication is indispensable if the entire process must be well co-ordinated; it is, in fact, the live wire of such activities⁸.

Communication Media is used by the political class, government or even civic society organisations for creating awareness (social mobilisation), which is to convince citizens, and in the case of an election, the electorate about political parties' ideas, manifestoes and what they stand for. Through social mobilisation, the political class tries to form through the electorate, a formidable majority in order to win an election and be in government. Apart from this, communication media serves as a platform for the purpose of educating and informing the electorate on the coming event of an election. Therefore, communication during an electioneering process must be strategic, having certain aims and objectives in view. Part of these strategic objectives by the political class is to communicate effectively through the media with specific and predetermined audiences such as opinion molders, community leaders and the general electorate.

The strategy of using the communication media in whatever situation therefore, must be precision-driven, employing several and varied tactics, so that at the end of the day, the much-desired goals and objectives are achieved. Scholars, however, have diverse views about the concept of strategy and communication. One of these views is that in a situation

of conflict or war, the aim of strategy is to accomplish a predetermined outcome, using the means of movement, and surprising the opponent in order to gain advantage and achieve victory. Therefore, an effective strategy is that which ensures a particular result or a favourable outcome; if possible, even without a fight⁹. This view is in contrast with the perspective that strategy is a means of bringing into existence a particularly predetermined policy or to even make the citizens of a country to view certain government policies from the view of government alone, through social mobilisation through the media of communication. So complex, yet important is the concept of strategy that even the act of war could be a strategy by a country to continue its political relations with another country, by other means¹⁰.

Thus, whether in international relations, business, war, politics, or even communication, strategy involves deployment and employment of means of achieving results; and not just achieving results, but doing so in an advantageous way¹¹. From the foregoing, it is empirically clear that when strategy is contextually applied to communication, (or any area of human endeavor for that matter) it is a situation of having a clear view of an end from the beginning. It is the same way that the intention of communication during an electoral process or the result expected, is to get the electorate mobilised, educated and informed for the purpose of making informed decisions during an electoral process.

Furthermore, strategy is not just the result expected from a process, it is in fact, the framework or the roadmap for intended (communicative) actions. It is therefore a plan; the pattern and position, as well as perspective all rolled into one which, without a clear end in view, may cause an entire effort (an electoral process in this case) to end in disaster¹². This position is in tandem with the amount of efforts seen around the world whenever elections are around the corner. Not only are human and material resources committed to it locally,

international collaborations and contributions are also involved as seen in Foreign Observer Missions to countries holding elections, Nigeria inclusive. The major reason behind all these efforts, plans and international perspective even in local electoral processes therefore, is that apart from having strategically deployed communication to play its roles, the entire process does not end up in disaster.

It is important to stress further that the media of communication deployed in an electoral campaign often establishes the direction that the process would go, once its goals and objectives had been predetermined and established. Thus the communication media deployed in any area of human endeavor, more so in an election, should ask and answer the question: How should the goals and objectives of the campaign be achieved? Communication media used in an electoral process is often multi-dimensional and multi-pronged in order to achieve the set goals and objectives. The communication media used during electioneering campaigns, which is the focus of this study, includes, but not limited to the print media which includes posters, bill boards, handbills, banners, among others; electronic media such as radio and television, including electronic billboards; the internet and social media. Other media of communication to be considered include political rallies, celebrity endorsements, use of slogans, door-to-door vote canvassing, marketing strategies, among several others.

It must be established, however, that the media of communication has always been evolving. In the last two decades, especially in developing countries of the world, a cheaper and more effective media which has attained global usage in reaching the widest audiences and in the fastest way possible is the new media which includes the Internet and all digital devices including social media platforms such as *twitter*, *instagram*, *Facebook*, *bulk SMS*, *blogs*, *vlogs* and *Whatsapp*. These have also been adopted globally as part of the communication process during elections across the world. The reason for adopting this

new technology is not far-to-seek. Elections, for example, are basically about organisation, building alliances, mobilisation of supporters, mass media coverage of a political process, voter contact and shaping the information environment. The New media by its characteristic, makes it easier to reach and communicate with an unimaginable number of people within the shortest time possible, thus playing a major role in those multi-sectoral political activities; this role is basically communication¹³.

This aligns with outcomes of researches on communication media during elections in Nigeria which have shown that good communication engenders a well-informed society and this subsequently leads to positive social transformation. Indeed, the elements of the messages which are to be communicated and the mediation of the messages, provide the context for the argument that “the power to influence (political power) is embedded in the power to communicate¹⁴.” In practical terms, communication during elections consists of some layers of actions. One is the production and generation of messages by political actors. Secondly, the transmission and reception of such messages could either be formal or informal. It could also be done publicly or in private and with contents that could be largely mediated or unmediated¹⁵.

Scholars also agree that the concept of communication media is a means to an end. It is also an established fact that its effect or ultimate aim during elections, is to be used to communicate in such a way as to influence the electorate or their voting behaviour in order to win an election. This, politicians do, most times, by deliberately communicating with the electorate employing certain types of language or medium with a view to gaining their support¹⁶. These positions find expressions in both the messages and media employed during electioneering. The messages are not only carefully crafted by professionals with appropriate language, the media and the timing of communicating the messages are also

carefully selected to make maximum impact on the electorate. The message could also be mediated or unmediated, formally or informally, since it is a means to an end.

However, some scholars believe that the character and nature of communication media during elections are not fixed, since so many factors shape and continue to shape them. These factors, according to them, include socio-political contexts, culture, race, system of government, location, leadership and followership behaviour, including the opinions of communication scholars¹⁷. Indeed, contexts shape communication media during elections because, for example, what may work in Ghana may not work in Nigeria. The issues to be addressed in one country also differ from another and so are the knowledge and perception of the electorate about certain issues as it affects their individual countries.

In Nigeria for example, in the last two elections of 2015 and 2019, issues of insecurity engendered by Boko Haram insurgency; kidnapping and banditry including the poor state of the economy were major issues that shaped communication during those elections. The major political parties contesting in the country's election at those periods directed their communication efforts towards addressing those issues as much as they could, in an attempt to convince the electorate that they were capable of solving them if they were voted into power. Thus, the communication media that would be used in any given electoral process by the contesting political parties, are going to be largely location-specific, as any attempt to import wholesale the strategy of communication perceived to have been effective in other countries into the Nigerian context, for example, may fail.

As it has been established from the foregoing, electoral campaigns in most democratic societies of the world are often mediated and the complex interwoven relationship between the media, politicians, political parties, their communication

managers and the electorate, among others who are the stakeholders in elections, are often subject of interest to communication scholars. In political systems based on different models of representative systems of government such as parliamentary and presidential systems, elections are a form of seeking political consensus, which would as a result lead to creation of a parliamentary majority that forms a government. It also ensures political accountability; creation of political programmes and recreation of the image of public opinion¹⁸. Based on these functions of elections, more importantly, credible electoral decisions based on the outcome of free and fair elections are thus irrevocable, and cannot be changed in any other way except through another election whenever next it comes up¹⁹.

In deepening the discourse on communication media adopted during elections therefore, it is a truism that globally, an election period generates a lot of activities in whatever location it is being anticipated and among the stakeholders, especially the electorate and the political class. The reason is that the outcome of such elections determines, at least, the immediate future of such society. Subsequently, both political actors and their supporters deploy a series of persuasive strategies through the communication media to gain the support of voters in order to control power²⁰. This attempt to persuade the largest number of supporters and control power is thus the main reason behind the use of communication media during elections. Contemporary literature on election communication has, however, tried to draw a clear line between information campaigns and communication campaigns. Information campaign, as it were, is related to efforts to make information available to various publics; this is basically and simply its major objective. However, this type of communication is mostly one-way in character and form.

On the other hand, election communication campaign using the mass media is interactive, participative and there is therefore a dialogue between the sender and receiver (the electorate). In an election, political parties and their candidates send out messages to the electorate and they expect a feedback through the reactions of the latter. The expected reaction, in essence, is to take a decision by voting for them on the day of election and thus control power and form a government. In order to have a successful communication campaign, the communicator must therefore have a deep knowledge of the campaign process²¹. However, whether the process is information campaign or communication campaign, three major stages are often considered or involved and these are planning, implementation and evaluation stages. All campaigns have only one aim and that is to achieve the desired result with cohesiveness and a central message; not only that, there must be a commitment to consistency and strategic effectiveness, in order to achieve the desired results²².

An electoral campaign that relies heavily on the communication media is an attempt to reach a particular target group, by designing a series of advertisements and placing them in various media. In an electoral campaign, the message of the campaign is the idea that a political party and its candidate wants to share with the voters. The message encapsulated in the communication process often consists of several talking points about policy issues contained in the party's manifesto. These points summarise the main ideas of the campaign and are repeated frequently through the various media, in order to create a lasting impression on the voters²³. These often-repeated ideas are encapsulated in what would later become the slogans and mantras of the party during the political campaign proper.

In doing a critique of campaigns generally, media studies have always been pessimistic about its role. Some media scholars see electioneering and its use of the communication media as a manipulative and domineering tool that controls the public. Furthermore, some critics also see communication strategies as a process that undermines democracy, citing its perceived manipulative tendencies earlier mentioned, which they claim are meant to convince the electorate to see things from a predetermined perspective²⁴. However, a shortcoming of these perspectives is that their proponents seem to perceive the audience at whom the communication media are directed as individuals without personal convictions or ability to think independently.

We have earlier argued that election communication focuses on mobilisation, information and education of the electorate during an electoral process. Therefore, if communication had performed these roles effectively, it is very much unlikely that the same audience would behave in exactly the same way given their individual differences. Thus the argument in favour of “manipulative tendencies”, “domineering tool” and seeing things from a “pre-determined perspective” may not hold water. In the same vein, it could be argued that this criticism of the communicative processes during elections have not fully acknowledged the conviviality, excitement and festive atmosphere including the human factor that makes those electioneering campaigns a series of events to look forward to every four or five years, as seen in many countries of the world.

In fact, given the Nigerian experience, as is the case elsewhere, it is always a time of economic boom for a category of specialists such as Social media influencers, advertisers, media houses, graphic artists and designers, and communication firms, among others who work on designing the winning persuasive messages for their clients – the political parties and their candidates. Therefore, communication media, rather than being seen as undermining democracy and being manipulative, should actually be seen as deepening it.

This is because communication during political campaigns helps the electorate to take decisions that affect not only their present but also their future²⁵.

This view underscores the efforts put into an electoral process which often takes several months in most cases. However, in making a choice during an election, the electorate might discover that they had made a mistake and that their future is in jeopardy. In between the last election and the next one, communication also helps to educate the electorate by way of enlightening them on their civic duties and responsibilities on what they could do to keep their leaders in check until the error is corrected through another election next time. Apparently, this was what happened in Nigeria during the 2015 election when the communication media used by the All Progressives Congress promoted the 'Change' slogan to tell Nigerians that the country needed a change from the way the Peoples Democratic Party was running the country. Empirically, the strategy worked as the party eventually won the 2015 election through its effective use of the mass media.

As noted earlier, the communication media that worked effectively in a particular environment may not be exactly successful in another. In other words, a very good knowledge and understanding of the demographics that a political party is dealing with is very essential to developing the right mediated messages to win an election. A poor understanding of same may lead to disastrous outing. Following this argument therefore, the effective communication media is that which meets the needs and speaks to the hearts of the electorate with the right messages, while appropriating the opponent's weaknesses and continuously hitting at it in such a manner that even its strength is undermined and weakened.

To further understand the nexus between an electoral process and communication media, it is important to understand the intricacies involved. Communication scholars have argued that politics as an area of human endeavor is basically about communication and

therefore it is media-dependent. In other words, the media is the platform upon which politics stands in the society in order to be fully functional and impactful²⁶. Empirical evidence, globally, during electioneering further underscores this position. In most part of the developed world, politics finds its full expressions and impact with the aid of the communication media because it is accessible to all on an equal basis. Without communication, the entire electoral process would be in jeopardy. This is because mobilisation which is an integral part of the process would fail. It is certain, therefore, that the entire process would become dysfunctional without a platform to operate.

Even in Africa where the media structure is not as developed as that of the Western world and accessibility is relatively low due to factors related to underdevelopment such as lack of electricity and illiteracy, an electoral process remains entirely media-dependent. Governments, including political parties and politicians generally need the media to function. It is no wonder that these major actors court the media, not only through their representatives (spokesmen and government officials) who constantly have interface with it, but also through Public Relations activities and advertisements in order to have their voices heard and to create favourable impressions in the mind of the people.

Therefore, in every electoral process, it is essential that messages be communicated in a strategic way in order to achieve the desired success. For example, the 2008 Obama presidential campaign reputedly communicated its 'Yes We Can' slogan effectively combining both the traditional means of campaign with New Media technology and social networking sites, having realised that the younger population constitute a formidable segment of the electorate and are more at home with the new media. The messages galvanised the youth into action. Thus, the message was persuasive, convincing and defined the objectives of the campaign, underscoring the fact that a winning campaign

message must not be ambiguous, and must be weaved intricately into the general objectives of a campaign²⁷.

This assertion is consistent with famous campaign slogans even in the Nigerian electioneering campaigns. The Change slogan of the APC in 2015 was not only unambiguous about its message of calling on the electorate that there was a need for a change in the direction the country was headed at that time, the slogan was also central to its objective of replacing the government in power. Not only did the change slogan try to persuade the electorate (and it actually did in the end), it also threw up several points of discourse on the issues facing the country then, an effective strategy to make Nigerians see how the government in power then had fared badly in tackling those issues effectively. In practical terms, the most effective message is that which is simple and true. Given the example expressed above it could be seen that the message was the simple message of Change. Was it true that the country needed a change at that time? The consensus at that time was that there was a need, hence the party with the message won the election.

The winning message is not however, a simple task. The process of strategic message management in an election dictates that even before the message is pushed out to the audience, it must have been consistently used and tested in-house by the political party involved to test or ensure its appeal. It is after this process that the message may now be channeled into all available media²⁸. The media campaign by political parties across the country supports this. Whether the message was Change or Next Level (APC slogan in 2015 and 2019 respectively) or Transformation and Atikulatd/Take it Back (PDP slogan in 2015 and 2019 respectively), there was hardly any communication media not used by these two major political parties in Nigeria during those elections, both online and offline.

Radio, television, billboards, social media, branded vehicles, political rallies, among several others often become the means through which the messages are conveyed. Even

human beings became mannequins painted in colours and logos of political parties to carry home their messages. In essence what makes a success of a campaign is simply a strategic commitment to consistency and effectiveness. Therefore, a campaign is not effective until it is characterised by a cohesive, attention-grabbing, straight-to-the-point message. Also equally important in the management of mediated messages is the use of visual symbols to accompany the messages being communicated to the electorate. For example, very prominent during the Obama campaign was the big O symbol, the first letter in Obama's name which everyone wanted to identify with and it subsequently became an integral part of that campaign²⁹.

In the most recent elections in Nigeria also, President Muhammadu Buhari was portrayed in campaign posters in different attires of the three major ethnic groups in the country – Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. The major essence of this is to reinforce the image that Buhari is a detribalised Nigerian and to echo what he said in his inauguration speech that “I belong to everybody and I belong to nobody³⁰.” It is essential to note that messages and its management have become a lot more complex than it has ever been and this is mostly based on what political parties and their candidates on one hand, and the electorate which is the major components of a campaign, have learnt from one another. On one hand, messages are being developed by candidates based on the information gathered on potential voters' preferences over a period of time. On the other hand, voters are able to make up their minds on their candidates of choice based on the information gathered through different means of communication, especially in recent times, on the social media concerning the candidates in the process of the electioneering campaigns.

One important factor which had made this possible is the advancement in Information and Communications Technology in the new millennium. As a result, the media team of candidates of political parties can obtain both demographic and

psychographic knowledge of the electorate – demographic and psychographic information being the preferences of voters including their beliefs and lifestyle. Thus, with a wide range of information at their disposal, political parties and their media teams are now better equipped to determine more precisely the voting patterns of the electorate in addition to the messages and policy issues that appeal to them. These are subsequently highlighted and underscored when messages are communicated to the electorate through the media. Ideally, having ascertained the preferences of the electorate and crafted the group-specific message, the messages must therefore be consistent with, and reinforces the image of the candidate it seeks to promote. As the campaign progresses, the message needs to be refined and reinterpreted, through the communication media, in response to social issues and developments.

However, this is not to say that messages emanating from the campaign team of a candidate can be changed at will. In fact, the communication structure of a candidate's media team, in its use of the media, should aim at consistency in the new messages emanating from it, and consistent with its previously communicated messages³¹. In creating the messages for the campaign, however, spin doctors often ensure that the messages are attractive and relevant, so that the audience who are the receivers could perceive them as credible. In recent times, researches had suggested that for the sake of credibility, three dimensions are essential.

Firstly, the messages must reflect competence and expertise; that is, the message must show that the wordings are not just spontaneous and ordinary words; it must present the reality that some fertile and creative minds must have brought them into being. The need to fashion out creative messages is one of the reasons political parties outsource aspects of their communication efforts during elections, which today has become a global practice. Secondly, the message must elicit trust. The reason for this is germane. Over a

period of time the electorate have come to distrust politicians generally and in many instances, their words are often not taken seriously. Thus, communication strategists, being aware of this gap, have always made efforts to create messages that must persuade the electorate and be accepted by them. Finally, there must be elements of goodwill rather than personal or self-interest in the messages. However, perception in this case is a determinant for acceptability of messages and communication strategists would need to do carry out a research among the populace, to determine what messages they are most likely to accept as credible.

2.1.4 Strategic Communication during Election

Globally strategic communication during electioneering has developed extensively over the last century as a result of cross-development of political and commercial persuasion techniques, especially in countries where there is stable democratic governance and freedom of speech. The basic tools for strategic communication are mass marketing and Public Relations techniques, including statistics, enabled by the adoption of new technologies such as the Internet and the New media which enables communicators to reach the widest audiences possible. As the industry became stronger and more sophisticated, new strategies and communication tools such as the Internet and New media displaced the traditional media, though the latter remains extant.

Today, during elections, communication is controlled by specialists, strategists and consultants, who create the words, images and slogans, using mass marketing, psychology and other communication strategies to persuade the electorate in the best way possible, to make certain choices. Thus one of the major strategists and experts in the modern communication industry is popularly known as Spin doctors, considered very versed in the use of communication as a powerful tool in the art of persuasion. The term, coined by American novelist, Saul Bellow gained popularity in the late 70s and early 80s and later

become the topic of a research work. The term is the combination of the word spin which means the slant or interpretation given to an event; and doctor meaning to patch up or even to falsify a situation or sequence of an event. Academics who later make it a term of discourse in Communication and Public Relations³².

Spin, basically, is closely related to the art of propaganda mostly by corporate bodies or governments, with deliberate attempt to influence public opinion by favourably interpreting an event in support of an organization, group, government, politician or political party. In such instances, fables could be communicated as facts to the targeted audiences. Even when facts are involved, they are deceptively selected and distorted to suit the purpose of misleading and deceiving the public to accept the message being sent through the media. In addition, a spin, especially in public administration and politics, is often an exaggerated, inaccurate narration of an event with an excessive dose of high-sounding words to appeal to the emotion of its audience³³.

Backed by new developments in Information Communication Technology, which allows quick gauging of specific audience's opinions on public issues, ideas and events at any given time, spin doctors could position or even reposition their principals (political parties and candidates) by speaking to the emotions of a specific audience with the aim of winning them over to win an election. As electioneering progresses external factors including the efforts by the opposition to puncture their opponents' campaign often brings out the best in the spin doctor who has to make sure that the communication process does not spiral out of his principal's control but redirected to the core message being communicated to the public.

The spin doctor is so important to election communication that he has to keep the campaign on course by selling to the media a candidate's version of events that is most advantageous to him. Though communication critics and analysts may see the job of a

Spin doctor as part of the problems in a democracy yet, as an expert, he defines issues in the candidate's own terms. In fact he's an indispensable part of the communication strategies, and politics generally and he's at the core of eliciting support in an electoral contest³⁴. Though the media uses the term in a derogatory manner that defines Public Relations activities in the field of politics, the Spin doctor is, however, the engine room of most election communication efforts³⁵. This could be seen in a situation whereby, even when the Spin doctor spurns negative attacks on opponents and their policies, he must be sure to make the best use of that strategy by keeping the messages honest and fair including highlighting the positive sides of his own candidate. Spinning also minimises the weakness of a candidate's campaign efforts by highlighting the opponents' weaknesses.

Essentially, strategic communication during electioneering follows the same basic pattern of planning a communication campaign for Public Relations, Advertising or Marketing events. The different stages include the campaign planning stage, the implementation stage and the evaluation stage. Though the three stages are distinct from one another, they, however, flow into one another such that they become one seamless process. The three stages thus form the groundwork for any successful efforts of a communicator³⁶.

The first stage, which is the planning stage, is the stage of laying a strong foundation for any campaign that would, in the long run achieve the purpose for which it was planned. It is the phase of strategic development of campaign efforts which is essentially to produce the blueprint or the roadmap for the entire campaign. This stage also involves the carrying out formative research, setting campaign objectives, knowing the target audiences, developing and creating the communication strategies and tactics. However, if the entire process must succeed, there must be a timeline attached, including a budget.

The second phase, which is the implementation stage, is the stage of making a decision on the modalities of translating the campaign plan and the communication strategies into action and aligning them with the roadmap for the campaign. At this stage also, while the communication media to be used are being determined, the development of the messages (e.g the radio jingles and television commercials and newspaper advertisements) that go with them, including the best mode of presentation are being packaged for maximum impact on the audience. Having done these, communication strategists saddled with the responsibility of crafting the central message that runs through the campaign, often begin to consider the more specific strategies and communication channels that will produce the best results which include use of radio, television, newspapers and magazines, bill boards, the internet and the New media.

Activities at this stage also include the timing of the messages which is very essential if the target audience must be effectively reached. Primetime such as news belt and popular radio and television shows are often considered to reach the widest audiences possible. The third phase is the stage of Evaluation. This is an all-important phase because the entire communication processes, indeed the whole campaign could not be deemed to have been completed unless an evaluation was carried out to assess the entire effort, especially the communication media that have been used. Therefore a research must be carried out to determine the extent of the success or otherwise of the campaign. The research would then answer the question whether, considering the blueprint or the roadmap, the campaign had done a good job or not; or whether the desired publics had been reached with the right messages. In essence, a sincere finding to these questions would, as a matter of fact, help to achieve better results in a future endeavour.

Arising from this process is developing a communication plan which in the process of electioneering involves not only advertising and marketing (in this case, of the political parties and their candidates), but also Public Relations activities. However, a simple component for designing and implementing a successful campaign including strategic communication during political and electioneering campaigns, known as the RACE model had been effective for decades. RACE, an acronym, is a four-step model that outlines a public relations management process guiding the communicator in planning his campaign efforts. It stands for Research, Action, Communication and Evaluation. The starting point in using this model is carrying out a Research through a process of analysing and assessing the activities that are about to be carried out; in this case an electioneering campaign, through different forms of formative assessments.

By using both primary and secondary research methods, the communicator is able to have a clear view of the issues at hand thereby laying a solid foundation for the next stage which is Action and the stage of formulating practical steps for the campaign process. The campaign goals - target audience, timing of delivering the message and the message itself including the media to be used in delivering the messages- are the main issues that characterise this stage of the process. Having determined these critical aspects of the campaign, the communication stage follows closely with the placement of the messages that have been produced such as jingles, television commercials or advertisements, documentaries, among others, in the appropriate media such as television and radio where the predetermined audience could be reached.

Finally, the evaluation stage is also research-based. This stage helps to answer several questions about the effectiveness of the communication strategies efforts and its goals. It is also expected to answer the question on whether a thorough job had been done by the campaign; whether the message delivery was effective and understood by the

audience. Questions on whether the financial input was adequate or not in achieving the set goal must also be examined. Apart from assessing the overall achievement measured against the set goal, the campaign team must also set the task of how future efforts could be an improvement on the present one. For a communication campaign to have an overall success both formative and outcome research should be part of the entire process while the communicators should identify the best research methods that would best advance their efforts. Though formative research could be carried out on different levels, its goal through a communicative process, is the basis for developing strategies that influence behavioural change³⁷.

To further enhance the success of the entire campaign, researchers suggest that it is essential that the campaign team should, *ab initio*, base the entire campaign on SMART objectives. SMART is an acronym for Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-stamped and the standard for monitoring the progress of the campaign, in order to ensure accountability and evaluate objectively the success of the communication strategies that could have been deployed for the electioneering campaign³⁸.

Having laid the foundation for the communication process during an electoral campaign and the strategies as a means of achieving the desired end, it is important to reiterate that globally, election communications, including the strategies involved have changed considerably. Thus, the challenges of reaching and communicating with different demographics and publics of voters have increased significantly, necessitating a greater need for recruiting communication professionals in communicating and persuading not only effectively, but also strategically, the target groups. Thus, election communication has become more professionalised across the world. In essence, media advertisement is no longer the dominant activity in an electoral process, Public Relations and Marketing have also become incorporated into election communication.

A contemporary example from a recent election in Nigeria would suffice here. In its attempt to challenge the dominance of the PDP in 2015, and in a departure from the norm in which party members and leaders form the media and publicity teams of political parties handle the media campaign, the bulk of the APC's media communication was outsourced to professional communication outfits, one of which was StateCraft, which in trying to change the perceived image of Buhari as an ethnic jingoist and unsmiling character, did a photo shoot to create a new image of a smiling, pan-Nigerian leader who was acceptable all over the country.

He was photographed wearing dresses of the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria – Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. Not only that, he was photographed in a suit with a bow tie to look aristocratic. The styling, photo shoot and the entire process of rebranding (to make him look presidential, aristocratic and pan-Nigerian) was meant to communicate something different about Buhari to the electorate. Such an effort was not only an act of Public Relations but also marketing which are both specialised areas. The result was positive, a situation which underscores professionalisation of electoral communication and the communication industry in general. This development shows that not only is the concept of electoral campaign professionalisation a continuous process where structures and practices are constantly revised and updated, it is also about professionals who possess particular expertise in different aspects of communication strategies³⁹.

This position is corroborated by some election communication scholars who see professionalization in this area as an increasing specialisation of tasks that are related to electoral processes and any form of campaign communication for that matter, be it in marketing or public relations⁴⁰. Therefore, electoral campaign professionalisation is not just the updating of structures and practices or specialisation of tasks undertaken by

individuals during electioneering, it is also the increasing use of different communication strategies and tactics⁴¹. To further the discourse on professionalisation of election communication, it has been noticed that in the last three decades, the field of political campaign has changed considerably. Thus political parties across the world are also reinventing and rethinking their communication strategies.

One major reason for this reinvention is that the demographic of the electorate, which is always the target audience of the messages being communicated through the media by political parties, is also evolving just as Information Communication Technology, a powerful tool for effective communication with a mass audience, was also changing rapidly⁴². The reality of the communication media used by political parties in Nigeria supports this view. Between 1999 when the first election was held at the return of democracy to Nigeria, and 2019, the face of communication during the intervening elections has changed considerably. During the 1999 election, social media tools such as *Twitter*, *Whatsapp*, *Instagram* and *Facebook* were not as popular and in use then as they were during the 2019 election.

Today, not only do political parties use these social media platforms extensively, they also outsource certain aspects of their electioneering campaigns to professionals in the field of communication in order to ensure victory in an ever-changing socio-cultural and political environment where the younger generation which has a different worldview from the older generation, is joining the voting population. Therefore it is only sensible, rational and strategic for political parties to devise a more scientific communicative process through which the young voters, who constitute the larger percentage of the voting population, could be strategically engaged using the media they are most comfortable with which is the Social media.

Given this constantly changing socio-political and technology-driven environment therefore, political parties have no choice than to commit more time and resources to a reorganisation of their party structures and communication machinery during, and even after elections, in order to bring them into alignment and in tune with an electorate which itself had become unpredictable, if they must win their elections⁴³. There are different reasons why political parties had to engage in this paradigm shift. Firstly, electoral campaigns had ceased to be a process that takes place only during electioneering season. It has since become a long-term process in which the incumbent political parties and the opposition parties are constantly in a struggle for power.

In effect, this new type of engagement of professionalisation of the communication machinery of political parties, has ensured that the experts are engaged on a permanent basis thus making media communication a capital-intensive one. Moreover, and in view of current realities, only small political parties with limited reach would ignore the growing trend of cutting-edge media campaign planning and execution embedded in campaign professionalisation. Therefore, the reality is that political campaigns have moved from mere advertisement of party manifestoes and candidates by non-experts such as party members, to marketing of same, including the use of market intelligence; that is, carrying out researches on opponents, using feedback methods and carrying out opinion polls.

Though media advertisement had become an intrinsic part of electioneering in Nigeria since 1952, and has since developed both in style and presentation, it was not until the 1990s during Nigeria's aborted Third Republic that Nigerian politicians became aware of its powerful influence in mobilising support during elections⁴⁴. There are some factors responsible for this. Since independence in 1960, the political history of Nigeria has been interjected by military coups in 1966, 1967, 1976 and 1983. Military dictatorship always created in the minds of Nigerian the desire for a return to democratic rule. Coincidentally,

the early 90s witnessed the decentralisation and proliferation of the media in Nigeria. With more radio and television stations in place and their obvious impact on the audience which by then had become more politically conscious, its ability to serve as a tool for mobilization was no longer in doubt.

Media advertisements encapsulate and organise the dissemination of messages about political candidates and their parties, promoting their manifestoes and how they intend to implement them should they win the election and be in government. However, the success or otherwise of this process would depend on the effectiveness of the strategy involved⁴⁵. In essence, deploying a particular strategy for media advertisement during an election does guarantee its effectiveness and success. The strategy must be effective to guarantee success. For example if a particular political party should use the Social media in reaching out to pensioners and the elderly to communicate with them that it (the party) was capable of solving the problem of unpaid gratuities and pensions, it may not be as effective as using the Social media to communicate with the younger population to promise free education and offer scholarship.

Usually, media advertisement during electioneering campaign has the basic elements consistent with the characteristics of product advertisements, except that in media advertisement during electioneering, the product is the candidates and the objective is to promote them and appeal to the emotions of voters (the electorate) to vote them into power. Researchers on media advertisement during elections have identified three major categories of advertisement during this process. The first one, positive advertisements, are basically those advertisements which make statements about a candidate only, and positions him as the best candidate among the contestants without reference of any kind to his opponents.

A classic example of this is the Hope '93 media advertisement for MKO Abiola (who was running on the ticket of the then Social Democratic Party) which had the refrain: "MKO is our man o!" The advertisement only communicated the problems in the country at that time, which were poor infrastructure, among others; the candidature of MKO Abiola, his party (SDP) and his ability to turn things around. The advertisement was probably one of the most popular radio and television jingle in the annals of election advertisement in Nigeria and many Nigerians who had access to radio and television in 1993 could still remember vividly the advertisement years after.



• **Figure 2.1 - A copy of Positive advertisement by the APC and PDP during the 2019 presidential election.**

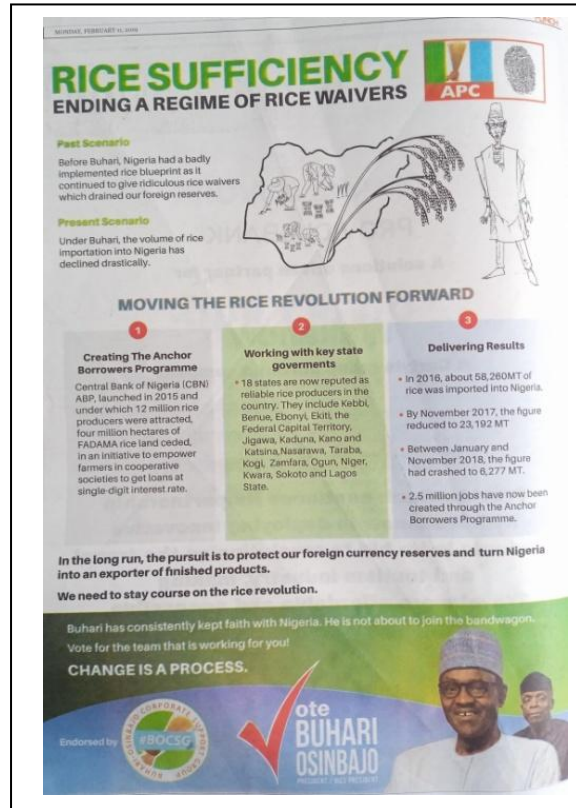
During the 2019 presidential election, both the All Progressives Congress and the Peoples Democratic Party used positive advertisement to shore up the chances of their candidates. In the examples shown above, the APC advertisement published by The Punch newspaper and dated February 13, 2019, the party put Buhari in positive light by portraying him as the achiever who built refineries and network of pipelines across Nigeria

when he was minister of Petroleum in the 70s but they were all later destroyed. They argued further that on his return as president he had carried out Turn-Around-Maintenance on the refineries, adding that he was a trust-worthy candidate. In the PDP advertisement also published by The Punch on February 13, 2019, entitled “From Grass To Grace” the party showcased their candidate as a patriot, successful business man who employed thousands of Nigerians and a lover of education.

The second one is contrast advertisements which are positive statements about a candidate juxtaposed with negative jibes against his major opponents. In other words, the media and publicity team of candidates tries to highlight the good pedigree of their principal while juxtaposing them with negative attributes of the other candidate. Again we illustrate this with an advertisement sponsored by Buhari-Osinbajo Campaign Organisation on February 14, 2019 in which the party tried to draw a comparison between it and its main opponent the PDP. To do this, questions on leadership quality, management skills and integrity were raised.

To drive home the point on resourcefulness and management of resources, the advertisement said that the APC government generated 5000 megawatts of electricity within three years but the PDP in contrast spent \$16 billion to generate just 3000 megawatts. To further denigrate the PDP as wasteful during its tenure in government, the advertisement said that PDP drained the external reserves down to \$23 billion while within three years the APC increased it to \$47 billion. It further said that while the PDP pegged the national Minimum wage at N27,000 the APC raised it to N30,000. Having positioned itself as the party that was resourceful and a better performer and thus capable of managing the country’s resources and make life better for the ordinary Nigerian, the

advert ended by saying: “The looters must be swept away forever. Vote wisely, Vote APC.”



- **Figure 2.2 – A copy of contrast advertisement. Source: The Punch newspaper**

In another example of contrast advertisement (cited above) published by The Punch on February 14, 2019, the APC contrasted the party with the PDP government before the coming of Buhari. They argued that before his coming the country had a bad policy which was draining its foreign reserves. It went further to try and persuade voters that since his coming the volume of rice importation into the country had dropped drastically. They highlighted some of his achievements in this regard as creating the Anchor Borrower Programme, working with key state governments and delivering results and creating jobs through his government’s policies on rice.

The third category, which is negative or attack advertisement, basically contains negative statements about the opponent, in which the objective is to attack the candidate and make him look bad in the eyes of the electorate⁴⁶. An example of this could be found in an advertorial in This Day newspaper of January 29, 2019 sponsored by the APC. In the said advertisement, sponsored by Buhari-Osinbajo Corporate Support Group, one of the groups supporting the presidential bid of Buhari, the APC intended to attack the PDP candidate, Abubakar Atiku by portraying him in negative light before the electorate.

The group did this by raising the Leadership question in the advertisement captioning it as “Safeguarding Nigeria’s future: Who would you rather vote for?” It also asked other questions such as: A man of compromise or a man of principle?; They say our candidate is not rich, but theirs can fund a million campaigns; They say ours is a cattle farmer, but theirs is a businessman known to survive on rent from the resources of the Nigerian State; They say he is too weak and old to rule us, yet the one who did nothing but works in the Customs yet has billions of dollars to show for it. By raising these posers, the intention of the sponsors of the advertisement were clear, which was to portray Atiku as not only corrupt but dishonest and so, not fit to be trusted as a leader. The advertisement went further to ask the electorate to “Vote the man that is standing with the majority and not the privileged few.”

In a similar advertorial by the Peoples Democratic Party in The Punch newspaper of February 14, 2019, under the heading: The question every Nigerian must answer, about five posers were raised; (1) How many more thousands of families can we afford to sacrifice for herdsmen? (2) How many more thousands of families can we sacrifice to Boko Haram wanton killings? (3) How many more of our gallant soldiers can we afford to die like fowls to Boko Haram blades? (4) How much further can we weaken our national

security and defence? and (5) How many more Nigerians can we afford to die from unprecedented hunger in the land flowing with milk and honey? The questions ended with: Enough is enough! Enough of wanton killings!! Enough of human sacrifices!!! It might just be you or yours NEXT!! Act Now! By raising these posers, the sponsors of the advertisement were subtly attacking their opponents' perceived inability to curb insurgency, herders/farmers clashes and the many losses of lives of soldiers and civilians alike.

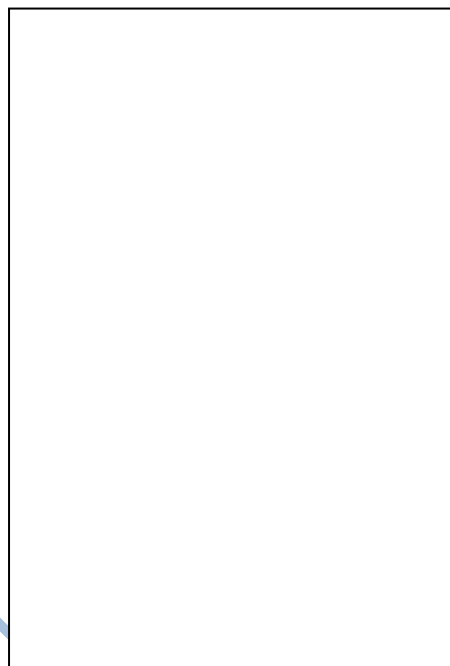


Figure 2.3 – A copy of attack advertisement. Source: The Punch newspaper, February 13, 2019

One may argue that since elections have been compared with wars, especially given the Nigerian experience, then 'all is fair in war'. Another argument could also be that since an election is a contest, the goal should be to gain advantage over an opponent, thus the use of negative campaigning as a persuasive communication strategy. However, not everyone would agree with this position. Those against this position argue that though it was important to communicate with the electorate during an election using different

strategies, negative campaigning amounts to character assassination. They submit that this approach or tactic is a sign of weakness on the part of the candidate using the tactic, which signifies his lack of clear focus in the electioneering and this strategy may bring the entire electoral process into disrepute⁴⁷.

This position is valid, given the reality of the political situation in Nigeria during recent electoral campaigns. Name-calling, hate speech, fake news, among other vices that encapsulate negative campaigning has led to violence, murder and destruction of lives and property along party, religious and ethnic lines. Despite calls before major elections by INEC, notable religious leaders and foreign missions in Nigeria for political leaders to call on their supporters to eschew violence, the aftermath evidenced by the above-mentioned vices show that negative advertisement not only plays on the emotions of supporters to gear them into violence, it also has long-lasting effects.

The question may arise: Is there a need for a post mortem or evaluation of the media advertisements done in an electioneering process that had already been concluded? The answer lies in the fact that approaching an election with a set of communication strategies is not an end in itself; it is a continuous means to an end. Therefore, since elections come up every four years in most democratic societies, the result of every attempt, whether good or bad, must be evaluated. In essence, the communication media used by political parties in every election, including the entire communicative efforts put into it must be continuously reviewed and reinforced for the next attempt. Furthermore, though the campaign team needs the media to carry its message across to the electorate, the messages often encounter the problem of accessibility in some media or may not be given equal access compared with other political parties.

This is often the case considering the issue of media ownership in Nigeria. For example, a certain candidate who belongs to a certain political party in power may get free access to the media owned by the state or federal government in power. However, an opponent may not be granted access though he was ready to pay for media coverage. Despite accessibility problem, it is important to note that even when there is access to the media, media advertisement during elections do not necessarily have the “hypodermic needle” effect on the electorate.

Another reason why the election post mortem was necessary is due to empirical evidence around the world on media advertisements and voters behaviour. For example, the Bullet or Hypodermic Needle Theory suggests that there is a process of ‘hypnotic effects’ or what could be referred to as direct influence, by messages coming from the media during elections which results in political, physical, emotional and mental empathy by the electorate. The theory further suggests that this ‘hypnotic power’ or effect does not enable the audience to engage in critical thinking before making their voting decisions during elections⁴⁸.

However, this theory might have been valid at some point, taking into consideration the huge impact of media consumption on the audience and especially its direct influence on human behaviour, but further studies in communication especially during electoral processes across the globe had proved its inadequacies. For example, a study that investigated the effect of communication on the 1940 US Presidential election suggested that contrary to the hypodermic effect of the media, the mass media, in fact, has a limited effect. The study discovered that though the media has effects on the electorate, other social factors have far more overriding effects on opinion formation⁴⁹.

To underscore the limitation of the bullet theory, further researches have suggested that not more five per cent of a particular audience exposed to campaign change their voting pattern due to the media messages they had heard. The reason, the researches further discovered is because voters often have long-held allegiance to political parties and they are not easy to change⁵⁰. Due to these inadequacies, the Limited Effect Theory has therefore replaced the Magic Bullet Theory. To further underscore the limitation is the established fact that the process of mass communication is affected by a number of variables.

Ironically, the Limited Effects theory did not hold ground for long before it also began to be challenged by other scholars who contend that though the media may have limited effects on people, it indeed has a “relatively strong” effect on public opinion. This is in tandem with the position of scholars of the Agenda Setting theory of the media who had discovered that the important issues highlighted by the electorate in an election often tally with those raised by the media⁵¹. In essence, the reality in the media effect discourse is that though the Bullet Theory may no longer be totally valid, the Limited Effects theory is in the same vein, not totally infallible. The implication therefore is that the media effect on the populace may not be as powerful as the earlier held view of hypodermic needle effects, but it does have some relatively strong effect on public opinion.

In empirical terms, the argument over media effect on the electorate found full expression during the 2017 British general election, during which the limitation of the media in directly influencing the voting population became clearer. The general consensus of the total outcome of that election was that the influence of the main stream media and the newspaper was in a declining state and the youth who are more radical in their thinking and did not have the loyalties the older generation were becoming more involved

in politics more than ever before as a result of effective use of social media for political campaign⁵².

This massive use of the social media by the youth, it must be noted, has become a global phenomenon, as communication has become largely liberalised and supported by innovations and developments in Information Communication Technology which has brought information to the fingertips of more people, especially the youth who are empirically more adept at the use of social media than the older generation. The interactive nature of Social media which allows for socialisation, job search, mobile entertainment among others, also allows for political participation by the youths more than ever before because accessing political information especially through the device had become easier.

However, looking closely at the entire 2017 British election, it was discovered that it was not the media that wins an election but that a good capturing of the public mood during the election often gives people the courage to increase their participation believing that their side was winning the election⁵³. This position supports and underscores the huge financial resources that political parties spend on elections in order to outshine their rivals and give the impression that they are the front runners, a strategy which often creates a bandwagon effect thus making undecided voters to queue behind the party. Despite this situation, empirical evidences around the world suggest that despite the huge resources that election candidates and their political parties spend on media advertisement during elections in order to mobilise and gain the support of the electorate, there is no consensus yet as regards its impact on the electorate.

Though it is an established fact that advertisement plays the role of political mobilisation during an electoral process, yet some authorities argue that though this might be true, the impact is not easily discernible as it ranges from ambiguity to even the negative⁵⁴. This is in tandem with a study which posits that regardless of the content,

context, or audience of media advertisement during an election, they do little to persuade voters. In other words, the media advertises despite their positive sides, only have “consistently small persuasive effects across a range of characteristics⁵⁵.” In addition, another study argued that the only benefits communicated by campaign advertising are that the strengths of a particular candidate is highlighted, and that attacking an opponent yields no benefits in the long run⁵⁶.

An example of recent election in Nigeria will illustrate these positions. In the 2015 presidential election, then governor of Ekiti State published an advertisement in at least two newspapers – The Punch and Nigerian Tribune – which suggested that the APC candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, may die in office if elected as president. Though his party, PDP, dissociated itself from the advertisement and the message being communicated to the electorate was grave enough to be considered by them, yet, the electorate went ahead and voted Buhari into office and even voted for him again in the next election. This empirical case supports the earlier position that despite the content or context of a media advertisement during an electoral process, voters are only lightly persuaded. In this particular case, majority of the voters were not persuaded by the possibility of their president dying in office. In furthering this line of argument, the study posits that campaigns’ efforts should rather be more concentrated on tailoring advertisement during an election to specific audiences, noting however, that the small effects “could make the difference between winning and losing a close election.⁵⁷”

In a similar research it was argued that “Advertising does not have the capacity to boost voter turnout to universal levels; to the extent that ads help citizens cast a ballot, it is on the margins and in small doses⁵⁸.” Given these scenarios therefore, the interplay between Communication media and the electoral process, including its outcomes need

constant and periodical reviews and assessment, not only during the process of the electioneering but also at the end in order to ensure a better outcome when next an election comes up.

2.1.5 Media Marketing during Election

Arising from the concept of campaign professionalisation is the concept of media marketing, which is a network of processes which take into account voters' needs, strategic and effective communication of party ideology and manifestoes to the electorate, and following them up through persuasive means to make them vote for their candidates on the day of election⁵⁹. This process is very essential in that in comparison to business where the ultimate aim is to create a product, and sell it at a profit, the ultimate goal of the entire process of media marketing is to win the election; the candidate, in this case, being the product. Thus, in recent times, attention has shifted from mere publicity of party activities and candidates to marketing of same during electioneering campaigns.

Consequently, researches in communication have thus revealed that a large segment of the electorate is increasingly becoming apathetic to the electoral process generally because the expected impact on them is not being felt. Unfortunately, this feeling of apathy is not location specific nor is it gender or demographic specific. In fact it could be transgenerational⁶⁰. In Nigeria, for example, this apathy is rooted in the behaviour of politicians before, during and after elections. In effect, the average voter often experience series of unfulfilled promises by politicians who during the campaign for political office did all they could to satisfy the electorate and even promise to do more when they get into power but the reverse is often the case.

Interestingly, this drastic change in character of politicians before and after elections has become topics of scholarly works by researchers. For example it has been discovered

that this change in attitude is partly as a result of cronyism and sycophancy by hangers-on who often become negative influence on the politicians. Interestingly, researchers who examined the brains of ordinary men and those in power have discovered that under its influence, power causes people to lose their ability to empathise with other people, thus explaining why those in power become withdrawn and isolated from the people they lead⁶¹.

Given this scenario, it is the ultimate aim of media marketing to woo and disabuse the mind of the eligible voting population that a certain candidate is “new breed” or simply different with a unique pedigree uncommon among politicians. If such a candidate is from a well-known political family, the attempt would be to highlight the good qualities of the family member who had been in office before and to send a message that this candidate would not be different. The very essence of marketing a candidate therefore, is to create the desired awareness and interest in the electorate through effective communication strategies in order to make them vote for certain political parties and their candidates based on perceived qualities such as integrity and loyalty, the same way certain qualities are highlighted in product marketing to create interest in the consumer.

Thus, just as in business, media marketing involves branding and positioning of candidates in order to make them stand out among other contestants. Not only that, the aim is also to produce and market candidates who appeal mostly to larger percentage of voters. Interestingly, media marketing is not just about candidate positioning and wooing voters through an effective communication process, it includes several other details such as grooming a candidate’s public appearances and his communication skills both in the public and in the media, in order to connect with the average voter. All these put together guide the strategies that drive a media campaign during an election.

In addition, to successfully market a candidate to the electorate, the media advertisements must be strategically targeted at their emotions, just as human emotion is

involved in order for an average consumer to make a choice between several alternatives of products. This difference this time is that the candidate is the product that has to be chosen among several other alternatives. The expected outcome of a successful media campaign marketing, therefore, is that voters would be emotionally connected to candidates who are able to demonstrate the ability to keep the attention of the average voting population⁶².

The candidate who is able to keep the attention of the electorate therefore, is that candidate who has combined the variables that have been mentioned earlier – that is he is well-positioned to stand out from the crowd; he is well-groomed in speech and public appearance; he must also appeal to the emotions of the electorate. It is also essential to note that in order to have an effective and strategic media communication that would keep the electorate focused on a candidate in an election, three major components are involved. These are: (a) voter segmentation, (b) candidate positioning and (c) strategy formulation implementation.

Voter segmentation involves the stratification of the voting population into different blocs which the candidate or the media campaign itself focuses on with specific messages, based on the realisation that even among the voters, there are sub-groups with peculiar characteristics, and that the voting population could not be pigeon-holed into one generalised group. For example, the youngest voting age in any Nigerian election is 17, while there is no limit to the age of any voter as long as they could be physically present on the day of election to cast their vote. However, the character of those is the younger age group (e.g 17 – 30) is markedly different from those between the ages of 35 and 50.

The youngest age group are those often referred to as the computer generation and they more often use the social media far more than the older generation. Their taste and love for entertainment is also markedly different for the other age groups. Therefore, to

strategically and successfully communicate with this younger generation and persuade them to vote for a certain candidate, the communication strategy to be used must take into consideration these peculiar characteristics in order to gain their attention.

As stated earlier, the demographic of the voter population had become more complex and constantly evolving, such that a generalised communication approach by a political party in an election may end up in disaster. Thus, there is the need by candidates and political parties to develop a communication and segmentation strategy and then reach out to each stratum of the voter population with specific communication tactics. Thus the successful candidate in an election would be one who is wise enough to understand this fact and diversify his messages and communication strategies to meet the needs of each segment of the population⁶³.

To do this effectively, the younger generation with their love for entertainment would be reached with messages using the social media – *twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp*, blogging sites, among others. The older generation is more at home with the traditional media such as newspapers and magazines, radio, television, including poster and billboards. Before now, it was standard practice for political parties and their candidates to survey the political landscape to consider polling and historical voting patterns to determine those who are likely to vote for them or not, including other voters who, traditionally, do not make up their minds until close to the Election Day.

For example in Nigeria certain parts of the country often vote for conservative parties. This could be seen in the voting pattern of the South-East and South-South region since the Second Republic where they have always voted for the National Party of Nigeria and Peoples Democratic Party. However, through segmentation, political parties are now more than ever before are able to specifically and precisely target their audiences with the right messages and at much cheaper costs when they allow professionals run their

campaigns for them⁶⁴. Therefore, political parties which are not strong in those areas could now expect to make in-roads and impact by targeting the younger generation in the regions through the media that they interact with most (Social Media) and send the appropriate messages that would catch their attention.

One of the by-products of this strategy of demographic segmentation by campaign professionals is the psychographic techniques, majorly aimed at determining the specific personality types, attitudes, values, and interests of media users, and to produce content that is informed by those users' specific personality profile. Similar strategies such as micro-targeting and narrowcasting have since become more frequently used as part of communication strategies during elections. The logic behind these is simply a process of identifying as many voter segments as possible which are distinguishable from other voter segments, but highly homogenous. The ideal strategy therefore is to tailor certain campaign messages to such target audiences.

In essence, by simply understanding the electorate's list of likes or dislikes on Social media, the accessed information can be processed to offer a deeper insight into their personalities and what they love to do which forms a rich data base of information for communication experts and professionals⁶⁵. This approach was effectively put to use by President Barack Obama's campaign marketing strategy in the 2008 US presidential election when it reached out to the electorate with different communication strategies but focused specifically on young people and new voters with the slogan of 'Yes we can' but kept on with its core messages on 'Change' without drifting from it throughout the campaign⁶⁶.

Due to this communication strategy and political marketing segmentation, it was easy for the United States Democratic Party to reach and draw out more young voters and increase their voting participation by 19 per cent in 2008 election that brought in Barrack

Obama, than what the case was in the 2004 election⁶⁷. This scenario had empirical equivalent in the 2015 and 2019 elections in Nigeria. The APC for example realized that the younger generation was more at home with the Social Media than the traditional media and used it more strategically. In contrast, President Goodluck Jonathan's Twitter account @presgoodluck had been dormant since after the 2011 election and had remained so until close to the 2015 election.

Furthermore, among the Social media platforms, Facebook and Twitter were the most popular and these were the major platforms used mostly by the party to reach out to the youth with the message of Change in 2015. Thus a myriad of hashtags were created to reach the youths with messages of a better future of employment, socio-economic prosperity and above all "Change" in all ramification. The platforms include: #ThisisBuhari; #Febuhari; #ThingsWILLchange; #Change, among several others. The Buhari media campaign team only began to use the Twitter in 2014, much later than the Jonathan team, but just before that 2015 election, he had garnered about 160,000 followers, much more than Jonathan's @gejites, a signup twitter account for his supporters. In 2019, Atiku who was the PDP candidate, also had hashtags such as #TheAtikuPlanforYouth, Twitter.com/atiku; and @AtikuAb40521500, among others, to reach out to the electorate, especially the youth, to get #Atikulated.

2.1.6 Means of Communicating with the Electorate

Before the coming of the New media, stakeholders in elections such as candidates and their political parties rely majorly on the traditional media which consists of the print media (newspapers, journals and magazines), and the broadcast or electronic media (radio and television) to get their messages across to the electorate. The role of the media in an election can never be over-emphasised. Apart from being the purveyors of information in

a democratic process, it also serves as a tool for political mobilisation and enables popular or mass participation not only in its reportage of events, but also by giving equal opportunities to all the participating political parties and contestants to engage the electorate through communication and for them to have feedbacks from them on their expectations⁶⁸.

For example, before the 2019 election, the media gave massive coverage to the national conventions of the major political parties during which their presidential candidates were chosen. These conventions often run from early evening to the early hours of the following day. In addition, newspaper articles, radio and television discussions, including mass mobilisation efforts by the INEC, National Orientation Agency and Civil Society Organisations are focused on the election and are open to feedbacks so that the electorate could be adequately enlightened and educated on their civic responsibilities concerning the election.

Furthermore, the media in an election functions as a reporter and interpreter of events. It defines issues, portrays personalities, and also acts as a support investigator. Similarly, it is impossible for a political party to be acceptable to the electorate without adequate media exposure. The huge financial expenditure by political parties on media advertisement during elections is a simple testimony to the extent to which political parties and their candidates rely on the media to carry their messages across to the electorate and how much they find it indispensable to their campaigns⁶⁹. This is consistent with the myriad of media publicity and communication strategies used by political parties during electioneering campaigns, not only in Nigeria but across the world. For example, during the 2015 election in Nigeria, more than 70 political parties used one form of the media or the other to communicate with the electorate in order to publicise their manifestoes and

what they stand for. Ditto the 2019 election in which 91 political parties participated and all of them also used one media or the other for publicity.

In terms of communication and media publicity, more than N89 billion naira was spent by all the political parties combined to fund their campaigns⁷⁰. This huge financial resource spent in communicating with voters, therefore, is in tandem with the position that the media is indispensable to political parties and their candidates during elections. These roles are not just self-ascribed. In most countries of the world, the constitution empowers the media to perform certain roles during major democratic process be it an election or referendum. For example, Section 22 of the Nigeria's 1999 Constitution empowers the media to be the watchdog of governance.

Not only this, Section 39(1) of the same constitution also provides that all citizens are entitled to freedom of expression as a form of basic human right, including the freedom to hold personal opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without hindrance. Consequently, a major role of the media is to provide political stability by giving all the constituents of a country equal opportunities for expression of their opinions⁷¹. The mass media not only gives the stakeholders in elections the opportunity to reach as many people as possible, they also do it faster and cheaper than any other way. Furthermore, not only do the media have the capacity to reach a large number of people and even do it selectively and in certain formats such as propaganda, documentary or news broadcasts, the media could also present its own view about an upcoming election through discussions and reports thus setting an agenda for the electoral process⁷².

This is true of the usual practice in Nigeria during electoral processes. Most of the media houses increase their coverage of politics and political issues by focusing on the candidates and their manifestoes. Platforms had also been created at not only the state level but also at the federal level for candidates to showcase themselves, their parties and

manifestoes. Thus we have #Nigeria Decides; #Ekiti 2018 or #Anambra Election. These panels of discussion and debates, including increased focus on politics by the media just before major elections during which issues such as electoral violence, money politics, among others are discussed, support the assertion that the media sets agenda for the electoral process.

The absence of any candidate at these platforms are often noted by voters among the elite class. However, it remains to be seen if this affects the performance of the candidate at the poll. For example, Buhari did not appear at the 2015 and 2019 national presidential debates, yet he won both elections. Despite the advent of the new media, the traditional media which provides the platform for the debates and discussions are still indispensable and majorly used during elections. The role of radio and especially television cannot be overemphasised as both had become indispensable and expensive tools of media campaign during an electoral process⁷³.

The huge amount of financial resource committed to media advertisement during elections as mentioned earlier supports this fact. The radio is mobile and so, potential voters could be accessed even in far places without electricity. In contrast, though television may be electricity-dependent, its audio-visual characteristics enables viewers to see and listen to what is going on as if they were at the venue of the events being relayed, even in the comfort of the viewers' home make it attractive. To place an advertisement in the media is a process. Professionalism of the advertisement industry makes it imperative to involve human and financial resources to produce strategic messages that would persuade the audience. After producing the advertisements and jingles, finance is also involved to put them in the right media at the right time, thus supporting the assertion that they are not only indispensable but also expensive, given the myriad of media channels they must go through if they must make the right impact.

Television advertisements, for example have become a feature of political campaigns at different levels of government all over the world, which are capable of reaching millions of people at the same time. The news media combined (including the Social Media), have become the new soap boxes on which party candidates stand to address and seek the support of potential voters. The significance of the media in elections is not far to seek; politicians use the media for mobilization and retention of public support knowing full well that the electorate and the average citizen align with the media on current public issues⁷⁴.

This is consistent with the Agenda-setting role of the media, in which the perception of the electorate on the most important issues during an election for example often tallies with what the media considered to be the most important issues. This intricate link between the media and politics which had always been there since the dawn of the print media has been so strong, such that the media is now being seen as more effective and preferable to other conventional campaign media due to its wide reach and status as opinion molders for the masses, with a much higher capability of influencing their voting decision⁷⁵. Thus, as much as it is central to actualising the communication strategies of any political party in an election, with a view to influencing the voting decision of the highest number of the electorate, how the media, especially the traditional media – radio, television and print – including the New media, is managed and used to communicate in the course of the entire electoral process is of importance. Monitoring the media to know the current trend of issues, and where it is focused, including analysing the media consumed by target audiences is also of great importance. While crafting the appropriate messages to be communicated by a political party, its communication strategists must design, promote and run media events concurrently in order to give the news media what they need to know about the main thrust of the party's messages to its audiences.

1. Radio and Timeline of its Development in Nigeria

Radio broadcasting in Nigeria owes its beginning to the directive by the British Colonial government to its Posts and Telegraphs Department to develop a wired-wireless system to commence broadcasting service in the country. The result was the commencement in December 1935 of Radio Distribution Service or what became popularly known as Redifussion, which was a method of distribution of radio programmes by wire to subscribers. In conjunction with the Empire Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation, the RDS rebroadcast BBC programmes to its subscribers who were majorly the small group of British residents, local elite and semi-literate and illiterate locals whose preference was the few locally produced programmes in local languages that they could understand. The stations were established in Lagos, Ibadan (1939) and Kano (1949). As of 1939, the number of subscribers had increased to about 2000.

To further develop broadcasting in Nigeria, the colonial government set up the Turner/Byron committee which recommended among others the conversion of the three existing rediffusion stations into radio stations. This led to the establishment of the Nigeria broadcasting Service in 1951. By 1960, year of the nation's independence, the number of redifussion services, mostly privately owned, had grown to about 48, and subscribers from just 16 in 1939 to 74,000. The RDS continued to rebroadcast BBC programmes. In 1954, a motion in the federal House of Representatives called for the establishment of a national radio service to be patterned after the BBC. The result was the coming of the National Broadcasting Corporation. However, at full independence the three regions which made up Nigeria were not in support of the centralisation of the new NBC, more so with most of its programming done in English and its non-commercial status.

The three NBC stations in Ibadan, Enugu and Kaduna which favoured local programming later became regional broadcasting services as Western Nigeria

Broadcasting Service (Ibadan), Eastern Nigeria Broadcasting Service (Enugu) and Northern Nigeria Broadcasting Service (Kaduna) in 1959, 1960 and 1962 respectively. With the creation of more regions in 1967, the broadcasting service stations in Nigeria would grow into seven: one in Lagos and six others in the regional capitals. As more states came into existence, more radio stations came into being but radio broadcasting remained on the exclusive list of the federal government especially with the coming of General Olusegun Obasanjo's regime when it was centrally controlled, but the advent of civilian administration in 1979 took radio broadcasting back to the concurrent list as states could now establish radio stations again.

However, by far the biggest development in the radio broadcasting in Nigeria came in 1992 when the regime of President Ibrahim Babangida deregulated the broadcast industry through Decree 38 of 1992 later amended as Act 55 of 1999. It later became known as the national broadcasting Commission Laws of the Federation 2004, Cap 11. The National Broadcasting Commission was established to regulate the industry. Through this law, private individuals were empowered to also set up both radio and television stations. Since then the radio broadcasting in Nigeria took a different turn with 24-hour broadcasting and more local content to take care of the needs of listeners. Raypower FM the first private radio station in Nigeria was established in 1994 and since then, the number of radio stations in Nigeria had increased exponentially. As of today there are no fewer than 400 private and public radio stations in Nigeria. Several others are also internet radio stations.

Radio is one of the most important communication media often used during elections across the world, but especially in developing countries, a situation which is at variance with what obtains in the developed world where the television is the number one choice⁷⁶. This disparity finds expression in the economic strength, among other factors, of both poor

and developed countries of the world. In developed economies such as Europe and America, the ratio of television sets to every home is almost 100 per cent unlike in developing and poorer countries of Africa where the percentage of homes with television sets is much lower.

Apart from this, television as mentioned earlier, is electricity-dependent. The reality in Nigeria for example is that the 200 million population depends on less than 5000 megawatts of electricity, whereas a country like the United States of America, though with a population that doubles that of Nigeria, has about one million megawatts of electricity. Communication scholars often ascribe the choice of radio by politicians for communication with the electorate to its reach, as over 80 per cent of the African population, for example, habitually listens to radio because of its cost-effectiveness, maintainability and non-dependence on electricity⁷⁷. Its portability, further improved upon by technology has integrated it into the lifestyle of listeners as we now have radio in cars and mobile phones. Thus, individuals have access to information through the radio, irrespective of location.

Radio is not just a communication tool in Africa, it is one of the most effective means of social and political mobilisation, though the reason for this is often adduced to the low level of literacy on the continent as broadcast is done in almost every language in different locations and all that is required for the audience is just to listen. In the Northern part of Nigeria where literacy is much lower than the Southern part, radio has helped to bridge that literacy gap by increasing political awareness and mobilization as a result of its wide reach, lack of dependency on power supply and the use of entertainment to keep listeners glued to the device⁷⁸.

There are supporting factors to support this assertion. Music, drama, dance and other forms of entertainment as means of traditional communication system are more successful

as communication strategies among illiterate or barely literate populations than elite populations because they are easily embraced as the population could easily relate to them as theirs. Thus, through a continuous and consistent exposure of local and illiterate populations to radio with the use of local languages and entertainment, irrespective of location or level of development, political awareness and mobilization could increase political participation.

The influence of radio in social mobilisation during elections is also due to the fact that being a mobile device which could be listened to on the go, in public transport, as personal device on mobile phones and on public address system at fuel stations. Thus, it is easy for an average person to be informed while in transit. During election periods, the radio could become even more entertaining and interesting as jingles, commercials, interviews and discussions are aired more frequently. These contents catch the attention of listeners and they often become the talking points of informal communication among them.

2. Television

Television as a medium of communication owes its beginning to several individual efforts in Europe and America between the late 19th century and the early 20th century and by 1928, the Baird Television Development Company (owned by John Logie Baird who invented the first mechanical television) was able to transmit television signals across the Atlantic. By the middle of the 20th century, however, live television dramas were already being broadcast in the US, a time often regarded as the Golden Age of television⁷⁹.

This golden age was not limited to America. It might have reached a certain level of development and popularity there but it became an inspiration elsewhere especially in

Africa and precisely Nigeria, where a series of events during its colonial history brought it into being. The journey of television broadcasting in Nigeria, which was intertwined with that of radio and broadcasting generally, began on October 31, 1959 when the then Western Region of Nigeria began to broadcast from Ibadan as the television arm of its Western Nigeria Broadcasting Service with the motto: First in Africa. This unprecedented step even while the colonial government was still setting up a viable radio broadcasting service in the country was followed by the Eastern Region on October 1, 1960 also with a motto: Second to none, and the Northern Region in 1962.

It must be noted, however, that all these television stations came into existence basically to serve as educational platforms for regional schools and to assist formal education. Not only these, it would serve as a window to the world for the people of the regions. The stations would later abandon their initial goals and become commercialized⁸⁰.

In addition the regionally-owned television stations served the political objectives for which they were set up. Those that came later, also followed the same pattern of political and regional interests of the owners. Notwithstanding, television stations in the country increased in number as the regions (four in number in 1967) transformed into 12 states, while in 1976 the federal government nationalized the existing television stations which were hitherto known Nigerian Television, changing them to Nigerian television Authority (NTA) and maintained administrative control over them. But, with the advent of the Second Republic in 1979, under a civilian administration, more states established their own television stations. Nigeria's own golden age of broadcasting eventually came in the early 90s when the broadcasting industry, which included radio, was deregulated, thus allowing for private ownership of the electronic media.

At the global level, television would later transform the entire process of communication and electoral campaign as communication at political rallies, sometimes in crowded places, was transferred to the television screens where it became more conversational, visual, commercial and recreational⁸¹. Before the advent of television, political rallies could only be witnessed by local residents alone; but as television took over, recording of the events that transpired during such rallies could be viewed by others who were not present, including those who live outside such area and even by those who live in other countries.

Furthermore, the events so viewed became points of discussion by viewers. Political candidates no longer address a rally of few thousands of people, they could now be in a television studio and engage in conversation with people, get responses from them while also addressing millions of people at the same time. Not only this. During such primetime discussions, television commercials are strategically placed to reach viewers and to engage them. During such times, family members and friends often gather around television sets and engage in recreational activities. From their television screens, viewers could see clearly the faces of candidates who were far away from them during political rallies. Television cameras could zoom so closely to reveal the facial expression of candidates and even make their own conclusions or deductions from there, even from the tone of their voices. Voters sometime make up their minds from such television appearances about the candidates.

In Nigeria, television has also become an indispensable tool for communication during electoral campaigns as nationally televised debates between candidates as well as media advertisements, messages and documentaries to support candidates' campaigns are aired. The failure of Muhammadu Buhari to appear on any of the presidential debates organised during elections involving him thus drew the indignation of many Nigerians,

an event which was an attestation to the influence of television on the electoral process in the country. To underscore this, during the 2015 presidential election, a political commercial: “*See who wants to be President of Nigeria*”, was aired on the Nigerian Television Authority’s (NTA) network news where millions of prospective voters watched it. The objective of that commercial was to use television, especially that medium perceived as having the widest reach in the country to provide political information that could influence voters’ choice.

However, as it turned out, the objective of the commercial which was a form of propaganda was to ridicule Muhammadu Buhari and portray him as someone who was not fit to rule the country as he was not able to answer correctly the questions on the name of his running mate and to say the full meaning of the acronym INEC on a platform that was supposed to be used to communicate with the electorate⁸². The effect of this perceived blunder on the part of Buhari as a candidate who wants to rule the country, on a media platform that supposedly had 30 million viewers was not lost on the electorate. The commercial reinforced the perception by opponents of Buhari and their supporters as somebody who was unfit to rule the country. That perception was shared by many other voters as it determined their choice at the election.

3. Political rallies

Political rallies remain one of the most distinct characteristics of an electoral process. Apart from using the communication media, it presents an opportunity for direct and interpersonal communication by a candidate with his audience. It also presents the audience to see and listen to a candidate live without the niceties of a mediated communication. We shall discuss some of the aspects related to a speaker and his audience at a rally below.

i. Speech/Rhetoric

A major characteristic of a political rally is the art of rhetoric and speech through which messages are conveyed to a very large audience, and as we have seen, are no longer restricted to the venue of the events but have become mediated through radio and television to much larger audiences. Though, speech is the oldest form of communication in a democratic process dating back to the ancient Greek society, however, it is still one of the most powerful means of communication today. It is a powerful sets of words used in generating meaning. It facilitates a rapport between the speaker and his audience to achieve a political goal of positioning a particular candidate as the one with a better manifesto and who could be elected into office⁸³.

This assertion is consistent with voters' perception of candidates running for political offices in an election. Communication between the two parties must be direct and persuasive. Any candidate who is not able to persuade his audience is perhaps not positioning himself enough to be considered for political office. This is why in most cases, the gift of oratory is often appreciated by audiences wherever persuasion is needed. The most persuasive candidate, even if deceptive, is most likely to gain the support of most voters. Its functionality informs its presentation such as we often see in advertisements and rallies. In fact speeches delivered or invented in dramatic works decades and centuries back still resonate in the present day. Modern day documented speeches by political leaders such as former British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill's "Our Finest Hour;" or civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" still resonate and inspire across the world today due to the special qualities of such speeches.

Speech is an essential tool for persuasion and rallying the support of particular audiences. An effective use of speech as means of communication often draws the largest crowd of admirers to the speaker. In the course of a speech, there is an interaction between

the speaker and his audience which is an essential characteristic of communication. The major aim of this two-way flow of communication is to persuade. Though, sometimes, speeches are made *ex tempore* (that is unscripted), most speeches are carefully crafted because they have to address certain issues extensively and deliberately as it often contains the manifestoes of the speaker at the rally.

It is important to note that many candidates in elections find it essential, useful and informative to try out the expected reactions of the speech on a non-partisan audience, and it is the best way to find out if it was going to be effective or not. A powerful and impactful speech has a pattern. It functions best by having a theme and a beginning that lays the foundation for the entire speech; a middle or the main body of the speech that leads to a climax. The conclusion, which must also be powerfully delivered to create the desired impact and impression on the audience summarises the typical speech.

In persuasive speech often seen in election communication such as advertisement, or even at a rally, the speaker must be able to establish his own case and rebut attacks from opponents using arguments in support of his character; using emotions and logic to draw empathy from the audience not only to support his cause, but also to see why he is far better than his opponents. Persuasive speech influences or reinforces, just as it also seeks to convince all at the same time⁸⁴. In furthering the impact of a speech, it is important for the speaker to consider some factors, some of which include demography of the audience; their personalities; why they are at the venue or location of the rally listening to the speaker; what their interests are and what they already know. All these go into preparations of the speaker and his speech writers and how effective it will be.

Closely related to speech and often embedded in it is rhetoric which is often used especially where the speaker needs to convince and appeal to the emotion of the audience and spur them into action. Rhetoric has its roots in human evolution in which language

elicits responses deeply rooted in human psychology. In moments of crises and wars, including struggle for attainment of human rights and social equality, rhetoric sways public opinion and arouse emotions of the populace in order to gear their audiences into action positively or negatively. In essence Rhetoric thrives on the effective use of language. Its function is to both convince and persuade audiences. In addition, the persuasive element must be in every given case. Also, rhetoric by its function uses not only language, but also symbols and other means of collective identification to promote cooperation among the audience in which it is used⁸⁵.

This view is consistent with the use of party symbols and flags, among others during political rallies. This does not only engender uniformity and unity, it also reinforces group identity and the need to do all possible to win the contest between them and their opponents. The language of rhetoric also underscores the perception of “we against them”. Rhetoric asks questions that produce obvious answers such as: Are we going to allow this problems of insecurity, impunity and economic adversity to continue? The essence thus, is to rally a common front against opponents in a contest, in this case a political contest.

ii. Ethos/Character/Image

As important as speech is, it cannot be divorced from the personality delivering it. Thus, the grooming of the personality delivering a speech is as important as the speech itself. The more reason candidates, including their handlers go to great lengths to improve on not just their appearance but also their carriage and the image being projected, hence they communicate through Ethos. Ethos is the Greek word for character or the ethical appeal of the character involved; an attestation to his credibility. It indicates how citizens

see themselves in relation to the speaker and their perception of the issues he raises, among others.

Every candidate during elections tries to position themselves as people of credibility and integrity. In persuading their audiences, they go into their backgrounds (as professionals for example) to try and convince their audiences how they had shown themselves as credible individuals and men of integrity by rising through the ranks and reaching the top of their profession. In using Ethos as a form of persuasion, a speaker must use appropriate language, sound fair in his judgment, be unbiased and highlight areas of his competence. He must, again, use appropriate words.

In other words the candidate in the campaign must be seen to possess the character and image that radiates confidence and substance and must be appealing. This aspect is very important if he must connect with the target audience's emotions and be able to effectively deliver his messages. For effective and impactful communication, the speaker must not just be an image on the rostrum or the television, he must essentially reflect the character that the campaign ascribes to or intends for him in the eyes of the people through the media or when the audience have personal contact with him⁸⁶.

The experience of the average voter in the developed parts of the world somehow supports this as politicians try to preserve the image that the electorate already had of them. However, the Nigerian experience does not support this view. For example, it is not uncommon for a politician who had been portrayed as accessible and with a listening ear by the media to simply change overnight. In many instances, the Nigerian politician becomes inaccessible, unapproachable and unconcerned about the plight of those who voted him into office. Most times he fails to deliver on his promises made during electoral campaigns.

iii. Pathos

Pathos, a Greek word which originally means suffering and experience, has become closely related to the words emotion, empathy and pathetic. In modern English usage, it means to persuade an audience through emotional appeal. As shall be seen later on, pathos is a deliberate use of words to draw sympathy from the audience. It is deliberate because the speaker using pathos wants his audience to feel what he feels such that if he is angry, his audience could be charged to get angry too. A speech, most especially in election communication, would not be effective if it did not have the desired influence on its audience. To have this desired effect, pathos which relates to emotional appeals in a speech must be involved. Since communication is a two-way traffic, the speaker invokes sympathy from his audience in order to elicit the passion that he wants them to feel.

Pathos, however, could be both negative and positive, depending on what the speaker wants. It could elicit rage, hatred or patriotism from the audience. In moments of major decisions such as voting in an election, pathos is often put to use using emotion-evoking words or stories intended to elicit massive support and shift an unfavourable situation around to one's advantage. An example of this is Goodluck Jonathan's "I have no shoes" media advertisement during the 2011 election campaign. This emotive content of the media advert was meant to be able to appeal to the emotions of the electorate and portray Jonathan as somebody from a humble background who eventually rose to become the president of the country.

This is a strategy that most Nigerians could easily relate with - a familiar grass to grace story. Thus many Nigerians could empathise with Jonathan and his humble background. It was a strategy which swayed public sympathy his way and contributed largely to his victory in the 2011 election. Like every other aspect of electoral campaign in the modern era, communication strategists often research into audience's preferences and make an effective use of pathos to strike the right chord that would elicit the right

emotions in their audiences, especially through advertisements in the media, especially on television⁸⁷. Hypothermic needle theorists have long held the view that television has helped speakers to effectively put pathos to use while speaking to a very wide range of audiences. They argue that by speaking directly to their audiences and candidly speaking about themselves and their personal experiences, candidates have effectively delivered their campaign messages right in their own living rooms while also minimising their areas of weakness, since the audience is limited to what they see on the screen.

iv. Logos

The last of the subset of speech, Logos, is also derived from Greek language which means word, the vehicle through which an audience is convinced by the use of logic or reason. Unlike pathos that uses empathy and emotion to convince the audience, logic and reason mixed with abstract language using facts, figures and logical arguments are used by speakers and candidates or contestants in an election to ascertain with emphasis that there is no alternative to him in the election⁸⁸. Indeed, there is no serious contender to a political office who wants to portray himself as the second best. It is often the case that contestants arm themselves with facts and figures concerning virtually every serious issue surrounding an election – the education system, economy, finance, foreign affairs and health, among others.

At every opportunity, these facts and figures are logically reeled out by contestants in order to communicate with their audience that they are versatile across all subject matters and in tune with the current issues in those fields, with a full grasp of the topical issues involved. The essence, no doubt, is to position themselves as the best candidate out of the whole pack of contestants. More importantly, the logos or the logic in a speech must not be confusing, to the extent of the opposition identifying gaps, highlighting the

inconsistency and begin to magnify it as a function of the inefficiency of a campaign team or the confused mind or weakness of their candidate.

4. Slogan

More often than not, political rallies are not complete without the use of slogans. An effective slogan therefore should be that which is simple and direct, yet have the power to create a complex narrative for an audience to interpret it their own way. Good slogans embody literary elements such as rhymes, rhythm and alliteration to create a memorable statement. Sometimes, these elements may not be present in a slogan but it must be capable of bringing back old memories. In addition, the slogan could underscore or emphasise partisanship, just as it could also make people to have a paradigm shift or change their orientation and start behaving in a better way⁸⁹. These characteristics are easily discernible in popular slogans during elections. The popular “Yes, We Can” slogan during the 2008 American presidential election was targeted mainly at the younger generation who hitherto did not participate in elections. It gave them a paradigm shift that they could make a difference just by getting involved. The paradigm shift came with the belief that “Yes, We Can” (make a difference).

In tandem with the objective of changing orientation and making people behave in a better way was the “Not in my country” slogan sponsored by the National Orientation Agency. The objective was to persuade people to put a stop to corruption, dumping of refuse and littering the environment among other social ills. These two examples of slogans maintain the characteristic of being simple and direct. In fact, the best slogans are always unforgettable and easy to identify with a particular campaign or period. Even long after they had been used many people could still remember them. During the Second republic in Nigeria, there was the National Party of Nigeria (NPN’s “One Nation, One Nigeria”; One Nation, One Destiny slogan for the 1983 election’ which was won by Shehu

Shagari, including the aborted Third Republic's MKO Abiola's Hope '93 and 'MKO Is Our Man O' slogans. In the 2015 general election in Nigeria, the All Progressives Congress came with "Change" which reverberated across the country and was believed to have spurred the voters to seek a change from the government of Goodluck Jonathan which the APC and its media strategists has tagged as clueless.

A slogan does not and may not necessarily catch fire automatically. It should first be tested through a qualitative research to make sure that it is resonating with the desired audience in a way that is irresistible. In fact it is better to test a series of the slogans and arrive at the one that is most effective and attractive. Strategically speaking, shifting from one slogan to the other within the same electoral campaign period is not a good for a political party. For whatever reason, the media communication structure of a political party must stick to its slogan for better for worse, though sometimes, it could be necessary to improve on the existing slogan in responding to very important changes as the campaign goes on. In most elections undertaken in Nigeria, as in other countries of the world, slogans are used to mobilise and connect with the electorate. Not only that it serve as the rallying point for party supporters and to also communicate the central message of the party, apart from informing and entertaining the electorate. Some examples of slogans of political parties across some states during the 2019 election in Nigeria will suffice.

i. O To Ge

One of the most popular slogans that reverberates across the Kwara State where it began and the South West and other Yoruba speaking areas of Nigeria was the "O to ge" slogan. Meaning 'Enough Is Enough' the slogan was adopted by the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Kwara State as the party's battle cry against perceived domination of the rival PDP which has ruled the state for a long time. It was a slogan that communicated

the long-held frustration of a group of people who felt that the Saraki dynasty had held the state “captive for too long having been controlled by the elder Saraki – Olusola Saraki before the baton was later transferred to Bukola Saraki, his son who was later succeeded by his own stooge.

The need for a change of baton from the old order therefore necessitated this call for change. The slogan communicated to the electorate that the time to effect the needed change had arrived. The message sat well with the electorate and the result reflected that they actually desired that “enough is enough.” Anytime the “Oto ge” slogan was chanted it was often followed by the response: ‘Lilo l’e lo, meaning: “you must be booted out at all cost.” Interestingly, and characteristic of electioneering campaigns in Nigeria, slogans often engender other slogans, in addition or in response to existing slogan which may be negative. The PDP, subject of the O to ge slogan which had gained much ground to its embarrassment, also had a response. The party also coined its own slogan: “O tun ya” which in Yoruba means “Let’s do it again,” meaning continuity or another four years in office. The slogan, however, was overshadowed by the “O to ge slogan.

ii. O To Ge Lagos

The success of the “O to ge slogan in Kwara State inspired a similar one in Lagos State where power was seen as having been monopolised by a particular group for a long time just like in Kwara State. Ironically, it did not achieve the same result. In Lagos, the PDP, rival party to APC, had not been able to get into office since 1999 when the Fourth Republic came into being despite several spirited efforts to upstage the incumbent. Critics of the slogan said it was belated and that it was not a broad-based and massive movement like that of Kwara State.

iii Next Level

While “O to ge” as a slogan called for a change of baton, 4 plus 4 = Next Level was a call for continuity in governance by the government of President Muhammadu Buhari. Also, while “O to ge” was verbal communication, 4plus 4=Next Level was non-verbal as it was simply a gesture of raising two hands up and spreading four fingers on each hand. The eight fingers thus raised conspicuously signifies eight years which equal two terms, meaning that Buhari should go for a second term in office. Similarly, whenever 4 plus 4 was chanted, it was always followed by the response “Next Level.”

iv. Atikulate

However, immediately after Atiku Abubakar who is a former vice president emerged as the PDP candidate he began to be projected as “Atikulate” a veiled comparison to Muhammadu Buhari who would later not attend the presidential debate arranged for presidential candidates of political parties to sell their manifestoes to Nigerians. The “Atikulate” slogan was also meant to position him as someone who had a good grasp of national issues and had the solution to the myriad of problems besetting the country. Arising from this, the logan “Atikulated emerged form Nigerians and supporters generally to show that they are backing his candidacy.

v. Ambo Leekan Si

Just as “Atikulate was coined from Atiku Abubakar’s name, “Ambo leekan si” the campaign slogan for Akinwumi Ambode was also coined form his name. “Ambo” in Yoruba language means “we are coming once more,” a slogan which was effective in using anticipation and suspense to communicate with electorate in Lagos State. Even those who were not interested in politics or unfamiliar with the personality of Ambode as a politician and governor became interested in him and what he had in stock for the state after eight years of Babatunde Fashola’s administration. Just like his 2015 slogan, “Ambo”,

Ambo leekan si was equally attention-grabbing until he was stopped by the local politics of the state which brought in Babajide Sanwo-Olu as governor of the state after the 2019 governorship election in the state.

vi. Penkele

In Oyo State, Bayo Adelabu, the APC candidate, former deputy governor of Central Bank of Nigeria, and a grandson of popular Ibadan politician, Adegoke Adelabu, using his grandfathers' alias to further his own political fortune adopted penkelmesi as his slogan. Thus anytime he was on a campaign train, the slogan O penkele always rent the air. Using family names and antecedents is not new in Nigerian politics. It is one of the easiest ways through which politicians worm their way onto the hearts of the electorate. However, the entertaining aspect of use of such slogan in Nigerian politics would emerge again as the opposition PDP soon began to twist the slogan penkele to mean something fake or lacking in quality.

vii. Sanwo-Eko

Again, coining slogans from names continued in Lagos with Babajide Sanwo-Olu whose slogan was "Sanwo-Eko" popularised during and after the primaries which adopted his as governorship candidate of the APC in the state. The slogan was coined from his name and like the others before him, the slogan was popular among the Lagos electorate as popular local musicians and supporters hyped it at major and mini political rallies.

viii. Omi Tuntun

As the eight years of the administration of Abiola Ajimobi came to an end in Oyo State in 2019, the political pendulum began to change. The slogan Omi Tuntun

popularised by Seyi Makinde of the PDP, which literally means Fresh water or Breath of fresh air began to spread across Oyo State. Though it was not new, as it had been used before by Makinde in earlier attempts to go for the governorship seat of the state, this time it became timely and apt. The slogan simply communicated to the electorate that the time was ripe for a new dawn and as the meaning of the slogan suggests: a time for a breath of fresh air.

5. Propaganda

For centuries, the concept of propaganda has assumed a negative character for different reasons. What is obvious for this wrong impression is that this might have been as a result of the way in which propaganda as a means of communication had been deployed over a long period of time since the term was first coined. Primarily, propaganda is an interdisciplinary concept traversing History, Journalism, Political Science, Sociology and Psychology. As such, its definition is diverse but a common thread is that which encapsulates it as an art that influences, manipulates, promotes and induces, among others, to ensure the acceptance of certain opinions, attitudes or behaviours⁹⁰.

In fact, propaganda as a tool for communication had been in existence and documented as far back as 480 BC in the Athenian city states of ancient Greece. Julius Caesar was said to be a master propagandist who knew too well how to transform subject population of the Roman Empire to its peculiar way of life using appropriate symbols of power and sophistication. However, the term, propaganda gained permanent coinage in 1622 and was used by the Catholic Church when its *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* was established in response to the arguments of the protestant Church to propagate the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

For some time later, propaganda gained a neutral usage for communication, especially in the political arena, until the Second World War when Adolf Hitler, Nazi

Germany and its Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Josef Goebbels, began to use it in a negative form. Goebbels having the instruction to shape mass public opinion to suit the overall interest of the Nazi regime, appropriated all the media in Germany under his personal control, introduced censorship and decided what is broadcast or published by the German mass media. For Goebbels, propaganda was and must be the production of a certain world-views that, once assimilated by the citizens, would make them to respond in a certain way that aligns with the requirements and expectations of the government of the day

Propaganda in its negative form, uses language in an exaggerated and pretentious way through metaphors and high sounding words that are sometimes meaningless “to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.” In essence, the overall intention of a propagandist State is to make any form of criticism, or an attempt to criticize it an unforgivable offence. Though scholars differ on the definition of propaganda based on whether it should be deployed for communication in a deliberate, systematic or organized manner, they, however, agree on the premise that propaganda is used as an attempt by certain forces to shape the attitude or actions of groups of people or individuals, just as it is used in mediated advertising, public relations and media publicity during elections to convince a mass audience⁹¹.

Furthermore, propaganda to all intent and purpose is not the truth. Its end purpose is to persuade. In character it appeals to emotions, existing attitudes, discredits other sources of information and its repetitive nature makes it believable and acceptable even without critical thinking. Generally it is intended to create a response in an audience which matches the interest and agenda of the propagandist⁹². Other scholars echo this definition, describing propaganda as a subset of persuasive communication. They see it as a situation

in which the attempt to shape perception is done deliberately; where cognitions are manipulated and behaviours are directed to further the intention of the propagandist⁹³.

Propaganda does not only mold public opinion and affect behavioural change, it is often discovered that rational approach to issues is compromised and hence the targeted audience is open to manipulation. Going by this premise of the audience being prone to manipulation, there is therefore a restriction and obstacle to a clear and straightforward definition of the term as a form of communication⁹⁴. However, in spite of the negative connotation that propaganda had assumed through the ages, scholars believe that though it is pervasive, or even manipulative, yet it is so subtle that it is invisible to the people whom it is targeted⁹⁵.

A classic example of this position was the Nazi Germany's objective of wiping away the Jewish population in their midst in the events leading to the Second World War. The propaganda then was not to ask Germans to exterminate Jews, but to simply make them feel they were the superior race by drawing their attention to physical appearance and how they were different to that of others. By simply persuading and convincing them to believe they were superior to others, it was not long before they began to carry out xenophobic attacks against their perceived enemies. The propaganda was subtle; in fact the ordinary German did not see it as propaganda but it achieve its set objectives. Beyond this argument, some researchers draw a clear difference between persuasion and propaganda. While some see propaganda as having a persuasive character and a tool for public relations, however, the question of ethics forms the basis of their own definition of the term.

For this category of researchers, the persuasive character of propaganda demands that those who use it as a communication strategy must be accountable, transparent and allow the participation of the targeted audience⁹⁶. By extension, another argument about

propaganda posits that once a persuasive attempt is focused on restricting human freedom and demanding obedience from the audience, in which case their participation is not involved, persuasion had given way to propaganda⁹⁷. In taking these two positions together, it is noticeable that modern day propaganda hardly takes into consideration any form of ethic, transparency or involvement of the target audience. The objective is to make them see things from a certain perspective without a rational mind and accept the message being communicated hook, line and sinker.

Propaganda as practiced in international communication by the Western world for example, through its powerful communication channels (radio, digital television, including the internet) with underdeveloped and developing countries in Africa and elsewhere as their target, would not have the desired influence if the target audience could realise that a certain message was pure propaganda. Still trying to find the appropriate definition for propaganda, a study on the use of the concept as a tool for communication in the workplace through the internet posited that propaganda swings between an unethical practice and persuasion⁹⁸.

Again, persuasion is a major ingredient, even if the method involves what some may consider as unethical practice. It is, however, worthy of note that propaganda has always been influenced by prevalent technology. In the 21st century for example technology, especially Information Communication Technology has simplified the job of propagandists. Thus the speed at which propaganda could reach its targeted audience had increased considerably⁹⁹. This position finds expression in the power of the Internet, including the new media, radio and television to reach millions of people at the same time with the same message. This is a departure from the 18th and 19th centuries when the print media was the best means of spreading propaganda.

Compared with ICT, it was slower, took longer time to produce the print material and distribute. Distribution (e.g of newspapers, magazines, books) sometimes could take days and weeks, if not months to reach the target audience. Today, communicating with millions of people could be done in real time, in more direct manner and with greater impact. Despite these differences in opinions and definition of propaganda as a means of communication, what is clear, however, is that wherever there is absence of or restricted media freedom and lack of pluralism, propaganda would easily take root. As an art, successful propaganda going by the different characteristics mentioned above could be informative and persuasive. On the other hand, it could also be deceitful and manipulative given its tendency to make people believe a certain narrative by playing on their emotions.

For example, a women group fighting for equality in the workplace or even in politics may reel out informative and educative statistics on the role of women in politics and the society generally to give the impression that women have always played active and developmental roles in the society. Slogans such as “Give women a chance” or “What a man can do, a woman can do better,” are some of the ways women have tried to advance their cause in seeking equality and recognition in Nigeria. However, this information could be manipulative through the use of exaggeration and inaccurate facts in order to drive home some points. On the other hand, propaganda, as stated earlier can be used for spreading positive messages like fighting for women’s rights and equality, racial equality, community health advocacy, as well as encouraging people and especially women to vote and vie for political office.

Not only this, propaganda is a powerful psychological mechanism that could be used for driving a population towards a specific cause or political agenda¹⁰⁰. This could be seen during the 1994 genocide war in Rwanda where the Hutus and the Tutsi elite used propaganda to arouse hatred against one another leading to one of the most destructive

wars of the last century not only in Africa but across the world, in which hundreds of thousands of lives were lost. In that particular instance, the agenda of both sides was simply to secure political power for the domination of the other ethnic group, this time not by the dominant group, the Hutus but the minority group, the Tutsi.

Furthermore, propaganda could be used as a psychological tool to create a fear of domination, for example, in order to gear more women to come into politics or make them vote for women who are contesting in an election. In Nigeria, propaganda also serves the interest of ethnic jingoists who use certain narratives to create a fear of domination in their ethnic groups in order to gear them into taking certain political action. So complex is the concept of propaganda that when propaganda it is deployed as a means of persuasion in communication, experts and scholars are bothered about issues such as manipulation and infringement on fundamental human rights, an attestation to its delicate character.

In fact, critics often assume that wherever propaganda assumes a free rein, true democracy may no longer be in practise¹⁰¹. This is because in such a situation, communication and information may no longer be factual as citizens may simply be misinformed or dis-informed by those who have the control of the media. In communist countries of the world such as North Korea, the State controls the media and everything that emanates from it. Private ownership of the media is prohibited, while the social media, especially, is hardly allowed to operate. In the course of an electoral campaign, politicians often dig into the trench of propaganda in order to gain undue advantage over their opponents, especially when they lack the expertise to use effectively or rightly the communication strategies that could endear them to the electorate.

The goal of propaganda in the long run, therefore, especially during electioneering campaign, is to evoke strong emotions among the electorate, sometimes without basis. By deploring his propaganda machinery, the political candidate is able to amass blind loyalty

himself and is able to make his supporters see things only from his own perspective. Propaganda techniques, among others, include introduction of diversionary tactics on issues, especially those that cast a candidate in negative lights. A candidate also sometimes uses simple and appealing slogans; stereotypes his opponents, and highlights testimonials from authority figures or celebrities extolling his qualities, and encourages readers or viewers of his mediated messages to jump on the bandwagon of a particular point of view¹⁰².

Media advertisements during electoral campaigns support this view. In almost all the media, candidates position themselves as trustworthy, hardworking and people of integrity. This they do with testimonials from individuals, newspaper reports that favour them among others, wrapping it up with something like “A man with a plan. A man you can trust.’ The goal of such communication strategy, in essence, is to encourage voters to see the candidate in the light of the testimonies highlighted and join the bandwagon of supporters. In reality, the period of electoral campaigns are often charged with messages on all media. Hundreds of audio-visual materials, documentaries, radio jingles and television advertisement among several other materials posted on the Social media are targeted at the electorate.

6. Posters

Early posters as a means of communication were largely unregulated, as they were posted anywhere there was space, such as walls, fences, lamp-posts and trees. They mainly publicised cultural events or advertising commercial products. Thus, the history of posters was replete with complaints disfigurement and pollution of public places. Though communication through posters predated World War I, the pictorial posters especially would later be used for government propaganda and recruitment of young men into the military¹⁰³. In World War One, for example, the famous Lord ‘Kitchener’ poster helped

recruit a volunteer army of three million men in the United Kingdom, and has probably become the most famous poster in history.

However, the emergence of political parties raised the importance of posters and took its use to a new dimension as competition for political offices and the need to communicate with the electorate became an integral part of the electoral process. It also became a communication tool for mass persuasion in which political parties are at war with one another without physically taking up arms¹⁰⁴. In modern era, especially concerning elections, the importance of posters cannot be over-emphasised. Undoubtedly, just like other communication strategies during elections, posters can create an atmosphere announcing a major upcoming event by drawing attention to the time and date, thus mobilising the electorate and thus performing an essential electoral function, especially given the fact that voter participation and turn out in major elections are declining in most part of the world.

Furthermore, posters serve as reminders as people come face to face with them on a daily basis in the days and months running up to the day of election, indirectly telling them that they would soon have to make a choice between the several candidates and political parties vying for public offices. Similarly, the poster being a fixed or mobile image, not only reminds the electorate about an upcoming election, it also informs them electorate about the existence of certain candidates and their political parties on which platforms they are running and thus promotes their image. Although some scholars posit that it is not very persuasive, however, posters can in fact send a message at the advantage conferred by the support materials such as handbills and billboards including its repeated exposure to the electorate.

In addition, characteristics such as originality, attractiveness, expression of optimism, aesthetic value or emotional effects are all mandatory requirements in order for the poster

to make itself conspicuous at a glance¹⁰⁵. Aside this, political parties which use posters a lot have the potential of being seen as strong front-runners in contrast with those who do not. Thus posters could create the impression of strength and visibility for candidates and their political parties, especially if they have national spread and are widely accepted all across the country¹⁰⁶. These positions tally with research findings which have concluded that pedestrians and commuters see posters within a short time of being put up and when asked about what they first saw or heard about an ongoing or upcoming election, posters are often reported as the first communication media that many potential voters first noticed.

This is often made possible by the aesthetics, texts expressing optimism, and the originality put into their designs. Their ubiquitous characteristics during electioneering campaign gets them noticed and the political party which has its posters in most places gets the impression of acceptability and national spread. Researchers also believe that posters have hypodermic needle effect on those who saw them. The essential features, especially pictures of the contestants and the logos of the political parties which posters carry help to underscore this fact as these features were easier to remember than texts. The pictures must, however, be bold and unambiguous. Texts on the other hand must be large enough and short so that they could be easily recalled and understood¹⁰⁷.

Perhaps one of the most famous posters that symbolises this concept is the Barack Obama campaign poster of 2008 designed by street artiste and graphic designer, Shepherd Fairey, on which stood a red, white and blue picture of Obama with the Change mantra or slogan and which immediately went viral and became an iconic symbol of the entire campaign¹⁰⁸. Similar efforts in Nigeria had no less become iconic where there are presidential candidates' pictures on posters appearing in the attires of the three major ethnic groups in the country in order to appeal the mass of the electorate. In 2015, Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress appeared in Igbo, Yoruba and

Hausa attires with the 'Change' slogan boldly written on the posters as the slogan of the party which many believed earned the party an unprecedented victory.

7. Social Media

Perhaps one of the newest tools for communication strategies across different areas of human communication is the Social media which has in no small ways reinvented the way political parties run their campaigns. Not only has it also become an indispensable platform for political parties, as far as elections are concerned, individual candidates in elections from the local level to the highest office in any country now see it as a veritable tool to communicate with potential voters, especially the younger generation who are the most ardent users of the new technology in order to mobilise them for political participation¹⁰⁹.

Usage of social media has continued to grow across the world especially in Nigeria and the rest of Africa, thus political campaigns and communication are being reshaped by the new technology, including how candidates and their political parties contest for offices. Not only that, the method of participation by the electorate in the electoral process is also constantly evolving and adding new dimensions to how elections are held.

Even in developed economies of the world such as the United Kingdom, statistics has shown that Social media has replaced the popular British tabloid press in shaping the political mood of the nation, just as it is not in doubt that it has been an effective tool of mobilizing the youths during elections and to amplify certain messages in such a way that a bandwagon effect could be created among the voting population¹¹⁰. This is in tandem with the view that though political rallies and the traditional media are still essential tools of communication during political campaigns, the entire conduct of elections around the world is evolving as the face of democratic participation, inclusion and expression,

especially among the youth who the most ardent users, have irrevocably changed with the coming of the social media¹¹¹.

An interesting aspect of the usage of the social media by political parties and politicians is its use for communication during elections, mostly to mobilise the electorate, engage them and engender their participation in the electoral process. For example *Facebook*, one of the social media tools has been known to perform these role remarkably especially during electioneering campaigns. In fact, communication research has proved that the most popular instrument for the dissemination of political news and especially for governments around the world is *Facebook*¹¹². *Facebook*, as a social media platform, after making its debut in 2004, amassed a population of about 2.23 billion users across the globe in less than four years. In fact, so important and effective for an electoral process was the *Facebook* such that in a 2016 study, known as Pew Research study, it was discovered that about 62 per cent of internet users make use of it as source for political information and news¹¹³.

This finding is consistent with another one done in Nigeria to find out the extent of social media use among the younger population in Nigeria which discovered that about 99% of the youth has social media accounts. The research also discovered that Facebook was the most used platform among the twelve social media platforms surveyed with 91% of users who use it to source information among other use¹¹⁴. Statistics from elections held across the world has also shown the rising importance of social media in the electoral process. This is because social media has proved to provide an endless opportunity for communication to a vast audience by people who consider themselves influential, especially in politics. To underscore this view, research has also suggested that those who obtain political messages from online platforms engage with them more than if they had come across same messages on television¹¹⁵.

Similarly, communication experts are more likely to succeed better in mobilizing the electorate if they use *Facebook* messages to reach the young population in order for them to vote for their principals¹¹⁶. The reason for these is obvious. Young people, it has been established, use the social media far more than those in the older age bracket and spend longer hours using it, a situation made possible by the interactive characteristic of this media. Apart from this, the opportunity provided for instant feedback by the social media makes it an important tool for communicating with and persuading this all-important and vital segment of the population.

Before the advent of Information Communication Technology and the Internet, political campaign and attempts by political parties and politicians to communicate with the electorate was basically done through the traditional media. However, in recent decades, political parties have discovered that the cost of election communication was growing geometrically, just as the impact of using a single media for political campaigns began to decline¹¹⁷. The new media, therefore, is affording politicians and candidates the opportunity to reach out to a mass audience with their messages in a cheaper, yet more innovative ways. In other words, communication during elections has shifted from traditional media to multimedia platforms while political rallies and even the volume of newspaper advertorials are on the decline as the social media have been discovered to be more effective at reaching a wider audience and is more cost-effective¹¹⁸.

To underscore this fact, the social media proved to be a most important resource for smaller parties to match the much bigger ones in the 2016 general election in Ghana. The smaller parties were able to come up with creative and inexpensive campaign strategies using the Social media and it turned out that it worked well for them¹¹⁹. For example, to take a newspaper advertorial in a Nigerian newspaper may cost N500,000 on the average. When the newspaper gets published, maybe only about 40,000 readers would see the

advertisement on that day or sometimes later. However, by using the social media, about a million users may see the advertisement within minutes while the number may increase exponentially within the next few days if there was anything of interest in it, as users would instantly begin to share the message. The cost of doing that in real terms may be just a fraction of the N500,000 spent on the same advertisement in the traditional media.

This underscores the efficacy of the social media as a means of communicating with potential voters. No only this, the feedback effect is also an advantage, which is an important aspect of communication. For example, a study carried out in the United States to find out the number of internet users who were likely voters in the next elections showed two-thirds of respondents replying in the affirmative. This showed that the internet and by extension the New media is a means by which voters voices could be heard and the feedback, an important tool for not only the organisers of elections but also the active stakeholders¹²⁰. Thus, with the social media, unlike the traditional media, the target audience is no longer the passive consumers of media messages. In this case, the electorate have since become more inquisitive, seeking more information and interacting actively with sources of messages coming from candidates and about the election¹²¹. Ultimately, candidates who are seen to be more engaging than others with the electorate on their websites and social media platforms often gain more followers and supporters than those who are not.

Other social media platforms such as *Youtube, Blogs, Twitter, Instagram*, among others, have since been incorporated by communication strategists during elections to reach the widest audience and diverse demographics in order to win their votes since the number of people that could be reached on each of those platforms are considerably huge. For example, *Twitter*, another social networking site as far back the year 2008 already had 335 million hits on a daily basis and by the third quarter of 2020 there were about 187

million hits on a daily basis. Most of these hits came from young people between the ages of 18 and 24 years who represent about 50 per cent of the users and another group of users between ages 25 and 34 and representing 29 per cent of daily users.

2.1.7 Arguments For and Against Social Media

The social media since inception, no doubt, has appealed mostly to different segments of the society especially the masses of voters whose voices have remained largely unheard in the public space. With the advent of the social media, this group quickly embrace it as they see it as the most effective way to have their stifled voices heard. It is, however, not by design that the social media has become a powerful tool in the hand of these people who have found a new means of expressing their views, for personal or sectional including socio-political interests¹²². This position is valid in view of current realities as individuals now have the power to express themselves through the social media once they have data. Unlike before where the traditional media has gate-keepers to sieve opinions and views of people, the gate-keeping factor is non-existent in social media thus giving opportunity to everybody to talk on any issue.

In other words social media furthers the interests of populist communication due to its characteristic of reaching its target audience in a direct manner. Thus populist campaigners, especially those who wants to reach the widest audience possible in an event like an election, are more likely to use the social media more often than the traditional media in order to achieve their personal goals¹²³. It is in view of this, that researchers and communication experts are concerned about this potential tendency of the social media to create some social problems as we shall see later. Obviously, there are underlying dangers and thus it has become a global problem in which people have advocated and are still

advocating that some level of control and regulation must be introduced if the society must curb misinformation and retain decency and social cohesiveness and national security.

This situation has already caused the Nigerian government to call for a national policy for restrictions on the use of social media in the country as it was worried that if not curtailed, its unbridled use may cause social and security concerns for government. Problems such as fake news, hate speech and cyber-bullying, among others, which have now assumed global dimensions, have thus overshadowed the gains made by the social media as an effective tool for mass mobilisation and communication, more than what the world had experienced before now. In effect, individuals and researchers are beginning to propound the argument that communication with the use of traditional media is more credible than the social media because the latter is more likely to be used for sentimental, un-educative and sometimes totally false information in the cyber space¹²⁴.

For example, the traditional media is controlled by professionals guided by ethics of their profession and are conscious of the Social Responsibility Theory of the Media in the society. In contrast, on the social media everybody is a commentator and a citizen reporter, thus not conscious of the responsibility attached to the media they are using and may decide to use it in whatever way they choose even parochial interest or to even cause security threat. To cite an empirical instance, the social media had been used several times to release information that Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari died. Ditto for the APC leader, Bola Tinubu, whom some of the social media platforms reported, died after going through some surgical operations in a certain US hospital. These turned out to be false and curious enough no traditional media outfit reported those false events.

In other words, the social media, as good as it is, is seen as thriving on perpetuating long-held beliefs, sentiments and biases. It also does not have the characteristics of the traditional media such as fairness, truth and credibility¹²⁵. Perhaps, this is the reason Social

media appeals more to communication and media strategists who focus more on the younger population, who by their nature, do not care much about verifying sources of information that they come across on the internet, but are mostly interested in information that excites and entertains.

In view of all these, the call for controlling the social media has continued to be a recurring decimal, just as other communication scholars argue that though the problems are real in the use of social media, yet they are not exclusive to it. They argue further, that rather than trying to control the social media and thereby denying millions of people access to it, its usefulness for example, in enhancing participation and inclusiveness in monitoring of electoral process, among other positive uses, should be further highlighted and underscored¹²⁶.

It is, however, important to recognise that the Internet generally, is a platform rather than a challenger to traditional media in terms of audience competition, especially by those seeking information. Today, most of those seeking information on the internet, especially news, now turn to the online versions of traditional media since access to information is no longer location-dependent. Following this line of argument therefore, it could be very misleading to continue to argue that the increasing usage of the Social media poses a threat to traditional media. The simple reason might just be that the internet is mobile and those seeking information are also increasingly on the move.

Still on the argument about its effectiveness, not all scholars see the Social media as an effective communication platform. They posit that it may be an excellent medium for governments, politicians and political parties to reach out to, and mobilise their supporters and activists¹²⁷. However, it is could be less efficient in terms of reaching out to new voters¹²⁸. This is because most of the younger generation who are voting for the first time are hardly interested in the serious issues raised about elections and would rather be at

home with the entertaining materials they could access on the social media, mostly *Youtube* video. In fact the growth of video as an entertaining communication material for the younger generation has created new and bigger threats. By the late 2017, what has come to be known as ‘deepfakes,’ had emerged, the term being an application of face-swapping algorithms (among other applications) which allow communication strategists to literally put words into their opponents’ mouths.

In other words, in no distant future, Artificial Intelligence systems would enable communication strategists to produce with ease high quality fake videos in which they would make their opponents make such damaging statements that were never made. These fake videos, would as it were, put a lie to the idea of ‘seeing is believing’ since what is being seen is totally different and far from the truth, thus damaging earlier held perception of the social media as a very effective tool of communication¹²⁹.

2.1.8 Traditional Communication System

The traditional media, including the new media, is an indispensable platform for communication by politicians and political parties with the electorate during electioneering campaigns. However, in developing countries and Nigeria inclusive, both obviously has their limitations. Some of the factors responsible for this include illiteracy and lack of media accessibility. Fundamentally, only the literate can read newspapers and magazines, and also use the social media to source for information. Furthermore, billboards, posters and handbills, among other media may not communicate any information to an illiterate voter about an upcoming election, except, perhaps, the pictures and symbols on them which might not communicate much information, except that the pictures are those of contestants in the election which the illiterate voter may not even be able to identify.

In a similar vein, radio and television may be available to residents of the urban centres, but the experience of poor power supply in the country may not allow for accessibility of information when needed. Billboards (analogue or digital, including the Social media, it must be emphasized, are hardly useful in communicating with residents of rural communities. Apart from these shortcomings, there is also the tendency for the media mentioned above to seem elitist to a certain segment of the society even in urban centres, who are largely illiterate or semi-illiterate. The demographics of urban centres across Nigeria also supports this fact as could be seen in patterns of settlement where the rich and affluent live in certain areas and the poor, mostly illiterate, live in others with largely poor infrastructure. Furthermore, in many instances, the advertisements and messages relayed in the mass media do not reflect the social reality in the rural areas.

Going by the aforementioned precepts, and to fill these gaps therefore, it is imperative for political parties to use a complimentary communication strategy or systems which would not only persuade, mobilise and enlighten both the educated and illiterate, but which they could also identify with and embrace easily. Thus, the need for African traditional communication system. It must be established that before the advent of mass media, backed by technology, African traditional communication system had served the African society for ages in mobilizing and informing them, among other uses.

This communication system basically serves economic, social, religious and political functions in various traditional societies as deemed right by those who constitute the leadership of local communities at particular times, whether the leadership is made up of a council of elders as we find in local communities in Igbo land of Nigeria or individual leaders who rule with a council of chiefs like an oba or baale as found in Yoruba land in South West Nigeria. However, though the mass media might have consigned the

importance of traditional communication system to the background, it is, however, still relevant today as it was in centuries past.

African traditional communication system, by its composition is unique, not only because it uses indigenous languages easily understood by the people, which allows for greater acceptability and impact, but also embedded in the communication system are local beliefs, customs and traditions which the people could easily relate with. From the foregoing, scholars have therefore argued that the mass media on its own cannot effectively fulfill the communication needs of modern African societies and that instead of pushing traditional communication system into the background because it looks archaic or outdated, it should in fact be integrated with modern mass media.

This, it is further argued is because the target audience of traditional communication system, which is the local populace, though mostly illiterate, attach great importance and credibility to it as a result of the affinity they feel towards that system of communication¹³⁰. This is a valid observation and the basis for it could be seen in the characteristics of this unique system of communication which includes elements of entertainment such as music, songs, dance and drama, among other artistic performances. It is important, therefore, to note that since this communication system is traditional in form, it is communally-owned, wholly acceptable and impactful, and without commercial considerations for patronage, a very important factor for the survival of the mass media. In addition, to the rural population, the traditional media system is more credible. This is because it is unmediated, as it is done in a direct and interpersonal manner.

2.1.9 Functions of Traditional System of Communications in Nigeria

Just like the modern system of communication, the traditional communication system also has its own functions within the local communities and societies where it is

put to use. One of these functions is that it serves as a vehicle for mobilisation of citizens at the grassroots, in order to drive them towards the development of their community and to also create in them a sense of self identity and national development. In many parts of Africa it has been discovered that the bane of development is the wrong approach in which the government applies the top to bottom principle whenever developmental programmes are designed for grassroots people and without their involvement.

However, a better understanding of developmental issues has changed the procedure in which the bottom up approach is now put to use, wherein people at the grassroots are mobilised towards development using traditional communication system, an approach which has produced better results. In addition, traditional communication system helps to drive people at the grassroots level towards self-actualisation because the implementation of programmes and policies put in place are meant for them and are specifically carried out in their localities. Not only these, given the fact that traditional communication involves music, dance, songs and other aspects of performing arts, the culture of the people is on display which also satisfy the curiosity of non-residents of such communities.

Some aspects of the cultural displays such as some masquerade performances are used to preach against social vices, or to encourage communal living and love for fellow neighbours in order to engender social cohesion and development. Furthermore, before the problems of insecurity became a national issue in Nigeria, traditional communication system ensured local and national unity. Major cultural festivals across the country such as Osun Osogbo festival, New Yam festivals in the South Eastern part of the country, including the Argungu fishing festival in Kebbi State, drew visitors from both within and outside the country. This process has created avenues for cross-cultural communication and better inter-cultural understanding.

2.1.10 Communicating with symbols

An aspect of traditional communication system often used as communication media and always conspicuous during electoral campaigns in Nigeria is the use of symbols. Symbols are images that are often associated with or represents people, institutions or ideas. Colours, objects or images, even the acronyms of the political parties are often combined to represent certain political parties and their candidates and what they stand for ideologically. These, combined, underscore the messages communicated to the electorate about the political parties and their candidates which helps them to make voting decisions on Election Day. Texts may not communicate to an illiterate voter, but symbols could.

Communicating through the use of symbols is not new in election communication in Nigeria. Since the early days of party formation and political campaigns, Nigerian political parties have adopted different symbols for self-identify themselves and to also distinguish themselves from other parties. During the First Republic for example, the major political parties include the Action Group led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo; Northern Peoples Congress led by Sir Ahmadu Bello; National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) led by Chief Nnamdi Azikiwe and Northern Elements Progressive Union, led by Alhaji Aminu Kano. The symbol of the Action Group at that time was the palm tree standing the behind the acronym of the party's name AG. The party chose the palm tree as its symbol then because agriculture was the mainstay of the Western Region's economy and moreover, every part of the palm tree is useful.

Thus the Action Group was very popular in the then Western region and widely known as Egbe Olope, meaning the "palm tree party." Even for the illiterates, making a choice of the party during an election was not difficult since it was easy for everyone to identify the palm tree. Moreover, most of the people then were farmers who cultivated the

palm tree for its economic value. Another notable symbol of a political party during the First Republic was the black, green and red coloured flag in horizontal lines of the Northern Elements Peoples Union with a white star in the middle. It distinguished the party from its main Northern rival, the NPC.

During the Second republic the major political parties were the National Party of Nigeria (NPN); Unity of Party of Nigeria (UPN); Nigerian People's Party (NPP) and Great Nigeria Peoples Party (GNPP) and they had distinct symbols that differentiated them from others. For the NPN, the party's symbol was a house with a stalk of maize each on both sides. Both the house and the stalks of maize were surrounded by a circle in which the name of the party was written with its motto: One Nation, One Destiny. The UPN on its part had a lit candle in the middle of the map of Nigeria with the light shining and radiating to every corner of it. In the Western part of the country it was known as Egbe Imole (the party of light) while its slogan in the North to identify the party was "Haske" which also means light. To identify itself, the NPP chose the image of a group of people sitting together to symbolize togetherness and to communicate to the electorate that it was the party of the people.

By the Third Republic, unfortunately, the two political parties in existence did not evolve like the others in the past. They were a creation of the military government of General Ibrahim Babangida who was then the head of government. The two political parties were the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC). The parties were rather an imitation of the two major political parties in America, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. However the symbols were different. The NRC had the eagle, a symbol on Nigeria's Coat of Arms as its symbol, while the SDP had a horse, another image on the national Coat of Arms as its own symbol.

In a way it was easy to distinguish between both parties. During elections, it was simple a choice between the horse and the eagle. Again, these symbols serve the purpose of identification and mobilisation. This means both the literate and the illiterate could easily identify both parties as either their party or that of their opponent. The Fourth Republic in Nigeria has experienced an unprecedented number of political parties in the country's political history. As of today there are no fewer than 90 political parties with even more seeking registration by the INEC.

However, while most of them are simply existing on the fringes, there are major and prominent ones. However, out of the major ones, only two of them stand out and they are the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressives Congress (APC). Both have distinct colours and symbols for their parties. For the Peoples Democratic Party, the colour is red, white and green standing vertically with the image of an umbrella in the middle, while for the All Progressives Congress, the colours are green, white and sky-blue, in vertical lines with a hand holding a broom in the middle. At the bottom of the flag is a horizontal red colour on which the name of the party, APC, is written.

Ideologically, political parties could also communicate what they stand for at a glance. The umbrella of the PDP stands for unity while the hand holding a broom stands for the anti-corruption policy of the APC. It is not surprising therefore, that whenever these two political parties are on their campaign train especially at their rallies, umbrellas and brooms are always on display by many of their supporters and major actors. As significant as symbols are to political parties, and though they may serve as objects of entertainment and excitements at their rallies which gives that aspect of the electoral process a character of its own, they may also be abused or misused¹³¹.

An example of this assertion could be seen in the manner that stalwarts of rival political parties make jest of and cast aspersions on themselves during political campaigns

in Nigeria. For instance, during the 2011 political campaign in Oyo State, supporters of the then Action Congress of Nigeria often deride their opponents the PDP as ‘pindipi.’ Though the word ‘pindipi’ has no clear meaning in Yoruba language, but it suggests an attempt by the ACN to deride its rival. Apart from this, it was not uncommon during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria for the APC, especially in the South West of Nigeria, to take to the streets after a major political rally by their main rival the PDP, and begin to sweep the streets with brooms, which is their symbol.

In Yoruba cultural nuances, this act of “sweeping away the footmarks” communicates a rejection of the personality against whom the act was carried out. The party therefore was sending out a message to the electorate that they should follow suit in rejecting their rival by sweeping them out of power. Similar scenario played out in Benue State during the 2011 general election. The then Action Congress of Nigeria used effigies which was popular in cultural displays in the state as communication strategy. However, the rival PDP cleverly used the strategy against the ACN by portraying the party’s governorship candidate, Prof. Steve Ugba as a political stooge to(or puppet of) George Akume due to the affinity which they both shared.

However, the ACN was quick to fight back by using the symbols of a pig in deriding its rival and governorship candidate of the PDP, Gabriel Suswam, as someone whose greatest achievement was importing pigs into Benue State. By using both the symbols of the pig and the puppet or effigy, both political parties communicated to the electorate, the deep and entrenched rivalry between them to an extent that not even the mass media could have done. Also very conspicuous during the administration of Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso as governor of Kano State was the use of red cap by members of the Kwankwasiyya, a movement of Kwanwaso supporters. Bound by the philosophy of commitment to the development and happiness of the common man in Kano State, the red cap which was

popularized by Kwankwaso himself became the trademark identity and symbol for all those who subscribe to the ideology.

2.1.11 Artiste/Celebrity Endorsement

For obvious reasons, some forms of entertainment have always been part of the electioneering campaigns in Nigeria, but in the more recent elections in the country, there seems to be a conscious effort by politicians to involve notable celebrity figures and artistes to boost their image and popularity among the electorate. The reason behind this relatively new strategy is that many politicians want to position themselves as having the support of and the love for the younger generation of voters. This segment of the population therefore becomes the target of the politicians whom they hope to communicate with through the artistes and celebrities either at the campaign rallies or in the advertisements on the electronic media and the social media videos which could be share many times over among the young voters.

Secondly, many politicians rely on this strategy of communicating with the younger generation because apart from being largely uninformed about their constitutional roles in the society, many of them are not too enthusiastic about the nitty-gritty of the electoral process. Furthermore, research has also discovered that there is a high rate of voter apathy among the younger generation of eligible voters. Therefore, the one of the most effective communication strategies to mobilise, engage and get them to vote is the use of celebrity endorsement by politicians. For example, “Our Time” an initiative founded in 2011 to inspire as many youths as possible to vote during the election of that year discovered that only eight per cent of eligible youths registered to vote, an abysmally low figure, given the percentage of the youth as per the total population of the country at that time which was estimated at about 49 per cent of the total population of 169 million¹³².

There was also the 'Enough Is Enough Nigeria' (EiE Nigeria) initiative by celebrity artistes, individuals and youths organizations with the goal of encouraging voter participation and monitoring the election through the traditional media and the Social media. Reaching out through its Register, Select, Vote and Protect (RSVP) and Election No Be War slogans, the EiE reached out to the youth warning them not to be cannon fodders for politicians and to enlighten them that election is not war¹³³. However, the relative success recorded by these artistes' initiatives seemed to have opened their eyes of politicians to the possible influence of artistes and celebrities on youth mobilization and the huge advantage that they could provide at the polls. Thus, by 2015 general elections there was an upsurge of the involvement of this segment of people, not only to support and endorse politicians for elective positions, they also themselves began to seek elective offices, though most of them did not make it further than the primaries¹³⁴.

By the 2019 election, artistes/celebrities' endorsement of candidates was on the rise with some artistes fully backing certain candidates while some backed the others. For example, popular fuji musician, Wasiu Ayinde Marshall, also known as K1 the ultimate was a familiar face at several rallies held by the APC both in Lagos and Abuja, among other venues, just like he did in 2015. Muhammadu Buhari who was very popular in the Northern part of Nigeria also had the backing of many musicians who waxed records to sing his praise. One of the artistes backing Buhari, based in Kano, popularly known as 'Rarara' released several songs praising Buhari as an anti-corruption crusader and asking corrupt politicians to flee. The popularity of such songs among the electorate brought electoral goodwill to the subject of the songs¹³⁵. While the above-named artistes backed Muhammadu Buhari, notable others such as Davido, Falz and Femi and Seun Kuti supported Atiku Abubakar who tried to position himself as the candidate of the youths. This support though may not be ideologically-based, the Kutis apparently had a family

grudge against the military and especially the military government of Muhammadu Buhari who detained their father, Fela Anikulapo-Kuti¹³⁶.

2.1.12 Social Mobilisation

It is very important to state that an electoral process, and indeed any process that involves the mass of the people may not succeed without Social mobilisation, which in general terms, refers to the process of engaging and motivating a large number of people for participating in and or supporting a cause. In another dimension, several participants engage inter-related and complementary roles with a definite objective of bringing about change in the society, be it through the ballot box or the system of administration. Though, mobilisation is often used by grassroots movements for some specified goals, governments or its agencies also use social mobilisation to further similar causes¹³⁷.

This is consistent with another concept of mobilization, in an election, as a process by which the major stakeholders induce others, mostly voters, to exercise their civic duties to win elections or to influence certain policies. In essence, Social mobilisation seeks to bring about change through individual groups who play interconnected and complementary roles¹³⁸. Components of this process include as earlier mentioned, the process of sensitisation, and among others, motivation, and providing information through the mass media. These efforts are not only geared towards motivating the masses to take actions towards a desired and specific goal, it is also to ensure that the motivators gain value, which in the case of an election is electoral victory for a political party¹³⁹.

These positions find expressions in empirical cases. For example in China, the Cultural Revolution could not have been a success without Social mobilisation of its citizens, through which the government was able to ensure a paradigm shift through communication. The goal in most cases is make citizens see through the eyes of

government, or its agencies and persuade them to begin to think in a predetermined pattern. In an election, stakeholders such as political parties, the electoral body organising the election, government agencies, engage the electorate in a combined process of sensitization and Social mobilisation. When political parties engage in the process of social mobilisation, the goal, also is to gain electoral value, by persuading voters to make a decision for them and their candidates. In essence, during an electoral process, whether it is government or political parties engaging citizens in social mobilisation, the direct and indirect advantage is an increase in voter participation.

Communication, it must be emphasised, is central to the role of Social mobilization in increasing civic participation¹⁴⁰. This is because, sometimes, citizens need to be assisted to make informed and rational decision in the course of exercising their civic duties. These decisions could only be made wisely when the needed information is available, especially in the case of voters in an election, in order for them to elect the right candidates and thus ensure good governance. In another dimension, a change in the attitudes, values and expectations constitute the expectations and goals of social mobilisation.

Not only this, social mobilisation is a derivation of sustained media exposure through increased communication process by stakeholders, in addition to the process of urbanisation and higher literacy level. Though restrictions or censorship on conventional media including low level of literacy could limit the influence of mobilisation, however, in recent times, the internet and especially the social media has made mobilisation much easier and far more intense in its impact. In essence, mobilisation is a consequence of a conscious organisation of groups of people, geared towards a pre-determined course of action or activities¹⁴¹.

Again, contemporary events across the world corroborates this. During the Arab Spring events that engulfed the whole of the Arab world in 2014, the phenomenon

recorded huge success as a result of social mobilisation by citizens themselves using the Social media. The predetermined course of action was to revolt against oppressive governments, but in some of the countries involved it went beyond that to even record cases of change in government. Though some governments tried to censor the media in their countries to slow down the process of the citizens mobilising themselves, but the Social media and the internet made the mobilisation much easier.

To further the discourse on social mobilisation, it is important to note that there are both direct and indirect approaches. The direct approach is that which involves street canvassing, coupled with individuals, television advertisements, direct mails and personal phone calls. In the case of indirect mobilisation, contact is made through the Social media networks that individuals subscribe to. People could also be indirectly mobilised by their friends, family members, members of the faiths they profess or even sports team-mates and colleagues in the office¹⁴². In essence, both direct and indirect mobilisation rest on communication. As a result of commentaries, reviews, panel of discussion fora, personality interviews and editorials in the communication media, awareness is created and questions are answered concerning diverse issues, especially those that have to do with governance and government policies and at the end of the day, citizens are better informed, educated and enlightened¹⁴³.

2.1.13 Voter Participation

Voter participation, is a major objective of an electoral process. Without it the entire process remains inconclusive and eventually become a failure attempt. More so, the role of communication during the electioneering should be of concern to researchers. This is because the concept of voter participation elucidates that the media shapes the level of both the interest and attitude of citizens during electioneering, meaning that the

information available to them determines their level of participation, which in turn is a reflection of the level of their media exposure¹⁴⁴. Voter participation is so important to the electoral processes that it is considered one of the most important among the indices of quality citizenship and civic duties in every society. By extension, voter participation encapsulates a combination of civic duties, not only to influence public policies, but also to elect those who would make such policies that would benefit citizens¹⁴⁵.

This position is true of most elections across the world as voter participation, whether high or low determines those who form the next government: either the incumbent or another set of leaders entirely. However, high or low level of voter participation may not entirely be a reflection of the level of media exposure of citizens. This is because even in urban centres where there is a higher number of educated citizens when are exposed to the media than rural dwellers, the level of voter participation had not always been high. In fact, the elite, who live mostly in urban centres have been known to shy away from voting during elections.

However, voter participation is dependent on some factors which include, among others, the importance of a particular election. A national election, for example, is likely to generate more interest and participation than a local government election or a by-election. Other factors that determine the level of voter participation include but are not limited to citizens' faith in the electoral system that determines whether their votes would count, belief system or faith professed by voters and personalities of candidates. More importantly, the media's reportage of a crisis situation in a country may generate high interest such that an election may experience increased voter participation, just as fanatical supporters of political parties are more likely to vote in an election (again, as a result of media exposure), than those who do not have serious sympathy for political parties.

Ironically, records of voter participation across the world especially in the African continent show that it is on the decline. Though the reasons for this are multi-dimensional and it could impact negatively on the democratic process and development of a society, yet some of the notable factors globally include large scale global socio-economic and cultural evolution including in the media and even the way communication is mediated during elections¹⁴⁶. In Nigeria, factors such as violence, ethnicity and inability of politicians to deliver on their promises also mitigate against voter participation.

The above position on global socio-economic and cultural evolution, including the manner of election communication and their possible impact on voter participation is valid. While more people had become socio-economically dependent, it is evident that poverty had also increased globally. The attitude of individuals and dependence on government for survival had also changed. Thus, individual perception of what is communicated during election, especially in Nigeria which is a multi-cultural society, may affect the level of voter participation.

However, if an electoral process must be of significance as a vehicle for social change, some factors must be considered. These include adequate knowledge of the major stakeholders in the electoral process which include candidates and their political parties, the agency that organises the election. More importantly, the process of social mobilisation must be thorough followed and sustained through the media to create awareness for the entire process.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Agenda Setting Theory

The Agenda setting theory is based on the foundation that the media has a very powerful influence and the ability to tell the masses what issues are important and should

be focused on. By 1922, a newspaper columnist, Walter Lippman, had shown concern that the media was influential and could present certain images to the public. However, the Agenda Setting Theory was formally developed by Dr. Max McCombs and Dr. Donald Shaw who investigated the American presidential campaigns in 1968, 1972 and 1976. In their 1968 “Chapel Hill study” their research focused on two elements of awareness and information during which they attempted to assess the relationship between what 100 voters in Chapel Hill, North Carolina saw as important issues and the actual content of the media messages used by political parties during their campaign. Their conclusion was that the mass media had significant impact on what voters considered to be the major issues of the campaign because it focused extensively on those issues and was able to sway public opinion.

Agenda-Setting being the media’s creation of public awareness and what issues are important are based on two basic assumptions which are: one, that the press and the media do not reflect reality but sieve current issues and shape them; and two, that the media’s concentration on some issues and subjects often make an impression on the public to believe that those issues as more important than others. When the media focus extensively on certain issues it then literally takes away the audience’s ability to engage in independent thinking. Agenda Setting occurs through a cognitive process known as accessibility. That is, the more often the audience is exposed to an issue through the media the more the issue sticks to their memory. One of the most critical aspects in the concept of an Agenda-Setting role of mass communication is the time frame and the fact that different media have different agenda-setting potentials.

The theory is quite appropriate to this study in understanding the extensive role and influence of the media in communication during an electoral process. This is founded on the premise that as elections come nearer, the media focuses more on issues prevalent in

the country such as insecurity, economy, failed promises of politicians, election violence, among other issues. By raising these issues in interviews, panels of discussion, documentaries, public debates and public opinion polls, members of the public are reminded about such issues which often form the bulk of their own inter-personal communication.

Furthermore, in planning their use of Communication media, political parties often try to address these issues by making them their talking points in their campaign and at every opportunity, using different media channels to push through the issues that they hold as priority and bring them to the front burners. They also try to position themselves as the party with the candidate who had the pedigree to tackle and solve the problem. This is often evident in their messages both in the traditional media and the Social media both in texts and video contents to persuade the general public that the messages and the issues they espouse are the most important issues that would set the mood for the election. On posters, billboards, radio and television jingles and other forms of advertisements, the feedback from the Agenda Setting role of the media form the bulk of political parties and their candidates' communication efforts with the public.

2.2.2 Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses And Gratifications Theory emanated from the 1970s, arising from earlier research in Mass Communication which stressed on both the message and the sender. Rather than building on this premise of message/sender, the Uses and Gratification Theory focuses on the receiver and or the audience, who are the more active users of the media, and taking into consideration their needs and motives. Most importantly, the theory focuses on what the audience/receivers do with the media. The theory was developed by Blumler & McQuail arising from their observation of audiences' motivation for media consumption during 1964 election in the UK, especially watching television. Both

researchers categorised the audience's media use or motives into four as: (a) using it as a tool for escapism or diversion; (b) using the media for personal relationship; (c) using it for surveillance and (d) for personal identity.

Furthermore, the theory is based on three objectives which are: to explain what people do with the media, especially how they use it to gratify their needs. Two, the theory seeks to find out the underlying motives for this use and finally, it seeks to identify both the positive and negative results of the individual's use of media. In essence, the foundation of the theory is the assumption that individuals or an audience use the media to satisfy certain needs peculiar to them.

In addition, the Uses and Gratifications Theory stands on the premise that when a user's motive for using a particular media is satisfied, the medium is used more, leading to increased satisfaction. Thus there is an acceptance and use of both the traditional and New media according to the needs of users or receivers due to their (media) characteristics and quality of their contents which they (audience/user) find gratifying, especially the entertaining contents of the media. These characteristics, especially in the case of New media, include mobility of the devices, creation of social space and currency of information, among others.

In essence, the audience, media and gratification are interconnected. The audience, through media choice could determine the level of their gratification. The media also, compete to gain audience satisfaction while the audience determines the current trend of media use as in the case of both the traditional and new media. In media advertising during an electioneering, which is the focus of this work, audience gratification could be categorised into four which are: (a) information. As we have seen earlier in this study, politicians create awareness through information to mobilise and educate their constituents

concerning their parties, manifestos, messages and image, among others. (b) Gratification in the area of entertainment and pleasure as a form of temporary escape from social pressure. (c) Gratification in the area of social integration and interaction to achieve a sense of belonging and (d) Gratification for personal identity, especially in the case of political parties and politicians for branding and identity in order to sell their views, beliefs and philosophy to the electorate through the media to win elections.

Uses and Gratification Theory posits that the audience, including politicians, in the case of an election, make deliberate choices in a myriad of available media. Politicians advertise in the media to persuade the audience in order to win elections knowing full well that the audience are avid consumers of media information. Thus we can safely say that this theory is relevant to this study as it will identify the communication media used by the audience during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State, including the messages sent by senders and the extent to which the messages influenced the users which speaks to users' media choice and uses, thus establishing the extent of gratification.

2.4 Review of Empirical Studies

2.3.1 The Barack Obama Campaign

Communicating with voters during electioneering, especially in the 21st Century has changed from simple running of a regular campaign, to creating a mass movement through the usage of the internet. Over time, the concept of community or a fixed location, of where to reach a mass audience has changed to other locations, which currently, are the Social media spaces like *Facebook*, *Myspace*, *YouTube*, *blogs*, *Instagram* and *Twitter*, among several others. Though, the traditional mass media made up of the newspapers, news magazines, radio and television, still play effective roles in elections around the world, yet the New media has proved that unlike the traditional media where

communication is tilted mostly one way, communication, especially during elections, is now a two-way, highly engaging and continuous communication between voters, contestants and other major stakeholders¹⁴⁷.

The Barak Obama campaign of the 2008 presidential election in the United States of America, is still a reference point in election communication till date. Not only because it was the first time an African American was elected as president of the United States, landmark progress was made in social mobilisation. Furthermore, the success of the campaign was basically as a result of the usage of the internet and Social media, and how it was used to create a mass movement of supporters for Obama. With its use of both the New media and Social media, the Obama campaign was able to reach a large quantum of small donors and young supporters who formed the bandwagon effect that largely made the campaign to succeed. Unlike his rival, John MacCain, the traditional media and new media structures of the Obama team were more integrated and synchronised for better synergy¹⁴⁸.

Not only this, the social media communication strategy of the campaign was based on the tactic of presenting Obama as a young, tech-savvy candidate compared to John MacCain, who was portrayed as old-fashioned and not in tune with the New media and how it operates. Empirically, the statistics supported this view. By election time in 2008, Obama had already garnered roughly 2.5 million Facebook friends, compared with MacCain's which was just over 500,000. Statistics also showed that Obama sent out more than 1 billion e-mails in addition to 10,000 messages to specifically targeted would-be voters in key states. On Twitter he had followers who were more than 23 times that of MacCain. Also more than 50 million viewers spent 14 million hours watching videos of his campaign on YouTube. They were more than four times that of McCain's¹⁴⁹.

Strategically, a large chunk of would-be voters targeted through the New media are the younger generation who are more tech savvy and are more at home with the array of

platforms which they often interact with, than the older generation. By the 2008 election, more young American people voted, than they did during earlier elections, with more of them voting to support Obama. The youth decided to come out in support of Obama for many reasons. Obama himself understood the concerns and struggles of the young generation such as the poor economy faced by the country in the dying days of George Bush administration, college debts and lack of access to health care coverage, among others.

With effective and strategic use of Communication media directed at this critical mass of the American population, Obama was able to position himself as the one who not only understood their problems, but could also solve them. His Social media and text Messaging platforms including YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and My.barackobama.com which were mostly interactive, became very attractive to this segment of the population. With its target audience in view, the Obama campaign had one central message and never strayed for it in all of his speeches at rallies and campaign advertising. Also, the overall aim of the campaign, was about focusing on direct communication with the electorate and maintaining a clear and simple image for the candidate with his messages of Hope, Change and post partisanship. Apart from the use of New and Social media for Obama's campaign, the television also played its traditional role. In the television advertisements, Obama campaign team was able to position their candidate as a simple, average American that everyone could relate with and a man from humble background raised by a single mom that struggled like every other man and worked his way up in life.

There were television advertisements such as "Country I Love," in which Obama narrated how he embraced values such as self-reliance, patriotism and hard work which guided him from his humble background to where he was at the time of the election. Also in "Something", another television advertisement produced by the Obama campaign team,

Obama was shown receiving support from different communities, thus creating the impression in the heart of the average American that he was the one candidate capable of bringing everybody together, to “choose hope over fear; unity over division, and the promise of change over the power of the status quo¹⁵⁰.”

In electoral campaign, negative advertisement is also a strategy, in which a candidate tries to hit at the soft targets of his opponent in order to gain advantage. The Obama campaign used this strategy by hitting at MacCain but was careful not to deviate from its central message of “Hope” and “Change”, through a reinforcement of the American people’s lack of faith in the Republican Party, on which platform MacCain was campaigning. Apart from this, more of the television advertisements also portrayed John McCain as a politician who is out of touch with reality and that electing him would mean an extension of George Bush’s eight years of poor administration.

For example, in one of the television advertisements - “Better Off,”- MacCain made claims about living a better life with more jobs created, good income and low inflation whereas the reality on ground was that the economy was not good. The voiceover at the end of the advertisement then asked the viewers “do you feel better off?,” That question reminded the average American viewer of the poor economy through the eight years of George Bush’s administration and that they needed a change for the better. The candidate who could bring about that change, they argued, was Barak Obama¹⁵¹.

In posters, symbols and logos, the Obama campaign sustained his messages of Hope and Change. The designs, reflected in the symbol “O” with red stripes flowing and representing a new hope for America, resonated with different groups and segments of the American public such as the youth, “Farmers for Obama,” “Asian-Americans for Obama”, among others. As a result, the Obama campaign’s communication strategy to maintain consistency largely succeeded, with its ability to appeal to different segments of the

society, making them feel a part of the campaign. In all, the Obama campaign was deemed successful by communication scholars who researched on that election, due to its masterful use of the Social media and effective media advertisement strategies, to identify and deliver what the electorate wanted¹⁵².

2.4.2. The Nigerian experience

In the Nigerian setting, over the decades, the communication media used during elections have similar patterns of tilting heavily towards the traditional media, especially the newspapers and magazines, television, radio, billboards, posters, handbills and political rallies, until the most recent elections when the social media become more pervasive. However, most times, these communication media are not used to address national issues as these are often neglected, just as contestants resort to character assassination and mud-slinging in order to discredit their opponents believing this would advance their cause and compliment their use of the mass media.

Ironically, many political parties use their social media and internet websites to state and outline the policy issues they hope to pursue should they be voted into power. Despite this, most voters do not often understand the basic issues at stake in the elections and often vote on emotions and pre-existing sentiments. For example, in the 2007 election, the major candidates used the mass media to get their messages across, but in the process they engaged more in character assassination than addressing national issues. For example, opponents portrayed Abubakar Atiku, then presidential candidate of the Action Congress as a 'corrupt' politician; Muhammadu Buhari of the CPC was presented as a 'religious fanatic' while Musa Yar'Adua was portrayed as an unhealthy stooge of the then outgoing President Olusegun Obasanjo¹⁵³.

In many instances, the reportage of the elections were not always balanced as federal and state governments own about 90 per cent of media houses in the country and in most

cases are always under the firm control of incumbent political parties. In practical terms, they made sure that the opposition parties are often under-reported and given as little publicity as possible through denial of equal access to the media which is a contravention of the electoral laws guiding election in the country. Similarly, some of the privately-owned media in the country belong to individuals who are either friends to those in government or their patrons, who often use them to the disadvantage of the opposition parties. It is not uncommon, for example, for some media houses, to disallow opposition contestants an access to use their platform for their campaigns¹⁵⁴.

In addition, during the general elections of 2011, former President Goodluck Jonathan used effective communication to appeal to the emotions of the average Nigerian with slogans such as “I had no shoes”, “if I can make it, you too can make it”. Through the different media, especially the radio and television, emotional and compelling stories were told about how he went to school barefooted. Many Nigerians were able to relate to such stories of humble beginnings which endeared him to their hearts and believing that if Goodluck Jonathan could make it to the highest office in the land, they also have the potentials of making it. Nigerians believed his stories and saw him as a kind of leader worth voting for.

In newspapers, newsmagazines, billboards, posters and on television and radio (through political commercials and jingles), the stories were retold countless times until the message of a humble beginning sank in and resonated in the minds of the average voter. At the end of the election, Goodluck Jonathan won. In the 2015 general elections, the existing political alignments had shifted. The Action Congress of Nigeria, the Congress for Political Change and the All Peoples Party had merged to form a mega party now known as All Progressives Congress with Muhammadu Buhari as its presidential candidate.

As was the case in 2011, massive media campaign created a lot of awareness among the electorate. The Buhari campaign, using the traditional and social media embarked on an aggressive campaign and public relations strategies to portray the former General as a reformed or “Born again democrat” and an anti-corruption leader to counter the onslaught of the ruling party, the PDP that he was a dictator and religious bigot. With a central message of Change to sensitise Nigerians to what it termed the failure of the ruling party which had been in government for sixteen years as of that time to solve major issues confronting the country, the Buhari campaign team was able to paint the Jonathan government as inept and clueless in solving those problems.

Coupled with the realities on ground, the strategy worked maximally as an overwhelming number of Nigerians at that time were convinced and had concluded that the Goodluck Jonathan government was indeed both corrupt and inept and thus there was need for change. Consequently, many Nigerians perceived Buhari as the alternative to Jonathan and the candidate who could bring about the change desired¹⁵⁵. The two major contestants in the election, the All Progressives Congress and the Peoples Democratic Party both used the electronic media extensively, especially those owned by their members or the media who were sympathetic to their cause.

For example, The Nation newspaper, perceived by many people as a media owned by a top member of the APC made uncomplimentary remarks about Goodluck Jonathan, among other forms of character assassination found in other media which were critical of his policies or those not sympathetic to his cause and ambition of recontesting for the presidency of the country. In a reverse case, the THIS DAY newspaper referred to Buhari as a candidate who was “a military dictator” with blood on his hands, while also giving editorial space to individuals who also referred to him as “an autocrat and a tyrant shielded by a rival newspaper”¹⁵⁶. This preponderance of media involvement in the election

resulted in some conclusions. One is that in Nigeria, we are reminded that media ownership plays a role in the electoral process in which it should be seen as an impartial umpire in the reportage of activities of all political parties and giving access to all sides without prejudice.

Secondly, it also showed that there was a brazen show of favouritism and preferences for certain candidates and their parties in the election by the media, despite well-established electoral regulations against such acts¹⁵⁷. In the election, the PDP's strategy was to hit at Buhari, the APC candidate, as a candidate who was incompetent and was not really in charge when he was a military head of state between January 1984 and August 1985. The party also used the traditional media, including the Social Media to portray him as a sick man old man, who may die in office. This was done in extensively in several national newspaper advertorials sometimes taking the front pages of newspapers, while the APC focused mainly of preaching its slogan of Change and rebranding its candidate to look like a democrat, despite his hard stance as military ruler during which the media and individuals were victims¹⁵⁸.

In the 2019 election, the communication media used by political parties were not much different from what had been done in earlier elections, except that the Social Media was by then deployed on a larger scale by the major political parties having discovered the advantages of its reach, cost effectiveness and influence among the average voter. Contestants presented their programmes through rallies, the mass media, presidential debates, radio and television commercials, including social media audio and video messages. By then, accessibility to the internet had increased exponentially, with Social media platforms such as *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *WhatsApp* as favourites as they were used by political parties and their candidates. The INEC which organises the election, Civil Society Organisations and other stakeholders also used the internet especially the Social

media to disseminate information, mobilise and encourage political participation, for sensitisation and exchange of ideas¹⁵⁹.

Activities of Civil Society Organisations in Nigeria, both before and during the 2019 election supported this view. About 60 registered organisations which include Media Rights Agenda, Alliance for Credible Elections and Center for Democracy and Development, among others, under the umbrella of Civil Society Situation Room were actively involved in mobilization, sensitization and collaboration with international agencies to make the 2019 election successful. However, the presence of INEC, which is the organiser of the election on social media was adjudged inadequate. For example by October 2018, its twitter followers were only 1.04 million people when it was said to have registered 89 million voters.

Mobilisation and sensitisation of the electorate is also a major task for contestants in elections. In 2019, just as in earlier elections, communication strategies used by candidates centered on appealing to the emotions of the electorate by highlighting issues that have to do with each region they were speaking to such as youth unemployment, restructuring, insurgency and insecurity in order to gain their support. Though there was nothing new or captivating essentially in the manifestos of the two candidates, some of the issues like restructuring sat well with some political elite especially in the South East¹⁶⁰.

The contestants, especially the major rival parties, the APC and the PDP, just as they had done in earlier elections through the traditional media, also used the Social media to attack each other, though the strategy of doing so was a little different. For example, though the APC's presence in the Social media, especially twitter, was overshadowed by that of the PDP, it was using news reports from the traditional media to attack its rival, while the PDP used its self-generated messages and negative tweets to attack the APC in

order to garner support for its candidate in what is generally known as negative advertising¹⁶¹.

However, this tactic, as mentioned earlier, often engender hate speech which could also lead to violence if the back and forth mudslinging and character assassination subsists. The violence which occurred during and after the election actually underscored this. After the election, the Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room reported the death of about 626 people, a rather high figure of casualty in any election. With the Social media now put to such use, being largely unregulated, it was not long before fake news and hate speech became other forms of communication strategies for some politicians and their campaign teams. The problem became heightened as the election drew near making the government to warn that a credible election was under threat as a result of misinformation and fake news, as rival political parties tried to pull down one another. Thus, instead of being fully mobilised to partake in an election, the charged atmosphere caused a lot of distraction to many voters and probably contributed to voter apathy¹⁶².

Consequently, the social media, which going by empirical evidence and statistics was noted as being more effective than the traditional media in reaching out to a much wider audience during elections was now suffering abuses instead of being used to advantage. For example, it became a tool for promoting fake news, hate speech and stereotypes among the electorate. An instance of this was that before the commencement of political campaigns for the 2019 election, there was a rumour through the social media that President Buhari had died at a London Hospital where he was being treated. There were also the rumour that Buhari had been replaced by a body double known as “Jubril of Sudan” as president. The issue became a national discourse as opposition parties capitalised on it for political gains¹⁶³.

Apart from being misused during an electoral process by one party against the other, the Social media was also used to promote fake news even by those in government. For example, a Special Adviser on Social Media to President Buhari, Laretta Onochie, posted a photograph in a tweet, supposedly at the PDP Sokoto rally where the party's candidate, Atiku Abubakar, was said to have distributes money and food items. However, the photograph which was later fact-checked and reverse searched by Cross-check, a journalism platform that combats fake news with Google Reverse Image discovered that it had been recycled and manipulated to discredit Atiku. It was noted that the photograph was first used in February 2017 by a charity foundation to publicise its activities. The photograph which was also reused by other persons in the same month had thus been in circulation for 19 months before the Sokoto rally¹⁶⁴.

It must, however, be noted that fake news, photographs or videos such as this has become a source of concern to many people around the world. The speed at which it spreads and its frequency on the Social media have become so much a daily occurrence and even a source of amusement to those who are subjects of the news¹⁶⁵. To corroborate this view, the fake photograph generated massive reaction from Nigerians on twitter with many of them making references to Onochie's past misdemeanor on the use of fake media materials. The subject of the fake photograph, Atiku, including his media team, must have been amused also, by the baseless claim.

Furthermore, just before the 2019 presidential election, the Kaduna State governor who is also a member of the ruling party, the APC, Malam Nasir El-Rufa'i, apparently not pleased with the presence of foreign observers in the country who flew in to monitor the elections, was quoted to have used words which amount to hate speech. He was reported to have said on television: "those that are calling for anyone to come and intervene in Nigeria, we are waiting for the person that would come and intervene; they would go back

in body bags, because nobody will come to Nigeria and tell us how to run the country.” The statement was widely reported by the mass media and believed to be directed at the international observers from the European Union, United Kingdom and the United States. Such mode of communication was widely considered as hate speech, as it had the potential of incensing political thugs and a section of the electorate against the foreign observers¹⁶⁶.

2.3.3 Characteristics of the Nigerian Political System

i. Voter Apathy: Arising from the situations which often characterise elections in Nigeria such as violence, thuggery, ballot box snatching, hate speech, fake news, character assassination, among others, voters are often skeptical about going out to vote on Election Day. Oftentimes voters stay away from polling stations to avoid being caught in the web of the ensuing crisis. Though low Voter Participation is not peculiar to Nigeria, yet statistics released by Election Observer Missions and electoral commissions arising from elections already held across the world show that in major elections vis a vis the number of eligible and registered voters, it is an increasing phenomenon.

Examples of voter turnout in Africa alone would suffice. For example, even though there were countries with high voter turnout, several others, Nigeria inclusive have not been able to record above 50 per cent voter turnout in a decade. These include: Algeria - 49.4 percent; Mozambique - 48.6 percent; Sudan -46.4 percent; Sao Tome and Principe - 46.1 percent; Democratic Republic of Congo - 45.4 percent; Mali - 42.7 percent; Egypt - 41.1 percent and Cape Verde - 35.5 percent. In the last few decades, contemporary democracies have been experiencing a gradual decline in citizens’ engagement due to large scale global socio-economic and cultural changes including the media and the way communication during election is mediated¹⁶⁷.

However, the problem of low voter participation is multi-dimensional in nature as it operates across disciplines¹⁶⁸. In addition, it could impact negatively on the democratic process and development of a country¹⁶⁹. These positions correlate with the root cause of voter apathy in Nigeria which have been identified as violence, socio-economic factors, ethnicity and candidates' popularity and ability to deliver on promises. However, it is important to note that voter apathy is a tip of the iceberg of a broader problem which is not just peculiar or individual, but emerges over a period of time. In due course, the problem gradually leads to a more serious problem of possible total disengagement from civic duties a situation which could stifle democracy and national development¹⁷⁰.

Simply put, low voter participation is a problem borne out of a low percentage of Voter turnout vis-à-vis the total number of registered voters who actually collected their voter cards; and when the percentage of the Voting Age Population turnout (VAP turnout), that is the turnout of eligible voters, in an election is far less than those who actually voted¹⁷¹. Statistics released by INEC shows that the average voter turnout in Nigeria has decreased from 52.3 percent of voters in the 1999 election when the nation returned to the path of democracy, to 34.95 percent in the most recent general election, the 2019 general election¹⁷².

Probably due to the excitement of transiting for dictatorship to democracy, Nigeria recorded 52.3 per cent turnout in 1999. In 2003 it increased to 69.1 per cent, but since then it began to decline. It fell to 57.4 per cent in 2007; 53.7 per cent in 2011; 43.6 per cent in 2015 and 34.75 per cent in 2019, one of the poorest voter turnout in Africa in decades. Whichever of the elections come first, be it Presidential and National Assembly elections which are usually held first and on the same day or the Governorship/State Houses of Assembly elections often held later but also on the same day, the figures have always been on the decline. In fact, the latter elections (Governorship/State Houses of

Assembly), according to statistics are known to record lower turnouts than the earlier elections (Presidential/National Assembly).

Going by this reality therefore, what is discernible is that low voter participation symbolised by this gradual withdrawal from a very important aspect of citizen participation in political affairs shows that there are underlying problems and subtle disengagement from other civic duties by citizens, though these may not be easily noticeable. The reality, essentially, is that the ruled are no more in sync with the rulers¹⁷³. The reason for this position lies in the relationship between voters and politicians before and after elections. Not only this, the failure of politicians in fulfilling electoral promises to produce dividends of democracy does not often materialise. It is a known fact that in Nigeria, most politicians no longer maintain close contacts with their constituents. This failure to fulfil promises and improve the lives of the common man especially in Africa is one of the major reasons for the disconnection between the ruled and the ruler.

Given this scenario therefore, voter apathy, a symptom of serious and complex set of issues in a democracy could be adduced to various reasons. Some of these reasons include insecurity/over-security. Over-security is seen as a state in which the military, for example, are drawn in during elections for security duties which could otherwise have been handled by the regular police. This situation, for example, often strikes fear into the hearts of potential voters making them to rethink their decision to go out and exercise their civic duties, the downside of which might be a decision to stay back in their homes for personal security.

Yet voter apathy also occur when voters believe that democracy is not delivering or has not delivered to them the expected dividends and fulfillment based on campaign promises of the politicians as it is often seen in most developing nations of the world¹⁷⁴.

For example in Nigeria, many potential voters are not enthusiastic about upcoming elections and are not even thinking of voting due to disappointment arising from failed promises of politicians. Most of the time the electorate cannot see what the whole electoral process was all about because the same cycle of not seeing anything getting better in their lives was enough to discourage them from voting in a new election.

Furthermore when elections are postponed for different reasons, coupled with poor planning, incessant violence and lack of faith in the electoral process because voters are not sure their votes would count, voter apathy can occur. Based on this rising trend, political parties, not only in Nigeria but other parts of the world, are paying more attention to their communication strategies not only to draw out eligible voters but also to position themselves advantageously in order to achieve victory at the end of the election.

ii. Electoral Violence: Before major elections in the country, the problem of electoral violence is often the concern of major stakeholders in the country including the international community. In the last two elections in the country, that is the 2015 and 2019 elections, peace accords initiated by political and religious leaders were signed between major contenders. The reason behind this is to ensure that they were committed to peace by ensuring that their followers also eschew peace. For example before the 2019 election, there was the Abuja Accord signed among others by Muhammadu Buhari of the APC and Atiku Abubakar of the PDP. A similar one had been signed in 2015 between Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP and Muhammadu Buhari of the APC.

The reasons behind these accords were not far to seek. In 2011 about 800 people were reportedly killed in post-election violence across the country when Goodluck Jonathan was declared winner of that year's election. Public communication by political leaders were said to have incited such violence across the country. A similar occurrence in 2015

left 100 people dead. Elections in Nigeria are always hotly contested and winners often have access to huge amount of financial resources with which they acquire more assets. More so, contesting in Nigerian elections, even at the local or state levels often involve huge financial resources. Thus politicians are not ready to lose such huge finances and so do all within their power to win elections at all cost.

This they do by appealing to religious and ethnic sentiments of supporters who with little or no financial inducement go all out to kill and destroy if their candidate did not win in an election.

iii. Vote Buying: Vote buying is a concept that is not new to Nigeria, neither is it peculiar to the country. By definition, vote buying is any form of inducement by any political party or their agent to influence the choice of voters or to even make them abstain from voting to enhance their own chances in order to win an election¹⁷⁵. Evidence from elections around Africa shows that it is a common phenomenon as about 16 per cent of voter reported that they had been offered either money or certain materials by one political party or the other or their proxy, to secure their votes¹⁷⁶.

Though vote buying is prohibited under Article 130 of the Electoral Act 2010, as amended which guides the electoral process in Nigeria, it is pervasive as it could be seen at different stages of an electoral process starting from delegate conferences, primary elections and majorly on Election Day. There are two different types of vote buying. One is that the voter is given a certain amount of money before casting his vote and the evidence of having voted for the candidate is shown to the proxy buying the vote. The second type is to give the promised amount after the voter had shown evidence of voting. These acts are often carried out in secret or sometimes even within the vicinity of the polling station under the watchful eyes of security personnel. Video recordings of such acts often emerge on the day of election.

Elections in Ondo and Edo states in 2016, Anambra in 2017 and Ekiti in 2018 all experienced cases of vote buying by the major parties. Vote buying is caused by several factors. One is that electronic card reader has made election rigging an arduous task for politicians, thus the need to influence voter decisions through financial and material inducement. In addition, politicians had become desperate for political office and had to do everything to win an election, believing that if did not do it their opponents would do it anyway and outsmart them.

Unemployment and poverty are among the major reasons. Despite public enlightenment by stakeholders before elections that voters should not sell their votes, and that their future was more important, prevailing economic situation often blindfold voters from seeking instant gratification. The weakness of the law, including security personnel in prosecuting offenders is also one of the factors responsible for vote buying. For example despite existing laws against it, evidence do not abound that offenders were duly prosecuted and punished. Consequently, the electoral process suffers the problem of credibility. Thus there is the question of legitimacy hanging on holders of public offices who come in through such dubious processes. In addition, honest individuals who have the desire to serve but do not have the financial wherewithal are shut out from seeking public office.

2.5. Conceptual Framework (Model)

The Conceptual model for this study is based on the research topic. It is primarily anchored on the flow chart of communication between the political parties and their candidates and voters through the media during an electoral process to persuade them and ensure participation. This is premised on the usual flow of election communication by these political parties using all available channels of communication media, to persuade voters to make them their choice at the poll, believing that when voters are exposed to the

media through predetermined communication channels with appropriate messages suited for the different segments of the demography, they are persuaded in a direct manner.

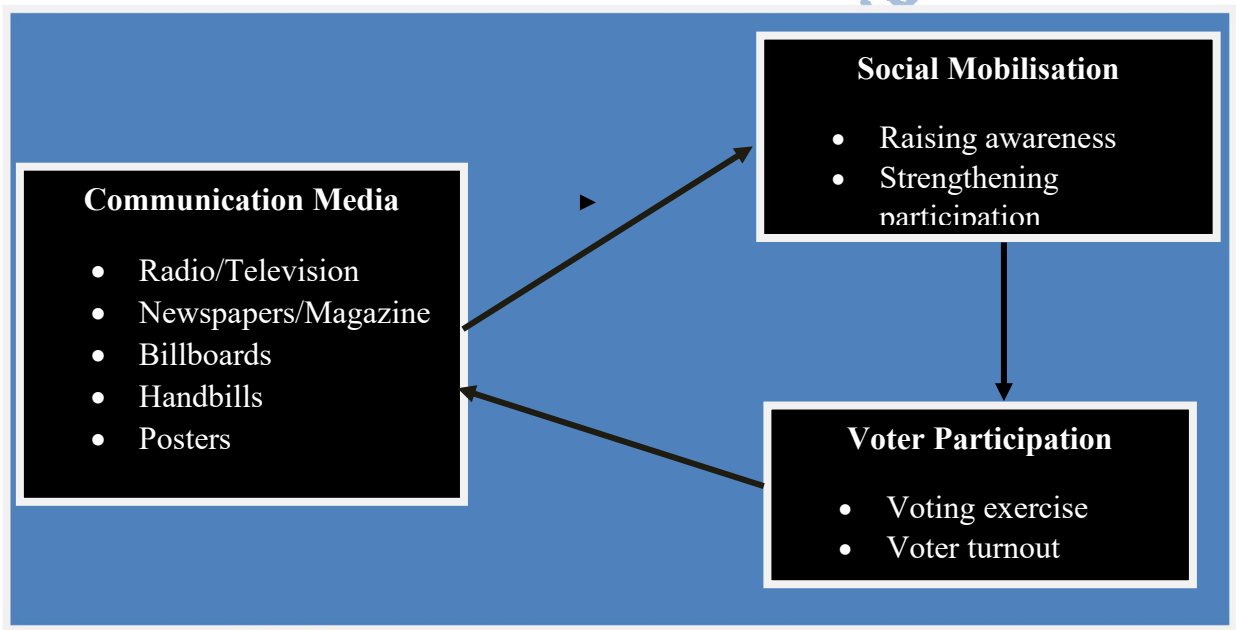


Figure 2.4 Model for Influence of Communication Media used by Two Major Political Parties on Social Mobilisation and Voter Participation in the 2019 Presidential Election in Oyo State, Nigeria.

The independent variable for this study is the communication media used by political parties in their communication efforts, while the dependent variables are social mobilisation and voter participation. The indices or the various elements that represent Social mobilisation, Voter participation and communication media are included in the model. Indices of the independent variable, the Communication media used by the

political parties in their persuasive efforts, as noted earlier, include the traditional media such as radio and television, newspapers and magazines, billboards, banners, handbills, posters, political rallies, including the new media such as the internet, Social media platforms such as *facebook, blogs, vlogs, twitter, instagram*, among others.

Through these media, messages are carefully crafted and mediated to persuade voters to make conscious decisions to vote for certain political parties and their candidates. At the onset of electoral campaigns, the individual political parties set up their communication machinery, including the agenda for their communication efforts targeted at specific goals, the overall objective of which is to persuade and possibly convince the electorate to make the choice of voting for them on Election Day. Political parties and their candidates also identify those communication media that would work best for certain segments of the demography they have identified as their core or priority groups, as not every communication media would work effectively for every segment of the voting population. For example, the elderly may not be reached effectively through the social media just as the traditional media may not be 100 per cent effective in communicating with the younger population.

Thus, through newspaper advertorials, opinions, personality interviews and commentaries in the media, the political parties engage in persuasive communication to portray themselves as the best choice out of the number of other political parties seeking power. Other traditional media such as radio and television are also used to communicate with voters through talk shows, debates, sponsored advertisements, both in English and local languages, again, mainly through persuasion or even propaganda. Though most of the time, persuasion is mediated, there are others platforms for communicating with the populace such as political rallies which provides opportunities for and ensure direct contact with the electorate for a two-way communication process.

The New media, characterised by the internet and the Social media have become an indispensable tool of communication for political parties during Nigerian elections in the last two decades. Most of the political parties use it mostly because of its reach and cost-effectiveness. More importantly, Social media has an overwhelming patronage by youths and new voters in the country whose population as a percentage of the total population of the country is higher than that of any other group. For the social media, communication does not only engender a feedback between political parties and potential voters, it also foster citizen participation in the electoral process, including intra-communication among the voters concerning the process. Likewise, some traditional media like radio and television allows for feedback, though in a limited way, which enables potential voters to also make comments on issues of public interest, and for the media to also play its traditional role as postulated by the Social Responsibility Theory of the media.

For voter participation as a dependent variable, the indices include the act of performing a civic duty such as voting, and the level of Voter Turnout, which in any election may be high or low depending on other factors unrelated to communication. It is a fact that despite attempts by political parties to mobilise, sensitise and educate citizens on their civic duties during elections, the process often experience low voter participation as it has been noticed in several elections globally. Low voter participation could, however, be as a result of social issues such as violence and election rigging which often leave citizens disenchanted with the electoral process and, especially in earlier cases of election rigging, citizens may believe that their votes may not count. Therefore, they may take a decision to abstain from participating in future elections.

Furthermore, voter participation, it must be established, is an expected direct result of mobilisation and sensitisation of voters which is measured not only by the number of registered voters but by the number of those who actually cast their votes, in addition to

the level of voter turnout. It is expected that in every electoral process these would be positive and in high percentage when compared with the total number of eligible voters. Indices of Social mobilisation as the second variable include raising awareness among the citizens, strengthening their participation, not only in an election but also in all social activities towards which mobilisation is focused, and empowerment of citizens so as to enable them become active participants in the society.

In summary, this model shows the interconnectivity between the communication media used by political parties and voters on one hand and the processes of Social mobilization and voter participation. In the model, there is a constant interaction and interconnectivity between communication media and mobilisation and participation, with the hope of the former influencing the latter through persuasion and mediation of messages. The outcome of this interconnectivity and influence in the final analysis, is voter behaviour manifesting as Voter participation, the citizens having been mobilised through the communication media.

2.5 Summary of Gaps in Literature

In this section, a review of literature related and relevant to the research topic was presented. The relevant concepts (Communication media, social mobilisation and voter participation) were reviewed, defined and clarified. The theoretical framework in which the Agenda Setting Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory were discussed also followed. The Conceptual model was similarly presented and discussed. Erstwhile studies had noted that Communication media and communication generally, are indispensable to political parties and the electoral process, and that since the return to democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999, political parties have developed different communication strategies using the mass media to win elective positions. The studies pointed out, however, that despite the fact that these electoral processes have been characterised by religious, regional/ethnic

bigotry and character assassination, among others, the nature of communication in the nation's electioneering is becoming worse with election communication increasingly being characterised by the use of hate speech directed at opponents due to the country's parochial political culture.

However, these studies did not take into cognizance the culpability of the media in the problem of hate speech and the need for the media itself to wake up to its responsibilities as espoused by the Social Responsibility Theory of the media, since the media has great influence on the society, including its role, especially in an electoral process. However, though the traditional media may be to a large extent self-regulatory, most of the existing research had not taken into consideration that the social media is not self-regulatory and as such as easy to control. Therefore, the social media may likely mislead citizens into making wrong choices during an electoral process, just as it serves to mobilise citizens for participation in their civic duties.

Though some extant researches had noted that the use of social media as a media of communication in elections is growing rapidly and helping political parties to reach much larger audiences, especially the youth, in an easier and cheaper way, empirical evidence had established that the youth despite their numerical strength do not translate this strength into an electoral advantage for political parties. Furthermore, despite this seeming advantage, the traditional media is still a formidable means of communicating with the mass of the electorate, just as a large percentage of the electorate are, in fact, not on Social media despite their numerical strength.

In essence, voter education and mobilisation are very essential to making informed choices, even for this group of young people who are of voting age. Even when they are segmented and reached with specific messages that are appropriate for their demographic segment, they must understand the issues behind the messages and be able to interpret

them appropriately to enable them make the right choices by using the media to engage voters generally in a robust way through dialogue and interpersonal communication. In addition, some of the extant researched had failed to highlight the importance of other stakeholders in an electoral process, including opinion molders and a vibrant media, a combination of which sets the agenda for citizens to think about which increases their knowledge gain and thus leads to better informed choices during elections.

Advertisement is mediated and persuasive in nature, but it does not allow for an immediate feedback which other forms of communication such as interpersonal communication or face-to-face communication affords. In addition, media advertisements, when used on multi-media platforms - both traditional and New media – are more likely to persuade a large segment of citizens on a wider scale than if they are narrowed down to some media. Moreover, credibility and content of the messages contained in the communication marketing efforts including that of the candidates are very important to their success at the poll. Not only this, the media which is the platform for the communication process must also be credible as people believe more in the traditional media than the Social media to provide credible and authentic information even about the contestants in an electoral process.

Endnotes

1. Oluwatosin Olaniru, Olusoji Olatunji, Olusola Ayandele and Olugbenga Popoola, *The Influence of Media on Political Knowledge Amongst Undergraduate Students In Ibadan, Nigeria*, **Global Journal of Social Sciences**, vol 19, 2020, Pp 13-24.
2. Destiny Oberiri Apuke, *Media Ownership and Control in Nigeria: An Overview of the Marxist and Pluralist Theories*, **New Media and Mass Communication**, vol.54, 2016, Pp 31-33.
3. David Smith, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/31/muhammadubuhari-military-dictator-nigeria-new-democratic-president>, available online.
4. Babayo Sule, Umar Adamu and Usman Sambo, *The 2019 General Election in Nigeria: Examining the Issues, Challenges, Successes and Lessons for Future General Elections*, **International Journal of Social Sciences Perspectives**, vol. 6, No. 2, 2020, Pp. 100-113.
5. INEC, All About 2019 General Election, <https://www.inecnigeria.org/all-about-2019-general-elections/> available online.
6. Seun Akinyemi, *Voter Apathy, A Threat to Democracy In Nigeria*, <http://democracyinafrica.org/voter-apathy-threat-democracy-nigeria/> available online
7. Mukundan • Sivara, *Political messages That Appeal To Voters*, <https://callhub.io/political-campaign-messages/> available online.
8. Elias O. Aruma, *Role of Communication in Community Development*, **International Journal of Network and Communication Research**, Vol. 5, 2018, Pp 1-10.
9. Fred Nickols, *Strategy: Definitions and Meanings*, available online, https://www.nickols.us/strategy_definition.html, 2016, Pp 1-13.
10. Michael Howard and Peter Pareta, *Carl Von Clausewitz On War*, Oxford World's Classics, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, 2007, Pp 1-336.
11. Ibid.
12. Marcel Herbst and Henry Mintzberg's, *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*, **Tertiary Education and Management**, Vol 4, 1998. Pp 153-157.
13. Jesper Stromback and Spiro Kiouisis, *Political Communication: Strategic Political Communication in Election Campaigns*, Mouton de Gruyter, 2014, Pp 109 -128.

14. Sharon Adetutu Omotoso, *Political Communication and the Nigerian Democratic Experiment: Critical Insights from Yorùbá Philosophy*, **Political Communication in Africa**, vol 3, Pp 189-210.
15. Christian D. Fouloy, *What is Political Communication?* Association of Accredited Public Policy Advocates of the European Union (AALEP), available online, www.aaalep.eu/what-is-political-communication/ Accessed June 2021.
16. Isa Mohammed, Muhammad Yusuf, Peter Julius Vau and Abubakar Lawan, *Political Communication during Electioneering Campaign and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria*, **FUDMA Journal of Politics and International Affairs**, Volume 3 Number 4, July 2020. Pp 126-133.
17. Eweka Osagioduwa and Sharon Omotoso, *The African Policom Stew* in **Political Communication In Africa**, Ayo Olukotun and Sharon A. Omotoso (eds.) Cham: Springer Publishers, 2017, Pp 1-13.
18. Waldemar Wojtasik, *Functions of Elections In Democratic Systems*, **Political Preferences**, no 4, 2013, Pp 25-47.
19. Ibid
20. Tunde Opeibi; *Political Marketing or Political 'Macheting'? A Study of Negative Campaigning In Nigerian Political Discourse*, **Internet-Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften 16 Nr**, Vol 16, 2006. Pp 1-19.
21. Kirk Hallahan, Derina Holtzhausen, Betteke van Ruler, Dejan Vercic and Krishnamurthy Sriramech, *Defining Strategic Communication*, **International Journal of Strategic Communication**, vol 1, no 1, 2007, Pp 3-35.
22. Jennifer Kopfman and Amanda Ruth-McSwain; *Public Information Campaigns: The Practice of Government Public Relations*, Routledge, Now York, 2017, Pp 75-100.
23. Sririam Arulchelvan, *New Media Communication Strategies for Election Campaigns: Experiences of Indian Political Parties*, **Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies**, Vol 4, Issue 3, 2014, Pp 124-142.
24. Elena N. Malyuga and Barry Tomalin, *Communicative Strategies and Tactics of Speech manipulation in Intercultural Business Discourse*, **Training, Language and Culture Journal**, Vol 1, Issue 1, 2017. Pp 28-45.
25. Darren G. Lilleker, *Voting and Voter Decision-Making in Political Communication and Cognition*, **Political Campaigning and Communication**, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2014, Pp 177-197.
26. Ejikeme Jombo Nwagwu, Onyinyeomachukwu Gift Uwaechia, Kingsley Chigozie Udegbonam and Rebecca Nnamani, *Vote Buying During 2015 And 2019 General Elections: Manifestation and Implications on Democratic Development in Nigeria*, **Cogent Social Sciences**, vol 8, no 1, 2022.
27. Abigail Michaelsen, *Brand Obama: How Barack Obama Revolutionized Political Campaign Marketing in the 2008 Presidential Election*, *CMC Senior Theses*. Paper 990, 2020.
28. Ibid.
29. Julian Flowers, Audrey Haynes and Michael Crespin, *The Media, the Campaign, and the Message*, **American Journal of Political Science**, 2003, Pp 259-273.
30. Muhammadu Buhari's Inaugural Speech, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/video/183998-i-belong-to-everybody-and-i->

- belong-to-nobody-pres-muhammadu-buhari-inaugural-speech.html, available online, accessed May 2020.
31. Stephen Stockwell, *Political Campaign Strategy: Doing Democracy in the 21st Century*, Australian Scholarly, Melbourne, 2005, Pages 10-13.
 32. Wolfgang Donsbach (ed), *Rhetoric in Western Europe: France-Structuration Theory*, **The International Encyclopedia of Communication**, Blackwell Publishing Ltd; Victoria, Australia. 2008.
 33. Richard Nordquist, *Definition of Spin in Propaganda: Glossary of Grammatical and Rhetorical Terms*, retrieved from <https://www.thoughtco.com/spin-communication-1691988>; July 2021.
 34. Donsbach, W. (ed.) op cit
 35. Chiara Valentini and Gianpietro Mazzoleni (ed), *Spin Doctoring, The International Encyclopedia of Political Communication*, John Wiley and Sons Inc. 2015, Pp 1-5.
 36. Jennifer Kopfman and Amanda Ruth-McSwain, *Public Information Campaigns; The Practice of Government Public Relations*, 2017, Pp 75-100.
 37. Elizabeth Corey, *Formative Research: What, Why and How*; Reproductive Health and Research, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland Training Course in Sexual and Reproductive Health Research, Geneva Workshop 2011.
 38. Ingrid Shikova, *From Differentiated to Smart Integration, 20 Years of the European Studies Department: Compilation of Articles*, St. Kliment Ohridski University Press, 2019, Pp 23 - 48.
 39. Ralph Negrine and Stylianos Papathanassopoulos, *Media Perspectives for the 21st century: The Transformation of Political Communication*, Routledge Publishers, 2011, Pp 1-264.
 40. Ralph Negrine and Darren Lilleker, *The Professionalisation of Political Communication: Continuities and Change in Media Practices*, **European Journal of Communication**, 2002, Pp 305-323.
 41. Jesper Strömbäck and Spiro Kioussis, *Political Public Relations: Defining and Mapping an Emergent Field*, Routledge, 2011, Pp 109-128.
 42. Elise D. Aronson, *Cyber-Politics: How New Media has Revolutionized Electoral Politics in the United States*, **Colgate Academic Review**, Vol. 9, Article 7, 2012, Pp 148-194.
 43. Darren Lilleker and Jennifer Lees-Marshment, *Ideal Types in Political Marketing – A Comparative Perspective*, **Czech Journal of Political Science**, 2006 Issue 4, Pp 439-447.
 44. Tunde Opeibi, *Political Marketing or 'Political Matcheting'? : A Study of Negative Campaigning in Nigerian Political Discourse*, **Internet-Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften 16 Nr. vol 16**, 2006.
 45. Ibid.
 46. Ken Goldstein and Paul Freedman, *Campaign Advertising and Voter Turnout: New Evidence for a Stimulation Effect*, **Journal of Politics**, Vol 64, Issue 3, 2002. Pp 721-740.
 47. Anne Johnston and Lynda Lee Kaid, *Image Ads and Issue Ads in U.S. Presidential Advertising: Using Video style to Explore Stylistic Differences in Televised Political Ads From 1952 to 2000*, **Journal of Communication**, 2002. Pp 281-300.

48. Alison J. Hackett, *Risk, its perception and the media: the MMR Controversy*, **Community Practitioner**, vol. 81, no. 7, 2008, P 22-25.
49. Andreas Hepp, *On Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld's Personal Influence, The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications*, Free Press, New York, 2019, Pp 293-296.
50. Ibid
51. Maxwell McCombs, Donald Shaw and David Weaver, *New Directions in Agenda-Setting Theory and Research*, **Mass Communication and Society**, vol 17, issue 6, 2014 Pp 781-802.
52. John Curtice, Stephen Fisher, Jouni Kuha and Jonathan Mellon, *Surprise! Surprise (again) The 2017 British Election Exit Poll*, **The Royal Statistical Society**, vol 14, issue 4, 2017, Pp 26-29.
53. Shira Dvir-Gvirsman, R Kelly Garret and Yariv Tsfati, *Why Do Partisan Audiences Participate? Partisan Public Opinion as the Mediating Mechanism*, **Sage Journals of Communication Research**, 2015, Pp 112-136.
54. Stephen Ansolabehere, Shanto Iyengar and Adam Simon, *Replicating Experiments Using Aggregate and Survey Data: The Case of Negative Advertising and Turnout*, **The American Political Science Review**, vol. 93, no. 4, 1999, Pp 901-909.
55. Alexander Coppock, Seth Hill and Lynn Vavreck, *The Small Effects of Advertising are Small, Regardless of Context, Message, Sender or Receiver: Evidence from 59 Real Time Randomized Experiments*, **Science Advances**, vol. 6, no. 36, 2020.
56. Ibid.
57. Michael Franz, Paul Freedman, Ken Goldstein and Travis Ridout, *Understanding the Effect of Political Advertising on Voter Turnout: A Response to Krasno and Green*, **The Journal of Politics**, Vol. 70, No. 1, 2008. Pp 262-268.
58. Liam C. Malloy and Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz; *Going Positive: The effects of Negative and Positive Advertising on Candidate Success and Voter Turnout*; **Research and Politics**, Vol 3, Issue 1, January-March, 2016.
59. Jennifer Lees-Marshment, *Political Marketing Principles and Applications*, Third ed. Routledge, London, 2019, Pp 1-286.
60. Olalekan Taiwo and Fethi Ahmed, *Geographical Analysis of Voter Apathy in Presidential Elections between 1999 and 2011 in Nigeria*, **African Geographical Review**, Vol 34, Issue 3, 2015, Pp 1-19.
61. Farook Kperogi, *Why Political Power Damages The Brain and How to Reverse It*, Saturday Tribune, accessed from <https://www.tribuneonlineng.com>, available online.
62. Bruce Newman, *The Mass Marketing of Politics: Democracy in an Age of Manufactured Images*, Published online June 19, 2012, accessed May 2022.
63. Bruce Newman, *The Marketing of the President: Political Marketing as a Campaign Strategy*, Sage Publication Inc., California, USA, 1994, Pp 1-12.
64. Frank Luntz, *Candidates, Consultants and Campaigns: The Style and Substance of American Electioneering*, Basil Blackwell, 1988, Pp 1-272.
65. Jamie Bartlett, Josh Smith and Rose Acton, *The Future of Political Campaign, Demos*, London, 2018, Pp 1-54.
66. Staci M. Zavatarro, *Brand Obama: The Implications of a Branded President*, **Administrative Theory and Praxis**, Vol. 32, Issue 1, 2010, Pp 123-128.

67. Andrea Aoun, Blake Dariyae and Lori Barker, "Has Change Come to America? College Students' Attitude To Obama's Presidency, **Obama On Our minds: The Impact of Obama On The Psyche of America**, Oxford Academic, 2016, Pp 237-256.
68. Buhari Olaoluwa Rasheed, *Broadcast Media as an Instrument of Change, During 2015 Electioneering Campaign In Nigeria*, **Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review**, Vol. 3, No. 12, 2016. Pp 14-27.
69. Ibid
70. Otun Olalekan, Karibi Benson Bobmanuel and Sam Smith, *Textual Analysis of 2019 Presidential Election Political Advertisements in Selected Newspapers in Nigeria*, **IOSR Journal of Humanities And Social Science**, Vol. 25, issue 8, Series 13, August 2020, Pp 10-26.
71. Michael Aleyomi, Olanrewaju Ajakaye, Otu Akanu Otu and Moyo Paul Oluwasegun, *Mass Media and Political Campaigns During the Nigerian 2015 Presidential Elections*, **Journal of Communication and Media Research**, vol. 10, no. 2, October 2018, Pp 174-185.
72. Isaac Olawale Albert, *A Review of the Campaign Strategies*, **Journal of African Elections**, 2007, vol. 6, no 2, Pp 55-78.
73. Nathaniel Swigger, *What You See Is What You Get: Drawing Inferences From Campaign Imagery*, **Political Communication**, Vol. 29, issue 4, 2012. Pp 367-386.
74. Godwin E. Oboh, *Reflecting on the Nigerian Media, Elections, and the African Democracy*, SAGE Open, 2016, Pp 1-10.
75. Michael Aleyomi, et al., *Mass Media and Political Campaigns During the Nigerian 2015 Presidential Elections*, **Journal of Communication and Media Research**, Vol. 10, No. 2, October 2018. Op cit
76. Robert McChesney, *Rich Media Poor Democracy: Communication Politics in Dubious Times*, The New Press, New York, 2015, Pp 1-64.
77. Ibid
78. Chiagoziem Onyekwena, How music influenced the presidential elections, 23 March 2019; <https://guardian.ng/life/music/how-music-influenced-the-presidential-elections/> accessed May 2021.
79. Mitchel Stephens, *History of Television*, www.nyu.edu. New York University, <https://stephens.hosting.nyu.edu/History%20of%20Television%20page.html> Accessed January 2021.
80. Adriana Simwa, *Brief History of Broadcasting In Nigeria*, <https://www.legit.ng/1109799-brief-history-broadcasting-nigeria.html>
81. Stephens, M. Op cit
82. George Ibenegbu, Brief History of Broadcasting In Nigeria, <https://www.nta.ng/tv-guide-magazine/> April 2015, accessed July 2021.
83. Otun Olalekan and Sam Smith, *Empirical and Methodological Analysis of Political Advertisements*, **Review of Journalism and Mass Communication**, Vol. 6, No. 1&2, 2018, Pp 12-21.
84. Sarah Stone Watt and Joshua Trey Barnett, *Persuasive Speaking*, www.publicspeakingproject.org., accessed online April 2021.
85. Roseline Ndimele and Gloria-Owums Owuamalam, *Language Use In political Advertising: A Rhetorical Discourse on See Who Wants to be President*, **Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences**, Vol.3, No.8, 2015. Pp 19-31.

86. Collin Higgins and Robyn Walker, *Ethos, Logos, Pathos: Strategies of Persuasion in Social/Environmental Reports*, **Accounting Forum**, Vol 36, 2012 Pp 194-208.
87. Darell West, *Television Advertising in Election Campaigns*, **Political Science Quarterly**, Vol. 109, No 5. 1995, Pp 789-809.
88. Robert Friedenberg, *Communication Consultants in Political Campaigns: Ballot Box Warriors*, Praeger Greenwood Publishers, Connecticut, London, 1997, Pp 1-92.
89. Ibid.
90. Judit Bayer (ed), *Disinformation and propaganda – impact on the functioning of the rule of law in the EU and its Member States*, European Parliament, 2019, Pp 1-202.
91. Karl Enenkel and Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer, *The Manipulative Mode: Political Propaganda in Antiquity: A Collection of Case Studies*, Leiden, The Netherland, 2017, Pp 1-321.
92. Mohit Malhan and Prem Prakash Dewani, *Propaganda as Communication strategy: Historic and Contemporary Perspective*, **Academy of Marketing Studies Journal**, Volume 24, Issue 4, 2020, Pp 1-15.
93. Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda & Persuasion*, Sage Publications Inc, London, 2018, Pp 122-154.
94. Ibid.
95. Paul Baines and Nicholas O'Shaughnessy, *Political Marketing and Propaganda: Uses, Abuses, Misuses*, **Journal of Political Marketing**, vol.13, no.1/2, 2014, Pp 1-18.
96. Irina Lock, Peter Seele and Robert Heath, *Where Grass Has No Roots: The Concept of 'Shared Strategic Communication' As An Answer To Unethical Astroturf Lobbying*, **International Journal of Strategic Communication**, vol. 10, issue 2, 2016, Pp 87-100.
97. Maureen Taylor and Michael Kent, *Dialogic Engagement: Clarifying Foundational Concepts*, **Journal of Public Relations Research**, vol. 26, issue 5, 2014, Pp 384-398.
98. Irina Lock and Rumona Ludolph, *Organizational Propaganda on the Internet: A Systematic Review*, **Public Relations Inquiry**, vol 9, issue 1, 2020, Pp 103-127.
99. Samuel C. Woolley and Phillip Howard, *Political Communication, Computational Propaganda and Autonomous Agents: Introduction*, **International Journal of Communication**, vol. 10, 2016, Pp 4882-4890.
100. Bruce Smith and Harold Lasswell, *Propaganda, Communication and Public Opinion*, Princeton Legacy Library Series, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, United States, 2016, PP 1-434.
101. Judit Bayer (ed), *Disinformation and Propaganda – Impact on the Functioning of the Rule of Law in the EU and its Member States*, European Parliament, 2019, Pp 1-202.
102. Propaganda, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Propaganda>, accessed March 2021.
103. Christinah Holtz-Bacha and Bengt Johansson (ed), *Posters: From Announcements to Campaign Instruments in Election Posters Around the Globe*, **Political Campaigning in the Public Space**, Springer International Publishing, AG, Cham, Switzerland, 2017, Pp 1-12.
104. Ibid.

105. Monica Pătruț and Manolache Mădălina în Bogdan Pătruț (coord.), *The Political Poster – An Advertising Tool on Facebook*, International Conference of Social Media in Academia, Research and Teaching (SMART), Editura Medimond, Monduzzi Editore International Proceedings Division, 2013, Pp 231-236.
106. Delia Dumitrescu, *French Electoral Poster Campaigns in the Twenty-First Century in Election Posters Around the Globe: Political Campaigning in the Public Space*, Springer International Publishing, AG, Cham, Switzerland, 2017, Pp 139-158.
107. Michael Herrmann and Susumu Shikano, *Do Campaign Posters Trigger Voting Based on Looks? Probing An Explanation for why good-looking candidates win more votes*, *Acta Polit*, 2020, Pp 416-435.
108. Ben Arnon, *Politics Meets Brand Design: The Story of Obama's Campaign Logo*, *The Huffington Post*, January 18, 2009, available online, accessed April 28, 2021.
109. Funmilola Omotayo and Mathew B. Folorunso, *Use of Social Media for Political Participation by Youths in Oyo State, Nigeria*, **Journal of Democracy and Open Government**, vol 12, no. 1, 2020, Pp 132-157.
110. Justin Fisher, David Cutts, Edward Fieldhouse and Bettina Rottweiler, *The Evolution of District-Level Campaigning in Britain: The Resilience of Traditional Campaigning?* Paper presented at the EPOP Annual Conference, Kent, September 2016, Pp 1-30.
111. Andre-Michel Essoungou, *Social Media Boom Begins in Africa*, **Journal of African Renewal**, <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/december-2010/social-media-boom-begins-africa>, available online, accessed June 2021.
112. Brent Barnhart, *Social media And Politics: 10 Best Practises For Campaigns To Know*, <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-for-political-campaigns/> accessed May 2021.
113. *Social Media Use In Politics*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media_use_in_politics, accessed May 2021.
114. Uche Mbanaso, Eman Dandaura, Gloria Nwabugo Ezeh and Uchechi Iwuchukwu, *The Use of Social Networking Service Among Nigerian Youths between Ages 16 and 25 Years*, Paper Presented at International Conference on Cyberspace Governance, Abuja, 2015.
115. Shelley Boulianne, *Social media Use and Participation: A Meta-analysis of Current Research*, **Journal of Information, Communication and Society**, vol. 18, issue 5, 2015, Pp 524-538.
116. Robert Bond, Christopher Fariss, Jason Jones and Adam Krammer, *A 61-million-Person Experiment in Social Influence and Political Mobilisation*, **Nature**, No 489, 2012, Pp 295-298.
117. Martin Ndlela and Winston Mano, *The Changing Face of Election Campaigning In Africa*, **Social media and Elections in Africa vol. 1, Theoretical Perspectives and Election Campaigns**, Martin Ndlela and Winston Mano (ed, Palgrave, Macmillan. 2020, Pp 1-12.
118. Kim Strandberg, *Social Media Revolution or Just a case of History Repeating Itself? The Issue of Social Media in the 2011 Finnish Parliamentary elections*, **New Media and Society, Sage Journal**, vol. 15, issue 8, 2013. Pp 1-19
119. Op cit, Ndlela, M and Winston Mano W.(ed)

120. Richard Davis, *The Web of Politics: The Internet's Impact On American Political System*, Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly, vol 76, issue 3, 2012, PP 1-225.
121. John Allen Hendricks and Lynda Lee Kaid, *Techno Politics in Presidential Campaigning, New Voices, New Technologies, and New Voters*, New York: Routledge, 2011, PP 1-235.
122. Social Media, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media, accessed August 2021.
123. Ernst Nicole, Sina Blassnig and Frank Esser, *Populists Prefer Social Media Over Talk Shows: An Analysis of Populist Messages and Stylistic Elements Across Six Countries*, **Sage Journal, Social Media and Society**, vol. 5, issue 1, 2019.
124. Meredith Conroy, Jessica Feezell and Mario Guererro; *Facebook and political engagement: A study of online political group membership and offline political engagement*, **Computers in Human Behaviour**, vol 28, issue 5, 2012, Pp 1535-1546.
125. Eiri Elvestad and Angela Phillips, *Misunderstanding News Audiences: Seven Myths of the Social Media Era*, New York, Routledge, 1st Edition, 2018, Pp 1-188.
126. Wilberforce Sefakor Dzisah, *The Media-democracy Paradox in Ghana: Rethinking Political Communication in Ghana*, **Intellect**, Bristol, UK, 2020.
127. Kaye D. Sweetser, *Digital Political Public Relations* in J. Stromback and S Kiouis, **Political Public Relations, Principles and Applications**, New York, Routledge, 2011, Pp 1-23.
128. Ashu M.G. Solo, *Political Campaign in the Information Age*, IGI Global, Hershey, Philadelphia, USA, 2014, Pp 1-359.
129. Jamie Bartlett, Josh Smith and Rose Acton, *The Future of Political Campaign*, Demos, London, 2018, Pp 1-54.
130. Job Allan Wefwafwa, *Indigenous Communication Systems versus Modern Communication Systems: A Case Study of the Bukusu Subtribe of Western Kenya*, **Global Media Journal African Edition**, vol 8, 2014, Pp 301-317.
131. Alakali Terfa, S.A. Sambe and Andosoo Wilfred Tondo, **American International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences** vol. 6 issue 1, March-May, 2014, Pp 44-49.
132. Nwaemeka Uwakwe Itiri, *From Entertainment to Politics: Nigerian Celebrities and the 2015 General Elections*, **VUNA Journal of History and International Relations**, vol. 2, no. 2. 2015, Pp 249-257.
133. Tuface Idibia, *Why I Embarked on Vote Not Fight Campaign*, available online at <http://www.sunnewsonline.com>, accessed May 2021.
134. Ibid.
135. Chiagoziem Onyekwena, *How music influenced the presidential elections*, 23 March, 2019, <https://guardian.ng/life/music/how-music-influenced-the-presidential-elections/> accessed April 2021.
136. Ibid.
137. Mass mobilization, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_mobilization, accessed June 2021
138. Ibid.

139. Fasanwon Adebayo Folorunso, *Social Media and Political Mobilisation in Nigeria*, **International Journal of Research and Innovation In Social Sciences**, vol. 3, Issue 12, Page 224-230.
140. Yannis Theocharis, Will Lowe, Jan W. van Deth and Gema Garcia-Albacete, *Using twitter to Mobilise Protest Action: Online mobilization patterns and action in Occupy Wall Street, Indignados and Aganaktismenoi movements*, **Information, Communication and Society**, Vol 18, Issue 2, 2015, Page 202-220.
141. Dungse, Y., Mato, S., Makinde Opeyemi. and Chidozie, F, *Social Media, Political Mobilisation and Participatory Politics in Nigeria*, Covenant University, Nigeria, Conference on e-Government In Nigeria, 2018, Pp53-66.
142. Abubakar Bappayo, Ahmad Abubakar and Yushau Haruna Kirfi, *The Impact of Mass Media on Political Mobilization Process in Plateau State Radio Television Corporation, Jos (PRTVC), Nigeria*, **KIU Journal of Humanities**, Vol 6, Issue 1, 2021, Pp 101-108.
143. Ibid.
144. Olaniru Oluwatosin, Olatunji Olusoji, Ayandele Olusoji and Popoola Olugbenga, *The Influence of Media on Political Knowledge Among Undergraduate Students In Ibadan, Nigeria*, **Global Journal of Social Sciences**, Vol 19, 2020, Pp 13-24.
145. Op cit Omotayo
146. Oniel Francisco Diaz Jimenez, *Election Campaigns , the Media and their Impact on Civic Engagement of Mexicans in the 2012 Presidential Election*, **Comunicacion y Sociedad**, No 29, 2017, Pp 123-146.
147. James A. Vargas, *Obama Raised Half a Billion Online*, Washington Post, November 20, 2008, http://voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2008/11/20/obama_raised_half_a_billion.htm l. Accessed November 28, 2019.
148. Ibid
149. Victoria Chang and Jennifer Akar, *Obama and the Power of Social Media and Technology*, **The European Business Review**, January 1, 2008, available online, accessed November 30, 2020.
150. Willits Weekly, "2008 Obama vs. McCain," *Museum of the Moving Image: The Living Room Candidate*, December 3, 2020, available online, accessed May, 2021.
151. Abigail Michaelson, "Brand Obama: How Barack Obama Revolutionized Political Campaign Marketing in the 2008 Presidential Election" (2015). *CMC Senior Theses*. Paper 990. http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmc_theses/990
152. Staci Zavatarro, *Brand Obama: The Implications of a Branded President*, **Administrative Theory and Practice** 32, no. 1, 2010, Pp 123-128.
153. Isaac Olawale Albert, *A Review of the Campaign Strategies*, **Journal of African Elections**, 2007, Vol. 6, No 2, Pp 55-78.
154. Ibid.
155. Aleyomi, M.B, et al; *Mass Media and Political Campaigns during the Nigerian 2015 Presidential Elections* op cit.
156. Mohammed Ayodeji Ademilokun, *Discursive Strategies in Selected Political Rally Campaigns of 2011 Elections in Southwestern Nigeria*, **International Journal of Society, Culture and Language**, vol 3, issue 1, No 1, 2015, Pp 120-132.
157. Hakeem Onapajo, *Nigeria's 2015 General Elections: The Saliency of Electoral Reforms*, **The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs**, Vol. 104, issue 5, 2015, Pp 573-584.
158. Godwin Ehiarekhian Oboh, *Reflecting on the Nigerian Media, Election and the African Democracy*, Sage Open, Vol 6, Issue 3, 2016.

159. Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group Nigeria General Elections, 23 February, 2019
<https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/NigeriaCOGFullReport.pdf>, accessed May 2022.
160. Fred Eriye, http://Atiku's_Southeast_Quandary, thenationonlineng.com, The Nation, 1 December, 2018, available online.
161. Bello Shehu Bello, Isa Inuwa Dutse and Reiko Hechel, *Social Media Campaign Strategies: Analysis of the 2019 Nigerian Elections*, Conference Paper at Sixth Conference on Social Network Analysis, Management and Security, Granada, Spain, 2019.
162. Terry Lee, *The Global rise of fake news and the threat to democratic elections in USA*, **Public Administration and Policy**, An Asia-Pacific Journal , Vol. 22, Issue 1, 2019, Pp 15-24.
163. Ismail Akwei, <https://face2faceafrica.com/article/why-nigerians-believe-their-president-has-been-replaced-by-a-sudanese-clone>, accessed March 2021.
164. Eniola Akinkuotu, <https://punchng.com/buharis-aide-lauretta-onochie-exposed-for-posting-fake-news-photo/>, accessed September 2021.
165. Mike Omilusi, *Campaign Communication In Nigeria's 2019 General Elections: Unfulfilled Party Pledges and Voter Engagement without a Social Contract*, **Journal of African Elections**, Vol 19, 2020, Pp 97-124.
166. Isa Mohammed, Muhammad Yusuf, Peter Julius Vau and Abubakar Lawan, *Political Communication During Electioneering Campaign and Democratic Consolidation In Nigeria*, **FUDMA Journal of Politics and International Affairs**, July 2020, Pp 126-133.
167. Oniel Francisco Dias Jiménez, *Election Campaigns, the Media and their Impact on Civic Engagement of Mexicans in the 2012 Presidential Election*, **Comunicacion y Sociedad**, No 29, 2017, Pp 123-146.
168. Adigun Agbaje, Funke Fayehun and Adewale Agbaje, *Research report: Voter Apathy and the 2011 Elections in Nigeria*, retrieved from library.fes.de/pdf-files/.../Nigeria/08931p;www.inecnigeria.org/.../conference.paper & <https://works.bepress.com/ozyb.../33/> available online.
169. Faeren Mercy Agaigbe, *Voter Apathy and Voter Turnout in the 2015 general elections: The Benue State Experience*, Draft Paper sent to The Electoral Institute, INEC in Abuja, retrieved from gfarrieagaigbe@gmail.com., accessed April 2021.
170. Rashid Menhas, Shumeila Umer, Saira Akhtar and Ghulam Shabbir, *Ascertaining the Impacts of Modernization on Political Institution: A Case Study*, **European Review of Applied Sociology**, Vol 8, No 10, 2015, Pp 23-28.
171. Daniel Stockemer, *Electoral Participation: How to Measure Voter Turnout*, **Social Indicators Research**, Vol. 133, issue 3, No 7, 2017, Pp 943-962.
172. Kunle Sanni, Analysis: *INEC's false Claim on Appeal Court Rulings, Challenges Nigeria's Multi-party democracy*, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/438354-analysis-inecs-false-claim-on-appeal-court-rulings-challenges-nigerias-multi-party-democracy.html>, accessed March 2021.
173. Sylvia Uchenna Agu, Vincent Onyekwelu Okeke and Adeline Idike, *Voters Apathy and Revival of Genuine Political Participation in Nigeria*, **Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences** Vol 4, Issue 3, 2013, Pp 439-448.
174. Olalekan Waheed Adigun, *The Factors Determining Voter Turnouts in Presidential Elections in Nigeria: Multivariate Correlation Analysis of the 2019 Presidential Election Open Access*, **Open Political Science**, Vol 3, 2020, Pp 11-33.

175. Cash For Votes Political legitimacy In Nigeria, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/gram-matenga/cash-for-votes-political-legitimacy-in-nigeria>, accessed 14 July 2018.
176. Ibid.

Chapter Three

Methodology

In this chapter, there is a detailed description of the research methodology which had been adopted for the study in view. There is also an outline of the various processes employed to achieve the set research objectives. The chapter further discussed the description of research instruments, research design, sample and sampling techniques, area of the study; population of the study; sample size; method(s) of data collection, including the method of data analysis. Finally, the chapter examined the different techniques used to test the hypotheses outlined in Chapter One.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a survey research design, using a descriptive approach. This design is decided to be more appropriate to comprehend the goal of the research exercise. It also enabled the researcher to capture or obtain an overview, including the findings about the population under study. The survey research design has also helped to evaluate the implications and interrelationship of the dependent and independent variables of the study, just as it helped in the collection of data by measurement of central tendency, variation and correlation of the study, and to discover the association between the variables.

The survey research design also helped the researcher to obtain first-hand information on how the population under study, (that is, registered and accredited voters),

perceived the communication media used by the two political parties in focus, their interpretation of them and whether they were influenced by them in any way.

3.2 Population of the study

The state of focus for the population of the study was Oyo State in South-Western Nigeria. Similar to every other state in the country, the state is divided into three senatorial districts and these are: Oyo North, Oyo South and Oyo Central senatorial districts. According to statistics, the total number of voters registered for the 2019 general election including the presidential election in Oyo State is 2.934 million. Out of this number, fewer than half of it, (905,007) were accredited to vote on Election Day but only 836, 531 votes were valid¹. However, for the purpose of this study, we focused on five local governments in each of the three Senatorial districts of the state by reason of having the highest population among other local governments in their zones. Oyo State has 33 local governments, with the number of local governments by senatorial district distributed thus: Oyo South (9 LGs); Oyo North (13 LGs) and Oyo Central (11 LGs). The five local governments by senatorial district focused on by the researcher with the number of their registered and accredited voters are stated as follows: Oyo South: Ibadan North (49,824); Ibadan South-East (28,781); Ibadan South-West (44,853); Ibadan North-West (27,000); Ibadan North-East (35,568) with a total of 186, 026 voters. Oyo Central: Oluyole (25,318); Akinyele (31,567); Egbeda (33,569); Ona Ara (19,787) and Lagelu (23,901) with a total of 134,150. Oyo North: Ogbomoso North (29,866); Ogbomoso South (24,416); Iseyin (35,320); Saki West (33,748); Saki East (12,541). Thus the total number of voters in the three senatorial districts are: Oyo South: 186,026; Oyo Central 134,150 and Oyo North: 135, 891. The sum total of these figures is 456, 067 which forms our population of study.

The population of the study also cuts across various demographics and they include members of the major political parties, including citizens who are not affiliated with or

sympathetic to one political party or the other, but may, for different reasons, make a decision to vote for a certain political party based on persuasion either through the media or inter-personal communication or even through any other means of influence. Furthermore, their participation in the election may also be due to their perception about the party they believed would better serve their interest. This set of people include the youth, students, civil servants, artisans, entrepreneurs in both the organised and unorganised private sectors, trade union members, petty traders, professionals, among others. These demography of people are spread across the three senatorial districts.

Also, the state is considered for this study because it is one of the states with the largest population in the country. It is, in fact, the state with the fifth largest population, according to a 2016 population projection estimates, with 7,840,864 people, after Kano, Lagos, Kaduna and Katsina states, with its capital, Ibadan, being the largest city in West Africa, which alone is made up of 11 local governments out of the state's 33 local governments and is bigger in land mass than some states like Bayelsa which has only eight local governments. It also has a landmass of 28,454 square kilometre.

Finally, the state capital which is Ibadan, has been a hub of political activities even before the independence of the country in 1960, and even till now. The state is also home to people of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, especially the major ethnic groups in the country. It is also home to both Christians and Muslims, including practitioners of African traditional religions. This diverse background therefore provides a good resource material for a population study.

Figure 3.1: Distribution of registered voters by state across the country

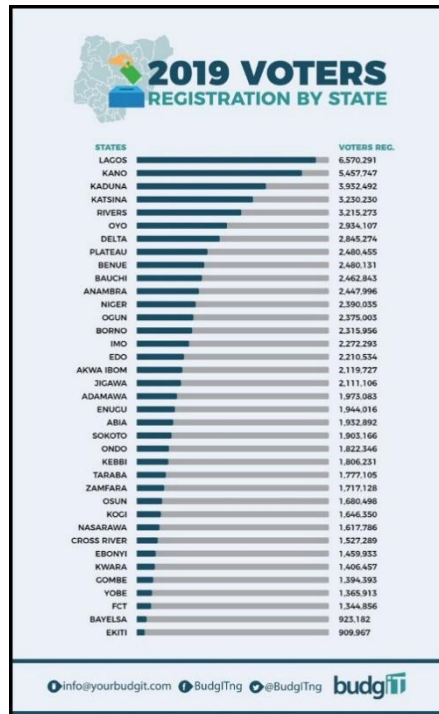


Figure 3.2: Progression of distribution of population in Oyo State by local government in 1991, 2006 and 2016 census respectively.

Afijo	Local Government Area	82,792	132,184	185,700
Akinyele	Local Government Area	140,118	211,811	297,600
Atiba	Local Government Area	...	168,248	236,400
Atisbo	Local Government Area	...	109,965	154,500
Egbeda	Local Government Area	129,461	283,643	398,500
Ibadan North	Local Government Area	302,271	308,119	432,900
Ibadan North East	Local Government Area	275,627	331,444	465,700
Ibadan North West	Local Government Area	147,918	154,029	216,400
Ibadan South East	Local Government Area	225,800	286,457	374,400
Ibadan South West	Local Government Area	277,047	283,098	397,700
Ibarapa Central	Local Government Area	...	103,243	145,100
Ibarapa East	Local Government Area	...	117,182	164,800
Ibarapa North	Local Government Area	...	100,293	140,900
Ido	Local Government Area	53,582	104,087	146,200
Irepo	Local Government Area	...	121,240	170,300
Iseyin	Local Government Area	170,936	255,619	359,100
Itesiwaju	Local Government Area	...	127,391	179,000
Iwajowa	Local Government Area	...	102,847	144,500
Kajola	Local Government Area	...	200,528	281,700
Lagelu	Local Government Area	68,901	148,133	208,100
Ogbomosh North	Local Government Area	104,295	198,859	279,400
Ogbomosh South	Local Government Area	65,958	100,379	141,000
Ogo Oluwa	Local Government Area	36,188	65,198	91,600
Olorunsogo	Local Government Area	...	81,339	114,300
Oluoye	Local Government Area	91,527	203,461	285,900
Ona-Ara	Local Government Area	123,048	265,571	373,100
Orelope	Local Government Area	68,566	104,004	146,100
Ori Ire	Local Government Area	103,611	149,408	209,900
Oyo East	Local Government Area	...	124,095	174,300
Oyo West	Local Government Area	...	136,457	191,700
Saki East	Local Government Area	...	108,957	153,100
Saki West	Local Government Area	...	273,268	383,900
Surulere	Local Government Area	64,097	140,339	197,200

3.3 Sample and Sampling techniques

The sampling process in this research study follows the basic steps of defining the population, selecting the sample size and unit, selecting the sampling technique and determining both the sample plan, and sample size. Therefore, the study sample size is the accredited voters during the 2019 election in Oyo State. According to 2016 population projections, Oyo State has a population of 7,840,864. As stated earlier, of this figure, 2,934 million people were registered voters, but only 905,007 were accredited to vote during the election out of which 456,067 spread across 15 local governments in the three senatorial districts formed our population of study.

Table 3.1 Population of voters by local government in Oyo North Senatorial District

S/N	Local Govts	No of Voters
1	Ogbomoso North	29,866
2	Ogbomoso South	24,416
3	Iseyin	35,320
4	Saki West	33,748
5	Saki East	12, 541

Total: 135, 891

Source: Independent National Electoral Commission Website

DO NOT COPY: LEAD CITY UNIVERSITY, NIGERIA

Table 3.2: Distribution of voters by local government in Oyo Central Senatorial District

S/N	Local Govts	No of Voters
1	Oluyole	25,318
2	Akinyele	31,567
3	Egbeda	33,569
4	Ona Ara	19,787
5	Lagelu	23,901

Total: 134,150 **Source: Independent National Electoral Commission website**

Table 3.3: Distribution of voters by local government in Oyo South Senatorial District

S/N	Local Govts	No of Voters
1	Ibadan North	49,824
2	Ibadan North East	35,568
3	Ibadan North West	27,000
4	Ibadan South East	28,781
5	Ibadan South West	44,853

Total: 186,026

Source: Independent National Electoral Commission Website

Since it may be difficult to have a comprehensive list of voters, a convenient sampling technique was applied to request members of the study population to help identify as many other voters as possible. This approach not only aided contact with the electorates within each senatorial district, it also enabled a population figure that was

representative of the set criteria for the target population of the research and also aided the distribution of the questionnaire to relevant respondents.

The sample size for the study was established with the use of the Taro Yamane (1967) statistical formula. This formula relates the population size to the level of significance as illustrated below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + (e^2) N}$$

Where

n = Sample Size Desired

N = Overall Population

e = Tolerated/assumed error limit 0.05 on the basis of 95% confidence level

Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{456,067}{1 + (0.05^2) 456,067} \\ &= \frac{456,067}{1 + (0.0025) 456,067} \\ &= \frac{456,067}{1 + 1,140,1675} \\ &= \frac{456,067}{1,141,1675} \\ &= 399.6 \\ &= 400 \text{ (plus 20\% of calculated sample size to allow for} \end{aligned}$$

non-response and wrongly filled questionnaire.

Stratified and purposive sampling techniques were also used for the study. The stratified sampling technic was used because the study dealt with a population spread across three senatorial districts in Oyo State, while the purposive sampling technique was considered for the in-depth interviews with party leaders, communication scholars and a media advertisement executive, all of whom have been pre-determined according to some pre-selected measures paramount to the research questions, including the issues raised in the course of the research. More importantly, this sampling technic was used because of these personalities' significant involvement in the electoral process.

3.4 Description of Research Instruments

To enable collection of data, a questionnaire was used as a primary source. The study used a close-ended format with the quantitative section of the instrument utilising a four (4) Likert scale format to ensure accurate data collection from the voters in the three senatorial districts of the state. The questionnaire which include demographics, Communication media used by political parties in the course of the political campaign, effectiveness of the Communication media and their influence on voter mobilisation and participation, which were divided into four sections.

Section A: focused on personal data and characteristics of respondents such as gender, age, nationality, educational qualification, marital status and occupation.

Section B: focused on identifying the Communication media used by the political parties and how familiar the voters were with these media.

Section C: contained items on relevance or importance and the effectiveness of Communication media on voters during elections.

Section D: had items on identifying the level of the effectiveness of Communication media on voters' choice of candidates during the elections. From Section B to Section D, each section of the questionnaire was in Likert Scale which required the respondents to grade their options which have scaled responses as follows: Strongly Agree (Coded 4); Agree (Coded 3); Strongly Disagree (Coded 2) and Disagree (Coded 1).

Section E: had items on the extent to which communication media influenced voters during the election.

Section F: had items on the extent to which campaign messages influenced voters.

There are two main sections in the questionnaire with Section A designed to obtain information on the demographics of the respondents. Sections B to F were designed to obtain information on the variables. The following constructs were used: identifying the Communication media used by political parties; identifying the messages contained in the Communication media; identifying the level of effectiveness of the Communication media used; extent to which the Communication media influenced voters and the extent to which campaign messages influenced voters.

Designed in a 29-item format, the questionnaire helped to elicit information from respondents. The questions were based on the study's variables: Communication media being the independent variable and social mobilisation and voter participation being the dependent variables.

Respondents were purposively identified for the administration of the questionnaire. They were registered voters in their various locations, with many of them having voted in previous elections. Also, most of them understood the English language and in cases where they were elderly and not literate, our research assistants interpreted the contents of the questionnaire to them and helped them fill them appropriately. The respondents were

heterogeneous, that is they cut across different segments of the demography. They included men and women, artisans, civil servants, traders, the self-employed and students. The questionnaire was administered in offices, shops, homes and in every other places where the respondents could be located.

Furthermore, Key Personality Interviews were conducted with carefully selected state executive committee party leaders, specifically the media and publicity secretaries, who coordinated the media and publicity efforts of their parties during the electioneering. The interview questions had been structured in an easy way so as to have required responses and key information which have in the process enriched the study. The Key Personality Interviews enabled the interviewees to state their roles in and their perception of their use of communication media during the election, and to give an overview of the events that led to the election proper.

In essence, the interviews expectedly contributed to this research with an in-depth knowledge of the major activities which characterised the election in focus, from the preparatory to the execution stages and up till the Election Day. This also gave the researcher a better understanding of the participants' perception of their roles in the entire electoral process and its outcome. The open-ended nature of the questions have been structured to achieve this purpose and to give opportunities to the respondents to freely share their experiences on the field and the entire process of the election without any hindrance. By freely expressing their views on these issues, the researcher had been able to obtain detailed and sometimes unanticipated responses from respondents.

Questions for party officials in charge of media and publicity were designed to obtain information on how the political parties used the media during the election, the specific media used and whether they consciously used certain media for particular segments of the population or they tried to reach everyone using the same media

irrespective of the heterogeneous nature of the population. These were done in order to answer the questions raised in our objectives in relation with our variables.

In addition, the interview with media scholars and advertisement executives was meant to give depth, scholarly and theoretical view, including an alternative perception of the issues raised in the interviews with party officials. In designing the questions, opinions were allowed to be freely given about the media and how it was used by the political parties. Interviewees were also asked to evaluate how the political parties used the media and whether poor communication could have been responsible to poor mobilisation and voter participation in recent elections.

3.5 Validity of the Research Instrument

Validity ensures that the right instruments and correct measurements are taken by the researcher to ensure that research outcomes are in consonance with research objectives. Therefore, a face value test, including content and external validity were conducted to ensure that the instruments were linked with research objectives.

3.6 Reliability of the Research Instrument

The reliability of a research instrument has to do with ability of the research instrument to bring out the desired results. Therefore, a pilot study was carried out among purposively selected but limited respondents who voted during the 2019 presidential election to determine the simplicity, clarity and accuracy of the instruments. The questionnaire was administered on 60 respondents who had voted in previous elections, for the pilot study in Oke-Ado area of Ibadan South-West Local Government area of Oyo State, in Oyo South senatorial district, which is also one of the areas with the highest population of voters in the state.

The 60 people pretested with the questionnaire were not part of the 425 respondents used for the study proper, in order to find out if there was any latent short-comings or ambiguity in the instrument so as to ascertain its appropriateness for the actual study. The pre-test was carried out between December 10 and 15, 2021. Responses were collected and given to a computer analyst who tested for reliability. Reliability co-efficient was established. The actual questionnaire for the study was administered between February 4 and 20, 2022 with the same process and success.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

Copies of the questionnaire were administered at the predetermined locations by the researcher with the aid of his research assistants who have been purposely trained on the process of administering the questionnaires to respondents, assisting them where necessary and encouraging them to complete and return the questionnaires, since maximum feedback from them is central to the overall success of the study. The 10 research assistants were made up of university undergraduates who were very familiar with the locations where the questionnaire was administered. The administration of the questionnaire took several weeks due to the number of local governments to be covered and a few hitches which had to do with the cooperation of the respondents in returning the questionnaire on time.

Out of the 425 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 400 copies were retrieved representing 98.5 per cent compliance. A total of six copies of the questionnaire were never returned. This represents 1.5 per cent rate of attrition.

Table 3.4 Number of Questionnaire Distributed and Retrieved

Senatorial District	No LGS Sampled	No of questionnaire distributed	No ref
Oyo North	5	130	128
Oyo Central	5	130	127
Oyo South	5	140	139
Total	15	425	400

The Key Personality interviews were also done over a few weeks. There was a little delay in conducting the scheduled interviews because those of them who were politicians travelled or were indisposed. Eventually the interviews were held, recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The research also employed the secondary source of data gathering through books, newspaper columns, and articles, journals, theses, and the use of websites.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected from respondents were checked for completion and compliance. It was also coded and entered for analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to process and analyse the data which was presented, using simple tables, charts, frequencies and percentages. The results were in tabular form while necessary explanations had been made after each table and analyses of the data collected been done for better clarity.

Data collected from interviewees were also content-analysed, content analysis being a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts and other meaningful matters, to the context of their use. The data collected had also been used to analyse research questions and hypotheses. The differences or level of influence between

the independent and dependent variables were also tested using the data collected from all our field research activities.

Endnotes

1. Nigeria Presidential election results, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-f0b25208-4a1d-4068-a204-940cbe88d1d3>, available online, accessed June 13, 2021.
2. Akintunde Akinola, *Road to Democracy can be rough*, The Guardian Newspaper, January 8, 2013.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion of Findings

This chapter presents data analysis and interpretation of results. The data were generated from both the questionnaire and a structured interview guide for the Media/Publicity secretaries of both the APC and PDP in Oyo State, other party officials, including others like political communication scholars, media and communication scholars, and an internationally-recognised communication executive. This approach was meant to provide sound opinions based on practical and empirical experience on the approach of the party officials to their communication activities and practices during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State, Nigeria, which is the focus of this work, and situate them on established theoretical and scholarly foundations.

The chapter is also structured into four sections: socio-demographic analysis, answer to research questions, test of hypotheses and discussion of findings. Results were presented in tables and interpretation of the result were given below each table. A total of 425 questionnaires were administered and 400 were returned filled. This represents a 98.5% participation of the respondents. Therefore, the analysis carried out in this study will be based on the number of copies of returned questionnaire.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1: Distribution by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	204	51.0
Female	196	49.0

Total	400	100.0
-------	-----	-------

Table 1 presents distribution of respondents by gender. From the table, 51% of the participants were male while 49% were female. This result implies that both genders were almost equally represented in the study. This finding almost tallies with the statistics released by INEC on the 2019 election which stated that 47 per cent of women participated in the 2019 general election, while percentage of participation by men stood at 53 per cent.

Table 2: Distribution by age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-27 years	74	18.5
28-37 years	208	52.0
38-47 years	94	23.5
48 years and above	24	6.0
Total	400	100.0

Table 2 presents distribution of respondents by age group. 74 representing 18.5% of the respondents were of ages between 18 and 27 years; 208 (52.0%) were between ages 28 and 37 years; 94 (23.5%) were between ages 38 and 47 years and 24 (6.0%) were 48 years and above.

Table 3: Distribution by Educational level

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
WASSEC/GCE	79	19.8
OND/NCE	108	27.0
Degree/HND	164	41.0
Masters	49	12.3
Total	400	100.0

Table 3 presents distribution of respondents by level of education. From the table, 79(19.8%) of the respondents had GCE/WASSEC/GCE, 108(27.0%) had OND/HND, 164 (41%) had First degree/HND, and 49 (12.3%) had masters. The result shows that participants are educated.

Table 4: Distribution by Respondents' Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	273	68.3
Single	102	25.5
Widow	15	3.8
Widower	10	2.5
Total	400	100.0

Table 4 presents distribution of respondents by marital status. From the table, 273 (68.3%) of the respondents are married, 102 (25.5%) were single; 15 (3.8%) were widows while 10 (2.5%) were widowers.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Civil Servant	144	36.0
Business Man/Woman	155	38.8
Student	79	19.8
Others	22	5.5
Total	400	100.0

Table 5 presents distribution of respondents by occupation. From the table, 144 (36.0%) of the respondents were civil servants; 155 (38.8%) were traders/business men/women; 79 (19.8) were students and 22 (5.5%) belong to other vocations.

Table 6: Distribution by Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	275	68.8
Islam	111	27.8
African Traditional Religion	7	1.8
Others	7	1.8
Total	400	100.0

Table 6 presents distribution of respondents by religion. From the table, 275 (68.8%) of the respondents were Christians; 111 (27.8%) practice Islam; 7 (1.8%) practice African Traditional Religion and 7 (1.8%) practice other religions.

4.2 Presentation of Data

4.2.1 Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question One: What are the communication media used by the political parties prior to the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State?

Table 7:

Descriptive result of communication media used by political parties prior to 2019 presidential election in Oyo State.

Communication media	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Radio Adverts/jingles	299	8.73%	1 st
Branded T-shirts, face caps	238	6.95%	2 nd
Billboards/Banners	219	6.40%	3 rd
Handbills	213	6.22%	4 th
Political Rally/road shows	208	6.07%	5 th
Newspaper	183	5.34%	6 th
Posters	179	5.23%	7 th
Facebook	156	4.56%	8 th
Motorized campaigns	147	4.29%	9 th
Radio Talk shows/debates	141	4.12%	10 th
Party manifestoes	137	4.00%	11 th

Newspaper and Magazine adverts	136	3.97%	12 th
Television Adverts and Commercials	128	3.74%	13 th
Twitter	128	3.74%	14 th
Television Talk shows/Debates	105	3.07%	15 th
Television Documentaries/news reports	101	2.95%	16 th
Artiste/Celebrity endorsement	101	2.95%	17 th
Vote-buying	101	2.95%	18 th
Opinion articles / news report	100	2.92%	19 th
Instagram	98	2.86%	20 th
Blogs/vlogs	91	2.66%	21 st
WhatsApp	87	2.54%	22 nd
Bulk SMS	71	2.07%	23 rd
Magazine	57	1.66%	24 th

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2022

Table 7 presents descriptive result of communication media used by political parties prior to the 2019 presidential election in Oyo state. As shown in the table above, the ranked method of frequency count was used and radio adverts/jingles 299(8.73%) was ranked the most used media channel, followed by branded T-shirts and face cap 238 (6.95%); Billboards/Banners 219 (6.40%); handbills 213 (6.22%) and political rally/road shows 208 (6.07%) respectively. Also, the five least ranked communication media include Instagram 98 (2.86%); Blogs/vlogs 91 (2.66%); WhatsApp 87 (2.54%); Bulk SMS 71 (2.07%) and Magazine 57 (1.66%) respectively.

Research Question Two: What are the campaign messages contained in the communication media used by political parties prior to 2019 presidential election in Oyo State?

Table 8: Identifying the messages contained in the communication media

S/N	Items	Agreed		Disagreed	
		Freq	Per	Freq	Per
1	Communication media messages used during the presidential election in Oyo State were used to address issues affecting the country	330	82.5%	70	17.5%
2	Messages contained in Communication media were used to attack opponents	206	51.5%	194	48.5%
3	Messages contained in Communication media included hate speech	172	43.0%	228	57.0%
4	Messages contained in communication media were used for mobilisation	340	85.0%	60	15.0%
5	Messages contained in Communication media were used to highlight the competence of a candidate and incompetence of rival candidate.	268	67.0%	132	33.0%

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2022

Table 8 presents descriptive result of campaign messages contained in the communication media used by political parties prior to 2019 presidential election in Oyo State. From the table, 330 respondents (82.5%) agreed that communication media messages during 2019 presidential election in Oyo State were used to address issues affecting the country; 206 respondents (51.5%) agreed that messages contained in communication media during 2019 presidential election in Oyo State were used to attack opponents; 172 respondents (57.0%) disagreed that messages contained in communication media during 2019 presidential election in Oyo State include hate speech and fake news; 340 respondents (85.0%) agreed

that messages contained in communication media during 2019 presidential election in Oyo State were used to educate and mobilise people on the importance of voter participation, and 268 respondents (67.0%) agreed that messages contained in communication media during 2019 presidential election in Oyo State were used to highlight the competence of a candidate and incompetence of rival candidate.

Research Question Three: What is the level of effectiveness of communication media on voters?

Table 9: Effectiveness of communication media on voters

S/N		Agreed		Disagreed	
		Freq	Per	Freq	Per
1	Communication media were maximally used to communicate with voters	347	86.8%	53	13.3%
2	The communication media carried messages that were informative and educative about the election	331	82.8%	69	17.3%
3	Communication media were used for mobilisation towards voter participation during the election	355	88.8%	45	11.3%
4	Communication media used during the election were adequate and would suffice for future elections	247	61.8%	153	38.3%
5	Communication media used during the election focused extensively on the candidates and their ability to deliver on their promises	223	55.8%	177	44.3%
6	Communication media used during the election improved candidates' chances of victory	280	70.0%	120	30.0%
7	Communication media was massively used to mobilise all potential to participate in the election	344	86.0%	56	14.0%
8	Communication media effectively used hate speech to discredit opposing candidates	211	52.8%	189	47.3%

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2022

Table 9 presents descriptive result of level of effectiveness of communication media on voters. From the table, 347 respondents (86.8%) agreed that communication media were

maximally used to communicate with voters during the election; 331 respondents (82.8%) agreed that the Communication media carried messages that were informative and educative about the election and the candidates; 355 respondents (88.8%) agreed that communication media were used for mobilisation towards voter participation during the election; 247 respondents (61.8%) agreed that Communication media used during the election were adequate and would suffice for future elections, except with probable introduction of new technology; 223 respondents (55.8%) agreed that Communication media used during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State focused extensively on the candidates and their ability to deliver on their promises; 280 respondents (70.0%) agreed that communication media used during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State improved candidates' chances of winning the election; 344 respondents (86.0%) agreed that Communication media used during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State were massively used to mobilise all potential voters to participate in the election, and 211 respondents (52.8%) agreed that Communication media used during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State effectively used hate speech to discredit opposing candidates.

Research Question Four: What is the extent to which communication media influenced voters during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State?

Table 10: Extent to which communication media influenced voter participation

S/ N		Low/V.Low Extent		Average Extent		High / V.high Extent	
		Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
1	Communication media influenced you to make a choice during 2019 presidential election in Oyo State	47	11.8%	147	36.8%	206	51.5%
2	Political parties' use of communication media during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State influenced voter participation	8	2.0%	112	28.0%	280	70.0%
3	Communication media during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State was used to mobilise voters	78	19.5%	123	30.8%	199	49.8%
4	Communication media during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State responsible for voters apathy	200	50.0%	90	22.5%	110	27.5%

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2022

Table 10 presents descriptive result of extent to which Communication media influenced voters prior to the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State. From the table, 206 respondents (51.5%) remarked that Communication media influenced them to a high/very high extent in making a choice during 2019 presidential election in Oyo State; 280 respondents (70.0%) said that political parties' use of Communication media influenced voter participation to a high/very high extent during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State; 199 respondents (49.8%) remarked Communication media was used to a high/very high extent during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State to mobilise voters; 200

respondents (50.0%) remarked that Communication media during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State, to a low/very extent, made many voters to stay away from participating in the election.

Research Question Five: What is the extent to which the campaign messages contained in the communication media used by the political parties during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State have influenced voters?

Table 11: Extent to which campaign messages influenced voters' choice

	Low/V.Low		Average		High / V.high	
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per
1 Campaign messages during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State influenced voters	16	4.0%	91	22.8%	293	73.3%
2 Quality of campaign messages during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State influenced voters	31	7.8%	141	35.3%	228	57.0%
3 Entertainment content of campaign messages during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State influenced voters	46	11.5%	177	44.3%	177	44.3%
4 Campaign messages by political opinion leaders influenced voters	43	10.8%	150	37.5%	207	51.7%
5 Party manifestoes influenced voter participation	51	12.8%	173	43.3%	176	44.0%

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2022

Table 11 presents descriptive result of extent to which the campaign messages contained in the communication media used by the political parties during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State have influenced voters. From the table, 293 of the respondents

(73.3%) believed that to a high/very high extent, campaign messages during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State influenced voters; 228 of the respondents (57.0%) believed that to a high/very high extent the quality of campaign messages during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State influenced voters; 177 of the respondents (44.3%) believed that at least to an average extent, entertainment content of campaign messages during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State influenced voters. The same number of respondents (177) also agreed that it did, to a high/very high extent. Furthermore, 207 respondents (51.7%) believed that to a high/very high extent, campaign messages by political opinion leaders influenced voters, while 176 respondents (44.0%) believed that to a high/very high extent, party manifestoes influenced voter participation.

4.2.2 Test of Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between communication media and voter participation.

Table 12: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient of relationship between Communication media and voter participation.

Variable	Mean	Std Dev	N	Df	r-cal	Sig
Communication media	8.58	6.32524	400	399	.296	.000
Voter's participation	22.76	3.15970				

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2022

From Table 12 above which shows Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient of relationship between communication media and voter participation, the calculated value obtained at .296. This result implies a moderate relationship between communication media and voter participation. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no

significant relationship between communication media and voter participation is thereby rejected.

The repudiation of this null hypothesis is supported in literature. First, it is an established position that Voter Participation as a concept, stands on the fact that the media shapes citizens' interest and attitude during an election. In other words, the information available and consumed by individuals determines their level of participation, which is a reflection of their media exposure¹.

Not only this, research has also established that media exposure and consumption promote and increase voter participation and engagements during elections. By extension, political knowledge and efficacy increase during the process, while citizens' attitudes and judgments become better guided. Overall, media consumption is expressed in higher participation on the part of citizens².

Furthermore, both the traditional media and the New media may provide varying degrees of voter participation. If the traditional media provided a limited level of participation and interaction for media users, the New media had since changed the pattern. The advantages of this on the part of politicians include the New media's ability to foster closeness with citizens and mobilise them more effectively in order to engender better participation. Likewise on the part of citizens, the New media offers them an opportunity of lending their voices on current issues. The media, mostly the social media, even in cases of 'accidental exposure', encourages participation by communication, social connection and for citizens' dissemination of information and reportage of events and current issues³.

H02: There is no significant relationship between communication media and its ability to influence voters' choice.

Table 13: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient of relationship between communication media and its ability to influence voters' choice.

Variable	Mean	Std Dev	N	Df	r-cal	Sig
Communication media	13.29	2.43325	400	399	.111	.026
Ability to influence voters' choice	8.58	6.32524				

Source: Researcher's fieldwork 2022

Table 13 presents PPMCC of relationship between communication media and its ability to influence voters' choice. From the table the result shows a statistically significant low relationship between the variable ($r = .111$; $p = .026$). This result implies that there is a significant relationship between Communication media and its ability to influence voters' choice.

This result is in consonance with submissions by researchers in our reviewed literature. In order to situate this position, we submit that in this research, the relationship between Communication media and voters' choice which were the subjects of such researches earlier reviewed showed significant relationship. Though there were divergent views, however, the overall submissions in general terms support this view and some of them deserve to be restated here for emphasis.

First, extant literature have long established that the media, especially the Social media provides the platform for dialogue, expression of personal opinions and feedbacks (e.g opinion articles etc in print media) which makes it a veritable tool for citizens in successfully making a choice during an electoral process. The media does not only help

voters to make a choice, especially for political parties with perceived positive media coverage, media exposure influences their attitudes and intentions, which are sometimes a by-product of their perception that other people's opinions are better than theirs⁴.

Furthermore knowing who to vote for and going ahead with that decision and making a choice, are a vital part of an electoral process for citizens. This process is often based on factors such as citizens' previous experiences, attitudes and various sources of direct and indirect communication during elections. Extant literature also posits that the media and peer communication coupled with interaction with politicians, impact on voters' choice. Thus in an increasingly digitised and multi-media environment, citizens make their choices based on the myriad of information made available to them. In essence, the media, and again, mostly the Social media which provides a convergence tool for all the information available, becomes the platform from which voters make their choice⁵.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State, the percentage of men (51%) was slightly higher than that of women (49%). However, it is in contrast with the percentage of men and women participation for political offices in the same election under review which was just 6 per cent and thus a national problem in Nigeria, especially in the Northern part of the country where socio-economic issues, among several other factors have kept women away from being active participants in electoral processes in the country⁶. In terms of age, majority of the respondents 52% were between the ages of 28 and 37. As for educational background or qualification, most of them 41% had HND or Bachelors degrees. Majority of them were also self-employed

(38.8%) followed by civil servants (36.0%). The study also revealed that most of the respondents (68.3%) were married.

Research Question One: What are the communication media used by the political parties during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State?

Most of our respondents, including our interviewees agreed that several communication media were used to communicate with voters in order to carry their messages across. They identified the traditional media and mostly, radio, as the communication media used during the election. In the Key Personality Interviews held it was established from the respondents that several communication media channels were used by the political parties in conveying their campaign messages to the general populace. In the words of Key Personality Interviewee 1 (KPI 1), the then Publicity Secretary of the All Progressives Congress in Oyo State said his party used three print media and five radio stations. This decision by his party underscored the use of that media as perceived by voters during that election.

He said:

We used virtually all media but when it comes to placing advertorials in the media we used majorly print media such as The Nation, Nigerian Tribune and The Punch. When it comes to (electronic media) radio, because of the strategic nature of the state, sometimes we were on Fresh FM and other stations and people in Ibarapa area would tell us that they did not hear us. So we looked for a radio station that has the reach to cover that area. That was how we decided on Lagelu FM because it has a lot of inroad into Ibarapa area. In Ibadan main city, including the less city, we used Fresh FM, Splash FM, Lagelu FM... We used Graffiti FM in Igboho... In Ogbomoso, we used Gambari FM (a sub-station) of

the Broadcasting Corporation of Oyo State (BCOS)... All of them were doing the job.

Also, KPI 2, Secretary of Oyo State All Progressives Congress, also said:

We used the traditional media but we used the social media more than the other ones because we intentionally focused on the youths, mostly because they are the ones who use the social media the most: the internet, twitter, instagram and so on and so forth. We also used the radio because of the elderly ones and those in the rural areas. Those ones do not watch much of television, but they listen to radio a lot. They may not have electricity in the rural areas, but through the radio they follow events and are even up to date with current issues and news. That is why we diversified the use of our media publicity to suit specific categories of people.

However, going by their responses, it was further established (as seen in Table 7) that radio was the most preferred media used by the two political parties in view during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State. The significance of radio as the most used communication media in Africa is consistent with extant researched documented in literature as the most-preferred media used by politicians to communicate with voters during elections.

Some of the established reasons for this dependence on radio include its ability to reach a very wide audience including audiences in remote place, its cost-effectiveness, maintenance-free characteristic and non-dependence on electricity⁷. In addition, the wide use of radio also bridges the literacy gap of its audience, whether they are literate or not, by increasing their political awareness and mobilisation through the use of music and

entertainment content which are very much present, especially during electioneering, in radio and television jingles and commercials⁸.

It is, however, interesting to note that though the political parties concentrated a lot of their communication activities on the use of Social media to mobilise young voters during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State, only Facebook which is the most-used social media tool is ranked among the top ten media platforms used during the election in this research as it came eighth as the most-used media platforms by voters as source of information for news about election. Other Social media platforms such as instagram, blogs, vlogs and whatsapp came a distant 20th, 21st and 22nd respectively. This underscores the view by Key Personality Interviewee 4, an international media executive, that most of the voters in Nigerian elections are not on Social media, and that those who use it need economic resource to catch up with what is going on there.

He said in the interview:

We have to look at the economic stratification of the populace. In the last one year, more than one hundred million people have fallen below the poverty line. Those who want to be online to catch up with what is happening there need money to buy data to be online. So, this means that most of the people who are going to vote are not online due to poverty. That is why somebody could be very popular online and still lose the election.

In spite of these arguments, and given the fact that most youths are economically disadvantaged as they are dependent on their parents, it is evident, however, that though some level of education and financial resource may be needed to use the Social media effectively, it is an established fact in literature that it is the most preferred media for

communicating with and mobilising the youth who are its most ardent users⁹. Not only this, the social media is the most preferred media, in the case of social mobilization, in amplifying messages among the youth in order to create a bandwagon effect¹⁰.

Research Question Two: What are the campaign messages contained in the communication media used by the political parties during the 2019 presidential election?

The findings on Research Question 2 revolved around the campaign messages in the communication media used during the election. Respondents agreed that the messages were used for different purposes. One is that the messages were used to bring to the front burners and to address issues confronting the country. Secondly, the messages were used to attack opponents using hate speech, though they also educated and mobilized voters concerning the election. Our interviewees were in agreement with the above. For example, they agreed that the campaign messages contained in the communication media used by political parties were used for different purposes. For instance, KPI 2 said:

Everybody is out marketing their candidate and de-marketing the opponent. So you look at the strong point of your candidate to sell to the people and you look at the weaknesses of your opponent. We look at the antecedents of our candidate and the antecedents of the opposition candidates. There is something call SWOT analysis, the area of strength, weakness, opportunities and threats, and so on. We commissioned some people to do a lot of research because we have a research department. We researched into the background of the candidate and if there is one area that they think they have covered successfully, politics will uncover it. It is all just because we want to market our candidate and de-market the opponent.

Thus, KPI 2 agreed with our findings that a large number of the messages contained in the communication media used by the political parties were used to attack the opponent and

highlight the competence/incompetence of candidate and opponent. In another approach to the question of what campaign messages are contained in the communication media used by political parties prior to 2019 presidential election in Oyo State, another interviewee responded that their campaign messages mobilised, informed and educated the populace, through the media, of the benefit of having young and dynamic people as leaders and as number one citizen of the state.

In light of this, KPI 3, the Peoples Democratic Party secretary, said that:

We looked at the situation in Oyo State where we had a young person in the person of Seyi Makinde becoming governor. He was the face of new generation of leaders in the country. The slogan then was Omi Tuntun, meaning New Dawn. We tried to compare the situation when the PDP, our party, was in government with what obtained then. We talked about the poverty level and security situation in the country, corruption, the economy and other issues before 2015... We even went back to pre-1999 to show that corruption was very high; economy was very bad; there was poor infrastructure and other things. We said that when we came into government things got better up to 2015. We also let people know that by 2019 things should have been better than before, but this was not so. So these were the main issues that characterised our campaign.

These views are in tandem with the position that messages embedded in media advertisements during elections encapsulate and organise the dissemination of information about political candidates and their parties, promoting their manifestoes and how they intend to implement them. However, these messages could be positive, that is, highlighting the qualities of a candidate; contrasting or negative, meaning drawing a

comparison between a candidate and another in order for the electorate to choose one candidate above the other and the negative advertisement, being intended statements meant to attack opponents with the goal of making him look bad in the eyes of the electorate.

The fact that media messages during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State, as we have discovered in this research, have been used heavily for mobilisation (85 per cent) and to address national issues (82.5 per cent) are commendable; however, the statistics that they were also used to attack opponents (51.5 per cent); for hate speech (57 per cent) and to highlight competence/incompetence of opponents, underscores the position that some messages contained in media advertisements during elections amount to negative or attack advertisement and that, consequently, the entire electoral process may become messy.

Research Question Three: What is the level of the effectiveness of communication media on voters?

Majority of respondents (86%) agreed that communication media was maximally used to communicate with voters during the election, just as they agreed that the messages were informative and educative; used extensively to improve candidates' chances of not only winning the election, but to highlight their ability to deliver on their promises.

The view of KPI 2 was in tandem with those of the questionnaire respondents who rate the effectiveness of the use of Communication media very high during the election.

He said:

To a large extent I believe so (that the use of communication media was very effective). They (supporters and the electorate) often commended us concerning our publicity drive and that if not for us, some of the things they were aware of about the election, they might not have been aware of them.

Our jingles and advertisement in the media often made impact at the grassroots level.

A political communication scholar, KPI 4, one of our interviewees, corroborated this position on the effectiveness of Communication media during the election when he said:

They have been very effective because when you communicate, what you need is the reach. It is the reach that determines how effective those media are. That is why they use diverse platforms like I talked about whatsapp for their group mobilization and communication, for the larger public they use facebook, then for the more general public they use billboards. You can see that there were diverse audiences for each of these platforms. Some of them don't reach the grassroots, that is why it is important for some of them to use television and radio because these are the ones that can get to everybody whether they are literate or not. But they actually achieve some measure of effectiveness to reach virtually everyone and these are the things that determine whether they are effective or not.

This position is also supported in literature. As argued in Chapter Two, the demography of the electorate is becoming more and more complex and constantly evolving, and a deep understanding of this complexity has increased candidates' ability to effectively use the media to communicate with the electorate by meeting their information needs, irrespective of their socio-economic background. It was also asserted that candidates and political parties are now more successful in effectively using the media to reach the electorate with the right messages in more precise and specific manner hence the effectiveness of their communication drive.

Research Question Four: What is the extent to which communication media influenced voters during the election?

Most of our respondents agreed that it influenced them to a very high extent in not only voting, but also making a choice due to its effectiveness in mobilisation of voters. These positions are consistent with and have been established in research findings. A research on influence of media on political knowledge among undergraduate students in Ibadan, Nigeria, corroborates this position. It was posited in the research that the media is not only very vital during elections, it is, in fact, the primary avenue for voter participation. Not only this, it was also argued that the media shapes their (voters) interests and attitudes towards election¹¹. Similarly, some scholars averred in their study that the more informed citizens become, the more their mobilisation and civic participation¹². More importantly, it was posited in a similar research that with the use of internet and digital media, the mode of voter participation is no longer a narrowed-down process, but it could be largely expanded¹³.

Though the general perception in this study that the media, to a large extent, mobilised and encouraged voter participation is in tandem with the references noted above, the overall results showed that voter participation was low in the election. Some reasons were proffered for this also. KPI 4, a political communication scholar, one of our interviewees averred that:

I think the problem has to do with, one: we talk of issues such as ‘returns’; that is the dividend of their (voters) participation in previous election. Then the second has to do with the environment of the political process... In fact what you find out in research is that in a place like Lagos, you will expect a high turnout, but you will discover that we record the lowest voter turnout, in fact one of the lowest voter turnout in the country, and this is largely due to voter suppression.

What the politicians do is that where they think they are strong, they dominate the place and allow election to take place but in places where they think they don't have good support they cause violence. So people who are afraid for their lives would not come out to vote.

KPI 6, a professor of Political communication also buttressed this point noting that the problem was not with communication. He said:

No, it is not about poor communication. The reason for voter apathy are one: the feeling and fear that the election result don't reflect correctly the voting pattern. Most voters are feeling that there is a disconnect between voting pattern and outcome of elections, which means that elections are often rigged, ballots are snatched and that violence is calculated to alter results. Many citizens don't even bother to register, they don't even have voter cards.

That is why you go around on Election Day, you even have the youth playing football. Some of the elite even travel out of the country or sit down at home watching television. Some go to golf course. Thirdly, leadership has been consistently poor. So the question has always been 'so what?.' Is it this candidate or that candidate? And people ask 'so what?' So it is not mainly about poor communication or inadequate use of the media.

KPI 5, a Mass Communication scholar, corroborating our finding that the media made people to stay away from the election only to a very low extent remarked that:

After the first eight years (of Nigeria's Fourth Republic), you will notice that people began to see things. Also politics as they say is a dirty game. People now saw a lot of dirty things and they saw many things. People knew how much the Obasanjo government was said to have spent on power but till today

we don't have light. Look at the corrupt politicians; what happened to them? So people don't want to listen anymore. No matter the (political parties) manifesto; when they say they have seven point agenda and they could not actualise three out of them people begin to lose interest. There are places politicians go today they don't listen to them. So no matter what you tell them, they are not ready to listen.

Research Question Five: What is the extent to which campaign messages influenced voters?

Most of our respondents agreed that it was to a very high extent, especially the messages coming from local political leaders or opinion leaders. However, though researchers are still divided on the extent of the influence of campaign advertisements on voters, empirical evidence show that its indices tend to be more positive than negative. A researcher posited that messages that offer to satisfy the needs of potential voters (in combination with other personal characteristics of candidates) often resonates with them than messages or advertisements that focus on personal achievements of those contesting for political offices¹⁴.

Another researcher even went further to assert that these messages in political advertisements that would influence and resonate with the electorate are those that had been consistently used and tested in-house by those who crafted them to test and ensure their appeal after which they are put in the media¹⁵. Therefore, the success of these messages contained in the advertisements by the two major political during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State apparently followed this trajectory for the electorate to have perceived them as having influenced them to participate in the election.

One of our interviewees, KPI 2, in line with this position on the effectiveness of messages contained in the media advertisements of political parties said:

To a large extent I believe so. They (the electorate) often commend us concerning our publicity drive. They often say that if not for our publicity and mobilisation drive, they would not have been aware of some of the things they knew about the election. Our jingles and advertisements in the media often made impact at the grassroots level. Concerning our presidential candidate, we made it known through our media campaign that when he was a military Head of State he did well. We also told them he is a man of integrity and an incorruptible candidate. We also told the electorate that as president from 2015 to 2019, he also did well to tackle corruption.

KPI 7, an international advertisement executive, however, disagrees with this position. According to him:

During an election in Nigeria, politicians are always talking about consensus candidacy and other issues. There is no substance in what they are saying; and people are asking: 'what is going to be done about the economy, value of the naira, among others? Nigerians are waiting to see that candidate who is speaking their language. Who is that candidate that would tell them what they are actually going to do to solve the problems of why Nigerians are using dangerous routes to migrate and end up dying in the desert? Which politician is the one coming out to articulate their plans to see how the problems could be solved?

In essence, the effect of messages contained in media advertisements during election and their effects on the audience has always been a subject of discourse. Theories have also

tried to explain it without definite success. The Hypodermic Needle Theory and the Media Effect Theory have both tried to explain the effects of the media on an audience. As discussed earlier in this work, studies on communication during elections concluded that the audience were not just sitting ducks who assimilate messages without critical thinking; that the influence of messages on an audience was limited and that other factors indeed have more overriding effects on formation of opinion by an audience¹⁶. The Agenda Setting Theory took this further with the argument that issues highlighted by the media often tally with those that an audience consider important, thus underscoring the fact that an audience indeed have its own opinion about certain issues and that media messages may only confirm or contrast with it.

Endnotes

1. Bello Shehu Bello, Isa Inuwa Dutse and Reiko Hechel, *Social Media Campaign Strategies: Analysis of the 2019 Nigerian Elections*, Conference Paper at Sixth Conference on Social Network Analysis, Management and Security, 2019.
2. Oluseyi Adegbola and Sherice Gearhart, *Examining the Relationship Between Media Use and Political Engagement: A Comparative Study Among the United States, Kenya, and Nigeria*, **International Journal of Communication**, Vol. 13, 2019, Pp 1231–1251.
3. Funmilola O. Omotayo and Matthew B. Folorunso, *Use of Social Media for Political Participation by Youths in Oyo State, Nigeria*, **Journal of Democracy**, Vol 12, Issue 1, 2020, Pp 132-157.
4. Drina Intyaswati, Eni Maryani, Dadang Sugiana and Anter Venus, *Using Media for Voting Decision Among First-time Voter College Students in West Java, Indonesia*, **Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies**, Vol. 10, no 1, 2021, Pp 327-339.
5. Mehul Rathi, Arijit Ghosh, Suchitra Kumari, Anirban Sarkar and Aditya Das, *Influence of social media on the Political Choice Making: An Exploratory Study*,

- Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry (TOJQI)**, Vol. 12, Issue 6, 2021, Pp 8326-8339.
6. Mercy Ette and Patience Akpan Obong, *Negotiating Access and Privilege: Politics of Female Participation and Representation in Nigeria*, **Journal of Asian and African Studies**, March 13, 2022, Pp 1-16.
 7. Michael Aleyomi, Olanrewaju Ajakaye, Out Akanu Out and Mayo Paul, *Mass Media and Political Campaigns During the 2015 Presidential Election*, **Journal of Communication and Media Research**, Vol. 10, No 2, 2018, Pp 174-185.
 8. Chiagoziem Onyekwena, How music influenced the presidential elections, <https://guardian.ng/life/music/how-music-influenced-the-presidential-elections/> available online, accessed April 22, 2022.
 9. Funmilola Omotayo and M.B Folorunso, *Use of Social Media for Political Participation by Youths in Oyo State, Nigeria*, **Journal of Democracy**, vol 12, no 1, 2020, Pp 132-157.
 10. Justin Fisher, David Cutts, Edward Fieldhouse and Bettina Rottweiler, *The Evolution of District Level Campaigning in Britain: The Resilience of Traditional campaigning?* Paper presented at the EPOP Annual Conference, Kent, September 2016, Pp 1-30.
 11. Olaniru Oluwatosin, Olatunji Olusoji, Ayandele Olusoji and Popoola Olugbenga, *The Influence of Media on Political Knowledge Amongst Undergraduate Students In Ibadan, Nigeria*, **Global Journal of Social Sciences**, Vol. 19, 2020, Pp 13-24.
 12. Marie Neihouser, Giulia Sandri, Felix Von Nostitz and Tristan Haute, *Political Information Consumption and Electoral Turnout During COVID: The Case of the 2020 Municipal Elections*, **French Politics, Springer Nature Limited**, 2022, Page 184

13. Sara Shaul-Cohen and Azi Lev-On, Smartphones, *Text messages and Political Participation*, **Mobile Media & Communication**, Vol. 8(1) 2019, Pages 62 –82
14. Grace Izeghe Ojekwe, *Akinwunmi Ambode's 2015 Election Campaign in Lagos State*, Political Advert Campaigns and Voting Behaviour, **Journal of African Elections**, P14
15. Abigail Michaelsen, *Brand Obama: How Barack Obama Revolutionized Political Campaign Marketing in the 2008 Presidential Election*," *CMC Senior Theses*. Paper 990, 2020.
16. Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence, The Part Played By People In The Flow of Mass Communications*, **Free Press**, New York, 2019, Pp 293-296.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

This chapter highlights the findings, contribution to knowledge, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Summary of findings

This study investigated the Influence of Communication media used by two major political parties on social mobilization and voter participation during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State, Nigeria. Findings emanating from the data generated from the field work indicated that all the respondents were exposed to one communication media or the other in the course of the election, through which they were mobilised and informed by political parties and other stakeholders about the election, the candidates, their party manifestos and every other thing about the election that constitutes voter education in order to enable full civic participation of the electorate. Media exposure of the electorate was neither at the same level nor was the communication media they were exposed to exactly the same, as the electorate in their responses showed that they were more exposed

to certain Communication media than others. In this study, voters were mostly exposed to the traditional media – radio, print and television, and to certain extent, other media including the New media and especially the Social media. For example political parties used the radio the most, which had been proved by extant researches as the most far-reaching and preferred of all media. About 299 of the respondents identified it (radio) as their major source of information during the election. This study also discovered that the use of the traditional media far out-matched the use of the much-hyped social media. This also underscores and tallies with some of our findings that most of the potential voters were not on Social media.

The other traditional media used by political parties which the electorate were exposed to included newspapers; branded t-shirts and face caps; billboards and handbills. It was not really surprising that newspaper and magazine advertorials were not a major or prioritized media, meaning that political parties did not lay much emphasis on these as the elite who are the major consumers of newspaper as a media do not show much enthusiasm to vote during elections which is also a confirmation of other established research findings.

Television advertisements were also not prioritised which confirmed research findings that television ranks behind radio and others as a media advertisement tool in African elections. This research also discovered that magazine, a print media and a form of Communication media came last in the ranking. This is, however, not surprising as most newsmagazines which is also a favourite news media for the elite had literally become extinct in the country and are no longer as visible as they used to. This, therefore explains the reason that political parties are not likely to place their advertisements in magazines any longer, unless, perhaps, some popular magazines published in local languages which are limited in readership population, as only the older generation or the less educated people in both urban and the grassroots level would read them.

Finally, vote-buying which is often a means by political parties to induce voters to vote for them through giving out of cash and material things, which is also a common feature of African elections, was found to have been used during the election, especially by the two major political parties considered by this study. Though this seems much on a lower scale as against sensational traditional and especially Social media reports during elections in the country, however, the reason could be that it was because the election under review was a national election, and not a state-based (governorship) election which often witnesses higher reported cases of vote buying and a more intense and passionate interest in whoever emerges as the winner.

Messages contained in the Communication media used during the election was also discovered to have been used both positively and negatively by political parties; positively to advertise their programmes and thus enhance their chances of winning, and negatively, to attack opponents. For example, majority of respondents agreed that the messages were used to address issues affecting the country; a large number of them also agreed that messages were used to mobilise voters. However, only about half of respondents agreed that the messages were used to attack opponents, while also a high number of respondents agreed that the messages were used both negatively and positively, that is, they were used specifically, to highlight the competence of certain candidates and the incompetence of their opponents. The use of messages negatively was distinctly captured when half of respondents said it included hate speech and fake news (against and about opponents respectively). Despite its incrimination by both the Federal Government of Nigeria and being frowned on by the Electoral Act, it still featured prominently in the election. This is also evident in the high number of respondents who agreed that the messages were highlighted or used to highlight the incompetence of opposing candidates in order to brighten the chances of certain candidates. Though an election is a contest, yet this aspect

of using messages to communicate negative or wrong insinuations about individual candidates is obviously not a positive development in an activity that is meant to involve general or widespread civic participation. This situation, if allowed to fester for too long, could also influence negatively the extent of voter mobilisation and participation in future elections, if potential voters perceive that the entire electoral process is resorting to mud-slinging and character assassination.

On the effectiveness of Communication media, more than three quarters of respondents agreed that it was maximally used to communicate with voters; the same size of respondents also agreed that it carried educative and informative messages about the major candidates. Findings also indicated that a large number of respondents agreed that it was used for mobilisation; that it was sustainable, adequate and would suffice for future elections and that the Communication media was effective in focusing extensively on candidates and their ability to deliver on their promises.

In addition, most of the respondents agreed that Communication media considerably improved the chances of candidates in achieving their goals, than if they had not used the media at all. Respondents also overwhelmingly agreed that it was deployed by candidates to mobilise and communicate with voters to massively participate in the election and vote for them in particular. Our findings also showed that in order to enhance their credibility, the candidates and their political parties used hate speech to discredit their opponents as noted by a little over half of the respondents. With these statistics, the finding was that Communication media was very effective in achieving the goals for which they were deployed. For the candidates, it was effective as means of communicating information and mobilising voters; it was sustainable, just as it was effective in enhancing candidates' credibility in the mind of voters, even if it means discrediting their opponents to achieve this.

On the extent of the influence of communication media on voter participation, more than half of respondents who rated it from high to very high said it influenced them to make their choices, while at least a third of them rated it as having influenced them averagely. Again, almost three quarters of respondents rated communication media as a tool by politicians and political parties to increase or influence voter participation, while almost half also agreed that it was used for mobilisation. Interestingly, at least half of respondents agreed that communication media was not responsible for lack of voter participation while only a small population of less than a quarter of respondents said it was responsible for low voter participation.

Campaign messages which constitute the jingles and advertisements in the communication media during the election, were also discovered to have influenced voters extensively as majority of respondents rated it from high to very high. The quality of the messages which often goes through a process of refinement by advertisement agencies and the media/publicity committees of political parties were also deemed good as more than half of respondents rated it high. For messages to be well-received by potential voters, one of the qualities is that it must be entertaining, at least to gain the attention of the audience; thus just under a half of respondents rated it as average while the same size of the population rated the quality as high, meaning that the messages at least attracted the attention of most of the voters with their entertaining contents which is the high point of any successful campaign message in the media.

Opinion leaders, who are often influential voices before and during an electoral process also influenced voters in the course of the election as more than half of respondents said their messages highly influenced them, but in a reverse case, most voters were not really influenced by party manifestos as not up to half of respondents said it influenced them highly. Also almost half of respondents said it only influenced them on the average. The

implication of this is that party manifestos did not resonate with voters and the reasons behind this may be manifold. One, it may be that the manifestoes of the political parties were too identical or similar or because political parties do not have the integrity of delivering on their promises thus making the electorate not to pay much attention to these promises. Again, it may also mean that since the political parties apparently have no distinct ideologies, meaning that what is being communicated to the electorate focused on the same issues bedeviling the country which had remained unresolved for decades and which the electorate do not believe could be resolved by the political parties and their candidates who simply renew promises to solve them.

5.2 Conclusion

This research work had been carried out to examine the influence of communication media on social mobilization and voter participation during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State, Nigeria. The aims and objectives of the research had been achieved with reliable answers provided for the research questions and conclusions drawn from the research findings. To this end, in the case of this particular study, political parties and their candidates use every available media of communication in the process of mobilising the electorate and publicising their manifestos in order to persuade the electorate to vote for their parties and candidates. Jingles and commercial advertisements designed to appeal to the emotions of the electorate are mediated through the mass media – both print and electronic media and the New media. The messages embedded in the mediated advertisements are mostly persuasive in nature, through the process of political marketing and public relations efforts of the candidates and their parties. These messages could sometimes be negative, by attacking opponents, and sometimes probing into their private lives, even to the point of the advertisements being filled with hate speech, wholly directed at major opponents.

Thus, identifying the Communication media used by political parties, the messages contained in the communication media, the intention of the messages, the level of effectiveness of the Communication media on the voters; the extent to which the Communication media influenced voters and the extent to which the messages contained in the Communication media influenced voters, were central to the study. Conclusions from the study suggest that the voters were exposed to all forms of Communication media used by political parties was instructive, though this exposure was to different degrees depending on certain variables such as location of the electorate, their level of education and socio-economic background, among others. However, voters were informed and mobilised about the election mostly through the radio, while magazines recorded the lowest level of use among all the identified Communication media.

The messages produced by political parties to persuade the voters were used both positively and negatively through the media. Despite this, however, the media was effectively used to inform, educate and mobilise the electorate. Communication media also improved significantly, the chances of the candidate in their efforts to win the election. In general terms, Communication media achieved the goals for which they were deployed. In effect, Communication media ensured significant level of voter mobilisation and participation. Not only this, messages contained in radio jingles and advertisements in both print and electronic media, influenced voters by persuading them to vote. However, they were not influenced by party manifestos, probably because they were not convinced that the political parties would fulfil their promises having been disappointed by their past performances in addressing the socio-political problems they promised to solve.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the outcome of this research, it is necessary to provide these recommendations:

1. All stakeholders such as Independent National Electoral Commission, National Orientation Agency, the media, among others, should be involved in the process of mobilisation of voters for their civic participation. The process should not be left for the political parties alone as this is a very important step towards continuous and improved voter participation. If social mobilisation is massive, voter participation is also likely to be high.
2. Media organisations must show more social responsibility and not be overtly partisan in spite of their ownership structure of factor. Media ethics must be strictly followed; they (the media) must not be confrontational or sensational in order not to give the impression that an electoral war was going on, a situation which may scare voters away.
3. Messages contained in Communication media must remain positive and persuasive in order to sustain voter participation. The tone and quality of the messages, including their entertainment content must inspire and sustain the interest of voters to perform their civic duties in future elections.
4. Voices of opinion leaders are very powerful and influence the actions of their followers. Whatever they say about their candidates or their opponents are sometimes amplified by their followers which often cause friction between supporters of opposing political parties, which may lead to widespread electoral violence locally and across the country. Therefore, hate speech and fake news must be avoided while infractions must be punished according to the law.
5. Beyond using the Communication media, political parties and their candidates also use other means of voter persuasion, not only as a means for social mobilization, but as inducement for voter participation. This latter means is known as vote-buying. It has become an established feature of elections in Nigeria. INEC should not only frown on this,

it must be criminalised and pursued legally to conclusion as most perpetrators are never convicted for the offence.

6. Political parties must rethink their ideologies as distinct groups and communicate this through their manifestoes in greater degrees to the electorate which is an aggregate of what they intend to achieve should they be voted into office. It should be communicated in simple clear statements and in different local languages that voters can easily understand and assimilate.
7. National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), Outdoor Advertising Association of Nigeria (OAAN), Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN) and Nigerian Press Council (NPC), among other media stakeholders, should monitor and endorse messages during elections before being advertised or broadcast as there are still high percentage of messages used during elections to attack opponents, including innuendos that hint at some private matters that they are dealing with. These may sound normal in an electoral contest. But the monitoring groups could draw a red line that should not be crossed. Negative advertisement should be avoided totally.
8. For sustainable voter mobilisation and participation, radio which ranked very high on the list of Communication media used during the 2019 presidential election in Oyo State should be continued for future elections, but candidates should also focus on interpersonal and one-on-one approach for their mobilisation activities. This is highly recommended and should be adopted as many voters hardly know the candidates they want to vote for on a personal note. Though meeting all voters in person may be difficult or practically impossible to achieve, a closer, more personal contact with as many voters as possible could improve a candidate's chances through inter-personal communication, rather than using the mass media to communicate with voters all the time.

5.4 Contribution to knowledge

The study has introduced one to the inter-relationship between Communication media and the concept of social mobilisation which is an essential and significant step towards ensuring maximum voter participation, especially in developing countries where voter apathy including other forms of apathy towards civic participation are on the rise due to several factors. In other words, there cannot be a significant voter participation without mass mobilisation of the citizens who are expected to perform their civic duties during an election.

Findings do not support the assumption that Communication media would or could automatically ensure voter participation without a conscious attempt at mass mobilisation of citizens as the Magic Bullet Theory of the Media suggests. In concrete terms, this study has helped to ensure a better understanding of the fact that Communication media alone would not automatically ensure voter participation. It has confirmed that citizens must be adequately mobilised before voter participation could take place; and not only that, citizens must be adequately informed about candidates, their political parties and the entire electoral process to ensure a better and higher level of voter participation. If not, citizens' participation, if it does take place, would end up in total failure since they are liable to making wrong choices due to poor voter education. Not only this, physical or in-person interpersonal communication between candidates of political parties and citizens is very essential as most potential voters in Nigeria for example often complain that they do not have physical interactions with their representatives before election and those who do interact with them only do so only at political rallies and in the media, only to simply disappear or remain aloof without communicating with their constituents after elections, only to reappear and begin to make efforts at re-engaging them just when the next round of election is near.

Furthermore, this study has also increased one's understanding that scholars should begin to look beyond the influence of communication media on voter mobilisation and participation. This is because other factors could also influence both in every electoral process. In addition, this study has confirmed the important role of asking questions to sieve the truth from a myriad of assumptions and outright falsehoods concerning voter mobilisation and participation. The study did not stop at eliciting answers from voters and Publicity Secretaries of political parties alone, we went beyond that to speak with Mass Communication and media scholars, Political Communication scholars and media advertisement executives, so as to give sound, informed, theoretical perspectives on the research topics. Their responses which had been well-stated in the preceding chapter has enriched this study by elucidating on the inter-relationship between communication media, social mobilisation and voter participation and basing it not only on theoretical foundation, but also on sound empirical foundation.

In addition, vote-buying was identified as part of the Nigerian electoral process, not as a means of mobilisation but as a means of inducing, indirectly, voter participation on Election Day and to ensure that the vote is cast for a certain political party or candidate. In this case, there is no form of real communication between both parties (voters and agents of political parties or their candidates), the act itself (non-verbal communication) has communicated something between the giver (of the cash or material) and the receiver. Though it is possible that those induced to vote for certain candidates through vote-buying could or could not have made up their mind to participate in the election, however, their votes, in the final analysis, would be tallied with those of other voters. The percentage of respondents who identified vote-buying as an influence on voter participation is significant enough to affirm that communication media was not 100 per cent effective in persuading all eligible voters to participate in the election. In truth, there would always be a little

percentage of the voting population who for one reason or the other (sometimes poverty) refuse to vote unless they are induced with money (non-verbal communication), however, this small percentage could make a difference in the total outcome of the results of any election.

Finally, this study also discovered that failure by the political class to meet the demands of the electorate could impact negatively on the level of social mobilisation of citizens and voter participation in future elections. Therefore, unless there is a significant improvement in social service delivery or dividends of democracy to citizens, the influence of Communication media on voter mobilisation and participation would continue to reduce significantly which might lead to a significant pattern of gradual and continuous or even permanent detachment of a large number of the voting population from civic participation in the society in future. Communication media may therefore find it increasingly difficult to bridge this gap going forward.

5.5 Suggested Areas of Further Research

In view of global concerns about low voter participation in elections even in developed parts of the world, it is imperative to continue to focus research efforts on the role of communication generally on this problem which has already assumed a global pattern. What is of interest is that if problems such as poor leadership and under-development issues are connected with low voter participation in developing countries, the question is: why are developed countries experiencing the same or similar issue in their own electoral process as well?

Thus, given the findings of this study, it would be interesting to continue to research into the interplay between a variable such as vote-buying and voter mobilisation and

participation in an electoral process and its likely outcome with or without the influence of Communication media in influencing voters' choice. This may likely bring to fore the role of vote-buying in electoral processes which had always been down-played or even considered negligible by the Independent National Electoral Commission in Nigeria, and in other developing countries of the world where it is most rampant.

In addition, future studies could also focus on factors that impinge on mass mobilisation of citizens and their participation in elections, despite the big role of the media and other stakeholders in the past. As a fallout of this study, future research could also focus on social mobilisation and voter participation by people in the rural areas where modern communication media or systems is limited, in order to see how this limitation might impact them. Future research could also focus on pattern of mobilisation and voter participation of the illiterate/semi-literate voters and the privileged ones in the society as a result of the Communication media used by them.

1.