

THE ROLE OF THE NEW MEDIA IN THE ELECTIONEERING PROCESS OF  
DEVELOPING NATIONS, A CASE STUDY OF NIGERIA 2015.

Alexander Omotayo BANDIPO

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bandipo".

Alexander Omotayo Bandipo

29 June 2016, Lagos, Nigeria.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The researcher is grateful to **GOD ALMIGHTY** for without His grace and blessings, this study would not have been possible.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation examined the roles new media technologies play in the electioneering process of developing nations. The chosen case study was the Nigeria 2015 presidential elections. For this study, the electioneering period was accepted to commence with from the campaign period and to conclude a year after swearing in. This allowed for the study of critical milestones of the electoral cycle.

The main argument of this study was that the new media played critical roles during the Nigeria 2015 presidential election. This study sought to identify these roles and contextualize their impact with a view to improving and institutionalizing positive trends.

It was discovered that practically all stakeholders that participated in one way or the other relied on the new media to improve their operational capability and judgement.

It was also discovered that the new media and its ability to disseminate information in geometric proportions is one of the critical factors responsible for the avoidance of post-election crisis in Nigeria.

Based on these findings, this study concluded that the new media impacted positively on the Nigeria 2015 presidential elections. It therefore recommended the continued encouragement of the use of new media technologies by all stakeholders participating in future African elections.

This study further recommended necessary legislation on the use of technology especially by the Electoral Management Body, where it is not already captured by the constitution.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the world today, all forms of media and their tools are considered important factors that promote democracy and good governance. Through the media, the voice of the people, as well as their thoughts on political issues are resonated. There is also an apparent synergy between the new media tools available today and the political life of people, and it typically sets the stage for a potent, interactive and virulent version of political communication.

Broad categories of new media tools in question include the Social Media, Instant Messaging Services and Big Data Analytical tools to mention a few. They consist of our everyday tools for mobile communication sufficiently tweaked and repurposed for political communication. Often times, they do not require much overhead in terms of cost, neither is their use constrained by geographic space and time. Their main requirement is technical competence, analytical competence and interpretive capability.



For the common man in sub-Saharan Africa and beyond, these specification makes the new media a favored choice as platform of expression and source for news. Likewise for some political actors it becomes an avenue to reach out to the people at a significantly less cost in terms of money and logistic. It also makes it easy to deploy as a toolkit for political propaganda as well as harness social insight.

Therefore, the use of the new media in today's political space is somewhat indispensable to all political stakeholders. The Electorate, Political Parties, the Electoral Management Bodies (EMB), Civil Societies, the Media and the International Community all find use for it.

Over time, the political dynamics in the third world, particularly in African states have been influenced by certain factors. These factors have made democracy more prevalent as a system of government in Africa, and is expected to bring about good governance in Africa where it lacks. They include:

The tolerance of the International Community like the United Nations, African Union and regional bodies like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), for unpopular systems of government like

military rule or coup d'état, dictatorship and illegal tenor elongation is fast approaching zero. Within the West African sub-region, the ECOWAS protocol on democracy and good governance stipulates “zero tolerance for power obtained or maintained by unconstitutional means” it further clarifies that recognition of accession to power shall only be “through free, fair and transparent elections” (ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES Executive Secretariat, 2001).

- I. Technological advancement in the areas of internet technologies like 4G mobile wireless networks, and social media network enhancements, as well as the proliferation of cheaper internet-ready mobile devices have significantly improved the access of Africans to information, thereby improving social interaction and political participation. As at 2015, Nigeria was ahead of Egypt and South Africa, leading Africa, in terms of internet penetration and usage. Internet penetration in Nigeria is estimated at 45.1% and its global share of internet traffic is a significant 2.5% (Internetlivestats.com, 2016).
- II. UNHCR interprets democracy as one of the core values of the United Nations. It is adequately covered in the Universal Declaration for

Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Ohchr.org, 2016). Embedded in these rights are guarantees of freedom of speech as well as the accommodation of new forms of human communication and interaction e.g. Net-neutrality and online press freedom. The declaration of Windhoek is a classic example, which calls for “free, independent, pluralistic media worldwide, characterizing free press as essential to democracy and as a fundamental human right” (Un.org, 2016).

These factors are significant developments because “the people” for whom democracy is intended is more informed, politically empowered and socially protected. This translates to political energy which he expresses during elections in his home country. It is however worthy to note that emphasis is not only on the adoption of democracy but also on the entrenchment of the best practices of democracy and good governance.

In American politics, the campaign strategy of the democrat’s candidate, Barack Obama in 2008 is fondly dubbed Obama 2.0. Its campaign success heralded the application of new media as a critical success factor in electioneering processes (DWYER, 2013). Thereafter, American elections

have remained at the vanguard the use of these new media to interpret and analyze political strategy.

Other stakeholders in the electioneering process have also incorporated the use of new media technologies in their processes in order to get faster and smarter result in today's information driven world.

In the Nigerian case, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) accepts that the applications of new media technologies in the electoral process show great promise but it also has identified challenges, vulnerabilities and weaknesses (Nwangwu, 2015). It is therefore crucial to take a holistic step and understudy all its roles, uses and applications, by all the stakeholders, with a view to using this tool to positively reinforce the Nigerian electoral system.

## 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In any electoral process, there are identifiable influencers and stakeholders.

In carrying out their statutory or self-apportioned roles in the electoral process, these stakeholders used new media technologies to support their systems. They stakeholder include:

### 1.1.1 The legislation and the political process

The Electoral Act of 2010 as amended establishes the framework of elections in Nigeria. It defines the structure of the electoral body, its funding and scope of operations, responsibilities and powers.

In terms of legislating on when and where to use technology to aid the electoral process, there are certain aspects of this act that may benefit from an amendment in order to reflect the current reality namely:

The specific mention or inclusion of the new media in areas where necessary in our electoral laws to avoid ambiguity and unfair advantage. As an example, this paper will compare the Nigerian electoral law with

Singapore's, where the electoral law specifically stipulates the expectation of the electoral umpire concerning the new media as regards cooling off day and polling day.

Specific legislation electronic verification already in use and possible consideration of electronic voting.

Electronic evidence and its acceptance at the election petition tribunal.

#### 1.1.2 The Electoral Management Body (EMB) – INEC

INEC is the Independent National Electoral Commission, the body mandated by the constitution to conduct polls in Nigeria. In carrying out some of its statutory functions, it continually relies on new media technologies to support its information system. It is therefore important to situate its use.

#### 1.1.3 The Traditional Media

As earlier said, one of the fundamental roles of the traditional media in any society is that it sets the agenda for the political actors particularly during the electioneering process.

This role invariably creates an avenue for political candidates to present, discuss and debate their proposals with the electorate. These exchanges facilitate civic enlightenment on the party's manifesto and programs. To achieve this, traditional media have also come to rely on new media tools because of advantages such as real-time interaction and geographic independence. In its role as a moderator, the media must strive to understand the thought flow of the people for a meaningful social exchange to occur. This literally means that you must be able to feel the pulse of the people in real time.

The internet having become the biggest agglomeration of human thought and expression, the traditional media having shown some level of convergence with the new media, depend significantly on new media tools to mine social data as well as interact with the electorate online and real time.

On the other hand, the traditional media can also show vulnerability to political influence. “A private or biased media can shape election and issue coverage to support corporate interests or provide propaganda for authoritarian regimes, subverting important democratic principles like freedom of speech and the press” (Ifes.org, 2016).

Many experts agree that the causative factor of the Rwanda genocide of 1994 and the Kenyan post-election crisis of 2007 are traceable to media bias and vulnerability. This project will serve as a reference point to further professionalize the traditional media with regards to electoral assignments.

#### 1.1.4 The political parties

Political parties in Nigeria now realize that it is no longer enough to plan a north to south road campaign to win elections. It has become expedient to include a robust campaign with the new media driving the political communication strategy.

Featuring majorly on the list of new market entrants into the Nigerian political campaign scene are foreign campaign managers, whom are largely new media-centric and data-savvy. During the 2015 presidential elections



notable among the foreign campaign managers that were contracted to work in Nigeria are Joe Trippi, who worked on campaigns of UK's Tony Blair and President Jonathan election in 2011. He is reputed to be a pioneer of mass fundraising on the internet. Another prominent name is David Axelrod, a known associate and campaign adviser for the incumbent president of the United States, and lastly BTP Advisers whom worked closely with Kenya's Rallia Odinga and Uhuru Kenyatta in 2007.

While there was post-election violence in Nigeria in 2011 and Kenya in 2007, there was also a widely celebrated peaceful handover in Nigeria in 2015.

In seeking to know if campaign managers brought technical competencies or political volatility, this project will help to chart a course for more African elections.

#### 1.1.5 The civil society, non-governmental and international organizations, and donor agencies

The international community and other foreign partners invested significantly in the Nigerian electoral process.

Since insurgency in Nigeria was at its height during this period, it was clear that the international community could not afford further conflict in Nigeria. Through the several public diplomacy efforts that were made, there must have been active leverage on the new media tools. An analysis of the application of these new media tools will serve as a template or reference point for several other African nations.

#### 1.1.5 The Citizens

In 2006 Barack Obama of the United States president said *“I always believe that ultimately, if people are paying attention, then we get good government and good leadership. And when we get lazy, as a democracy and civically start taking shortcuts, then it results in bad government and politics”*

I believe that this is another way of expressing the importance of the electorate in the political process. Since the resultant effect of governance is so strongly tied to the people and their actions, it is expedient to examine their actions online as citizen journalists and social commentators with a view to encouraging participatory politics.

Towards the Election Day, social media parameters like hashtags, mentions, retweets, and likes potentially create invaluable metrics that constitute data for social intelligence. It is therefore useful to politicians. It is also usable as early warning systems and as deterrents to electoral malpractices. Due to these immense potentials, it is highly expedient to unleash the versatility of the new media tool in the hands of citizens on out electoral systems.

#### 1.1.6 Citizen in diaspora

One of the biggest agitations of Nigerians living in the diaspora is to be able to participate in the electoral process by voting.

Although they couldn't vote in the 2015 presidential elections, technology through the new media made partial participation possible. The gains of their partial participation can serve to draw attention to their demands.

Hence the need to study them.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

It is necessary to state that the primary objective of this study is to evaluate the roles of the new media in the Nigerian electoral process. The specific objectives of this study includes:

- I. To understudy roles, uses and applications of the new media by stakeholders during the Nigeria 2015 presidential elections.
- II. To evaluate the adherence to the basic human rights as upheld by international best practices during elections with specific interest in online press freedom, online hate speech and media bias.
- III. To determine the impact of the use of new media professionals on the outcome of the elections.
- IV. To understudy the roles public diplomacy played in the Nigerian electoral process.
- V. To determine the roles social media participation played during the election with specific interest in citizen journalists and Nigerians in the diaspora.
- VI. To identify lacuna in the Nigerian constitution with regard to the use of new media technologies to support the electoral system.

### 1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- I. What specific uses did stakeholders use new media for during the Nigerian 2015 presidential elections?
- II. Who and what are the category of soft power influencers during the Nigeria 2015 elections?
- III. What provisions of the Nigerian electoral laws need to be revisited in order to operationalize and legalize the existing uses of new media technologies to support the electoral system?

### 1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research work is an important contribution to this field of study because it will serve as an eye-opener to policy makers on the gap between the reality on ground and in the law books.

It will help to put into context the contemporary nature of technology vis-à-vis electoral laws.

This research work will also set the tone for further research in the area of international and local public diplomacy, as well as human right advocacy as it concerns elections in Africa.

### 1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on the use of new media technologies during the electioneering period of the Nigeria 2015 presidential elections. The major limitations of this study are:

- I. Cost: Subscription for online analytical tools is considered expensive. Nigeria is currently facing an economic downturn and the Naira shed a lot of value against the dollar.
- II. Policies: During this project, the government reviewed their economic policies particularly forex. This limited access to the much needed dollar currency thereby impeding access to online analytical tools within certain critical periods.
- III. Time: The period covered by this study is 16th November, 2014 to May 29<sup>th</sup> 2016, in order to factor in good governance. This

requirement compelled the researcher to conclude data gathering late relative to his submission date.

## 1.6 ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 4: Analysis and synthesis

Chapter 5: Conclusion

## 1.7 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMINOLOGY

**New media:** All means of communication digitized into bits, which involves the transmission of sounds and images using the internet. This allows the possibility of on-demand access on any digital device anywhere and anytime. People using the new media are therefore able give feedback and form online communities around media content.

**The Electoral Cycle:** The electoral cycle is a graphical model or tool used by electoral assistance providers to plan and to train and to understand cyclical nature of the processes that lead up to a democratic election.

**Social Media:** The social media is a collection of internet based tools that provide channels of social interaction, content sharing and collaboration. Specific examples include Facebook, Instagram, Google+, and YouTube.



**Big Data Analytics:** This is the process of examining large data sets containing a variety of data types, with a view to uncovering hidden patterns and unknown correlations. This type of data is often accessed online and it has several applications in business and consumer intelligence. Because of its versatility, in recent years, its application has spread to the acquisition of social data from online sources.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTERPRETING THE NEW MEDIA:

The oxford dictionary explains the term New Media is a contemporary word that has become “*central to the political arena*” (Oxforddictionaries.com, 2016). In the technical sense, it refers to all digital platforms communication. Some of its distinguishable features include global reach, real-time access, on-demand access and interactivity. Its applications is not limited only to business. It is widely used to even in other areas of endeavor like sports and creative arts. For example, using player statistic like number of goals scored and number of goal assists to value a football striker, or number of iTunes download and YouTube views to rate the popularity of a

music artist. You can even determine the current form of a tennis player from his or her win/loss record of the particular season.

A major determinant for the delivery of new media content is the availability of network infrastructure. Although this remains a challenge in Africa, significant progress has been made continent-wide and there are on-going efforts by global stakeholders to keep improving mobile penetration and internet access in Africa (Esipisu and Kariithi, 2011).

## 2.2 SITUATING THE NIGERIA 2015 ELECTIONS AGAINST A POLITICAL BACKDROP.

Nigeria gained independence from the British in 1960. In her 56 years of existence as a nation, she has cumulatively enjoyed 27 years of civilian rule, part of which is the current 17 years of unbroken democracy.

In Nigeria, the 4th republic for which this democratic dispensation is known, refers to the 4th attempt at democracy by the nation. Having tried 3 times earlier and failed, she perhaps knows 3 ways how not to approach democracy from an African perspective.

The 2015 presidential elections distinguishes itself from other elections for the following reasons:

- I. It is the first time in the history of elections in Nigeria that the ruling political party will be voted out of office at the presidential level.
- II. It is the first time that a sitting presidential candidate will concede power and congratulate the president-elect even before the electoral management body declared him as the winner.
- III. It is also one of the few elections that the international community has accepted and identified with the election result. Consequently, the global community have shown acceptance of the new Nigerian Leader.
- IV. It is the first time that technology will be used during the voting process.
- V. It also distinguished itself because the political outcome pleasantly surprised the international community by defying the predictions of widespread post-election crisis.

Analysts have posited that for the incumbent to have conceded defeat before the official announcement, he must have had access to fast and reliable information that could safely predict his loss.

It was also reported that Nigeria could only have averted the prediction of post-election crisis through public diplomacy efforts. It is against this backdrop that this project seeks examine what roles new media technologies played during this political season.

For the purpose of this research, 16th November, 2014 to May 29th, 2016 as the period under review. This represents ninety days before the presidential election of 2015 as provided for by the section 99 (1) of the Electoral Act of 2010 (Nass.gov.ng, 2010), to one year after handover to allow for measuring of good governance.

This project adopted the Electoral Integrity Framework as proposed by Prof. Pippa Norris, as our guide because it is an internationally recognized model which emphasizes the quality and integrity of elections using measurable parameters (Norris, 2016).

This model is in use as in an on-going effort led by the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA), in collaboration with the African

Union (AU), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), to contextualize electoral integrity on the African continent (Electoralintegrity.blogspot.com.au, 2015).

## 2.3 NEW MEDIA AND ARMED STRUGGLES IN NIGERIA:

### 2.3.1 The Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast

Terrorist organizations such as ISIS, Boko haram, Al Qaeda in the Maghreb rely on the social media as part of their propagandist agenda. This has proven to be quite effective in disseminating their message of terror partially because of how the internet is governed. Terrorists and insurgents typically use the social media because it is affordable, it has global maximum reach and it is largely not censored.

Although there is no evidence to support that the social media encourages violence, in its role of breaking news to the world, willingly or unwillingly, they aid the mission of the terrorist in dissemination the news of his nefarious acts.

It is however worthy of note that as far back as 1986, before the prevalence of social media, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had identified the need *“to find ways to starve the terrorist and the hijacker of the oxygen of publicity on which they depend”* (APPLE Jr., 1985). (Burke, 2016), extends this observation by drawing attention to the fact that the media has converged; that *“new technologies not only made it possible to produce propaganda with astonishing ease – they have also made it far easier to disseminate these films and images”*.

According to the 2015 Global terrorism Index report, Boko haram overtook ISIL as the world’s deadliest terrorist organization, with a spike of over 300 percent in their number of fatalities, and Nigeria was ranked as the world’s third most terrorized country alongside Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and Pakistan (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2016).

Boko Haram propagates its message of terror characteristically through video messages circulated on YouTube and to major online media. This is clearly their propaganda strategy as evidenced by the following analysis drawn from their posted video *“Arrivals of the Soldiers of the Caliphate in West Africa – Wilāyat Gharb Ifrīqīyyah”* (Zenlin, 2015):

- I. They rebranded by announcing transition from Boko Haram to Islamic State of West Africa, and swore allegiance to ISIS by video.
- II. Through partnership with ISIS, they upgraded the quality of their videos and launched a new logo.
- III. For show of force
- IV. To mock the Nigerian military of their inability to rescue over 200 abducted school girls from Chibok.
- V. This is alongside the upload of several other videos of killings and massacres.

Boko Haram is also known to utilize audio clips as a part of its new media kitty as evidenced by when Abubakar Shekau “hailed” the leader of ISIS Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as “*caliph*” in an audio message (Yahoo.com, 2015). This is however not as common as the use of video.

On the side of the government, the social media has equally played a significant role in counter-insurgency strategies. The gallantry of the Nigerian military in the field including the fallen heroes is usually celebrated by ordinary citizens via social media channels. The Nigerian army through its twitter handle and other channels use the social media to communicate

with the people, issue warnings on terror threats as well as counter boko haram propaganda on any issue necessary (Vanguard News, 2015).

An interesting dimension was introduced when the Australian negotiator Dr. Stephen Davies accused the Nigerian political class of being the sponsors and patrons of Boko Haram. In his revelation first on Australian radio and subsequently corroborated by telephone interview to Sahara reporters a Nigerian online news service. He named a political sponsor, accused a military commander, a serving legislator, the State Security Services and a staff of the Central bank of Nigeria (Sahara Reporters, 2014). This lent credence to what President Jonathan had severally said that *“Boko Haram had infiltrated his government”* (Mark, 2012).

He also raised alarm that the terror group will attempt to contact other terror groups specifically Al Shabaab and ISIL.

J. Peter Pham, a US expert on Boko Haram described it as *“a marriage in the making”*, and that the *“courtship”* was evident in their video productions as well as exchanges of *“shout out on social media”* (Pham, 2016). He considers the alliance as *“a real threat because the risk of the establishment of a highway of Jihad is very strong”*, pointing out what is



unfolding was pre-conceived by Al-Qaeda but was not able to actualize (Boscolo, 2016).

The phrase “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” subsist because terrorism is a contested concept and therefore difficult to define in general terms. In its over 200 years of existence, its meaning has changed per era, partially because of the difference in what constitutes an act of terror or not per place, per time. For my definition I will rely on a study conducted by Alex Schmid’s for the UN Crime Commission on the definitions of terrorism, where he ranked 109 definitions of terrorism.

He ranked political elements as second on the list, with 65% occurrence in the evaluated definitions, only after violence itself which scored 83.5% occurrence. Publicity, the aspect to which the use of social media speaks to is ranked with 21.5% occurrence (Schmid and Jongman, 2005).

Interpreting this study, it is shows that terrorism is closely linked to political elements, and that publicity is important to terrorist strategy. It is therefore foreseeable that new media is critical to Boko Haram’s survival strategy.

Furthermore, a renowned human rights lawyer in Nigeria, posited that there are elements of truth in the accusations of Dr. Davies judging by the

verifiable and explicit nature of his revelation. The onus would lie on the accused to prove otherwise but where empirical investigation is carried out to prove otherwise, the natural tendency is to “accept” Dr. Davies’ accusations. He subsequently advised prosecution at the level of the International Criminal Court.

Judging from the events of the past months concerning voluntary recovery of funds from arms deals and stolen funds indicting the category of people stipulated by Dr. Davies namely military men, heads of agencies, politicians and bankers. I consider Falana’s thoughts as admissible but this project will not delve into this to avoid prejudicial comments. It will however form an interesting area of study in the future.

### 2.3.2 The Niger Delta Militancy in the South-South Nigeria

The Niger Delta Avengers are the first armed militant group to emerge from the Niger Delta after the Umar Musa Yar’Adua amnesty program. BBC describes their name as that which “*came out of superhero comic book*” (Ewokor, 2016). If I may judge only from their name and their utterances, I would describe them as sensational.

As proclaimed on their website ([www.nigerdeltaavengers.org](http://www.nigerdeltaavengers.org)), they are *“young, well-travelled, well-educated and motivated”* militants with the intention of running the Nigerian economy aground. They have code-named their onslaught against the Nigerian government “Operation Red Economy”. They claim that the central government marginalizes the Niger delta region and degrades the environment with pollutants of crude oil extraction.

Since their emergence, they have carried a spate of attacks majorly on oil installations in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This has caused a significant decline in the crude oil earnings of the Nigerian state.

The Niger Delta Avengers basically use their website ([Nigerdeltaavengers.org](http://Nigerdeltaavengers.org), 2016), and their twitter handle ([Twitter.com/@NDAvengers](https://twitter.com/NDAvengers)) for their propaganda strategy. They essentially use their twitter handle for the following purposes:

- I. Announce their latest targets
- II. Threaghten other militant groups mostly Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta people (MEND)

- III. Issue warnings e.g. to international oil buyers and banning helicopter flights in the region.
- IV. Self-glorify through congratulatory messages to their “strike-team” upon successful ops.

Little is known about their leadership but analysts speculate that the immediate causes of resumption of armed militancy in the Niger delta as:

- I. The slashing of the amnesty budget by about 70% by President Buhari (Nigerianwatch.com, 2016)
- II. Regrouping of militants that their sponsors were left out of the amnesty program (Dailytrust.com.ng, 2016).
- III. The recent crackdown of the government on militants benefiting from illegal contracts.

Based on these speculations, it is noteworthy that the Niger Delta Avengers’ twitter handle uses a MEND oil militant’s picture previously used Agence France-Presse (AFP) in 2008 (BBC News, 2016). It is also important to note the behavior of other militant groups and their supporters online. While MEND and other militant groups tends to dissociate themselves from the current actions of the NDA militants, the Indigenous People of Biafra

(IPOB) and their sympathizers express open support for the Niger Delta Avengers on social media channels (News Biafra, 2016).

### 2.3.3 Rampage killings by Fulani Herdsmen: Video evidence

Rampage killings by Fulani Herdsmen in Nigeria is on the rise. Attacks have been recorded recently in the North-central, South-west and the South-eastern parts of Nigeria. Except for the North-central, other locations are just witnessing these attacks. Worst hit areas are Local Government Areas falling under Benue state namely: Agatu, Markurdi (Adaka, Adeke, Adem, Upahar, Tse-Kwaghbo, Apir and Mbalagah communities. Others are Gwer-West, Logo, Katsina-Ala, Kwande and Guma (Tse-Oragbo and Tse-Anundu) and Tarka Buruku.

This is a worrisome trend for most Nigerians. Analysts liken the situation to the proliferation of weapons and fighters in the Sahel after the demise of their Post-Ghadafi (Leigh, 2011). That the Boko Haram problem was a result of a splinter cell of Ghadafi-sponsored rebels and consequently the recent military onslaught against Boko Haram in the North-east has resulted in

splinters of terrorists melting into the herdsmen population and trickling down-south (Odunsi, 2016).

Others refuse this argument and relate the alleged tolerance of the government of these killings to sectional interest which continues to plague the Nigerian nation. They prefer to tie it to the politics of allocation of land as a federal grazing reserve (Nwankwo, 2016).

The Christian Association of Nigeria views it as a Jihadist agenda to Islamize Nigeria (Vanguard News, 2016).

Once again, politics, ethnicity and religious intolerance manifest as the underbelly factors of terrorism in Nigeria.

It is instructive to note that eye witness reports of survivors of the Nimbo killing perpetrated by the herdsmen reported the use of sophisticated mobile devices to record the massacre. Surfacing videos online corroborate this fact and substantiates deliberate action of the attacking herdsmen to record footage of their barbaric acts. This is vintage terrorist mindset and strategy as seen in Boko Haram killings (Times, 2016).

#### 2.3.4 The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) of the South East

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) is an assembly of ethnic groups mainly from the south eastern and parts of south-southern region of Nigeria. The ideology of the organization is primarily the restoration of the “The People’s Republic of Biafra” along pre-colonial lines.

There are other organizations that have similar mandates like Movement for the Actualization for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) but IPOB seems to be the one that is currently most vocal politically.

Its social media strategy is quite robust. Its website, boasts of a bouquet of social media tools namely live radio, twitter, Facebook, Pintrest, live TV broadcast, online picture gallery and several telephone and Skype numbers to call in and join conversation in real time ([www.ipob.org](http://www.ipob.org), 2014).

The IPOB organization use their new media tool for the following purposes:

- I. To organize and coordinate IPOB protests online and in cities around the world.
- II. To leverage on the social media interactive tools like twitter mentions, retweets and hashtags to attract and sustain a global

discussion on their agitation thereby attracting more attention to their cause.

- III. To recruit new members, communicate with existing ones, and organize them into groups.
- IV. To receive donations online to finance their operations.

IPOB and its propagandists claim that their communication strategy is so effective that it has earned them self-acclaimed world records:

- I. For protesting out of 80 countries of the world “Highest number of protests across the world, by the same people for the same cause” (Radio Biafra, 2016)
- II. Their leader also proclaimed the IPOB group as “the most peaceful freedom fighters in the world”.

Ironically, part of the charges alleged by the Nigerian government against their political leader Nnamdi Kanu were committed over a new media tool; online radio (Biafra Radio). Nonetheless, according to Kanu, aside from their fundamental agitation for sovereignty, other listed reasons for



agitation are corruption, power and economic mismanagement plaguing the nation (Kanu, 2016).

#### 2.4 CORRUPTION AND CAMPAIGN FINANCING IN NIGERIA

Corruption in its most basic sense means abuse of public power or position for personal gains. Transparency international also defines corruption in these lines as “the abuse of public office for private gains for the benefit of the holder of the office or some third party”. It further explains that “corruption corrodes the fabric of the society and it undermines the people’s trust in political and economic systems” (Transparency.org, 2016).

Examples of political corruption usually perpetrated by government officials are embezzlement and cronyism, bribery, extortion, influence peddling, and fraud. Without doubt corruption is a major deterrent for free and fair elections, and a hinderer of good governance.

Likewise corruption, campaign finance is a major concern in Nigeria and a major culprit in shredding the fabric of equity and fairness during elections. There is a direct link between the two because large sums of money illegally acquired can create unfair advantage and avenue for under-the-table favors for some candidates.

In Nigeria today, a few moneybags can float and finance a party almost as an investment, with the expectation of reward through political offices and juicy contracts once their candidate assumes office. This is an identified flaw in the system that some political parties are hoping to block (Ezigbo, 2015).

According to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the financing structure of Nigerian political parties is yet to avail a level playing field for the rich as well as the poor. This problem is not common to Nigeria alone as we hear of large corporate campaign donations in the United States and drug money in Latin America, finding its ways into politics (Casas-Zamora, 2010).

Okunade et al submits that electoral laws governing how parties should secure and spend their funds are ineffective as there is a lack of knowledge about them. As a result, these laws have limited enforceability.

In my opinion, the key to enforceability lies in the proper legislation followed up with a robust financial intelligence. Africa does not present much of a choice on this matter since politicians tend to prey on “limited enforceability”. In the Nigerian case, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is there to collaborate with INEC to enforce financial intelligence in the political sector.

In the words of Bernie Sanders, US democrat presidential hopeful “our vision for American democracy should be a nation in which all people, regardless of their income, can participate in the political process, can run for office without begging for contributions from the wealthy and the powerful” (Bernie Sanders, 2016).

I also subscribe to the thoughts of Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Nigeria’s former minister of finance, stating that in order for corruption to release its influence on our politics, there is an urgent need to restructure campaign financing in Nigeria (TEDx Talk, 2014).

I believe that there is an urgent need to remove the influence of money from our political process lest we run the risk of running an unending cycle of corruption and bad governance. It is when the overbearing influence of money is removed from the electioneering process that the politicians will stop being compelled to speak to political godfathers and sponsors whose interest only lie in the inordinate acquisition of more money and more power. They will then begin to speak to the real people, the larger society comprising of the working class, low-income earners, women, the aged, the sick and the poor of the society.

In Nigeria, the CBN governor raised the alarm that over 20 billion dollars was missing from government coffers and gave a detailed analysis of how this fraud was perpetrated. Instead of the government of the day to take expected proactive action to recover, he was witch hunted politically and forced out of government (Sahara Reporters, 2016).

This alleged missing money is the basis of several electoral malpractices.

The piled up evidences ranging from leaked audio conversations ([www.saharareporters.com](http://www.saharareporters.com), 2015) to confessions on the air (ChannelsTv, 2015) and monies traced to personal accounts, support the position of

analysts that these funds were diverted to fund upcoming elections in Ekiti state, Osun State and the presidential elections. This was the basis political manipulations at state level, and national level popularly referred to as “Ekitigate” (Channels TV, 2015) and later “Dansukigate”.

The Former minister of finance in Nigeria Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala whom is also mentioned as a caucus member in the Jonathan cabinet, considers that looking for a way to finance elections in Africa is a “legitimate good” and therefore it should be considered for government budget allocation. Other analysts submit that if government over-regulates campaign funding or allocate for it in the budget, it will lead to government control. George Will posits that it is “restricting freedom of speech by restricting money” (Will, 2014). He argues that restricting money in politics will be met with stiff opposition by stakeholders like the media, while pointing out the fact campaign donation is one of the way measures of political participation.

In Africa, the issue is more of using “dirty money” or diverting public funds to garner unfair advantage in politics. If we are to go by the recent revelations of how money was used to subvert the rule of law in Ekiti state, Nigeria and how the Nigeria’s public funds was from arms purchase to fund

President Jonathan's political campaign, it is indisputable that there is a link between corruption and politics and bad governance in Nigeria.

The onus now lies with African think-tanks and the legislature as well as election observers and other stakeholders to factor this appropriately in the equation.

## 2.5 WESTERN POLITICAL INTERFERENCE AND WESTERN SAFE HAVENS

During the Anti-corruption Summit in London (2016), Prime Minister Cameron described Nigeria and Afghanistan as “fantastically corrupt” before the Queen of England in a conversation (BBC, 2016). While it is a known fact that Nigeria's corruption index is not very favorable, the deliberate comment made by the PM to the hearing of the media is considered one-sided by the Nigerian government and ironical by the general public.

Although Nigerian president thereafter alluded the comment as a “truth”, his response in a news conference is equally revealing. Stating his lack of interest in apologies but for Britain to fast track the repatriation of stolen

funds to the Nigerian state. He later capped it in his speech for western nations to stop creating “safe havens for corrupt money” (YouTube, 2016).

The question then subsist: Who is really fantastically corrupt? The Nigerians accused of stealing government funds or the British equally accused of creating safe havens for proceeds of corruption?

What is most evident in this poser is the international nature of corruption and the need for international cooperation to dismantle endemic or systemic corruption hence, the Anti-corruption summit. This is an appropriate response to the global problem and the only way that the dividend of democracy and good governance will reach the common man.

In my opinion, the international community is on the right path in their fight against corruption and good governance particularly in Nigeria. The British-led global declaration against corruption enumerates the following commitments and action plan (Gov.uk, 2016):

- I. Corruption should be exposed – ensuring there is nowhere to hide.
- II. The corrupt should be pursued and punished and those who have suffered from corruption should be supported.
- III. Corruption should be driven out wherever it may exist.

These are relevant steps that are actionable by the following public diplomacy effort:

- I. Denouncing corrupt governments and promoting human rights at the local level.
- II. Promoting and reinforcing good governance at the local level.
- III. Internationalizing the fight against corruption.

## 2.6 CORRUPTION AND BAD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

One of the most famous campaign comments of the 2015 presidential elections is attributed to the then APC presidential candidate, Muhammad Buhari: "If Nigeria doesn't kill corruption, corruption will kill Nigeria".

In the 4th republic, several major corruption cases have rocked the Nigerian nation but there are some that have been a recurrent decimal and have simply refused to leave the national consciousness.

Aside from actions of civil organizations, the social media is one of the means by which such cases are kept alive. Often times they trend under related hashtags. They form the cornerstone of desperate cry of the people, that the commonwealth of the nation is being siphoned away by a



few. Corruption is what stops the people from feeling the impact of the oil wealth of the nation and by extension, good governance. Corruption is also responsible for the unimaginable scale of environmental degradation happening in the Niger delta region. The fact remains that the incessant pollution by oil spills and gas flaring have robbed many of the natives that depend on the land of their livelihood. This is coupled with the fact much money is voted for projects but little of these social palliatives is concluded or delivered.

The Haliburton case is one of such that refuses to go away, and also stand out as an example of the negative role some multinational companies play in the web of corruption. In a much publicized case, Jack Stanley the head of KBR, a subsidiary of Halliburton, pled guilty to the financially inducing a succession of Nigerian government officials to the tune of 180 million dollars, in return for engineering, procurement and construction contracts valued at an estimated 6 billion dollars. This violates the United States foreign corrupt practices act. Government action taken against him resulted in a conviction, amendment of company procedures and the payment of the second largest FCPA fines yet imposed (Justice.gov, 2012).

In contrast, Nigeria has failed to prosecute or conclude investigations on the country's citizens alleged to have participated or benefitted from these illegal transactions. Rather, there is more evidence of feet-dragging on the part of government agencies perhaps because of caliber of Nigerians involved.

Through the new media, all these facts are available and accessible to the average Nigerian, and it helps him see what is often interpreted as insincerity of government.

## 2.7 Public diplomacy interventions in Nigeria

### 2.7.1 White House Diplomacy

According to Ambassador John Campbell, "the success or failure of rule of law, and ethnic religious reconciliation in Nigeria is a bellwether for the entire continent" (Campbell and Bunche, 2016). In other words, what happens to Nigeria as a nation is bound to affect sub-Saharan Africa and by extension have a global ripple effect.

The Nigerian 2015 presidential election was set against the backdrop of several reports rating the potential for a violent process as very high. The Council for Foreign Relations had analyzed the ethnicity and religion would be leveraged upon for political gains and this was a dangerous trajectory.

The security situation was no better. Boko Haram's had recently declared a caliphate bigger in territory than what ISIL controlled, and its terror rating was the deadliest ahead of ISIL and Al Shabaab. Also with a drop in the global oil prices coupled with questionable fiscal discipline, Nigeria's economic fortunes was fast dwindling.

Against this backdrop, it was clear that the US and the world could not afford to let the current political and security situation of Nigeria persist let alone subsist. It would mean the world conceded the biggest landmass to the world's deadliest terrorist group.

The US Bureau of counterterrorism through its website and flyers designated the leader of Boko Haram, Abubakar Shekau, as an international terrorist and placed a bounty of 7 million USD on his head, 2 million more than the leader of leader of the Taliban, Mullah Omar (DipNote, 2014). This

price comparison is to put the importance of stopping Boko Haram into perspective.

From a human rights standpoint, the US government and the Nigerian government traded banter at different fora on the issue of arms sales. The US stated that the Nigerian military's use of arms was ultimately resulting in major civilian casualties. Noting that clearance for certain classes of weapons was subject to conformity to the US laws. The Nigerian position was that the US was not only not selling, but blocking the sales of the class of weapons that could deliver the "killer punch" to the militants (Ibekwe, 2014). Nigeria will subsequently suffer cash seizure from the South African government in an embarrassing secret arms deal, and blocking of a fly-over permit over Saudi Arabia of weapons-laden cargo plane flying from Pakistan to Nigeria (The Times of India, 2016).

The United States left no one in doubt of their intention and determination to participate in the Nigerian elections, within the provisions of international laws. Although analysts suggested the US policy on Nigeria was a regime change, anchoring their argument on a convergence of

opinions that Nigeria will become a failed petro-state if the Jonathan administration were to continue on its current trajectory.

When the announcement for the postponement was made, President Obama personally called Secretary of State John Kerry to fly directly to Abuja and deliver a strong worded message, that the US considers “May 29 handover date as sacrosanct”. Speaking on the envisaged post-election crises in Nigeria, he also told President Jonathan that the US and its allies will not issue visa to any one perceived to have stoked tension or violence. In other words, if you combust Nigeria, the US will make sure you’re caught in the fire you created. Judging from the efficacy of the US blockage of Nigerian arms purchase, this open threat could not but be taken seriously. Efforts ensuring a peaceful election in Nigeria did not end there for the US. It is on record that the Vice President of the United States reached out on phone, to President Jonathan two critical times during the electioneering process. Shortly before the election, to express support for the use of card readers to support the voter verification process, and after the elections to commend him on his leadership role particularly on his stance on peace.

### 2.7.2 Chatham House Diplomacy

Chatham House, home of the Royal Institute for International Affairs UK, has been playing a significant role in contributing independent ideas and perspectives for the benefit of the global community. It played a significant role during the buildup to the Nigeria 2015 presidential elections. Its grounds became where important clarifications were made as well as justifications for actions of government. Chatham house speeches are streamed live and are widely available on social media. They also maintain an online archive, a YouTube channel as well as a website where audio and transcripts of speeches given over time can accessed.

Rtd. General Muhamadu Buhari in his speech on Prospects for Democratic Consolidation in Africa: Nigeria's Transition (Buhari, 2015), he used the Chatham house platform to clear the air on his alleged dictatorial tendencies. In his words, "I take responsibility for whatever happened under my watch", and "before you is a former military ruler and a converted democrat". These comments, intended to launder his militarized image, raised the level of public discourse on him back home in Nigeria.

While the opposition posited that APC paid and doctored the audience at Chatham house (Premium Times Nigeria, 2015), rather, I believe that it was a carefully timed and orchestrated event, that Nigerians needed to hear, and a product of public diplomacy effort by the international community. It is important to note that this was his last political speech in the diaspora before the election.

On the same day, incumbent president Jonathan chose to step up his online campaign via Facebook, where he posted his famous comment “Never again shall Nigerian territory be occupied by terrorists”, which was widely reported and applauded.

These activities of politicians in the real world is actively followed by all stakeholders in the virtual world. This brings about intimacy of the electorate on knowledge of person, past actions and current ideologies. It must also mentioned that there is a lot of noise and false information online which is intended to misinform and misdirect, but where only credible sources are taken into account, such experiences only lead to a well-rounded decision.

Other important speeches delivered on the Nigerian 2015 elections at Chatham house include that of the National Security Adviser, Rtd. Col. Sambo Dansuki giving reasons why the Nigerian elections must be postponed from February 14 to March 28, 2015.

### 2.7.3 The Abuja Peace Accord

Pre-2015 presidential elections, it was hard to conclude that the events in the country was leading up to a peaceful conduct of the elections. While public analysts social commentators like Femi Falana SAN opined that the signing of a peace accord in itself cannot bring about peaceful conduct of elections, that the basic ingredients for peace like respect for one another and the rule of law must be in place and adhered to. Falana further added that the most important factor that can guarantee peace is for people's votes to count (Vanguard News, 2015).

The international community however still saw the need to prevent violence through proactive steps rather than waiting to react to crisis.



The Abuja peace accord was initiated by seasoned diplomat Prof. Bola Akinyemi and conducted under the watch of eminent, international figures of African descent like former U.N. Secretary General, Kofi Anan and former Commonwealth Secretary General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku. The accord birthed the National Peace Committee (NPC), steered by former Nigerian head of state and ECOWAS mediator Rtd. Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar alongside other respected Nigerians like Bishop Mathew Kukah. The NPC was charged with the responsibility of sustain dialogue between the major political actors before, during and after the elections.

According to Ighosa (2015), the signing of the peace accord played a significant role in preventing a repeat of the post electoral violence of 2011 that caused the death of over 800 Nigerians.

This preventive diplomacy engineered by the international community with the United States, UN, ECOWAS, EU playing key roles played a significant role in moderating the actions and reactions of politicians pre and post elections. It is laudable because it set a precedence was also widely adopted at the state level, and it has henceforth become a feature in volatile African nations.

The new media is significant in this peace accord because a lot of the alleged inflammatory comments, hate speech and character assassination was being perpetrated online. An example is the “Lion of Bourdillon” video released by Africa Independent Television on YouTube on behalf of PDP, directly targeting an influential APC politician Asiwaju Bola Tinubu. Another widely condemned act was the “death-wish advert” published in national dailies and online on the APC presidential candidate<sup>1</sup>.

#### 2.7.4 Major Political Parties and Frontline Candidates in the 4<sup>th</sup> Republic

##### 2.7.4.1 Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) 1999-2015

The People’s Democratic Party (PDP) was founded in 1998 by members of different political groups namely the G-18 and G-34. The birth of the party coincided with Nigeria’s transition to the 4<sup>th</sup> republic.

From 1998 to 2015, PDP has been consistently winning the presidential elections in Nigeria. From 1998 to 2007 Olusegun Obasanjo was the presidential candidate of the party and the winner of the election. In April 2007, Umaru Musa Yar’Adua was the party’s flag bearer and winner of the presidential elections. Unfortunately, his mandate was cut short as he died on May 2010 of chronic illness.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://saharareporters.com/2015/01/19/governor-fayose-places-death-wish-advert-buhari-national-newspapers>

The Obasanjo regime being the return to democracy after 16 years of military rule was widely celebrated. Part of the successes attributed to his government are the significant reduction in Nigeria's foreign debt and paving the way for Nigeria's mobile revolution.

He is also remembered for the establishment of an anti-corruption agency Economic and financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), and his policies on Public Private Partnership (PPP). Economic analysts concluded that Obasanjo's government sailed on soaring crude prices and not on necessarily on sound economic policies and good governance.

Obasanjo was accused of favoritism in his privatization agenda, that he only created opportunity for his personal friends and political benefactors in his political party PDP.

The biggest damper on his popularity was his attempt at a third term in office. This tested his democratic credentials and the civil society and the legislature resisted this attempt successfully.

In 1999, oil price per barrel was \$19 per barrel. By 2000, it had doubled to \$35 and by 2007, oil prices had risen to \$90 per barrel. By 2007 when Umaru Musa Yar'Adua took over, the global economic crises was full gear, global oil prices were in decline as well as Nigeria's local crude oil production.

The Yar'Adua government inherited two socio-political problems namely militancy in the Niger delta and insurgency in the North-East.

Faced with dwindling resources, Yar'Adua and his National Security Adviser (NSA) opted to resolve the problem in the creeks through an amnesty program that saw relative peace return to the Niger delta. Billions of naira was invested in social programs like training and rehabilitation of the agitating youths. Little was done in the area of environment cleanup and policy reforms.

On the emerging insurgency of Boko haram in the Northeast, in a swift operation, the government forces chose hard power and frontally engaged the terrorists. Part of the casualties of this military operation is the Mohamed Yusuf, who was killed in captivity. He was alleged that he killed while "trying to escape". Many analysts including the Boko Haram sect believed this killing to be extra-judicial it detourorated whatever chances there was to dialogue.

On corruption, he reversed and revised several decisions made by the Obasanjo regime, citing them as not following due process and some corrupt. Notable among the policy revisions is the removal of subsidy on kerosene and the revocation of the sale of government owned refineries.

Sadly, he passed on on May 2, 2010 from critical illness.

Upon the death of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan assumed the mantle as acting president on May 6, 2016. He concluded their joint tenure.

Often described as a politician without political base with elections due in 2011, his rise to the position of acting president was perceived as a brief sojourn rather than an actual threat to power brokers until Obasanjo threw his weight behind him. He was re-elected as president on May 29, 2011 under the PDP flag.

Journalists like Ben Shemary are of the opinion that his name bestowed him a cultural advantage. Ebele means God's wish and his first name is Goodluck.

Between 2011 and 2015, there was not much credited to his tenure as achievements. It was a dark period in the nation's history. Despite the price of oil per barrel rising to as high as \$110, Nigeria accumulated foreign debt and depleted its National reserves instead of otherwise. It was also a season that terrorism spiked in Nigeria to unprecedented global levels.

#### 2.7.4.2 All Progressives Congress (APC) 2015- till date

All Progressives Congress (APC) was favored in Feb 2013 as an alliance of Nigeria's 3 largest of political parties the ACN, the CPC and ANPP.

By the end of 2013, APC had grown to be the most formidable political group in Nigeria's history. Nov 2013 saw a significant number of the incumbent PDP defect

to the ranks of the APC. Among these political defectors included 5 sitting governors Abdul Fatah Ahmed of Kwara State, Murtala Nyako of Adamawa State, Aliyu Wamako of Sokoto State, and most significantly Governor Rotimi Amaechi of River State and Governor Rabiu Kwakwanso of Kano State.

The December 2014 APC presidential primaries saw Muhamadu Buhari emerge as the presidential candidate to challenge the PDP presidential incumbent, Goodluck Jonathan. Buhari is a former military dictator who was overthrown in a coup in 1985, but later converted into a democrat and ran unsuccessful campaigns in 2003, 2007 and 2011.

The APC ran on an anti-PDP agenda and promised to offer stronger leadership in Nigeria's fight against corruption, combating Boko Haram and sustain economic development. It relied Nigeria's cases like endemic corruption in government, the lack-luster military response to Boko haram and the PDP's failure to provide basic services to the nation.

As the residential polls scheduled for February drew closer, it became clear to commentators and analysts that the APC has grown to be the first political opposition that could unseat an incumbent president in Nigeria's history.

Fearing a major loss, the PDP which had been in power since 1995 forced the February elections to be postponed six weeks while the state security services

were deployed to fight against book haram. The APC emerged from the presidential polls with a historic victory removing an incumbent president through vote.

This changed the political map. Nigeria's voting patterns during the 2011 presidential elections revealed a near 50-50 split with the voters in the south of the country voting for the PDP and the voters in the north voting for the opposition party. However, the 2015 election map shows that the APC gained ground and renewed the majority votes in the south west of the country including Kwara, Oyo, Ogun, Osun and Ondo States. The APC also gained the majority votes in Kogi, Benue and Adamawa States, all States that the PDP had traditional won.

The 2015 gubernatorial races showed a similar trend with the PDP losing in all gubernatorial races except in Gombe and Taraba States and the PDP stronghold areas in the South-south of Cross Rivers, Enugu, Ebonyi, Akwa Ibom, Abia, Rivers and Delta states. The APC did secure a governor victory in Imo State which is traditionally a PDP stronghold.

The APC also took the majority seats in the National Assembly with no fewer than 61 senators compared to the PDP's 48. The APC House of representative members numbered 214 out of the 360 available seats making the APC in majority control of the house, senate and presidency.

Political analysts Dr. Malcom Fabiyi and Dr. Adeleke Odunuga after reviewing the APC victories, concluded that the APC should be cautious on its assessment of its hold on the Nigerian political system. Fabiyi and Odunuga noted that the polls were not won or lost because of grand strategy. It was simply a referendum of the people against PDP's unique brand of scorching corruption.

Like earlier governments, the APC government is confronted with major political, economic and security challenges. Successively, these problems have gotten worse. Against the backdrop of Nigeria being in deep crises, the APC made many promises to the Nigeria electorate in order to garner votes. While many particularly the PDP thought their campaign promises were bogus, they were made and they were elected upon these promises.

#### 2.7.5 The new media citizen journalism and citizen activism

According to Roland Digieneri, citizen reporter for Radar UK, *"Newspapers are owned by politicians and government. They have agendas. We have a different angle to central media's angle"*. While this statement does not exonerate the citizen journalist from bias, his opinion resonates the mood of many and the basis of the distrust for the traditional media particularly in Africa.



Citizen journalism on a broad note refers to the kind of journalism where the user or the audience also participates in the creation of content rather than wait to be fed by the traditional media outlets.

With the advent of mobile technologies, the citizen journalist has become a valuable addition to the list of stakeholders in an electioneering process.

Shayne Bowman and Chris Willis explains that “the intent of this participation is to provide independent, reliable, accurate, wide-ranging and relevant information that a democracy requires”<sup>2</sup>. Citizen journalist plies his trade via common social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, twitter, Whatsapp and blogs. His tools include all user generate contents like photos, videos and comments from direct sources or secondary sources such as likes and retweets.

US based National Association of Citizen Journalists classifies citizen journalists as accidental journalists, advocacy journalists and grassroots journalists.

For areas like sub-Saharan Africa, it is important to leverage on what Radar UK describes as the least common denominator for access. According to

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<sup>2</sup> Shayne Bowman and Chris Willis in ‘We Media: How Audiences are Shaping the Future of News and Information’- The Media Center, American Press Institute, 2003 Page 9

them, they accept text messages and Whatsapp for this purpose. These are the new media tools with the least technological overhead and know how. Facebook and Twitter are equally popular and can be acceptable tools for analysis. As we think of the lowest denominator tools, we should also bear the tech-savvy enthusiasts in mind and their tools of choice. Examples are live-streaming and mobile apps, infographics to mention a few. It is not likely that the Nigerians in diaspora will create content with least denominator new media tools.

The importance of the role of the citizen journalist can be situated on the logic that one correspondent or observer can only be at one place per time however, technology gives the advantage of receiving reports from many geographic spreads at any given time.

According to Alexa.com, a commercial web traffics and analytics company, leading citizen journalism sites in Nigeria include:

- I. Google.com.ng: This is the localized version of google.com.
- II. Nairaland.com: Started in 2005 by netpreneur Seun Osewa. 65% of traffic originates from Nigeria while India and the US account for 7.1% and 5.6% consecutively

- III. Vanguard news: This is reputed as Nigeria's most reputed online news source large because it is considered to be independent of political control.
- IV. The Punch: Also a daily newspaper known for its wide circulation across Nigeria. It is also considered as independent of political control
- V. Linda Ikeji's blog: Former model and blogger with major interest in writing on fashion trends and major events in Nigeria
- VI. Saharareporters: Owned by a Nigerian Sowore Omoyele, it's an online news service dedicated to exposing corruption in Africa. In partnership with citizen journalists, Saharareporters is known, in fact notorious in government circles for causing governments a lot so embarrassment through their exposures. Their syndicated online shows namely keeping it real with Adeola and Dr. Damages enjoy a lot of followership amongst Africans.

These bloggers, satirists, commentators and news services constitute a group of people that are influencers. This project will further help to unearth their geographic spread, their core values and roles during the electioneering process.

## 2.7.6 LANGUAGE DIPLOMACY IN A DATA-DRIVEN WORLD.

Diplomacy is very traditional and conservationist in its way but we all agree that the world is evolving technologically. The more data we produce per time, the more people will rely on graphical and data visualization tools for interpretation. We live in times when effective communication is sometimes limited to 140 characters, and part of our conversations are held using emojis. A study conducted by Microsoft Corporation reveal that our digital lifestyle has shortened out attention span hence the world's reliance on data visualization and analytical tools.

This is precise science or art, which leaves no room for ambiguity.

Therefore if diplomacy is to have any meaning to the society, it has to use communication tools that the society can relate to particularly when information is meant for the consumption of the larger society. A lot of our communication is done using graphics and videos therefore data visualization tools is a meaningful way to reach out.

As Ambassador Claudio Bisogneiro captures it, "While still preserving its traditional roots and processes, diplomacy is changing!, technology and innovation have been important factors in the evolution of diplomacy and

we need not only to embrace them, but to really understand their role in what we do and how we relate with all players, traditional and less-traditional.”

In the context of elections, the role of the international community as stakeholders in the elevation of democratic norms and practices particularly in Africa cannot be overemphasized. For the Nigerian presidential elections, the ECOWAS electoral assistance division is mandated statutorily to observe the process, and all presidential elections held within the sub-region. Other international observer missions may have derive their right to participation through treaties, membership or universally accepted practices. A. Santa-Cruz (2005) posits that national elections have become international affairs. This is a valid position judging from rate of participation of international organizations in elections.

During any electioneering process, a situation whereby there is lack of coherence in the published findings of different election observation missions on the same election casts shadows of doubt on the credibility of such important documents while not sparing its authors.

The case of the Nigerian 2003 presidential election is an example where the declaration of the European Union Observer mission, and that of the African Union and ECOWAS, were distinctly different. The EU was blatant in its language of condemning the prevalent electoral malpractices reported by its observers while the AU and ECOWAS missions were more cautious and measured.

To the EU, it seemed more paramount to maintain high professional standard and the political independence of the observer mission, while the African institutions were more willing to compromise on the quality of democracy to avoid post-election crises. By and large, these somewhat polarized reports submitted to the larger society showed lack of concurrence and it raised criticisms. The use of ambiguous language, that could be interpreted for and against also did more disservice than some service. Some analysts interpreted it as escapist tendencies of the international community not wanting to be boxed in.

Dirk Kohnert (2004) concludes that “effectiveness could still be enhanced significantly if observer missions will follow declared aims and improve the methodology of election observation correspondingly”. I am of the opinion

that the improvement in methodology required for observer missions to rely more on data-driven tools that the open society can relate to.

The avoidance of diplomatic bias in election observation reports can be avoided by alluding to efficiency by standardization. If observer missions will rely more on the use of empirical data driven tools that are derived through an accepted model to guide observation missions, this will result in more homogenous outcomes that is bound to strengthen the veracity of their reports hence enjoy wider acceptance.

#### 2.7.7 THE ELECTORAL INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK

Electoral Integrity is synonymous to free and fair elections. The framework is the structure put in place that guarantees that people can participate in genuine elections, free of violence, suppression and manipulation. This is provided for in article 25 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights<sup>3</sup>. According to Prof. Pippa Norris (2012), Electoral integrity reflects shared international principles, values, and standards of democratic elections which apply universally to all countries and which

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>

should be found at all stages during the electoral cycle, including the pre-electoral period, the campaign, polling day and its aftermath. In this definition, “aftermath” in my opinion, refers to good governance commonly called “dividends of democracy”.

Countries in the world particularly in Africa, share a common challenge at meeting the international standards of electoral integrity. Where they are flawed, the tell-tale signs are often evident resulting in the exact opposite, electoral malpractices and bad governance.

In Africa, the cycle of electoral malpractices and bad governance often manifest as stealing public funds to gain unfair advantage during elections, and then after having fraudulently won, you gain power perceived stronger than government institutions. Then because you were not checked, you just right back to iterate the corrupt practice, stealing, to prepare for the next round of elections.

The Durban declaration of 2002 on the principles governing elections in Africa<sup>4</sup>, the African charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance of

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<sup>4</sup> African Union. 2002. African Union Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, AHG/Decl.1 (XXXVIII). [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation\\_democracy/ahg.htm](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/ahg.htm), accessed: 12 May 2015.



2007<sup>5</sup> and the ECOWAS protocol on democracy and good governance<sup>6</sup>, are examples of relevant texts, treaties and protocols that the international community rely on as mechanisms to improve the quality of elections and promote good governance in Africa.

The Electoral Integrity Project (EIP) in partnership with Hanns Seidel foundation reported eight major findings on electoral integrity in Africa<sup>7</sup>.

Some of them are:

- I. The degree of threats to electoral integrity is more severe in Africa when compared to the rest of the world
- II. The types of problems in Africa are similar to those found in the rest of the world. Put simply, there is no African electoral exceptionalism
- III. The report highlights the fact that elections can fail long before election day, so attention should be paid to the electoral dynamics and institutional quality over the entire election cycle not just election day

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<sup>5</sup> African Union. 2007. African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. <http://www.au.int/en/content/african-charter-democracy-elections-and-governance>, accessed: 12 May 2015.

<sup>6</sup>

[http://www.internationaldemocracywatch.org/attachments/350\\_ECOWAS%20Protocol%20on%20Democracy%20and%20Good%20Governance.pdf](http://www.internationaldemocracywatch.org/attachments/350_ECOWAS%20Protocol%20on%20Democracy%20and%20Good%20Governance.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.hss.de/fileadmin/suedafrika/downloads/Final\\_African\\_Electoral\\_Integrity\\_Ranking.pdf](http://www.hss.de/fileadmin/suedafrika/downloads/Final_African_Electoral_Integrity_Ranking.pdf)

- IV. State resources for elections are important, but not determinant
- V. Difficulties in regulating campaign finance extend across the continent
- VI. The vote count is consistently the highest rated part of the election cycle
- VII. Countries with good overall electoral integrity may still perform poorly in certain dimensions of the electoral cycle, on the other hand, low overall performers may excel in certain dimensions

Two country case studies of Malawi and Mozambique highlight that countries with similar levels of economic development can have vastly different outcomes of electoral integrity

With the spate of post-election crises riddling the continent in recent times, it is acceptable that the threats to electoral integrity is more serious on the African continent. Corruption and stealing of public funds to finance politics remain the order of the day in countries like Nigeria. This is not exclusive to African states alone as Hopkins (cited in Kura,) noted. Citing occasions of funding scandals and violation of funding regulation in several EU states. The situation is however more dire in Africa because the proceeds are of

often stolen directly from government coffers thereby contributing to already prevalent poverty. Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Nigeria's immediate past minister of finance identifies "the way we finance or do not finance elections as one of the root causes of corruption". How we finance our democracies in Africa is therefore key to the integrity of the process itself.

Contrary to what most people believe, the electioneering process does not start and end on polling day. Elections involve several time-bound elements that constitute the electoral cycle. All these elements have a contributory role that culminates in a successful electioneering process.

The Global Commission on Elections, Security and Democracy (2012) defines a genuine election as *"any election that is based on the democratic principles of universal suffrage and political equality as reflected in international standards and agreements, and is professional, impartial, and transparent in its preparation and administration throughout the electoral cycle."*<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Global Commission on Elections, Democracy and Security. 2012. Deepening Democracy: A Strategy for Improving the Integrity of Elections Worldwide (September 2012). Stockholm/Geneva: International IDEA/Kofi Annan foundation. Page 13.

Based on this definition it is pertinent to realize that every component of the electoral cycle is important to the outcome and therefore must be given adequate consideration.

## CHAPTER 3

### OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the methods adopted in carrying out this research.

The research methods and design, population and sample size, sources and nature of data, model specification, and limitation of the study.

#### 3.2 Research Methodology and Design

In Albert Einstein's word *"not all things worth counting are countable and not all countable things are worth counting"*

This project adopted a mixed approach research methodology. This is due to the fact that both the qualitative and the quantitative approaches will avail significant research benefits to this area of study.

This project incorporates elements of science as well as that of the arts in the sense that, the statistical outcomes of big data analytical tools is fundamentally scientific and quantitative, while the social outcomes and deductions from reports and texts to be analyzed are qualitative in nature.

In-depth interviews with relevant personalities and focus groups was carried out to gain in-context insight on the area of study.

Analysis of texts and documents was also carried out to expand the scope with a view to uncovering recurrent themes in order to enrich arguments on patterns, trends, intent or behaviour.

On the quantitative aspect of this research, using relevant search criteria, this study sourced social media data from twitter and some blogs considered to be influencers in the Nigerian political scene.

For the data mining exercise, necessary codes were written in R programming language and imported into the Knime Graphical User Interface where big data analytics was performed.

Sentiment analytics and predictive analytics was performed concurrently using a tag cloud, histogram and a polarity table to arriving at a measure of positivity or negativity around the top two presidential candidates and their political parties. In this analysis, relevant hashtags, retweets, mentions, favorites and likes constituted critical data that helped our analysis of social sentiments hence our inferences and conclusions.

This study also used data extracted through the above explained methodology to source for preliminary results of the presidential election released over the new media channels and compared it with the final results as published by the EMB.

A correlation was performed with a view to determining the relationship with these two datasets.

For the qualitative aspect of this project, the Electoral Integrity Model was selected as a guide from a new media point of view, to evaluate the roles of the new media on the stages of the electoral cycle as well as on the analyses of reports from the European Union as an international election observer, a local civil society group as well as the electoral umpire's final report.

Other stakeholders in the election were also sufficiently reviewed as secondary sources of data and they featured significantly in this study.

The period reviewed was 16th November, 2014 to May 29<sup>th</sup> 2016.

### 3.3 Population and Sample Size

The population of the study include all categories of stakeholders that participated in the electioneering process in Nigeria in 2015.

The Stakeholders include: the Electorate, the Traditional Media, Nigerians-in Diaspora, Political Parties and their candidates, Social Media Influencers, the Electoral Management Body, the Academia and the International Community.

For the qualitative aspect, stratified random sampling was done. Data was sourced from different new media sources namely twitter, Facebook and URLs. Data was randomly pulled from recent tweets as well as older tweets that coincided with the period under review.

### 3.4 Limitations of the study

This study faced some constraints. Access to data with particular reference to personal interviews was a problem. Most people did not want to be quoted. The Researcher was referred to the official report or communique or declaration in many cases.

The researcher was officially a technical member of an election observation mission that covered the election being understudied. Concerted effort was



made by the researcher not to be bias in judgment and also not to just conform to the official positions of the team he was part of.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This research work utilized data mined from several new media channels on the internet namely Facebook, Twitter and URLs.

It also relied on reports from the Electoral Management Body, INEC, the EU as well as

#### 4.2 Quantitative analysis

##### 4.2.1 Correlation

STATE	AS DECLARED BY INEC						AS DECLARED BY SOCIAL MEDIA				% APC AND PDP VOTES		TOTAL VALID VOTES CAST	
	APC	% VOTE (APC)	PDP	% VOTE (PDP)	TOTAL APC AND PDP VOTES	% APC AND PDP VOTES	APC	% VOTE (APC)	PDP	% VOTE (PDP)				
Abia State	13,394	3.43%	368,303	94.18%	381,697	97.61%	13,394	3.43%	368,303	94.18%	97.61%	391045		
Adamawa State	374,701	58.91%	251,664	39.57%	626,365	98.48%	374,701	58.91%	251,664	39.57%	98.48%	636018		
Akwa Ibom State	58,411	5.74%	953,304	93.73%	1,011,715	99.47%	58,411	5.74%	953,304	93.73%	99.47%	1017064		
Anambra State	17,920	2.60%	660,762	95.96%	678,682	98.56%	17,929	2.60%	660,000	95.85%	98.45%	688584		
Bauchi State	931,598	91.30%	86,085	8.44%	1,017,683	99.74%	931,598	91.30%	86,085	8.44%	99.74%	1020338		
Bayelsa State	5,194	1.42%	361,209	98.40%	366,403	99.82%	5,194	1.42%	361,209	98.40%	99.82%	367067		
Benue State	373,961	54.73%	303,737	44.45%	677,698	99.19%	373,961	54.73%	303,737	44.45%	99.19%	683264		
Borno State	473,543	94.35%	25,640	5.11%	499,183	99.45%	473,543	94.35%	25,640	5.11%	99.45%	501920		
Cross River State	28,368	6.30%	414,863	92.09%	443,231	98.38%	28,368	6.30%	414,863	92.09%	98.38%	450514		
Delta State	48,910	3.86%	1,211,405	95.55%	1,260,315	99.41%	48,910	3.86%	1,211,405	95.55%	99.41%	1267773		
Ebonyi State	19,518	5.36%	323,653	88.94%	343,171	94.31%	19,518	5.36%	323,653	88.94%	94.31%	363888		
Edo State	208,469	41.66%	286,869	57.32%	495,338	98.98%	208,469	41.66%	286,869	57.32%	98.98%	500451		
Ekiti State	120,331	40.02%	176,466	58.69%	296,797	98.70%	102,560	34.11%	151,124	50.26%	84.37%	300691		
Enugu State	14,157	2.47%	553,003	96.48%	567,160	98.95%	14,157	2.47%	553,003	96.48%	98.95%	573173		
Federal Capital Territory	146399	47.72%	157,195	51.24%	303,594	98.95%	146399	47.72%	157,195	51.24%	98.95%	306805		
Gombe State	361,245	78.43%	96,873	21.03%	458,118	99.46%	361,253	78.43%	96,873	21.03%	99.46%	460599		
Imo State	133,253	18.96%	559,185	79.55%	692,438	98.50%	133,253	18.96%	559,185	79.55%	98.50%	702964		
Jigawa State	885,988	85.39%	142,904	13.77%	1,028,892	99.16%	885,988	85.39%	142,904	13.77%	99.16%	1037564		
Kaduna State	1,127,760	69.72%	484,085	29.93%	1,611,845	99.65%	1,127,760	69.72%	484,085	29.93%	99.65%	1617482		
Kano State	1,903,999	89.44%	215,779	10.14%	2,119,778	99.58%	1,903,999	89.44%	215,779	10.14%	99.58%	2128821		
Katsina State	1,345,441	92.83%	98,937	6.83%	1,444,378	99.65%	1,345,441	92.83%	98,937	6.83%	99.65%	1449426		
Kebbi State	567,883	83.88%	100,972	14.91%	668,855	98.80%	567,883	83.88%	100,972	14.91%	98.80%	677003		
Kogi State	264,851	62.86%	149,987	35.60%	414,838	98.46%	264,851	62.86%	149,987	35.60%	98.46%	421328		
Kwara State	302,146	68.66%	132,602	30.13%	434,748	98.79%	302,146	68.66%	132,602	30.13%	98.79%	440080		
Lagos State	792,460	54.89%	632,327	43.80%	1,424,787	98.69%	686,924	47.58%	533,735	36.97%	84.55%	1443686		
Nasarawa State	236,838	46.30%	273,460	53.46%	510,298	99.76%	236,838	46.30%	273,460	53.46%	99.76%	511547		
Niger State	657,678	80.83%	149222	18.34%	806,900	99.17%	657,678	80.83%	149222	18.34%	99.17%	813671		
Ogun State	308,290	57.82%	207950	39.00%	516,240	96.82%	308,290	57.82%	207950	39.00%	96.82%	533172		
Ondo State	299,889	53.45%	251,368	44.80%	551,257	98.25%	299,889	53.45%	251,368	44.80%	98.25%	561056		
Osun State	383603	59.69%	249929	38.89%	633,532	98.59%	383603	59.69%	249929	38.89%	98.59%	642615		
Oyo State	528620	59.98%	303376	34.42%	831,996	94.40%	528620	59.98%	303376	34.42%	94.40%	881352		
Plateau State	429140	43.68%	549615	55.95%	978,755	99.63%	429140	43.68%	549615	55.95%	99.63%	982388		

Rivers State	69238	4.42%	1487075	94.99%	1,556,313	99.42%	69238	4.42%	1487075	94.99%	99.42%	1565461
Sokoto State	671926	80.54%	152199	18.24%	824,125	98.79%	671926	80.54%	152199	18.24%	98.79%	834259
Taraba State	261326	45.08%	310800	53.62%	572,126	98.70%	261326	45.08%	310800	53.62%	98.70%	579677
Yobe State	446265	94.19%	25526	5.39%	471,791	99.58%	446265	94.19%	25526	5.39%	99.58%	473796
Zamfara State	612202	80.44%	144833	19.03%	757,035	99.48%	612202	80.44%	144833	19.03%	99.48%	761022

Table Showing Social Media released results and INEC’s Final results for Nigeria 2105 Presidential Elections for APC and PDP

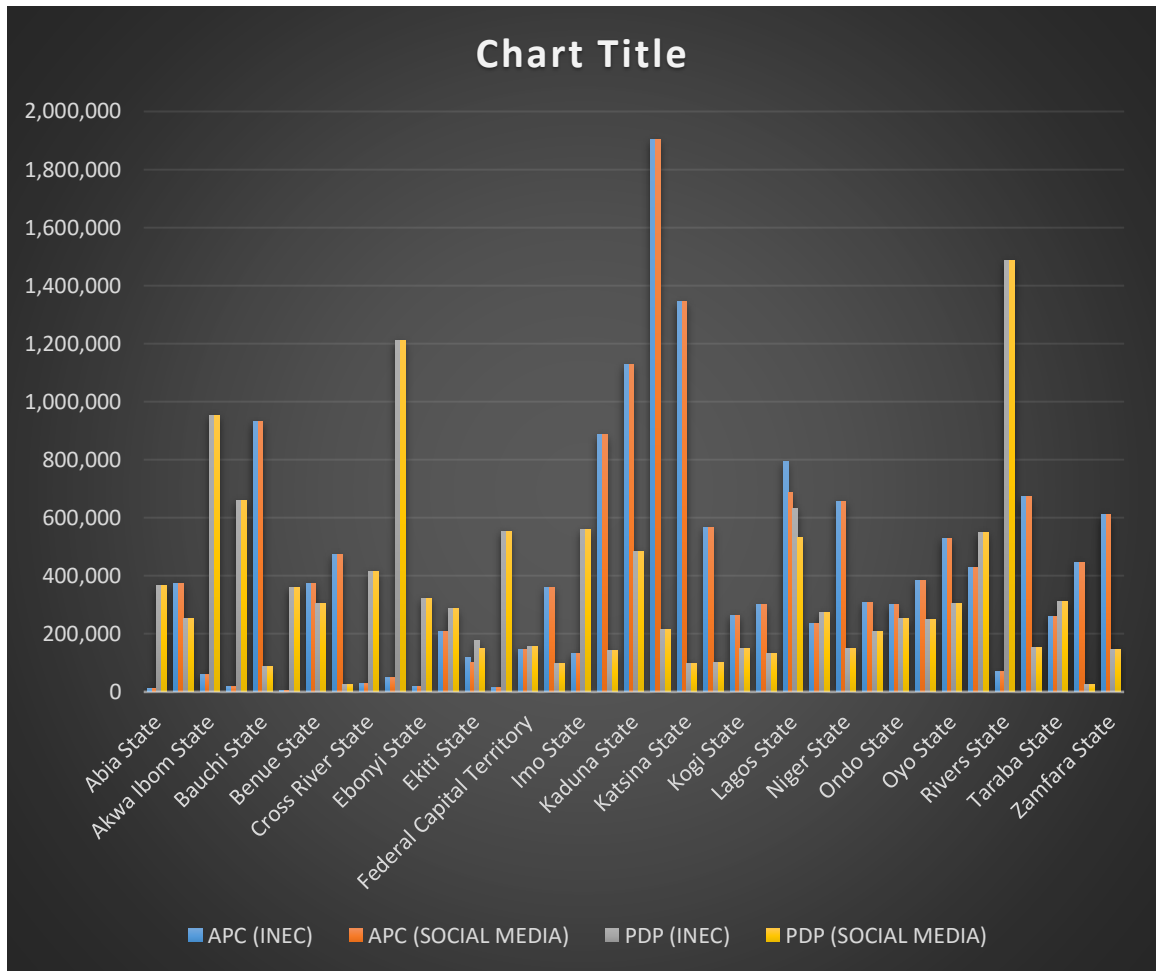


Chart 1 Showing significant parity between social media results and INEC results.

Table 1 shows figures acquired from the EMB's official website representing INEC's final result released for the presidential election. It also shows figures acquired from several twitter and Facebook accounts. At a glance, it is still clear that despite the existence of 14 political parties registered in Nigeria, the APC and PDP are still the dominant parties. The voting pattern in all the states show that no state accorded less than 93% of their votes to these parties cumulatively. Ebonyi state voted least with 94% while states like Rivers, Yobe, Nasarawa, Katsina and Bayelsa, almost exclusively voted for these 2 political parties with numbers as high than 99%.

In most cases, a comparison of results released by INEC and that obtainable via new media sources show that except for Lagos state, Ekiti state and Anambra state, the results mined from the social media were correct. Chart 1 displays this parity save for the above mentioned states.

Reasons why results for these few states may not have been readily available include extension of voting period, logistic and security reasons.

Table 1 and chart 1 attest to the fact that the new media is a remarkable medium for crowd-sourced information. It also shows its vulnerability that it often almost correct but not quite. This is the reason why parallel polling or result collation or announcement is discouraged by the EMB, INEC. Nevertheless, people relied on it significantly as a preliminary source of information while awaiting the final declaration of result.

	<i>INEC - APC</i>	<i>SOCIAL MEDIA - APC</i>
INEC DECLARED RESULT FOR APC	1	
SOCIAL MEDIA PREDICTION FOR APC	0.9988626	1

	<i>INEC PDP</i>	<i>SOCIAL MEDIA - PDP</i>
INEC PDP	1	
SOCIAL MEDIA - PDP	0.998455686	1

Pearson's r (correlation coefficient)  
 Effect Size: if r= +/- 0.5 it is large, if r= +/- 0.3 it is medium, if r= +/- it is small

**Table 2 showing a correlation between INEC final results and crowd-sourced results on social media.**

Table 2 tests for the level of significance of results presented by INEC and results sourced via new media channels. With correlation coefficient of APC data being 0.9988626 and that of PDP being 0.998455686, these values support that there is a strong relationship between data sourced online and data released by INEC. It is therefore accepted that the new media was used as a by the people to protect the integrity of their votes by

collaboratively sharing information online. While its vulnerability is observed that it is often times not 100% percent correct as desired by law and the people, its margin of error even on wrong data can be negligible.

STATE	APC VOTES	PDP VOTES	WINNER-LOOSER GAP	EXISTING CONFLICTS
BENUE	54.73	44.5	10.23	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
KOGI	62.86	35.6	27.26	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
KWARA	68.66	30.13	38.53	
NASARAWA	46.3	53.46	7.16	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
NIGER	80.83	18.34	62.49	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
PLATEAU	43.68	55.95	12.27	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
FCT	47.72	51.24	3.52	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
ADAMAWA	58.91	39.57	19.34	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
BAUCHI	91.3	8.44	82.86	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM CORE AREA
BORNO	94.35	5.11	89.24	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM CORE AREA
GOMBE	78.43	21.03	57.4	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM CORE AREA
TARABA	45.08	53.62	8.54	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
YOBE	94.19	5.39	88.8	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM CORE AREA
JIGAWA	85.39	13.77	71.62	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
KADUNA	69.72	29.93	39.79	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM CORE AREA
KANO	89.44	10.14	79.3	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM CORE AREA
KATSINA	92.83	6.83	86	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
KEBBI	83.88	14.91	68.97	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
SOKOTO	80.54	18.24	62.3	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
ZAMFARA	80.44	19.03	61.41	BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY/TERRORISM PERIPHERAL AREA
ABIA	3.43	94.18	90.75	BIAFRA/SECESSIONIST MOVT CORE AREA
ANAMBRA	2.6	95.96	93.36	BIAFRA/SECESSIONIST MOVT CORE AREA
EBONYI	5.36	88.94	83.58	BIAFRA/SECESSIONIST MOVT CORE AREA
ENUGU	2.47	96.48	94.21	BIAFRA/SECESSIONIST MOVT CORE AREA
IMO	18.96	79.55	60.59	BIAFRA/SECESSIONIST MOVT CORE AREA
AKWA IBOM	5.74	93.73	87.99	MILITANT ACTIVITY CORE AREA
CROSS RIVER	6.3	92.09	85.79	MILITANT ACTIVITY CORE AREA
BAYELSA	1.42	98.4	96.98	MILITANT ACTIVITY CORE AREA
RIVERS	4.42	94.99	90.57	MILITANT ACTIVITY CORE AREA

DELTA	3.86	95.55	91.69	MILITANT ACTIVITY CORE AREA
EDO	41.66	57.32	15.66	MILITANT ACTIVITY CORE AREA
EKITI	40.02	58.69	18.67	RELATIVE STABILITY
LAGOS	54.89	43.8	11.09	RELATIVE STABILITY
OGUN	57.82	39	18.82	RELATIVE STABILITY
ONDO	53.45	44.8	8.65	RELATIVE STABILITY
OSUN	59.69	38.89	20.8	RELATIVE STABILITY
OYO	59.98	34.42	25.56	RELATIVE STABILITY

**Table 3 Showing ethnic and regional voting patterns, and possible correlation between polarized voting and socio-political conflicts in Nigeria.**

Table 3 introduces a new variable the “winner-looser gap”, meant to give insight into polarized voting patterns. It also attempts to relate polarized societies and existing conflict in Nigeria.

A significant number of the Nigerian electorate voted more on ethnic and regional lines than on ideological beliefs. In the south-east, south-south as well as the north-east regions of the country, table 3 presents strong evidence of extreme preference of one candidate over the other. This pattern is consistent with the term racial polarization.

In Bayelsa the home state of the PDP candidate, he got over 98% of the votes while less than 1.5% voted for the APC candidate. Delta state also



presents such extremely polarized data, 95% to 3.8%. This trend was sustained in the south-south and the south-east regions of Nigeria.

In the same vein, the polarization in favor of the APC candidate is easily noticeable in his native north-west as well as in the north-eastern regions of Nigeria. He garnered 92% of the votes cast in his state, Katsina, and as high as 89% in Borno state.

While there are models existing to measure polarized voting such as the ecological interference model by Prof. Gray King, inaccessibility and unavailability of data on Nigeria deterred the use it.

It is my opinion that in Africa, it will be difficult for societies that less than 2% or 4% voted for an incumbent to accept the leadership. Our democracies have simply not matured or evolved to this point. This lack of tolerance may be attributable to the patterns and timelines of socio-political conflicts in Nigeria. The winner-looser gap column and the existing conflict column definitely suggest a relationship. This comments will however need to be subjected to more rigorous empirical analysis.

Voter education and promotion of issue based campaigning is a statutory responsibility of the EMB however it is a role for all stakeholders. The

media must be involved, international organizations, and it is also a very active role within civil society groups. If all stakeholders in the electoral process participate in enlightening the electorate particularly the villages and hinterlands where information flow is less and ethnicity is more of a factor, participatory politics can be deepened and refocused on ideology rather than ethnicity. The new media through data visualization tools is helping to visually contextualize the problem areas in the electioneering process as well as bring out new patterns and possible relationships like never before. As we liberalize the use of new media applications within the electoral process, the focus then shift to the best tools to achieve what process. For example Nigerians are very cultural people and also boasts of a very prolific movie industry called Nollywood. One of the best ways to convey a message or teach its consequences to the African mind is to embed it in a movie or a drama series. Such collaboration can be fostered by partnership between the civil society and international organization. Such collaborations already exist in areas like maternal education, planned parenting, campaign against HIV and female genital mutilation that we can learn from.

#### 4.2.2 Predictive analysis through sentiment analysis

This analysis is based on sentiments surrounding new media discussion surrounding the presidential candidates of the two major political parties that contested for presidency in the Nigeria presidential elections of 2015. The presidential candidates in question are Muhamadu Buhari of the APC and Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP.

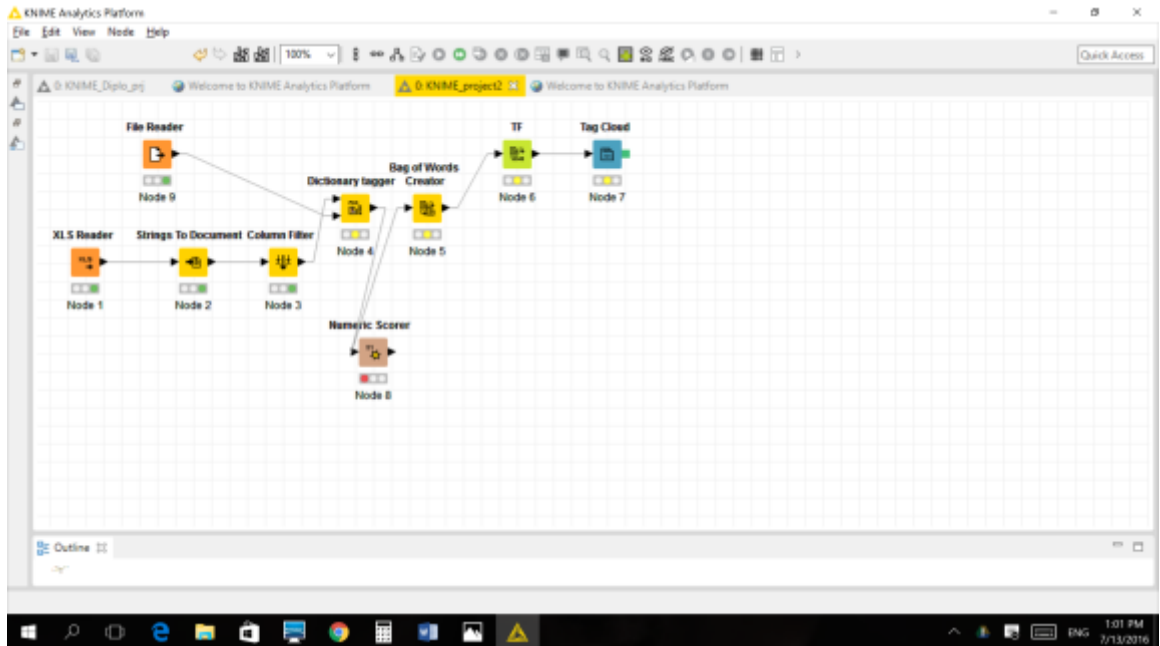
The sentiments are graded thus:

Positive =1

Neutral = 0

Negative = -1

Programming applications used for this analysis are R and Knime. Data was extracted using from Twitter, Facebook and blogs using R while the rest of the analysis was carried out using Knime.



**Chart 2 Showing workflow of sentiment analysis on Knime.**

Analysis of the workflow show are as following:

Collection of data:

The following key words were used as search parameters for the study:

“buhari, Goodluck jonathan, GEJ, GMB”. These are the common means of referring to the candidates by the people. R coding was used to mine data from Facebook, Twitter, [www.saharareporters.com](http://www.saharareporters.com) and [www.lindaikejisblog.com](http://www.lindaikejisblog.com).

A total of 1000 datasets was extracted for each candidate, political party and name acronym (GEJ and GMB) forming a survey population of 3000.

Transformation of data:

The extracted data was converted to the document data type. This data type was selected because it encapsulates more values that will allow for more analysis.

Preprocessing and enrichment of data:

First, unwanted variables were filtered out. Such as non-English words, numbers, hyperlinks, stop words and symbols. Then the polarity of the remaining words were tested based on the assigned based on the earlier mentioned assigned numbers.

Classifying the data based on sentiment.

Data was processed by first using the frequencies of negative and positive words to generate a word cloud. The polarity was calculated summing up the total value using the following formula:

Polarity ( $\alpha$ ) = Positive (P) – Negative (N) + Factors ( $\beta$ )

$$\alpha = P - N + \beta$$

It is assumed that there are several factors that come into play in politics that are not captured by this simple polarity model but for the sake of

deriving a mathematical equation to account for these, “factors”

represent the unaccounted for factors and it is assumed as 0.

	<b>Muhamadu Buhari/APC</b>	<b>Goodluck Jonathan/PDP</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
Positive	37	16	There more positive sentiments around Muhamadu Buhari
Neutral	160	80	
Negative	4	8	There are more negative sentiments around Goodluck Jonathan
Factors unaccounted for ( $\beta$ )	0	0	
	Based on this analysis, Muhamadu Buhari will likely win the electins.		Positive and negative polarity are in favor of Muhamadu Buhari

**Chart 3 showing sentiment analysis on the presidential candidates of the 2 leading presidential candidates of the Nigeria 2015 elections.**

## Conclusion

Based on Chart 3 reflecting the sentiments of the people online around both presidential candidates, and accepting that these sentiments will their action on voting day, it is safe to conclude on the winner of the election.

This analysis show the possibilities of mining social data and drawing inference from it using empirical means. In future, a more robust model will be required to better delineate sentiments and emotions as well as capture native slangs or diction that will lead to a more robust analysis. In this case for example, the widely accepted native word “sai Buhari” which one of the candidates is often hailed as, was excluded from this analysis in order to avoid unfair advantage.



Chart 4: Word/Tag cloud showing polarity on Goodluck Jonathan/ PDP presidential candidate.

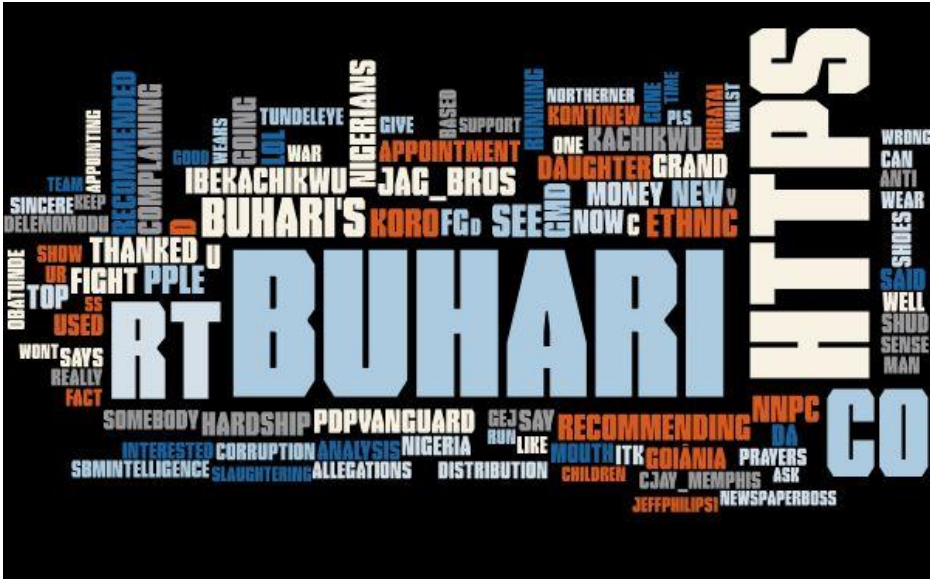


Chart 5: Word/Tag cloud showing polarity on Muhamadu Buhari / APC presidential candidate.



In chart 3, after his name Goodluck Jonathan which was the search criteria, there are several words that jump out, and are next in size namely Dansuki, Arms, Implicate and Scandal. These are very useful themes around the principal word that can be subjected to political research to determine why these words trend in relation to the candidate.

Comparatively, in the case of Buhari, there are a myriad of words but on closer observation, none that specifically stands out as the case of Jonathan. This may be due to the fact that Jonathan was the incumbent and he the challenger.

Analyses of these word clouds show that they are topical issues that have trended on social media around these names over a period of time. It also shows that they compare favorably with headline news on print media.

Given that there is a congruence between socio-political issues being discussed online and offline, this study accepts active social media participation by stakeholders.

### 4.3 Qualitative Analysis

This study accepted the Electoral Integrity Framework as a guide to organize an approach to probe the way and manners the new media was deployed during the 2015 presidential elections.

To discuss these roles, the electoral timeline was divided into three logical segments, and further deconstructed thus:

Pre-Election: Electoral Laws, Party Internal Democracy, Voter Registration Exercise, Campaign financing

Election Day: Voting process, Security, Electoral Malpractices

Post-Election: Vote counting process, Result Declaration, Post-Election Violence, Assessing the EMB and Good Governance.

#### 4.3.1 Pre-Election Day

**Electoral Laws:** The legal framework guiding the conduct of the 2015 elections is derived from the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) and the Electoral Act of 2010 (as amended). Specifically, the INEC's 2015 Election Guidelines and Procedures is the operational document issued by the EMB to pilot the program.

This document was widely circulated both in print and soft copies. Access to these documents by stakeholders was good because there is no evidence of complaint on lack of knowledge or information on the electoral rules of engagement. It is readily downloadable from the widely publicized INEC website: [www.inecnigeria.org](http://www.inecnigeria.org)

On issues concerning the new media, the legal framework is yet silent on the agitation of a significant number of Nigerians living in the diaspora. For them to be able to vote. For this to happen, a platform that allows for geographic independence has to be adopted. Even the electorate within Nigeria is strictly regimented in order to verify the voter through a device called card reader.

Before the amendment of the electoral act, section 52 had specifically prohibited INEC from using “any form of electronic voting” but it now states that “voting at an election shall be in accordance with the procedure determined by the Independent National Electoral Commission” thereby empowering INEC to introduce the electronic card readers for voter verification on election day.

For logistic, security and transparency in elections, it has become apparent that the voting process has more to gain electronic voting than not. The cumbersome process currently in use is a logistic nightmare as confessed by the EMB, and a disincentive to voting particularly the younger generation. It is therefore expedient that necessary legislative processes be commenced to move from using technology for just voter registration and verification to full support for the entire electioneering process. Part of the immediate gains of electronic voting include immediate enfranchisement of Nigerian in the diaspora, a right yet denied.

**Party Internal Democracy:** According to the Spanish constitution, “Political parties are the expression of political pluralism; they contribute to the formation and expression of the will of the people and are a fundamental instrument for political participation. Their creation and the exercise of their activities are free in so far as they respect the Constitution and the law. Their internal structure and operation must be democratic.”

The EU 2015 Election Observation Mission reported a lack of democratic practices at the party level. It notes a “lack of effective monitoring

mechanism for internal party democratic processes for candidate nomination". It also recorded INEC's inability to reject candidates spawned from such dubious processes thereby impacting negatively on the credibility of the electoral process.

PDP's presidential primaries was held on December 10 2014 at the Eagle square, Abuja. The critical exercise was scheduled to run during its 2 days national convention. Among the contestants for the party's ticket were Jelil Tafawa Balewa and Akasoba Duke-Abiola.

Rather than the process of selecting the party's nominee to be birthed by voting, the executive committee of the party simply presented Goodluck Jonathan as the sole candidate of the party, effectively taking advantage of section 87 (2,3 and 4) of the electoral act. This provision that allows for informal means of party nomination. Though constitutional, it was perceived as less than democratic given the circumstances. It effectively shut out other presidential hopefuls and it must have contributed significantly to earning the electioneering process this indictment by EU team.

While other candidates saw this as the use of power of incumbency to coerce and intimidate for political gains, other political parties described the process as a “coronation” rather than an election.

In contrast, at the presidential level which is the scope of this study, the APC leveraged on the use of new media to hold a national convention and to guide the process of selecting the party’s presidential flag bearer. From the process from the arrival of delegates from the 36 states of Nigeria, to the counting of votes, it was televised live. This raised the level of transparency at the party level for the nomination of candidates.

Also, through this open approach opportuned by new media, other stakeholders were carried along including other candidates. This inclusive and transparent approach connected all aspirants with the process and guaranteed continuity without rancor at the party level.

Their use of their website [www.apc.com.ng](http://www.apc.com.ng) , played a pivotal role in this process. The events were streamed online with other new media features incorporated e.g. photo news and hashtag on social media: #apcdecides.

**Voter Registration:** INEC embarked on the usual periodic continuous voter registration exercise to capture people that for one reason or the other had not registered, and for people just attaining the eligible age to vote: 18. This process involves capturing personal data as well as biometrics of people. The equipment used is the Direct Data Capture machine. At the end of this exercise, 73.5 million eligible voters had been captured, and about 4 million dubious registrations also detected. Had it not been detected, about 5% of votes cast would have been fake.

INEC innovated and produced the Permanent Voter's Card (PVC) with the data gathered. The PVC, a product of the voter registration exercise was used to verify authentic voters on Election Day.

The use of this electronic device raised many questions and event in the Nigerian polity

- I. The constitution had to be amended to allow its use during the elections.
- II. As at March 13, only 81.2% of registered voters had collected their PVCs. And as at April 11, the EMB admitted that over 100,000 PVCs

could not be produced hence, outright disenfranchisement of these categories of people.

III. The PVC collection rate was skewed to the North

For all the benefits of the use of technology in elections, it is very pertinent that all scenarios that present be given adequate consideration ahead of time in order for new media technologies to serve the process right. There is no room for disenfranchisement nor logistic failures as these are construed to be calculated sins of omission.

**Campaign Financing:** In terms of equitable access to funds, it apparent that this was not the case. Allegations of diverted state funds by both parties pervade the air.

It is alleged that the then incumbent funded Transformation Ambassadors of Nigeria (TAN) with federal government funds. It is also alleged that the opposition funded their campaign largely from funding from Lagos and Rivers states.

From the position of the role of the new media, it is instructive to note that efforts were made by the APC to democratize fundraising by encouraging



small donations online through short messaging services but the regulators NCC, blocked this move by instructing the telecoms carrier “not to carry political messages”.

This is a step backwards in my opinion because there is no cogent reason to restrict new media participation in any new role in politics. Rather it should have been encouraged as it would have raised the bar in people-party partnership.

Campaign Media: It is a given practice that the traditional media must be and be seen as being free, fair and giving equal opportunity to all party during the electoral process.

In the Nigeria 2015 process however, their conduct openly fell short. In the state-owned media, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) more coverage of PDP activities was reported by the EU report.

Some privately owned media can easily be accused of participating in hate speech either as originators of content, or accomplices.

On January 19 2015, in what has been christened “Buhari death wish advert by Fayose”, two major newspaper companies namely The Sun and The Punch, published an advert sponsored by Ayo Fayose, insinuating that the presidential candidate of the APC Buhari, will die in office if elected. This style of campaign is morbid, toxic and hate speech to say the least. It was also insensitive to the northern states as it the advert also contained 3 ex-heads of state, of northern origin whom had died in office.

Another independently owned private media house known as Africa Independent Television produced and released a documentary a documentary on YouTube known as the “lion of Bourdillon” with intention of damaging the image of frontline politician and member of APC, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu. Although the media house has since apologized after being dragged to court, the use and intent of content produced was obviously for hate campaign and condemnable.

The convergence between the new media and the traditional media is such that whatever content appear in one finds its way to the others.

While there were several other positive ways by which the media positively contributed to the electoral process, it is worthy of note that despite the

fundamental exalted role of the media in the society, the Nigerian media failed to get even one live debate between both frontline candidates.

**Election Day:** On a general note, the fact that the outcome of the election was accepted by the incumbent, who happened to lose on the same day is testament to the quality of the process.

It is also instructive to note that the opposition, PDP, did not contest the outcome of the election.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of the new media to the Nigerian electoral process of 2015 was a simple phone call made by Goodluck Jonathan, the then incumbent president who lost the election, to General Muhamadu Buhari, the opposition candidate. This call was made before the EMB's final declaration of results. Jonathan called Buhari to concede defeat and congratulate him.

This phone call served 3 purposes:

1. It doused boiling point tension in the country.
2. It made the loser a hero of democracy as much as the winner of the election.

3. It made Nigeria the example to follow in democracy, and returned Nigeria to a leadership role in Africa.

Another critical use of the new media on Election Day was the setting up of a central collation center charged with the responsibility of collating and announcing election result live. The process gained country-wide acceptance as transparent because it was broadcast live.

Godsday Orubebe, a PDP personnel and former minister attempted to scuttle the process but it only presented another opportunity for the EMB to showcase their commitment to the process.

It is my opinion that Nigerians learnt some political maturity from these events that contributed to a peaceful conclusion of the process.

**Election Administration:** During the 2015 electoral process, despite all logistic, technological, legislative and political challenges, the administrative exploits, professional conduct and purposeful leadership of the head of INEC, Prof. Attahiru Jega was acknowledged as a critical success factor.

Also, the reforms embarked upon by INEC to continue to better the process over time is commendable. Significant administrative steps include:

1. The introduction of the Permanent Voters Card.
2. The introduction of the National Inter Agency Advisory Committee on Voter Education and Publicity (NICVEP), that took the Commission to the people via the social media.

The administration of the 2015 presidential elections notably underperformed in the following areas:

1. Widespread under-collection and skewed distribution of Permanent Voters Cards (PVCs)
2. Underproduction of PVCs
3. Inadequate recruitment and training of ad hoc staff

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presented the summary of key data findings, conclusions drawn from the findings highlighted and recommendations that were made. The conclusions and recommendations drawn were in the quest of understanding the roles of the new media in the electioneering process of the Nigeria 2015 presidential election.

#### **5.2 Summary of findings**

This research provides an examination of the roles and impact of new media technologies on the Nigerian electoral process of 2015.

The first chapter was devoted to the introductory part of the study while the second chapter discussed extensively the literature review on the subject matter.

Chapter three looked at the details of model specifications and research design of the study, which were analyzed and discussed in chapter four.

Data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods of statistic.

On the quantitative analysis, data was scrubbed from the internet using R programming language, transformed, processed, enriched and classified based on sentiment. This was used for predictive analysis, to generate a word cloud and further analyzed based on sentiment word count.

Data was also gathered from the Electoral Management Body, INEC and compared with social media data to test for correlation of the outcome.

On the qualitative aspect, with the electoral integrity framework serving as a guide, texts and events were analyzed to examine the role of the new media on different activities during the electioneering process namely Electoral Laws, Party Internal Democracy, Voter Registration Exercise, Campaign financing, Voting process, Result Declaration, Assessing the EMB and Good Governance.

### 5.3 Conclusion

Based on the research questions this project set before it, it was discovered the new media played a significant role in the performance of all understudied stakeholder during the Nigeria 2015 presidential elections.

The following stakeholders were examined:

- i. The Electoral Management Body – INEC
- ii. The Traditional Media
- iii. The International Community
- iv. Major Political Parties namely All Progressives Congress (APC) and the People’s Democratic Party (PDP).
- v. Nigerians in the diaspora
- vi. The people or the public.
- vii. The Legislature

During the course of this study, it was discovered that politics is a significant factor that features in most of the societal ills plaguing the Nigerian State. Politics is at the heart of corruption. Politics is prominent in armed conflicts namely insurgency, militancy. Political exclusion is a major



factor in the agitation for secession. Through data analytics and visualization, these patterns are observable.

It was also discovered that the application of new media technologies allowed for the visualization of our social challenges in a new way. It brought forth new variables and their likely relationships were noted and linked to socio-political impact. For example, because polarized voting and armed conflict are occurring in the same regions of Nigeria, this project proposes further studies into these variables to further establish their relationship or otherwise, in relation to the political landscape in the country.

The use of data analytics and visualization also helped us to realize and accept the limitation and vulnerability of the use of technology in electoral processes. While there is a strong correlation between results released on social media and that released by INEC, there is still a margin of error that must be acknowledged hence, the system is not perfect.

However, if the requirements of an information system is well analyzed and designed through the assent and contribution of the election managers, the new media can serve as a veritable support for the electoral process.

## **The International Community**

The International Community notably the United States, United Kingdom, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, France and International organizations notably the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) played significant roles in the build up to the Nigeria 2015 presidential elections.

Their effort at public diplomacy and bilateral diplomacy, to achieve an atmosphere peaceful and secure enough for the electoral process to be sustained was sufficiently aided by the new media.

Part of the new media strategy adopted by the international community include:

1. Bilateral diplomacy using direct telephone calls to convey messages and intention between major heads of government.
2. Press conferences and social media activations utilizing resources of foreign missions.
3. And use of soft power.

## **Major Political Parties**

This study concentrated on the two major political parties namely APC and PDP. Cumulatively, they garnered more than 97% of votes cast during the election.

It was discovered that new media technologies was a major component of the campaign strategy of both political party.

Their communication strategy relied heavily on the social media to reach the electorate and interact with them. Online adverts, candidate websites and party websites are part of the bouquet of new media tools deployed.

They both also relied on allied campaign groups based on geographic location, religious and social ideologies. These groups in turn reached out through mobile applications such as Whatsapp and Blackberry Messenger, as well as mobile versions of social media applications like Twitter, Google+ and Facebook.

The APC as a political party used the new media social platforms as a communication strategy to break PDP's monopoly of allocated broadcast time for political party campaigns on traditional media.

The APC also ushered in the concept of crowd funding to the Nigerian political space. This was supposed to introduce transparency and accountability into party funding in Nigeria but it was shut down by the broadcast regulatory body. A move tantamount to denial of the people's right to freedom of expression and association on the part of the Nigerian Communications Commission.

On the other hand, it was discovered that political parties too did not adhere to good ethics and best practices in their use of the new media. It was not difficult to find unethical behaviour on the part of both political parties and their members online as online political campaigns of both political parties was heavily laced with unbridled character assassination and hate speech and in some cases deliberate misinformation.

AIT's Lion of Bourdillon and Fayose's death advert resonates.

It is pertinent to separate the person of the presidential candidates from actions of the political party as the most enduring use of new media by the leading presidential candidates was the promotion of peace and prevention of post-election violence.

The most outstanding instance is the much celebrated telephone call made by Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan of the PDP to Muhamadu Buhari of the APC, on the eve of the Election Day to concede defeat at the polls hence thwarting all plans and predictions of post-election crisis in Nigeria.

### **The Traditional Media**

The traditional media in their role of information dissemination, relied heavily on new media technologies. This is expected as we talk of new media convergence technologies with the traditional media sector.

Essentially, the traditional media relied on the interactive technologies embedded in social media platforms to engage with Nigerians both home abroad, on topical issues. The use of online opinion polls also featured prominently to sample public opinion.

Some notable television and radio stations like Channels Television and Africa Independent Television (AIT), extended their new media capabilities

by developing mobile apps with citizen journalism capabilities commonly referred to as the eyewitness feature. This was more prevalent in the private sector controlled media than in state controlled media.

In the same vein, it was also discovered that the some elements of traditional media abused their influence to perpetrate less than honorable roles during the electioneering process. The earlier referred to character assassination and hate publication of the AIT, and the death advert published on national dailies are in clear infringement of broadcast rules and ethics. Also, lack of action taken against such publication shows institutional weakness on the part of the concerned broadcast regulatory agency, Broadcasting Organization of Nigeria as well as on the part of the EMB, INEC.

It must be stressed that publications or broadcast capable of disrupting the peaceful conduct of elections must be nipped in the bud lest capable of causing crises as have seen in some African examples like Kenya.

In conclusion, the greatest opportunity missed by the traditional media is to get the two most prominent presidential candidates in the same room for a debate. The opportunity cost is the absence of a issue-based yardstick with

which to measure the candidates opinion of issues rather than relying on well-oiled manifestos or overfunded campaigns for the people's vote.

## **The Citizen**

New media technologies played significant roles for the citizens during the electoral process of 2015. Due to the significantly improved mobile penetration in Africa, and the improved sourcing of mobile devices for the continent, internet ready mobile devices have become relatively common in Nigeria.

The election being all about the people of Nigeria, their mobile devices became a platform where all the stakeholders converged and competed for attention.

On a personal note, the electorate used the new media in an interactive manner. To source for information as well as to create content. In its role of creation of content, a lack of tolerance is noticeable as there is abundant use of abusive words in tweets and online posts to attest to this.

Also noticeable is a tendency for the public to propagate through broadcast messages, retweets and likes without filtering for veracity. This often amplifies false information, misinform or distort information.

Another critical role the new media played with the people is that is created an avenue to protect their votes. In our studies, it was discovered that digital copies of result sheets of a significant number of polling stations exist online. This made it an exercise rather in futility to snatch ballot boxes or alter already declared figures.

Although this is not full-proof, it is a strong enough deterrent for would-be perpetrators hence serving as an extra layer of security for the peoples votes.

### **The legislature**

So far, the legal framework guiding Nigerian institutions with regards to the new media has been weak. Where the laws exist, agencies lack the political will to execute.

There is urgent need to strengthen institutions and reinforce their capabilities to perform. I strongly believe that if a country has the right set



of guidelines for electing credible leaders, such a nation will self-heal over time.

The onus therefore lies with the legislature to make laws in consonance with the times we live in.

## 5.4 Recommendations

- i. The veracity of any electoral process revolves round its ability to keep accurate data and keep accurate records. The EMB, INEC must develop a robust plan aided by new media technology to maintain the voters register. The continuous voter's registration exercise in its current form is logistically tasking and cumbersome. It must also be understood that the records in the voters register cannot be designed to be static or slow to update. There must be a technology-friendly avenue to continuously update the voters register to avoid the capillary action that builds up a redundancy in the system. People are bound to die and others will attain voting age. These events must be anticipated and disposed of . If the process of continuous voter registration is simplified and assisted technologically to the point where it becomes a relatively comfortable civic duty to perform, we will an improvement in the number of registered voters as well as more voter participation in elections.
- ii. The use of technology to support INEC's logistic and information system will inform the need for adequate training of staff. It is

most important that both INEC's core staff and ad hoc staff are trained on deployed technologies well enough and for long enough. This will restore confidence the technology brings solutions and not new problems.

- iii. The national assembly must live up to the expectation of Nigerians in the diaspora. It is outright disenfranchisement and a violation of their fundamental rights to continue to deny them the right to vote during elections. New media technologies can help in this regard to make voting geographically independent.
- iv. Election off-cycle periods can be used to devise new strategies against politicians that are only interested in preying on the system. As the new media presents new ways to uncover plots and establish their patterns of operation, strategies cannot afford to remain stagnant. Off-cycle periods must be used by the EMB to canvass for stiffer penalties against electoral offenders, develop strategies and partnerships to monitor campaign financing.
- v. The national assembly needs to rise to the occasion and heed to the call of the EMB, the international community as well as the civil society on the urgent need to establish an elections petition

tribunal where prescribed punitive action will be taken against erring politicians based on the gravity of offences. The Nigerian electoral laws as it exist today has proven inefficient as a deterrent against electoral malpractices.

- vi. According to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, *“every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity ... without unreasonable restriction....to be elected”* This covenant does not support the notion that people must belong to a political party before he or she can present himself as a candidate to be voted for. It is pertinent that the electoral laws of the country be liberalized to the point of independent candidacy. This will break the jinx of politicians recycling themselves in a closed ecosystem of two political parties hence leaving new entrants with little or no room for participation.
- vii. Internal democracy within party structures must be upheld by legislation. If a party cannot be transparent and accountable at the party level, then it is not likely that such a party will contribute meaningfully to the electoral value chain. The onus is therefore on the legislators to block all means of mischief or manipulation.

In conclusion, the primary reason for the democratic exercise of electing political leaders into office is to ensure that the dividends of democracy reach the people.

As discussed earlier, corruption is a major cankerworm in Nigeria deterring these democratic values. The south-south region of Nigeria complains of impoverishment despite being the cash cow of the nation. The south-east complains of political exclusion and marginalization. The Northern part of the country is backward educationally and this has made the region vulnerable to radicalization. It is common knowledge that Nigeria is an oil rich nation, albeit the fact that it's economy is vulnerable as a mono-economy.

During election seasons, campaigns are filled with plum and pageantry and promises. Political adverts are on point to target where the shoe is pinching the common man. Sadly, these political activities hardly ever translated to tangible growth and development. The gully between promises and performance of politicians ever widening.

Apparently, the problem is not scarcity of resources but that of weak institutions that can ensure transparency and good governance. In other words, the dividends of bad governance are more apparent in the Nigerian state than that of good governance.

Sound democracies are built on sustainable programs of government, guided by strong institutions. In order for the Nigerian electoral process to return dividends of democracy to Nigerians there is urgent need to strengthen the processes of decision making in the country.

For elections to be truly free and fair, the process leading to it must transparent, accountable, follow the rule of law, be responsive and adaptable. It also must be equitable, inclusive, tolerant and participatory. Most importantly, it must be effective and efficient.

In country as culturally complex, geographically diverse and populous as Nigeria, there is no doubt that the process that will satisfy these itemized requirements will need technology to support the system.

As a nation we must learn to accept technology as a critical success factor and use as such for our national benefit.

We must also accept that electoral processes are iterative in nature and as such can always be improved upon. The inclusion of technology or its adoption in strategic areas of the value chain will immediately improve transparency, reduce logistical cost in terms of time and money. It will also improve the process of election petitions in terms of evidence gathering because of the archive policy function embedded in such systems.

In the simplest of logic, you cannot hope to improve on a system by doing nothing. In other words, since we all agree that the manner in which elections are conducted in Africa needs to be improved, we must also accept to introduce the one sure factor that has unarguably improved all facets of our lives; new media technology.

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