A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND ALL PROGRESSIVE CONGRESS" DURING THE 2011 GENERAL ELECTION IN NIGERIA

BY

SUMBO OLUWAKEMI OLORODE

STUDENT NO: 213574234

ETHICAL CLEARANCE NO: HSS/0584/014M

Supervisor: Professor Ruth Teer Tomaselli

Dissertation presented in fulfilment of the Degree of Master of Social Science, in The Centre for Communication, Media & Society, School of Applied Human Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College.

Durban, South Africa.

November 2014.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

I, Sumbo Oluwakemi Olorode (213574234), declare that;

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:

a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced

b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks, and referenced.

5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

Signed

…………………………………

Sumbo Oluwakemi Olorode

November, 2014

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the Almighty God who has seen me through my studies and reflecting His strange works and strange act in me. To Him I return all the glory.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

Ever since President Obama won the American presidential elections in 2008, credited to his innovative use of social media, the use of social media by politicians all over the world has experienced an exponential growth. The Nigerian presidential elections in 2011 reflected such innovative trends with the use of social media by incumbent President Jonathan Goodluck announcing his candidacy through Facebook. Such a charismatic gesture by a political candidate created euphoria of political excitement, especially among the youths of Nigeria, to read from their President on Facebook. For this reason the research was aimed at comparing how the two leading political parties People's Democratic Party and All Progressive Congress along with their presidential candidate's use of Facebook during the 2011.

To realise the objective of the study, the researcher used a qualitative research approach within an interpretivist paradigm. Data for the study was collected through interviews with those who took part in the presidential elections; twenty participants took part in the study. Additional data were collected from the official Facebook page of the two political parties selected for the study. The theoretical framework that guided the study was the social network theory, through the theory the computer mediated communication was understood as a form of social networking which was computer dependent.

The finding of the study revealed that Nigerians, especially the youths, were actively engaged in the 2011 presidential election through the use of Facebook as the leading social media in Nigeria. It was also revealed that both political parties took advantage of the potentials of Facebook for political purposes. Nevertheless, the PDP is credited for initiating the use of Facebook for political purpose in Nigeria. This party made earlier and more extensive use of Facebook to show their political achievement in the form of health, educational and infrastructural developments. The PDP also used graphics for political propaganda and to attract more voters. In contrast, the APC used their Facebook page to discredit the political achievements of the PDP. This was done through the use of graphics mainly illustrating issues of corruption and division within

the party. The use of language by both political party was English and was suggested that this was perhaps due to the fact that only the educated youths participated on Facebook political discussions.

The researcher recommended that a similar study be carried out for the upcoming presidential elections in 2015 and should be done during the elections proper as the exact opinions of the voter and political parties would capture as the elections proceeded. Also a study should be done for each political party respectively without comparing one against the other, as this will provide an in-depth use of Facebook by these parties.

ACRONYMS

ACN	Action Congress of Nigeria
APC	All Progressive Congress
ANPP	All Nigeria Peoples Party
APGA	All Progressive Grand Alliance
C SOs	Civil Society Organizations
CPC	Congress for Progressive Change
GSM	Global System for Mobile communication
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SMS	Short Message Service
PDP	Peoples Democratic Party
PLAC	Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre
UAE	United Arab Emirate

LIST OF FIGURES

Figures

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<div align="center">**CHAPTER ONE**</div>

<div align="center">**INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY**</div>

This is the introductory chapter of the study entitled *a comparative analysis of the use of Social Media by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressive Congress of Nigeria (APC) during the 2011 Political Election Campaigns*. The unprecedented use of the social media during the 2011 Nigerian presidential election have changed the way information is being used and managed during political activities in that country. The chapter begins with the background of the study, followed by the purpose and focus of the dissertation. The rationale, research objectives along with the critical research questions are also discussed in the chapter. A brief overview of the research design and methodology will likewise be introduced. To conclude the introduction of the chapter, the last section of this chapter will thus provide a concise overview of each chapter in the entire study and their respective organisation.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Although there are over sixty registered political parties in Nigeria, only two of them have been outstanding over time in their organisation and political contestations for supremacy. One of whom is the People's Democratic Party (PDP)and the other the All Progress Congress (APC) Amongst other things both political parties are particularly known for their aggressive lobby for voters during political elections. With the emergence of social media, these political parties made the most of what they could during the 2011 presidential elections. To better elucidate the political position of these political parties [PDP and APC], the background of this study will present a separate overview of each of these political parties' prowess.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) founded in 1998 by Alex Ekwuene, who was eventually the leader of the party. The party has successfully stamped its authority by having many seats at all levels of political authority, including the legislative, house of representative, senate seat, governors and at the local government level. PDP has a

broad political base, support economic deregulations, human rights and greater backing for health care service improvement. The PDP was the first democratically elected party in Nigeria and was being ruled under the leadership of the president Olusegun Obasanjo, who was the first democratically elected president of Nigeria in 1999[1] He was re-elected as the president in 2003. The party is well-represented all over the country and within various religious groups and sects, although the high ranking members of the party are mostly Muslims and Christians.

In 2007, UmaruYar'Adua who is a Muslim and PDP candidate from northern part of Nigeria was elected as the president of Nigeria, and Goodluck Jonathan Ebele, a Christian from the southern part of Nigeria, was elected as the vice-president. In 2010, Goodluck became the acting-president of Nigeria in February 2010 due to the then President Yar'Adua's ill-health that eventually led to his unfortunate death. The smooth and peaceful transition of power in May 2010 from Yar'Adua to Goodluck Jonathan to complete the rule of Yar'Adua, was not only a demonstration of how Nigeria's democracy has grown from a country that was known for civil wars and military coups for presidential successor-ship but also a significant sign of peaceful political engagement by her politicians.

To usher the use of social media into the PDP political activities the acting president Goodluck Jonathan made the announcement of his intension to run for the 2011 presidential election through the party's Facebook page. Due to this initiative, his political campaign took an unprecedented momentum among the youth and it could arguably be concluded that it play a huge significance in his success in the elections eventually.

The APC was previously known as the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) which later on merge with three other political parties after an unsuccessful run for the presidency in the 2011 presidential elections. The political parties that merged together were the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), All Nigerians Peoples Party (ANPP) and All

---

[1]His democratic election to office was after 39 years of the nation's independence from Britain in 1060.

Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA). After the merger these political parties decided to go by the political name of APC which was perhaps the mother party to the merger.

The Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) was founded on September, 2006 and participated in the 2011 general election. Although ACN had also won some political seats during elections, especially in the south west, Midwest and north-central region of Nigeria, the party strategized itself by merging with other political parties so that in their unity they could be fortified, and the party would be in a better position to better rival the PDP in power come the next presidential elections in 2015.

As it usually said that in politics that there are no permanent friend and there are no permanent enemies; this assertion has also turned out to be true in the contestations of the Nigerian political situation. Some of the reputable members of these rival political parties have switched sides to the party they considered beneficial to them and not necessarily a switch in political views. For example, on the 25th of November 2013 some governors and senators from the PDP joined APC because they were the opposition party and they considered the APC as a threat to the ruling party.

Just within a relatively short space of time, political advertising through the use of social media has become part of the political culture of most democracies, especially in developed countries and Nigeria as a democratic nation (young democracy to be precise) has not been left out (Olabamiji, 2014). With social media being one of the recently specialised areas of human communication and business Nigerian political parties have not sat back in taking this innovation to meet their electorates. More specifically, the parties have used social advertising, which is part of social marketing. The component parts of social advertising include political advertising, social-cause advertising, philanthropic organisation advertising and private non-profit advertising. Considering that political advertising is a marketing function similar in intent and purpose to product marketing (Nwosu1992), political campaigns can be considered as canvassing for votes, in other words a kind of political salesmanship. Political parties Nigeria therefore uses different media to reach their audiences, most significantly Facebook. 'Social media' is a broad term that emerged in the latter part of the 20th century to encompass the amalgamation of traditional media such as film, images,

music, spoken and written words, with the interactive power of computer and communications technology and computer-enabled consumer devices through the Internet (ES.Asenah, LO Edegoh,2012).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Social media in today's world has grown unprecedentedly and has helped individual, businesses and group of communities to communicate effectively, faster and cheaper with one another. In other words, social media has significantly turned the world into a global village (McLuhan 1964) this has really enhanced information to go around the world faster and more cheaply.

A survey done by the Pew Research Centre's Global Attitudes found that most people in the world share their views online about a variety of topics, especially popular culture and politics. Across twenty of the nations polled in Arab world, excluding pakistan due to the low rate social networking usage a median of 67% of social media users say they use social media to share opinions about music and movies. Significant numbers also posted their views on community issues 46%, sports 43% and politics 34%. Fewer than below 14 % give their opinions about religion (Kohut, 2012). Amongst the variety of existing social media that people use, Facebook has grown exponentially since its creation in 2006, and in April, 2013 more than 71% of all Americans had a Facebook page[2]. This allows citizens and politicians to participate more in political discuss and to share political opinion publicly.

Although the public has always been part of news contributor, the advent of social media has made the contributing role of the public more engaging and rapid, although the truth of a single event at times are usually questionable or multiple. This is possible for instance, because Facebook allows individual to post, comment, or report current happenings in the around their community of anywhere in the world, also update people on situation of things such as sport, entertainment, politics and education.

---

[2] http://www.statista.com/statistics/268136/top-15-countries-based-on-number-of-facebook-users/

Additionally, it also allows citizens and politicians to participate in public discussions, share political content publicly and provide news commentary.

Many politicians have made use of social media to interact with their constituency and supporters. President Barrack Obama in 2008 American presidential election proved that social media has been very beneficial to politicians, especially during his political campaign (Learnmonth, 2009). Meanwhile, it could arguably be said that Goodluck Jonathan won the 2011 election in Nigeria with the help of his use of social media. The purpose of this study therefore is to explore how political parties in Nigeria, especially the PDP and APC, used social media during the 2011 Nigerian presidential elections. Emphasis will be made on the use of Facebook by these political parties and how they through Facebook lobbied electorates to vote for them.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Regardless of a politician's party affiliation or previous history, social media simplifies word of mouth and facilitates collaboration (McConnell and Huba, 2007), a concept that is key to generating and maintaining interest in a campaign. In addition, social media have significantly altered the accessibility and availability of information on specific candidates. Instead of gathering basic knowledge from news stories and websites, users of social media gather information, and at times, opinions, using interactive sites where communication is continuous between voters and politicians and where information flows directly from politicians' mouths to voters' Facebook pages. Young people are most frequent users of social media in most societies for different activities, and considering the youthful population in Nigeria, politicians recognise the large number of youths as a portion of the population worth an interest for any political success to power.

The study is significant in the sense that I will provide politicians, social media experts and stakeholders with information on how political parties make use of social media with specific interest on how they used Facebook during the 2011 political campaign in Nigeria

THE PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

Through the help of the Internet, information dissemination through the use of social media has spread tremendously all over the world in less than ten years of its creation (Facebook). The political use of this innovation has not been neglected by politicians across the world. Compared to the 1980s and early 1990s where people were limited in watching television, reading the newspapers and listening to the radio to be informed or updated on what is happening around the world politically among others. The use of social media has changed tremendously the way political information is being disseminated. With particular reference to the Nigerian society, political activities have seen a number of changes since 1960 when Nigeria achieved her independence from the British. Some of these changes were specifically how political power was being transferred from one leader to the next. This has usually through a military confrontation of the various interest groups.

Despite the peaceful transfer of political power in Nigeria, social media which, continues to be used by politicians. Considering such changes, the use of social media by political parties has not been well documented, providing a significant gap in the body of literature pertaining to Nigerian politics. Hence, the study is aimed at examining how these political parties have used the social media in a fragile and young democratic society such as that of Nigeria. Nigeria has a very rich cultural diversity with a more than 200 ethnic tribes which are different from the others not only through language but also through political beliefs and orientations. This cultural aspect of the Nigerian society has further prompted the study to understand how these political parties through Facebook get to the needs of such culturally diverse communities.

The Nigerian legislation had provided some roles on how social media should be used for political activities among other things, but that notwithstanding, there remain many areas of improvement of this legislation that could oversee the use of social media that is constantly changing in its complexity moreover in a society that could be considered politically fragile owing to her political history.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To solve the research problem, the research came up with some objectives to be met in an attempt to engage with the above mentioned problem. The objectives of the study were set as follows:

 I. To understand how the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive Congress (APC) Party have adopted the use of social media during their political campaign.

 II. To understand why most Nigerian political parties made use of Facebook as a medium of communication to their electorate during the 2011 political election.

 III. To understand how the use of social media impacted the political campaigns of the PDP and APC Party during the 2011 political campaign.

 IV. To understand how Facebook influenced electorate decision to vote.

 V. To compare the extent of use of social media by these political parties in Nigeria during the 2011 election.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Three research questions are posed in this study

1. How did the **People's Democratic Party** and the **All Progress Congress Party** use the social media for political campaigns in Nigeria during the 2011 election?

   - How did they adopt the use of social media for political campaign

   - Why did most Nigerian political parties make use of Facebook as a medium to communicate to their electorate? and

- How effectively has this medium served its purpose

2. How does the use of social media impact political campaign of the All Progressive Congress Party?

  - What was the extend of use of social media participation in Nigeria

  - Did the use of Facebook influence electorate decision to vote?

3. How does the use of social media impact political campaign of the People Democratic Congress Party?

  - What was the extend of use of social media for political campaign

  - Did the use of Facebook influence electorate decision to vote?

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

To answer the above mentioned questions, the study was located within an interpretivist paradigm. Neuman (2006:81) defines a paradigm as "a basic orientation to theory and research". An interpretivist paradigm was used to explore an in-depth understanding of how social media was used by political parties during the 2011 elections in Nigeria. The exploration was done by analysing data from the Facebook pages of the two political parties and also from those who used the Facebook page of these political parties during the 2011 political campaign in Nigeria. The study further employed a qualitative approach to explore the richness, depth, and complexity of how social media influenced their decision and also how the voters identifies themselves through the various posts and languages that were being used in their affiliated Facebook pages. The interpretivist paradigm uses the perspective of participants as the main indicator of meaning is (Henning, Ronsburg, and Smit, 2004). The participants were all those who used the Facebook pages of the two parties during the 2011 political elections in Nigeria. Purposive sampling was used since the researcher wanted to have the same number of political representation of the selected number of political parties. However, within the array of responses recorded on Facebook, a random approach

was taken in selecting the responses recorded and analysed. By 'random' I mean that all population elements (among those that were recorded on the relevant Facebook pages) had the possibility of being part of the study and were also qualified to participant in the study since the criteria for participation is not too specific. This approach was used to obtain empirical knowledge of the contemporary use of social media by political parties in Nigeria which allows generalizations of the existing use of social media during political elections in Nigeria. Once they were identified, a semi-structured interview was sent to each participant. Some of the participants were found in South Africa while others were contacted in Nigeria. A total of twenty participants took part in the study, equally divided between affiliated members of both selected political party of the study.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was limited to one social networking site which was Facebook and specifically on the account of two political parties; Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressive Congress (APC). The PDP and APC official members were interviewed for the study to provide information on how their party make use of social media during the 2011 political elections campaign in Nigeria. Also, only the official Facebook page of each party were analysed for information.

The limitation was due to the unavailability of insufficient resources, both financial and human for the entire research, and also lack of time due to limited time schedule. This limitations did not, however compromise on the quality of the findings nor did it have any impact on the rigor of the methodology.

CONCEPTUALISATION OF TERMS

To enhance the efficiency of understanding of the researcher's conceptualisation of key words, the researcher deemed it necessary to clarify of some of the words that might result to ambiguous interpretation and conceptualisation from that of the researcher's position of understanding. For this reason, the following words were

defined from the researcher's own point of view and how they were subsequently use throughout the study.

Social media

The term 'social media' is define as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010).Also O'Relly, (2005) defines web 2.0 as a set of principles and practice that join a wide array of site that user- generating content and make emphasis on social connection.

Facebook

Facebook was understood as a popular 'free' social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. At the time of the study, the site was understood to be available in 37 different languages and included public features such as: Market place - which allows members [including political parties] to post, read and give their opinion.

CHAPTER OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The following chapter outline has been provided to guide the reader with an impending understanding of what constitutes each chapter and how the chapters further explains the study.

Chapter 1:   Introduction to the study

This chapter provides an overview of how the study has been organised. This chapter is made up of the background of the study, purpose and focus of the study, the rationale and the objectives to be achieved by the study. The research questions were also introduced here, along with the research methodology that was used to in providing answers for the research objectives. The chapter ended with an outline of the chapters and what they organised.

Chapter 2:   Review of relevant literature

This chapter essentially provided all the relevant literature for the study. This chapter was divided into main headings and subheadings to elucidate the reader's understanding of the various aspects related to the use of social media and how it was being used in Nigeria and other parts of the world. The chapter also covers the role of social media in political transition from one leader to the next.

Chapter 3:   Research methodology

This chapter was used to provide answers to the research questions that were presented in chapter one. The chapter deals with aspects of research paradigm, sampling of the participants, instruments and how the data were being analysed. The chapter also presented the challenges encountered and some of the ethical considerations that framed the entire study and the last phrase of the chapter will also describe the theoretical framing of the study.

Chapter 4:   Data analysis and interpretation

This chapter presents an analysis of the data that were collected through the semi-structured interview and also on the selected political party's Facebook official page. The presentation of the data was through the use of emerging themes. The themes that emerged were initially coded and categorised where commonalities across the data were grouped and therefore referred to them as themes.

Chapter 5:   Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter, which also happens to be the final chapter, concludes the study. The conclusions that were arrived at were based on the analysis of the data collected and presented in the previous chapter. The conclusion also concluded the research objectives of the study. Furthermore, the chapter ended by suggesting some recommendations for further studies that were based on the finding of the study. The recommendations were for further studies to be done and also to inform the political parties in Nigeria on matters related to the use of social media during political elections.

CONCLUSION

This chapter presented an overall summary of the study. The following headings were discussed; background of the study, the purpose and focus; which centred on the use of social media during the 2011 elections in Nigeria. The rationale of the study which was concerned with understanding how political parties used Facebook as a social media during the election through the use of graphics and languages. A brief overview of the research design and methodology was also mentioned, which was a qualitative study within an interpretivist paradigm. The chapter ends with a summary overview of the five chapters in the study. The next section of the study –chapter two, talks about the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Most countries of the world today acknowledge and use democracy as the best form of government because it allows freedom which basically entails government of the people by the people and for the people. Elections as a process of selecting a president, senate, governors etc., represent the most modern and to a greater extend a universally accepted process through which individuals are chosen to represent an entity or government and thus the electoral process plays a fundamental role in democracy(Nnadozie, 2007). Reason being that in a democracy, the authority of the government is deriving from the majority consent of the governed; perhaps why democracy is commonly referred to as 'the government of the people by the people and for the people'.

Nigeria's democracy may be considered nascent by many observers (Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)) when compared to the older democracies in Africa and of the western world(Okoro and Nwafor, 2013). Irrespective of such consideration, the 2011 general election will be credited in the history of Nigeria as one of the 'best' elections in the last few years of uninterrupted civilian rule in the land.Okoro and Nwafor (2013) Opine that although a democratic election is usually characterised by competition, periods, inclusion, freedom and fairness, Nigeria's general election have experienced a considerable amount of violence. Amidst this nascent transformation and sparingly erupted violence Kidafa et al. (2011b), observe that one remarkable thing about the 2011 general elections was the drastic and unprecedented adoption of social media especially the use of Facebook by the Nigerian politicians, the political parties and the electorates. Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp etc. served as a platform for a democratic political participation for all Nigerian.

For us to best understand how Nigerian political landscape used social media during the 2011 general elections and also appreciate its use to political parties, this section of the review and related literature will be divided into three main sections.

Section A will discuss some related aspect of the use of social media by the Nigerian political society and their preparedness in the use of social media as well as the aftermath of the use of social media. The second section [section B] will explore the use of social media in Africa and with a specific example to the Arab spring and sub-Saharan Africa. The final section, section C, will briefly explain how President Barack Obama phenomenally used social media to get to voters innovatively.

Section A: A brief description of Nigeria and her demographics

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is located on the western coast of Africa divided into 36 states with the federal capital Abuja. There are over five hundred different ethnic groups scattered all over the country with many different local languages; however, the only official language is English. The most common non-English languages include the language of Hausa, the language of Yoruba, and the language of Igbo. Those three languages are the most widespread, apart from the language of English.

According to the Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics (2012) the population of Nigeria was approximately 166.2 million people with an estimated growth rate of 2.8%. This makes Nigeria the most populated country in Africa. The entire population of Nigeria currently accounts for about 2.5% of the entire earth's population. This technically means that 1 out of every 43 people in the world is a Nigerian. One third (approximately 43%) of her population are young people between the ages of 10 to 24 years. Thus there are currently over 72 million young people in the country. This places Nigeria as the third largest Facebook user in Africa (36th worldwide) with 5.3 million members connected, this number is only second to South Africa (32nd worldwide) with 5.5 million people connected and Egypt (20th worldwide) with 13.01 million connected to Facebook(Alabi, 2013). When it comes to the average of a Nigerian citizen, the country is a relatively youthful population. For both males and females, the median age of the country is 19 years of age. The split between the males

and the females in Nigeria are quite even. Men take the edge in numbers, but not by much. There are, according to estimates, about 1.04 males to every 1 female in the country (Nigerian National Bureau of statistics, 2012).

As we mentioned above, there are multiple ethnic groups in Nigeria. The Hausa-Fulani ethnicity outnumbers every other ethnic group, accounting for two-thirds of the population. Out of those two-thirds, a very large majority of them are of the Muslim faith. They are predominantly found in the Northern part of the country. The other ethnic groups in Nigeria are the Nupe, the Tiv, and the Kanuri. The overall religious aspect of Nigeria is generally split between Christianity and Islam. Most Nigerian Muslims are Sunni and are located in the northern parts of the country while the Christian population is located mainly in the middle and the southern areas of the country. A study in 2009 stated that 50.4% of the population was Muslim while the rest were Christian.

An overview of Nigeria's political system of government

The Federal republic of Nigeria has three arms of government; these arms are the executive, legislature and the judiciary. These arms of government are the main bodies of Nigeria federation and they control the political system of government in Nigeria. The government has two level system of administration which are the State and the Local system of government.

The executive arm of the Nigerian government is in charge of the constitution at the federal level, the government is controlled by the elected body headed by the president. The president is variously known as 'the head of state', 'the chief executive of the federation and the commander in-chief of army force of the federation of Nigeria'. As the head of state, his/her responsibility (amongst others) is to make sure that the day-to-day activity of the government is executed smoothly and effectively, and to bear in mind that should any failure occur in the government, then he/she has to bear accountability for them. As the commander in chief of army, he is responsible for the activity that takes place in the armed force, as well as the way in which they are controlled and organised. Although the president is not a member of the national

assembly (the legislature), he shares responsibility with national assembly for effective governance where s/he is mostly responsible for administration. An elected president of Nigeria is only allowed to be in office for two terms of four years each. According to the Nigeria constitution, it is the president's responsibility to appoint ministers. The constitution allows the president to elect ministers from the 36 state of the Nigeria federation, that is, to preside over the executive and to ensure on a daily basis that the general laws of the land made by the legislative are administrated and enforced.

Each of the 36 state in Nigeria is controlled by an elected governor of the state. He is elected into office in the same was as with the president, together with an assistant, the deputy governor of the state, who could relieve him of his duties and responsibility if the need arose. According to the Nigerian constitution, the governor can only be allowed to stay in the office for two four-year terms. The governors assign duties and responsibilities to his adviser and commissioners. The governor's administration at this level is referred to as the state government.

The local government is the third level of the administrative structure after the federal and state level. There are 77 local governments in Nigeria. The local government is the closest to the people. According to the Nigeria constitution, the local government works together with the state government in the aspects of education, health and agriculture, Each local government area is administered by a local government council comprises of chairman, who is known as the chief executive of the local government area, and other elected members who are referred to as councillors. The elected officials can only hold the office for three to four years depending on the state. The local government has some functions which are guided by the constitution of the land such as the making of recommendation to the state commission on economic planning, housing, and transportation licence maintenance of public convenience etc.

Irrespective of the level of administration an individual finds him or herself, they can only get into office through the process of elections; and they must be affiliated to a political party. For this reason election in Nigeria is always busy with politicians trying to win voters at every stage of the elections and at every office. Social media therefore

has become a rapid and cheap way of reaching the plus one hundred voters in Nigeria. How each political party and their politicians use the social media is the underpinning focus of the review[3].

Social media and political campaigns

Marshal McLuhan in 1964 predicted that the world would someday become a 'global village' where what happens in one part of the world would be known instantly and simultaneously worldwide. This prediction has not only made the world 'smaller' but has greatly enhanced all aspects of human communication. In many parts of the world today, individuals, groups, organisations and even nations are taking advantage of the opportunities provided by social media and other e-media platforms to mobilise millions of people to support and advance their course. In the political sphere it has become a veritable tool for interacting and mobilising citizens towards active participation in the political process and democratic projects. It is through the media that people are able to participate freely in discussions relevant to public interest. The use of social media in today's campaign is not only important but it is critical; millions of people are involved in using social networks daily. It is the contemporary opportunity for political parties to be in touch with large numbers of voters quickly, constantly and at a low cost (Olabamiji, 2014).

A political candidate may have a million subscribers on his/her Facebook account, but would be able to reach 10 million or even a 100 million people that persuades more followers because of his/her activities online. Through social media, many people get to see large numbers of campaign content coming through, whether they like it or not. Adelabu (2011) notes that the success of President Obama's Presidential campaigns in 2008 and his eventual emergence as first black president of the United States was largely credited to his active use of Facebook to mobilise millions of volunteers, voters and to lobby for financial support. Indeed, politics has evolved greatly in the recent decade with the advent of the new technology. With it, information sharing has greatly improved, allowing citizens to discuss ideas, post news, ask questions and share links. With social media, politicians reach the masses with the aim of assessing the political

---

Reference [3] http://www.onlinenigeria.com/government/ 06/06/2016.2.10pm

atmosphere even before venturing into the campaign. Social media is perhaps the best tool to assess the popularity of a candidate especially by the young people and craft the best language to use as a campaign slogan (Ibagere, 2013).

Social media also provides politicians with the opportunity to be informally free with the public. This free connection through social media helps politicians to communicate their humour, indicating their approachability and accessibility to the public. With social media, politicians appeal to citizens; this makes them seem more personable and gives them the advantage of keeping in constant contact with their supporters. Social media grants many people the chance to participate actively and get involved fully in the political discourse by adding their voices on issues posted on the social media sites. Thus, advancing the tenets of participatory democracy that sees media as a debate avenue and aids tremendously in actualising public-sphere journalism. Although this quality of political engagement is still to have a solid ground in the Nigerian political forum,Adeyanju and Haruna (2012) argue that it affords electorates a friendlier avenue of assessing candidates for political offices and promoting transparency in governance. Therefore, creating a user-friendly social media strategy for use during political campaigns is not only vital but has become an essential part of majority of political candidate's plan to get into office in present day Nigeria and seemingly the rest of the world. This is evident from the fact that social media sites often get more traffic congestion than an official campaign website of political parties; this in its self indicates the importance for candidates to get connected to these sites(Olabamiji, 2014).

Use of social media by key election stakeholders and the strategic use of social media by some political parties

The importance attached to social media in the 2011 general elections can be seen by President Goodluck Jonathan's decision to use the medium of Facebook to declare his intention to run for the highest political office, declarations has been common with politicians, with that of Obama in 2008 being the most prominent. On Wednesday, September 15, 2010, President Jonathan informed his 217,000 fans on his Facebook page of his intention to run for elections. Twenty-four hours later, more than 4,000 fans joined his page, and by the day of the election on 16 April 2011, he had over half a million followers. His remarkable move of announcing his intention to run for Presidency on Facebook evoked excitement within his party as most of them considered such a move to be charismatic and appealing to voters –a majority of them youths (Odoemelam and Adibe, 2011). This move was against the backdrop of heated arguments that characterized the debate on whether Jonathan should contest in the 2011 elections or no. The Facebook announcement had an instant impact on his legitimacy as president, judging from the number of followers a couple of days later.

Goodluck Jonathan was not the only candidate to use Facebook. His rivals- Alhaji Mohammed Buhari of the CPC, Nuhu Ribadu of the ACN and Alhaji Shakarau of the ANPP were among those that maintain a strong presence on Facebook among other social media platforms. Judging from the number of followers each candidate had on their Facebook page, the incumbent President made the most of social media when compared to his counterparts. These statistics were provided by the Social Media Tracking Centre, an independent ad hoc centre set up to track the use and effect of social media during the 2011 elections.

In addition to the approximately 3 million registered Nigerians on Facebook and 60,000 on Twitter almost every institution involved in Nigeria's elections conducted an aggressive social networking outreach, including the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), political parties, candidates, media houses, civil society groups and even the police (Okoro and Nwafor, 2013). Apart from the

presidential candidates, many governorship aspirants, senatorial and House of Assembly seat contenders from the various states of the Federation also embarked on aggressive use of social media platforms. Facebook was particularly used to announce their candidacy and further disseminate their political messages, persuade electorates and support groups towards the actualization of their goals.

The use of social media during the 2011 general elections was extensively exploited by four key stakeholders in the electoral process. These stakeholders were: the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), politicians/political parties, the electorate, and the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The use of social media by these stakeholders in achieving their stated objectives was interdependent from a structural point of view. In spite of such interrelatedness in attaining electoral success, this section of the literature review will focus predominantly on how political parties used the social media during the elections.

For Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), social media was deployed to share information on the elections and receive feedback from the public on the performance of election officials. It was not only INEC that tapped into the opportunities provided by social media for greater and more efficient political communication. Politicians and political parties also utilized the social media largely to engage with voters and constituents. Many candidates who contested the 2011 general elections had Facebook, Twitter, and/or YouTube accounts. The voters used social media to report their experiences and receive election related information. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) used social media tools to mobilize and educate the electorate as well as to cover and report the outcome of their monitoring of the electoral process.

The 2011 elections demonstrated the extent to which the social media has penetrated the urban populace in the Nigerian society. Estimates indicate that at the time of the elections in 2011, out of approximately 150 million Nigerians, 87 million owned mobile phones that were able to send and receive SMS messages and 44 million had internet access (Asuni and Farris 2011). The benefits of the penetration of social media in Nigeria came to light during the 2011 elections. Nigerian citizens of all ages,

education levels and from different parts of the country used and were mobilized through the use of social media to participate in the 2011 general elections.

The Nigerian electorate used social media in two major ways during the 2011 elections. Firstly, social media was used to mobilize both the 'online' and 'offline' electorate during the elections. CSOs, politicians, political parties, GSM service providers, as well as the electorate themselves passed on messages through various electronic channels mobilizing the citizens to participate in the electoral process and ensure that their votes count. However, a more interesting aspect of the political mobilization that took place during the 2011 elections was the extraordinary propensity of social media users among the electorate (online electorates) to pass on the information they have received through the social media to the sections of the electorate that are not connected to the social media (offline electorates) Orji. N (2013, pg7)

Anyone who knows Nigeria would know of the amazing ability of Nigerians to talk to each another in the markets, 'newspaper stands', bus stops, schools, workplaces, bars and restaurants, as well as in their homes. This gregarious attitude of Nigerians helped to reinforce the messages that were sent through the social media. In this sense, there were very high tendencies for messages transmitted through the social media to quickly reach the offline electorates. This broke down the gap between 'online' and 'offline' electorates, and enabled messages circulated through the social media to rapidly and easily penetrate the rest of the society.

Secondly, social media enabled the electorates to serve as 'citizen journalists' or 'citizen observers' during the 2011 elections. Citizen journalists or observers are simply individuals who actively participated in observing, documenting and reporting major events in the society such as elections. The emergence of social media enabled untrained citizens to cover and share their election experiences in audio, text, photographs and video and post them on Facebook and or WhatsApp their friends. On their own, some electorates engaged with INEC and other election stakeholders such as Nigeria Police and National Civil Defence Corps, using the hotlines and other communication channels provided by these agencies Orji. N (2013, pg8).

As part of social media strategy, politicians created interesting posts to try to engage followers, similar to the strategy and techniques used by a brand adverting for commercial reasons. Candidates created simple design posts that could be easily shared. This type of campaign marketing is very different from creating television commercials, as the politicians can create social media posts quickly and easily to react to news and reach out to voters, whereas making an advertisement is a much longer process.

Generally, Nigerian politicians actively utilized social media in their campaigns. They sent bulk text and voice messages in unprecedented numbers. They made massive use of Facebook pages and other social media platforms to win supports and canvass for votes. Non-Governmental Organisations(NGOs) such as, 'Enough is Enough Nigeria', 'WangoNet' and 'IamLagos' established platforms enabling citizens to report election-related incidences with pictures, videos, text messages and/or voicemail. There was another group, 'Reclaim Naija' who used text messages and e-mail reports to compile a live online map of trouble spots. At the same time, traditional media houses such as Channels Television, *234Next*and *Punch* newspaper used new media to disseminate information and gather feedback from viewers. Photos, pictures, details and videos from polling stations were quickly uploaded to Facebook and YouTube. There were also 'Twitter activists' whose job was to look out for rigging and spread warning about bombings at polling stations. Omenugha (2011) observed that this massive use of social media culminated in the success of the election acclaimed the freest and fairest in the history of the country.

Limitations and critics of the conventional media used for political campaign

Before the advent of the new media, older or conventional media – radio, television, newspapers, magazines, etc., ruled the world of information and communication, and had directly or indirectly limited the participation of the masses in the electoral process. Amongst other reasons, it was obvious that there had always been a scramble for the limited time-on-air given to political parties by the conventional media, and

also for the citizens to have their say in politics, governance and in the electoral process (Graber, 1976; Fallows 1996; Blumler and Gurevitch, 1995). Conventional media critics thus believe that voters were always being feed with paid political propaganda containing only meaningless slogans via the limited communication routes, thus making them disinterested and cynical about politics(Okoro and Nwafor, 2013). These critics further argued that there is absence of serious debate in the conventional[old] media that could enable people understand the depth and substance of issues, policies proposals and related arguments; all of which disallows citizens from participating actively in political discourse (Omotola J. And Gbenga A,2012).

Meanwhile, media critics have pointed out that social media are interactive, web-based media. They belong to the new genre of media that focus on social networking, allowing users to express themselves, interact with friends, share personal information, as well as publish their own views on the internet. Omotola and Aiyedogbon (2012) argue that the ubiquitous access of these online devices no doubt has democratising effects as they offer citizens a unique opportunity to fully engagement in the political process that has significant impact of their daily lives. This means that voters have become more active electorates through the use of social media and they can freely express their opinion to the rest of the world. Previous, they would have had to wait to hear what the conventional media had to say. Social media have therefore brought power back to the people of Nigeria at least for electoral reasons(Ibagere, 2013). This implies that people can now consume media as they want and need rather than allowing media producers to schedule consumption time and content. A person can now communicate and participate in political debates at anyplace and any time they so desire to get involved. Again, using social media is not only widely available but less expensive to the common Nigerian than the outrageous political advertisements on the older media that only made the media richer (Nnadozie, 2007). The new media are flexible, accessible and affordable to a majority of Nigerians. They promote democratisation of media, alter the meaning of geographic distance, and allow for increase in the volume and speed of communication. They are portable due to their mobile nature; they are interactive and open to all. The change in

communication landscape in Nigeria's 2011 general elections played a huge role in the way political parties approached the public and lure voters to themselves.

The negative aftermath of the use of social media in the 2011 general elections in Nigeria

The use of social media in the 2011 general elections was undoubtedly a formidable force for social and political engagement in Nigeria. Because the technology of social media is participatory, interactive and cost-effective, this has made it the medium of the moment as far as political communication and participation are concerned. Nigeria had her first true test of social media use for political participation during the2011 general elections (Adibe et al., 2012). Many positive results were recorded. For instance, both the local and foreign observers rated the election as the best in the fourteen year history of unbroken democracy in the country. However, a Human Rights Watch report of April 18, 2011 says that although the April elections were heralded as among the fairest in Nigeria's history, they also were among the bloodiest (Okoro and Nwafor, 2013).The reports further show that a total of not less than 800 persons were killed, more than 65,000others displaced and over 350 churches either burnt or destroyed in the violence that precipitated the announcement of the 2011 general elections results in the northern states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara by Muslim rioters. This sporadic widespread violence was (and is presently) believed to be orchestrated by the Islamic fundamentalist called Boko Haram.

Adeyanju and Haruna (2012) believe that social media played a huge role in instigating and fuelling the aftermath violence. They argue that during the period, many Facebook pages were awash with false rumours and gossip that added to the already existing discontent of some sections of Nigerians electorates, therefore setting the stage for post-election violence through the creation of unnecessary tensions. Regrettably enough, social media was used to spread false election results that differed from what INEC eventually announced. This led to the belief among the electorates that the elections were massively rigged. Glimpses of the violence started on the commonly used social media platforms, where abusive languages, all manner of attacks and

counter attacks between supporters of various opposition parties were posted. There was an influx of several insulting and inciting messages that flourished on Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp etc.. The use of such abusive languages pictures and graphics culminated in the violence and tensions that were witnessed during and after the elections in many parts of the country, with some states ordering non-indigenes to leave(Okoro and Nwafor, 2013). As a result of these violent outbreaks,Okoro and Nwafor (2013) recommended periodic public enlightenment campaigns on the use of social media platforms for political purposes, especially among the youths. Furthermore, suggested Okoro and Nwafor (2013), the government should be at the vanguard of these campaigns, using such instruments like the ministries of information at both state and federal levels, the National Orientation Agency, the mass media, among others.

The Nigerian legal framework for the use of social media in elections

The Nigerian Electoral Act of 2010 (Nigeria, 2010) is the most recent legal framework amended and adopted by the Senate. This Act oversaw the conduct of social media in the Nigerian elections. Irrespective of the amendment a year before the elections, the Act did not provide sufficient and specific guidelines on the use of social media in (Dundas, 2014). Instead, it contains a number of sections that made references to the use of 'electronic media' in the conduct of elections. These amendments were made in consultation of the Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC) whose primary function was (and remains) the promotion of good governance and citizenship. The changes included where:

- Section 100(4) of the Electoral Act 2010 which allows for the use of public electronic media for electioneering campaigns;

- Section 101(1) which prohibits the broadcast, publication, advertisement or circulation of any campaign material over the 'radio, television, newspaper, magazine, handbills, or any print or electronic media whatsoever called' during 24 hours to the opening of polling;

- Section 154 which empowers INEC to make use of electronic media to conduct civic education and public enlightenment;

- Section 34 which requires INEC to 'publish by displaying or causing to be displayed at the relevant office(s) of the Commission and on the Commission's website, a statement of the full names and addresses of all candidates standing nominated', at least thirty days before the day of the election;

- Section 71 which require INEC to 'cause to be posted on its notice board and website, a notice showing the candidates at the election and their scores; and the person declared as elected or returned at the election';

- Section 56(2) which states that INEC 'may take reasonable steps to ensure that voters with disabilities are assisted at the polling place by the provision of suitable means of communication, such as Braille, large embossed print or electronic devices or sign language interpretation, or off-site voting in appropriate cases'; and

- Section 52(1) (b) which states that 'the use of electronic voting machine for the time being is prohibited'.

It would be realised that the Act is mindful of the opportunities provided by the electronic media and that it considers electronic media crucial in four major areas. This is due to the manner at which the Act is conceptualised. Firstly, the Electoral Act envisages a key role for electronic media in campaigning; and suggests allowing for the use of electronic media (and by implication social media) during political campaigns. Secondly, the Act is based on the anticipation that INEC's capacity to provide civic education and enlightenment can be improved by the use of electronic media(Okoro and Nwafor, 2013). Thirdly, the anticipated role of the social media envisaged in the Electoral Act sees a role for electronic media improving the quality and transparency of the electoral process – this explains the requirement that vital information be disseminated through INEC's website. Finally, from an inclusive point of view, the Act considers electronic media a useful tool that can be used to facilitate the participation of various segments of the society, particularly of People Living with Disabilities (PWDs), in the electoral process. This explains the provision which

encourages INEC to provide electronic devices that could assist PWDs at the polling stations.

Although the Electoral Act of 2010 referred to some of the core issues relating to the use of electronic media in elections, some vital elements did not receive the attention they deserved(Dundas, 2014). For example, Section100 of the Electoral Act provides the guidelines for election campaigns, outlining regulations of the use of media during campaigns. Nevertheless, many expected the Electoral Act at this point to provide specific guidelines to govern the use of social media in elections. But that section was silent on the use of social media within such capacity. Authors (Dundas, 2014, Ibagere, 2013 , Okoro and Nwafor, 2013, Olabamiji, 2014, Omotola and Aiyedogbon, 2012, Kidafa et al., 2011b) concluded that the experience using of social media in the 2011 elections has become a crucial tool for political campaigns as increasing number of politicians and political parties (PDP, CPC, APC etc.) have created websites, Facebook accounts, utilized electronic messaging and social networking tools. It is therefore one of the recommendations of the present research that the INEC ought to begin an early rectification of the use of social media in elections in order to ensure that the Commission does not become overwhelmed by the rapid evolution of social media technology and the ways in which they are used by Nigerian politicians.

Section B: An overview of the use of social media in sub-Saharan Africa

The arrival of social media has greatly enhanced human communication in sub-Saharan Africa. This is partly due to the participatory, interactive and cost-effective nature of social media when compared to the traditional communication tools. The sub-Saharan region of Africa still grapples with political maturity of their citizens and the peaceful transfer of political power from one person or political party to the next. The transition to a more democratic order has coincided with the impending arrival of the new technology. Globally, the region is the poorest in the world, and the use of social media is still the lowest. The central part of Africa is even lower than the Northern and Southern regions of Africa. The low penetration and access to social

media in sub-Saharan Africa is an issue of concern for the development of the region. Writing on penetration of new media in Africa, Adibe et al. (2012) state that:

The diffusion of new technologies in Africa is still at a snail speed such that the gap between the information rich developed countries and African countries continue to increase everyday..... Africa has 13% of world population but only 2% of the world telephone lines and 1% internet connectivity. Consequently, most African countries have not been able to reap the abundant benefits of the global information revolution in many areas of life.

It should be noted that 2% of telephone lines and 1% of internet connection is largely due to the contributions made by the northern and southern regions of the continent. Again, in many parts of Africa where social media is in use, it is still mainly an urban affair and use is mostly by the middle class. Perhaps, the most worrisome problem is the weakness, or absence, of regulation of the technology. Kidafa et al. (2011b) observe that regulating traditional media in the face of issues like obscenity, copyright, right to privacy, etc. was difficult, but have become more difficult with the emergence of social media. The increasing use of social media and other online tools has indeed led to greater privacy challenges. Thus, despite the great potentials of the internet and other digital social media, challenges of monitoring and regulation remain.

Besides the gloomy image of the use of social media on the continent, social media nonetheless have been a formidable force for social engineering and political electioneering within the continent as a whole. However, despite the importance of social media in political mobilization, scholars have pointed out that the social media is indeed a technology with a double edge, quick and sharp with its embedded strength and weaknesses for the continent (Nnadozie, 2007, Kidafa et al., 2011a, Ibagere, 2013 , Adibe et al., 2012).

The strength of increased interaction between election candidates and voters

Along with the advent of the new technology, politics has evolved in recent decade in Africa. Information sharing has become instant, and especially with the advent of social media. in sub-Saharan African countries, Facebook was not introduced until

2004, YouTube 2005 and Twitter, 2006 (Kidafa et al., 2011a). The coming of these technologies brought new trends in election campaigns in sub-Saharan Africa, although these were not too different from what has been experienced in the rest of the world. The Facebook platform, which is the most commonly used for political campaigners, allows one to send out mass messages, post pictures and videos and interact with the public; such approach have been experienced in Ghanaian presidential election and the independent referendum in South Sudan (Kidafa et al.,2011a), Twitter is used to send short and targeted messages to thousands of followers and to interact with others; YouTube is used to post campaign videos; and Flickr, to post campaign pictures. These platforms now give electorates a competitive voice in political participation in the continent. Nonetheless, the number of participants through social media is still very low compared to the number of people in the continent who eventually participate through voting, a circumstance that could be attributed to poverty and low levels of education. Nevertheless the ubiquitous access to these online devices has a democratising effect as they offer citizens opportunities for fuller engagement in the political process. This means that voters have become more than just passive consumers of digital messages; they are now creators of the messages. According to Eze (2007), the value of the communication experience has undergone a sea-change; from the need to share it, to the need to share in it. Technology and social media in particular have brought power back to the people especially in a continent that is yet to fully establish herself as being democratic in relation to political activities.

Similar to the rest of the world, the use of social media in Africa is perhaps the best tool to assess the popularity of candidates and craft the best language to use as campaign slogans, especially by the young people. It is therefore no doubt why President Good lock Jonathan strategically decided to use Facebook to announce his candidacy for the 2011 presidential elections in Nigeria.

With social media, politicians appeal to citizens; the networking ability makes them seem more personable and gives them advantage of keeping in constant contact with their supporters. Social media grant many people the chance to participate actively and get involved fully in the political discourse by adding their voices on issues posted on

the social media sites. Thus, it advances the tenet of participatory democracy that sees media as a debate avenue and aid in tremendously actualizing public-sphere journalism in Africa. Social Media afford electorates a friendlier avenue of assessing candidates for political offices and promoting transparency in governance at least to an extent. This represents the strength of social media in sun-Saharan Africa and Africa in general.

Susceptibility of Social Media as weakness to the problems of Africa

Despite social media's numerous advantages in sub-Saharan Africa with respect to fostering politics, democracy and good governance, they have had their regrettable downsides. To start with, social media provide very volatile platforms to trend politics; judging from the relatively low levels of political participation education of the electorates. However, at the same time, a viral video or uncensored sex photo can instantly infect a political campaign or career, dooming it to a lingering or mercifully rapid death. Also, anonymity of sources makes strict regulation difficult, since it is almost impossible to monitor or prosecute illicit acts. This makes social media vulnerable instruments for perpetuating fraudulent acts. Social media also promotes piracy. This is partly because the question of copyright and intellectual property are more complex and difficult to define and even more difficult to regulate online than in traditional media (Eze, 2007). Similarly, images and sounds can be digitally manipulated, so truth and reality are difficult to ascertain. The difficulties associated with the use of social media on the African continent are largely due to the low levels of technological development in the content. Notwithstanding social media being 'addictive' in nature makes work and life balance hard to achieve. This is because with the new technologies, even if they are not sophisticated, still have the potential for information overload, and social network overload. In Africa, furthermore, the use of social media is expensive when compared to other parts of the world. Again, the rural population in the sub-region is still largely excluded from this trend as the technological backwardness in most African countries has restricted the World Wide Web's accessibility to cities, thereby shutting out the rural areas which constitute the greater land area and population of the masses. This is perhaps largely due to

affordability than the lack of political will to participate in elections using social media.

In spite of the threat associated with social media use in politics in Africa, it facilitates more transparency in governance in the content with poor governance experience at every level of the government. They are highly accessible, affordable and portable. Social media has the power to quickly move ideas from the grassroots to the forefront of public discourse. It enables citizens to interact more quickly and directly than ever, and at the same time saving time and money. With it, election result could be released faster and more accurately. Also, it could help in reducing political rallies which in most cases result in violent clashes with opponents. It reduces election malpractices as voters can mass communicate results of each pooling unit to reduce possibility of falsification of figures.

The Arab uprising

The Arab region 'which simply means a nation comprises of twenty-two countries in the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf, the eastern Mediterranean, and North Africa that are linked by shared predominance of Arabic language and Islam (Flona. H, 2012) part of this country include; Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Libya, Bahrain, Jordan. Syria, United Arab Emirate, Mauritania, Moroco, Oman, Palestin, Qartar, Somalia, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya[4] witnessed the new technology that were mobilized through the use of social networking websites such websites helped people in having collective actions and overcame their fears and encouraged enough to go to streets and speak out. Most of these social media propagated revolutions whether in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Jordan and Syria are due to the totalitarianism, authoritarianism, and repression system that the Arab people are still living in and facing in their daily life. These people suffered from high unemployment rates, corruption, high food prices, and violations of most human rights including freedom of expression. Thus through social media, they developed a means to express their political opinions, and found their opinions were shared by almost everyone

---

[4]Retrived from http://www.almanarconsultancy.com/defining-the-arab-region.html at 18/11/2014 05:22pm.

which in return, encouraged ordinary people as well as political activists to speak and express their opinions, beliefs and thoughts freely (Buisier, 2011).

Change in the number of Facebook users within the Arab region.

The total number of Facebook users in the Arab world increased from 11,978,300 users in January 2010 to 21,361,863 in December 2011, which constitutes an annual growth rate of 78%. The average penetration rate was 6.77% across the Arab region as a whole by the end of 2010 (Mourtada and Salem, 2011). This average penetration rate increased to 7.5 percent by April 2011. The number of users increased from 21,377,282 on January 5, 2011 to 27,711,503 as of April 5, 2011. Thus, the total number of Facebook users increased by 30% in the first quarter of 2011.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has the highest penetration rate for the Facebook as 45 percent of the population has a Facebook accounts. Egypt constitutes about 22 percent of the total Facebook users in the Arab region with around 5.7 million users. The Gulf countries dominate the top five Facebook users compared to the percentage of their population. Interestingly, Iraq and Djibouti are among the few Arab countries where the number of their Facebook users exceeds the number of Internet users, which means that people there rely more on their Facebook for information. Thus, Internet freedom does not affect Facebook penetration in the Arab region as countries with low scores as a consequence of high censorships and filtering, have high Facebook penetration. This has been attributed to the fact that approximately 75 percent of the Facebook users in the Arab region are between the age of 15 and 29, are techno-savvy and have found creative ways to overcome filter and censors (Simon.C.2011).
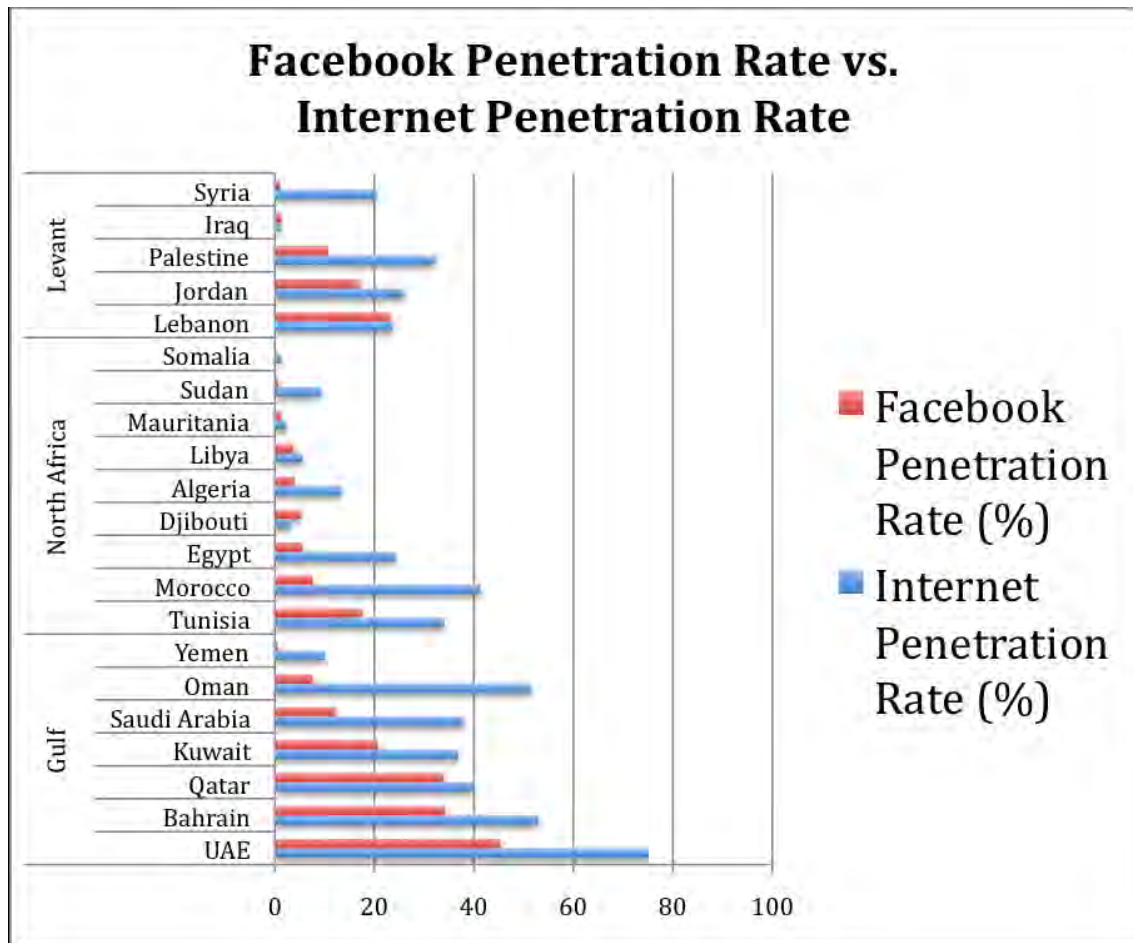
Figure 2.1: Estimated numbers of Facebook and internet penetration rate.

Source: Data on Internet penetration rates come from ICT Statistics Database, 'ICT Statistics, International telecommunication Union. http://www.itu.int/ITUD/ICTEYE/Indicators/Indicators.aspx (accessed April 13,2014). Data on Internet penetration rates from 2009.

The case of the Egyptian Revolution during the Arab spring

The Egyptian revolution was a consequence of long-term dictator regimes that deprived the majority of the Egyptians from their basic human rights. This dictator regime under the former-president Hosni Mubarak began in 1981 and ended in 2011. Mubarak ruled for almost 30-years during which many people suffered by being by

not being able to service their basic needs to live a moderate and secure life (Buisier, 2011).

Reasons for the uprising

The Egyptian revolution was initiated for a number of reasons, including economic hardship; a high unemployment rate, especially among the youth; high food prices, poverty, government corruption, political corruption, lack of democracy and a demand to put an end to torture. Therefore, according to a CNN correspondent in Cairo, and in view of the activities taking place in Egypt, it was safe to say Egypt is in revolt' (Masr, 2011). The demonstrations in Egypt were a result of continuing anger and the fact that that people had been suffering from for a long time. Thus, protestors went to the streets asking for changes to take place. Cairo's downtown Tahrir Square witnessed thousands of people fighting police with rocks, while the police responded by using tear gas. The most important characteristic of the revolution is that it was arranged and implemented through the use of social media, specifically the social networking websites, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The following reviews the revolution, and sketches the role of social media in the uprising. The revolution could be divided into two stages before January 25th and the 18 days of the revolution from Jan. 25th and till the President resignation to pass power to the Egyptian army on the 11th of February 2011.

Before the revolution

Before January 2011, protesters used social media websites such as Facebook, especially a page entitled 'we are all Khaled Said' to a protest meeting on January 25[th,] the annual Egyptian national day celebration. The protest was to oppose the cruelty and torture that the Egyptian police used against citizens. This therefore, means that social media can be used to change a non-democratic regime such as the one in Egypt at the time.

During the revolution

During the 18 days of the revolution starting on January 28th 2011 until the Day of Rage, itself inspired by the Tunisian demonstrations, huge protest movements erupted

across Egypt, during which protesters in Cairo congregating on Tahrir Square. Protesters arranged their gatherings and communications through Facebook. Twitter also played a crucial role as a tool used by protesters to post news of the day in Egypt and abroad through using 'hash tag #jan25.' Social networking websites occupied a major role in the preparation of this day. Moreover, anonymous leaflets were distributed among the protesters to advise them on how to react against the police, organize mass demonstrations, control governmental offices, email and photocopy the leaflets to distribute. For security reasons, these were not distributed through the social media as the Egyptian government closely monitored most social networking websites. It is not surprising that during the 18 days of the revolution, Al Jazeera TV had the highest viewership both in Egypt and abroad compare to that of Mubarak. Then on the January 27 Mohamed El Baradei returned to Egypt to participate in the demonstrations against the thirty-year dictator regime, where he spoke to thousands of Egyptian protesters. Yet, on this day, the number of protesters was small as they were preparing for a massive demonstration the following day. The police spread across Egypt as a whole in an attempt to control the streets. Besides, the Egyptian government started disrupting the mobile blackberry messenger and all Internet services in an attempt to stop the protest. The most significant day, which turned from a peaceful demonstration to a revolution, was January 28th 2011, also known as the Friday of Anger. Demonstrations continued in spite of the cut down of the Internet and mobile services as people started using 'offline networking tools: the mosques' to communicate and organize the demonstration. El Baradei was forced to stay under 'house arrest' and released later only after the US threatened the Egyptian government that it would 'review its $1.5 billion package to Egypt.' Vicious conflicts between the Egyptian police officers and the protesters took place where the foremen used rubber bullets and allegedly real ammunition to disperse the protestors. By the end of the day, Mubarak came out after a long silence gave his first speech when he asked Nazif's government to resign. On 29 January, both Twitter and Google coordinated to establish a special system mainly for Egypt: the 'speak–to-tweet' system was designed to enable people to send voice messages using the landlines to overcome the need for an Internet access. On January 31,pro-Mubarak protesters appeared for the first time to meet at the Mustafa Mahmud mosque to demonstrate in support of Mubarak. It was

the first time that Al Jazeera Television had to face the disruption of its signal to broadcast across the Arab region. On February 1ˢᵗ 2011, the movement known as March of the Millions' was launched. Mubarak gave an emotional and a big percentage of the audience sympathized with him. He announced that he would not rule for another term, but intended to remain in office for the rest of his tenure in order to ensure a a safe and peaceful transition for the sake of all Egyptians. Mubarak's speech led to more violent clashes between anti- and pro-Mubarak protesters. On February 2ⁿᵈ 2011, Internet access was partially restored. In what became known as the Camel Battle or Maaraket Al Gammal in Arabic, the government allegedly sent gangsters to Tahrir Square riding on camels and horses carrying 'swords, whips, clubs, stones, rocks and pocket knives' to fight against the anti-government protesters. . Moving on to February 3rd, 2011 the situation deteriorated further as Mubarak announced that he was tired and wished to leave, but was afraid to do so for fear of the chaos that would erupt when he left. Egyptian authorities forced Vodafone to send pro-Mubarak messages to its subscribers at a time when the public was still unable to send messages to each other. On February 4ᵗʰ 2011, known as the Friday of Departure, hundreds of thousands demonstrated in Tahrir Square asking for Mubarak's resignation. February 10, 2011 Mubarak gave another speech stating that he will not step down for the safety of Egypt as a whole and its citizens. Yet, on February 11ᵗʰ 2011, Mubarak finally stepped down and celebrations were everywhere in Egypt and all over the world as it was the end of the 30 years dictators' regime. According to the Arab Social Media report (2010) the primary language that was used by most Facebook users during the Egyptian revolution is Arabic, which constitutes around 75.4 percent while only 26.4 percent used the Facebook in English.

The following Figure shows the usage of Facebook in both Egypt and Tunisia.
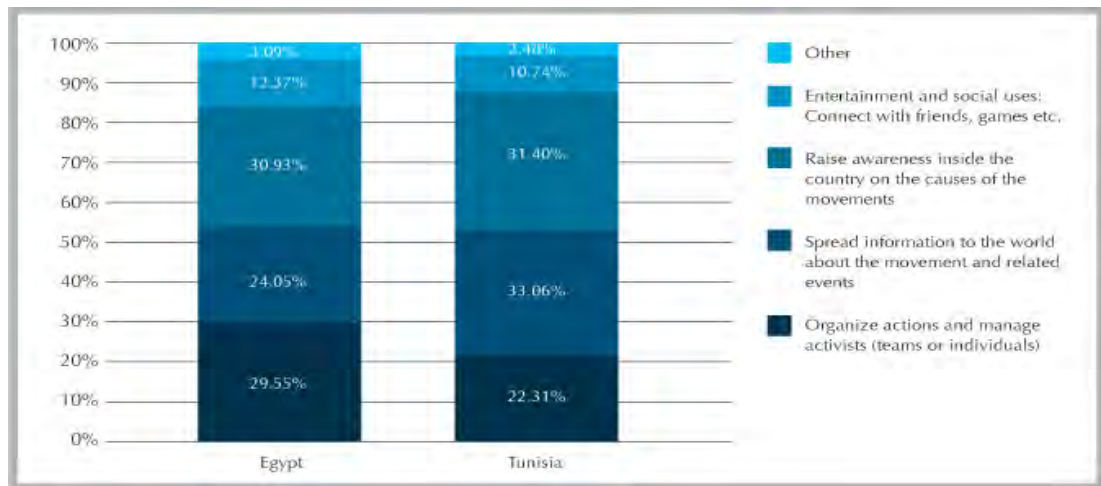
Figure 2.2: The Main Usage of Facebook during the Civil Movements and Events in Early 2011.

Source: http://www.edots.ps/internews/userfiles/CIMA-Arab_Social_Media-Report

It would be realised that almost 30% of the use of Facebook in Egypt was concerned with the organisation and management of activities around the uprising. The least amount of a Facebook postings were devoted entertainment, or in connection with friends and playing of online game either individually or with others (Hbibul.H.2011).

Figure 2.3: Internet blackout on Jan. 28th

 Source: Arbor Networks Chart of Egypt Internet Activity on January 27-28, 2011

The Internet blackout Egypt witnessed during the Egyptian revolution represents the corruption that was in the country. Protesters used social networking websites, especially Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, for two reasons internal and external. They used mainly Facebook to plan, arrange and organize the protest movements as an internal reason. While the external reason was to upload all the videos through Twitter and YouTube and write all the comments and government responses to be available and seen by people worldwide. After launching videos of the Egyptian police killing and torturing Egyptian activists and protesters on January 25, the government decided to block down the Internet to keep Egypt isolated from the whole world.

Section C: The Obama phenomenal internet phenomenon

In the United States, political campaigning online has existed since 1996 when candidates first established websites. These websites featured policy information, videos about the candidates and the issues they wanted to address during the campaign, links on registering to vote and donate money to the campaign or volunteer to help (Marett, 2010). The 2008 presidential elections in the United States were the first elections that had the opportunity to use all the new post-2004 social media developments, including YouTube and Facebook. The study by Kushin and Yamamoto (2010) as cited by Bimber (2012) found that young people tend to get political information from social media more than any other age group. Also, a 2011 study conducted by the Harvard Institute of Politics found similar results and concluded that 27% of young adults find that Facebook and other social media websites have more of an impact that other types of advocacy (Harvard Institute of Politics). These two studies show that the use of social media helped Barack Obama target young people in his 2008 campaign. Barack Obama's online campaign during the primaries and the election set a precedent on the successful use of social media and combined it with grassroots organisation and support. The Obama campaign's success has been analysed and researched as an example of a campaign completely inundating the web with content and information as well as using effective online communication techniques to engage new and young voters, creating mini-communities of supporters under the umbrella of the national campaign.

Obama's website was easy to use for supporters who wanted to get involved. If they wanted to attend a campaign event, they could find out instantly when all the events where within five miles of their location, get information about the organiser, and register to participate in the event (Marett, 2010). The registered user would get prompt email confirmation and the organiser would contact them shortly afterwards. An example of how this communication took place is on Facebook where an individual could connect their own Facebook profile with a My.BarackObama.com account that highlighted which of their existing friends was with My.BarackObama.com.

Each time that individual volunteered, attended a campaign event, or made phone calls; the details of their activity appeared on Facebook so that the group could see what each one of them was doing to support the campaign. On Barack Obama's official website, users were actively encouraged to use the link to the My.BarackObama.com community to use social tools to blog, join local groups, go to events, and talk to voters (www.barackobama.com). Neuman et al. (2011) noted that those accessing political party's websites were not swing or undecided voters but users with strong partisan identity and party affiliation. Based on this Obama was able to attract and maintain many voters through his website.

Barack Obama's campaign was a multi-media phenomenon that encompassed all the social media that the Internet had to offer. His opponent, John McCain, utilised social online media poorly. Instead, his campaign used traditional media to reach his party faithful which limited the number of people with whom he was able to communicate(Graber and Dunaway, 2014). Statistics indicated that Obama had two million Facebook friends while McCain only had 600,000.Obama's official YouTube channel had over 24 million views, 2,000 videos and over 117,000 channel subscribers. McCain failed to produce as much video content and received only a quarter as many views and only a fifth as many videos. Obama's video content and his message dominated on online video because his campaign was consistent in uploading quality content for viewers. Barack Obama's domination of video content online encouraged the growth of viral video content that was positive about Obama. Because McCain's presence was not as strong on the Internet, the majority of viral video content about him was negative. Commentators have argued that this indicated

that Obama used social media more effectively than McCain in the 2008 election, and accounted for his success (Marett, 2010). This has also been supported by Hindman's research which argued that well-organised and interactive websites, together with the use of social media, can reinvigorate supporters to participate in campaigning (Neuman et al., 2011). Beyond Facebook it is interesting to note that Obama also had video podcasts on iTunes, one type for his Senate constituents and one for the national campaign for presidency. He used podcasts to convey his own personal message to the growing number of ipod users while in contrast, McCain's campaign produced no podcasts (Bimber, 2012). Furthermore Obama even had an iPhone application that kept users in touch with all the latest campaign-related news and local groups.

Barack Obama was also the most searched for candidate on Google and because his campaign dominated in terms of available online content, when he was searched for, users had endless amounts of information and media to view (Graber and Dunaway, 2014). Obama's campaign on Facebook was innovative, utilising the idea of interest groups as platforms for mobilisation, including phenomenal of particular interest were Facebook groups like -One Million Strong for Barack, and-Students for Barack Obama that emphasized user generated support for Obama during his campaign Obama's official Facebook page was also viewed to gain insight into his use of social media. Also of interest were YouTube videos like Will I am-Yes I Can, and the parody video-I Got a Crush on Obama by the Obama Girl, which was said to have made an impact on the campaign. These sources provided insight into the social media platforms and the viewing of them by campaign supporters. When people searched for Obama on the Internet, they found mostly positive content and a controlled message as supplied by his campaign; this compared favourably to McCain, whose lacklustre attempt at using online social media and tools meant that there was not as much positive content available - therefore he lost control of his presented online message (Graber and Dunaway, 2014).

CONCLUSION

The above review of related literature has attempted to reveal the use of social media in three separate sections, and to relate it with the theoretical framework. This first

section emphasised Nigeria's use and approach to social media and the potential that such an innovation has in the political landscape of Nigeria. Nevertheless it has also been realised that there is much to be done constitutionally to best prepare a friendly landscape for a peaceful use of social media in Nigeria. Although some glimpse could be found in literature the exact use the social media by each political party has yet to be fully understood. The present study embarks on this, and examines it from several point of view such as the use of language and graphics. As a consequence of the paucity of existing literature on the specific area, this study attempted to provide such vital information through examining two parallel situations in which social media have been used to change the political landscape of some countries. Section B examine the use of social media in the political uprising in the Arab spring and how it change regimes that had been in power for almost two decades, and the last section [Section C] explores how President Barack Obama used the social media in an innovative and phenomenal manner to reach out to millions of voters, costing a smaller amount of money than his rivals, to win his elections as the first ever black president of the United States of America.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology the researcher has employed to understand the use of social media by political parties in Nigeria during the 2011 presidential elections, specifically the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive Congress (APC) party. Central to the focus of the use of social media by these political parties was how the use of social media impacted on the political campaign of each party, and the general impact it had on the electorates during the elections. The chapter discusses the way in which data was generated for the study; and discusses the research design. The paradigm that guided the study is also considered. The chapter further explores aspects related to computer-mediated communication and argues for the choice of the methodology being used by the researcher within the context of the computer-mediated communication. Finally, the sampling of participants, data collection instruments, how the data was analysed and finally the ethical consideration underpinning the study are addressed.

Framing the research design

According to Johann Mouton (2001) a research methodology is simply a systematic, methodical and accurate execution of the research design where various methods and tools are used to perform different tasks. Research designs also provide the rationale for how the researcher will proceed at each stage of the research. Therefore, the selected subheadings in this section of the study have been chosen due to their relevant ability to provide for the rationale in producing the findings expected at the end of the study. This section will start by discussing the paradigm for the study which is framed within the interpretivist paradigm. Within this paradigm, the study employed a qualitative research approach with the main concern being the use of social media by political parties in the 2011 presidential elections in Nigeria.

Interpretivist paradigm

Different paradigms are different ways of viewing the world. William Neuman (2006) defines a paradigm as a basic orientation to theory and research. In other words, a paradigm is considered a broad framework within which researchers conduct studies. Each paradigm will include basic assumptions and important questions to be answered by the researcher. The research techniques to be used within the paradigm must correspond with the paradigm chosen for the study.

Interpretivist are concerned with meanings and attempt to understand daily phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them within their social context (Henning, 2005). Therefore, individuals within the Interpretivist paradigm are considered to be socially, politically and historically active in constructing meaning in their world. Sometimes these constructed meanings could have significant impact to the lives of other. Therefore the constructed meanings of each political party during the election, as presented in their use of social media, had a direct or indirect relationship to the choices of the electorates, particularly the youth.

The central endeavour for an interpretivist according to Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion and Keith Morrison, (2007) is to understand the subjective world of human experience, to get inside a person, to understand from within and to comprehend the interpretations of the world around individuals was considered to guide the researchers understanding of the participant's reality.

It would be worth noting that within the interpretive paradigm, the researcher does not concern him/herself with the search of broadly applicable laws as the positivist would do, but concerns him/herself with descriptive analyses that emphasise deep, interpretive understanding of social phenomena (Henning, 2005). Therefore the selected sample for the study was assumed to provide enough depth during the interview process to yield meaningful results, so it was not considered necessary to undertake an analysis of the entire official Facebook page of each political party during the 2011 elections, since the methodology requires an in-depth consideration of a smaller sample and not a survey based on large numbers. Ontologically, the interpretivist paradigm does not accept the notion of an objective reality or truth

independent of the perspective of reference of the observer, rather reality is mind dependent and influenced by the process of observation, content analysis interviews and ethnography (Henning, 2005). For this reason, interviews and content analysis of the political party's Facebook page as an instrument of data collection was of vital importance to the researcher. This paradigm also caters for the multiple perspectives of all the participants (electorates) reality within their social setting. This therefore validates the use of the interpretivist paradigm for the study.

Qualitative study

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher employed a qualitative research approach which explores the richness, depth, and complexity of the participants use of social media in 2011, and this is associated with the interpretivist paradigms in which the main indicator of meaning is content (Henning, 2005). Sharan Merriam (1998) suggested that qualitative research should take place in the participants' natural settings, with the intention that the data obtained would be as realistic as possible. For this reason, the choice of the selected participants are those who actively participated in the 2011 general elections, were present in Nigeria for the elections and still have a fresh memory of their participation through the use of social media and how it played an impact in their involvement in the entire lections. Therefore, the qualitative research was employed to describe, understand and explain the various way that social media was being used by the PDP and APC party respectively. This was carried out using evidence from the electorates' interpretations and perceptions of their subjective reality.

According to Martin Bauer and George Gaskell (2003) qualitative research avoids large numbers but rather utilises small numbers that effectively interpret social realities. Qualitative researchers believe that the way of knowing reality (epistemology) is by exploring the experiences of others regarding a specific phenomenon and is an attempt to understand how others have constructed reality by participating (Maree, 2007); in this case the electorate and the political parties involvement and participation during the elections. Nevertheless, it should be cautioned that although qualitative research is very helpful when describing,

explaining and analysing social phenomena, the researcher must however be aware that participants brings different life experiences and understanding into the research situation (Newby, 2010). Therefore there are certain to be multiple realities of the same life event, as a result of the subjective construction of each participant's nature of reality. Essack (2011) argues that such nuanced understanding of participants' realities cannot be captured through quantitative research.

Among the most appropriate and reliable methods of data collection in qualitative research are interviews, content analyses, ethnographies and narrative studies. In each there is a lot of text and where data collected are in the form of words. Henning et al. (2005) supports this notion by stating that, in the qualitative approach, a researcher seeks to understand and explain by using evidence from data and literature. Jack Fraenkel and Norman Wallen (2008) argue that interviews are designs that favour in-depth information in a narrative form and are very detailed and descriptive information is collected in the form of words (Slavin, 2007). The detailed transcripts of an interview will permit the researcher to identify themes and as a result, the researcher is able to understand and portray the participants' perceptions and understanding of particular that social media was being used in the presidential elections in Nigeria in 2011.

One of the advantages of qualitative research is that it allows for the use of non-interfering data collection techniques, where the researcher can capture the natural flow of events and how participants interpret these events from their subjective perspectives.

Contextualising the study within computer-mediated-communication

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) is defined as any human communication that occurs through the use of two or more electronic devices (Herring, 2002, 2004; Zazcek & Bonn, 2006). This will include any form of exchange such as video, audio or text that requires the use of a computer. As social networking site such as Facebook enables communication by the Internet, this has made the use of CMC more important and valuable when compared to the other forms of communication such as the tradition face-to-face communication. Although CMC may take many forms such as e-mail,

discussion groups, real-time chat, virtual reality role-playing games and the like, the linguistic properties vary depending on the kind of messaging system used and the social and cultural context embedding particular instances of use, Susan C.Herring (2002,pg 112-113). The way humans communicate in professional, social, and educational settings varies widely, depending upon not only the environment but also the method of communication in which the communication occurs, which in this case is through computers, and specifically, via Facebook. With respect to this study the language used on Facebook during the 2011 election by the political parties and the electorates on each party's Facebook page is of interest to the researcher. Furthermore, the use of graphic images for propaganda and the attempts to sway voters has been considered vital for the study. From this perspective therefore, the contextualising the study within the frames of CMC was essential in answering the research questions.

There are two main forms of CMC, categorized as either 'synchronous' or 'asynchronous'. Synchronous CMC takes place in real time. This means that participants communicate with each other at the same time or with a very short delay where the transmission is received at the other end of the communication instantly. Examples include instant messenger (SMS), video conferencing (Skype) and Internet chat (e.g. WhatsApp). Face-to-face and telephonic communication can be seen as traditional forms of synchronous communication (Peters, 1998). On the other hand, asynchronous communication does not occur in real time. In asynchronous communication there is often a substantial delay between departure and receipt of a communication message. Examples of asynchronous CMC include e-mail, Internet bulletin/discussion boards, list servers and newsgroups (Herring, 2004 and Peters, 1998). Interestingly Facebook enables both synchronous and asynchronous communication and therefore enabling Facebook as an appropriate choice for CMC in the study. Contextual, cultural and political factors can also differentiate manners of CMC. Additionally, differences such as age, race, gender and level of education result in different communication styles and content of the Facebook page depending on the variable just mentioned. Many methodologies can be employed in studies within the context of CMC and social interaction. This could range from large-scale sophisticated surveys to small scale qualitative study with specific concern on the level of the

compliance with the methodological rigor required by qualitative study (Spottswood, Walther, Holmstrom, and Ellison, 2013).

The sampling of the participants

The study was carried out in Durban, South Africa where the researcher is located. Nevertheless, the researcher was in South Africa while a majority of the participants were located in Nigeria. Although some of the participants were found to be located in South Africa at the time of data collection, they were only considered for the study based of the strict condition that they participated in the 2011 elections in Nigeria. Based on that criterion a good number of the pre-selected participants located in South Africa were considered ineligible for the study. Additionally, the selected participants had to be affiliated members of the selected political party where their involvement was considered as being actively participatory by the researcher. The participants had to present to the researcher any party artefact(s) in their possession as evidence for their political affiliation.

With respect to the selected participants residing in Nigeria, their geographic locations were not of significant interest in the sampling and selection process for the study; the researcher however acknowledges that some areas of Nigeria is made up of party members predominantly of PDP and APC parties respectively. Therefore to have an even number of representative participants for the study the researcher did not undertake random sampling, rather a purposive sampling was done. Cohen et al. (2007) asserts that purposeful sampling is the strategy of selecting participants that are judged to be typical of the sample under investigation. This method also regulated the number of representative members of each political party in the study.

Data was collected within a period of a month and half. This was due to the constant change of scheduling by the participants who were in one time or the other committed in some other personally related activities. In spite of these changes the participants remain true to their commitment for the study. A total of twenty (20) participants took part in the study, of who ten were from the PDP party and the other ten from the APC party respectively. Within the PDP party, four (4) lived in South Africa while six (6) lived in Nigeria., Five (5) of the APC party participants were from Nigeria while the

other five (5) were in South Africa. All the participants were within the age range of twenty-five (25) to thirty (30) years old. This therefore implies that at the time of the elections these participants were twenty-one (21) and twenty-six (26) years old. These participants indicated their excitement in the used of social media as a whole at the age and particularly during the elections. Therefore qualifying the participants for the study.

Data collection methods

In order to answer the research questions, the study used more than one method of data collection. These methods were interviews and content analysis of each political party's official Facebook page. These instruments were deemed by the researcher to be adequate and sufficient enough to answer the research questions and meet the objectives of the study.

Interviews as an instrument for data collection

Due to the dual location of the participants, data was collected through several means. Firstly, those who were found in South Africa were interviewed online as well. The researcher interviewed the participants using a semi-structured interview schedule. It was online (Skype) interview between the participant and the researcher, which is important because it helped the researcher to understand the teacher's perspectives about their use of social media during the 2011 elections and how the social media had an impact in their political involvement. Clarity was requested whenever there was a misunderstanding between the participant and the researcher for instance, whenever the participants mentioned something that was unfamiliar to the researcher. The researcher also avoided asking closed-ended questions. Each participant was interviewed once and the time for each interview range from thirty to fifty minutes.

Secondly, the participants in Nigeria were sent the interview questions well in advance so that they were able to get themselves ready to respond to the questions that were being asked. The initial idea was to undertake a focus group interview via Skype. However, some of the participants declined the option to participate in a focus group interview, while for others scheduling problems. Therefore, the interviews were done telephonically and each of the participants had a separate schedule for the interview.

The telephone interviews were recorded and using the same telephone (mobile) set that was used to make the phone call. Generally, the telephonic interviews where shorter perhaps this was due to the face that the participants already had the questions well enough in advance.

The researcher code the respondent names with numbers however, the researcher has maintain the confident coding sheet, linking numbers with figures.

Content analysis as a data collection instrument

The content of each political party's Facebook official page was examined with the purpose of answering the research questions on how the political parties used the Facebook official page during the presidential elections in 2011. According to Cohen et al., (2007) content analysis is a set of methods (qualitative and quantitative) for analysing data from verbal, print or electronic source of communication. It is therefore the process of systematically analysing messages in any type of communication. With respect to this study the content of the each political party's official Facebook page was analysed. Issues of language, graphics on how electorates and politicians use Facebook was at the heart of the content analysis. Blogs, comments and post were all looked into. Considering that these web sites were open for public view and participation it became easy for the researcher to collect data without necessarily going through gate keeping protocol. This was done by simply tracking backwards into the time of the 2011 presidential elections in Nigeria. The content was then copies to be analysed for the purpose of answering the research question.

Data analysis approach

According to Mouton (2001) the aim of analysis is to understand the different elements in a collected data and to identify patterns or themes. Maree (2007) states that data analysis involves working with data by organizing, and breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it and, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what to tell others in the write up of the study. That notwithstanding, Coherence and integrity of each individual response was preserved and this facilitated a holistic view of how the social media was used during the election

through Facebook. In an attempt to attain the objectives of the study, the raw data collected was coded, and categorised into themes that emerged. The coding process of the interview data and content of the official Facebook page of the respective political party was essential in providing meaning. This was done through analysing the data in a manner that allowed for easy identification, indexing and retrieval of content relevant in answering the research questions.

A. S. De Vos (2002) stated that qualitative data analysis is a search for statements about relationships among categories of participants' data. In addition to the interview transcript, data from the Facebook pages were compared for triangulation purposes and this was also analysed for in relationship to the various ways in which electorates and their political parties used the social media during the 2011 presidential elections. Literature was also used to support the findings of which some of them concurred while others did not.

Lichtman Marilyn, (2006) concludes that it is the role of the researcher to bring understanding, interpretation and meaning to the data; therefore, the data were analysed in an explicit and descriptive manner to bring the understanding into the finding. Furthermore, Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006) explained the nature of thematic analysis by stating that it involves a constant moving forward and backwards between the entire data set, the coded extracts that the research is analysing, and the analysis of the data that being produced. Writing is an integral part of analysis, not something that takes place at the end as it does with statistical analyses. This was exactly the experience of the researcher during the analysis of both sources of data.

Validity, trustworthiness and reliability

The credibility of qualitative research lies in its validity. Carla Wilig (2001) defines validity as the extent to which the researcher describes measures and/or explains what it aims to describe or explain. Also, it may also mean how true the findings are. This study will employ triangulation to validate the findings in this research. Triangulation refers to the use of more than one approach to the investigation of a research question

in order to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings. (Bryman, 2006). To ensure validity, the data collected during interviews were triangulated with those collected at the Facebook pages of the political parties. Although they were not exactly the same but interestingly members of the PDP and those of the APC political parties had similar slogans common in their speeches during the interview process. Some of these slogans were also found at the Facebook pages. This ensured that the data collected was accurate through such triangulation process. Micheal Quinn Patton (2002) advocated the use of triangulation and stated that triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods therefore; it was used to strengthen the validity of the research. Cohen et al. (2007) posit that in an interview credibility can be verified by triangulation. Furthermore, the researcher strictly adhered to the four criteria of trustworthiness for research studies, which emphasised that data should be credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable (Schwandt, 2007).

Reliability refers to the dependability or consistency is involve in the findings of a study Neuman W.L. (2006) suggests that under similar conditions and circumstance the same information of findings will still be obtained. This was ensured through the rigour of the methodology and the purposive sampling of the participants. With respect to any form of bias in the analysis, the researcher stated by piloting the research questions and made the necessary recommended correction. Furthermore, the researcher made sure the exact meanings of what participants meant were correctly understood by the researcher. Finally some of the posts at the official Facebook page of the selected political parties are still open for public use.

Ethical consideration

The researcher applied and received ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal to carry out the study. Informed consent permission letters were was given and explained to all participants about the nature of the study. For those who were interviewed in Nigeria, theses were emailed. The purpose of the study was made clear to the participants, and the use of a voice recorder during the interview on Skype was made known to the participants who were found in South Africa while whose in

Nigeria they were told the interview was being recorded for to help the research best transcribe the data. The participants' gave their approval and were willing to participate. According to Carla Willig (2001) participants should be fully informed about the research procedures prior to giving their consent to participate in the research. The participants were guaranteed confidentiality of their information and anonymity of their identity as well as that of their respective political parties. The rights of the participants were made known to them and they were informed that they were free to withdraw their participation at any time if they no longer wished to continue with the study. All the participants signed the consent form.

Limitations of the study

Considering the number of eligible Nigerian who took part in the 2011 elections, it would be understood that the selected sample of the study was less than a fraction and therefore the opinions express by the participants could not be an exact representation of the entire view of each political party, and neither will it be a representation of that of the voters who participated in the study. This aspect in its self could serve as a limitation of the study due to the small nature of the selected participants. For this reason the finding cannot be generalised to represent everyone involved in the 2011 elections nor that of the selected political party' use of social media with Facebook in particular. Nevertheless, there could be some similarities in the opinions of some members of the same political party as well as some voters on how to use the social media during the political activities, such as elections. Therefore the use of social media could possibly lead to a wide range of conclusions from a qualitative research design perspective, pertaining on the use of social medial during political elections.

Furthermore, other use of social media such as tweeter, Skype, Blogs, Flicker, WhatsApp were not considered for the study although the researcher acknowledges their role they could have also played in the elections. Therefore views and opinions about their use as a social media to this regard were not considered in the study.

CONCLUSION

This chapter explored the research design and methodology used for the study. The study is situated within the interpretive paradigm and followed a qualitative approach which focused on the use of social media during the 2011 elections in Nigeria, by a selection of political parties. The use of social media was limited on Facebook only. The research was contextualised within the frames of computer mediated communication were this form of communication has emerged as a more rapid and alternative means to communicate in long distances. The instruments used for data generation were interviews and content analysis of the participants and Facebook pages of the political parties respectively. The participants were fully informed of the research, and their rights and anonymity were also made known to them and guaranteed respectively. The limitations of the study were also identified in this chapter to acknowledge the areas of the study that can affect its credibility. The next section with explore the theoretical framework use to guide the study.

Theoretical framework

A framework covers the main features of a researcher's positioning and its presumed relationships (Henning at al., 2004). The theoretical perspective therefore supports and holds the researcher's view of the study through the explanation and description of the theoretical framework. In this study, the underpinning problem of how political parties in Nigeria used social media was investigated through the lens of the social network theory. From a social network point of view, a population structure (such as that of Nigeria) is a result of local interactions between individuals and their environment and there is a need for a framework to integrate the different scales of interaction or communication across individual behaviour, group-level phenomena (such as political parties) and population-level patterns. According to Krause, Croft and James, (2007) there has been evidence for social interaction patterns that strongly deviate from randomness (individuals have a greater affinity to interact amongst themselves) and individual variation in social contact patterns. For instance, some individuals have many contacts than others. The presence of social 'assortativity' and individual

variation have important consequences for any population level processes such as the communication through interaction, the spread of diseases within and between populations, understanding job performance in business and interactions within a school community. For instance, the speed with which a disease will spread in a population would be dependent on which individuals get infected first.

Kadushin (2004, pg 3) states that social network theory is one of the few and perhaps the only theory in social science that is not reductionist. This is because the theory applies to a variety of levels of analysis from small groups to the entire global system. Although there are emergent properties at different system levels, for instance ways of communication, these are nonetheless extensions of what can be done at a lower level and not entirely different forms of organization. A network is thus a set of relationships. More formally, a network contains a set of objects (in mathematical term, nodes) and a mapping or description of relations between the objects or nodes. The simplest network contains two objects, 1 and 2, and one relationship that links them (mathematical term, ties). Nodes 1 and 2, for example, might be an individual, groups or organisations and the relationship that links them might be; standing in the same room (for individual to individual ties), belong in the same community (for group to group ties) and have the same political affiliation (for organisation to organisation ties).There are also cross level relationships such as individual to organisational ties. The cross level relationship will be the point of analysis in this study where individual participation will be understood from the point of how they use Facebook page (ties) of the PDP and APC political parties (organisations) during the 2011 general elections of Nigeria. A social network theory, therefore consists of a set of nodes and the relationship between these objects. (Kadushin, 2004,pg 3-4)

The varying essential dimensions along which networks

According to Katz, Lazer, Arrow, and Contractor (2004) network researchers have examined a broad range of types of ties. These include *'communication ties'* –such as: who talks to whom, or who gives information to whom. Such ties will be looked at through the relationship of communication between political parties and their Again the emphasis will be looked upon as how these parties report to the Nigerian

society by telling them about the political intentions of the country in an attempt to lobby their voters. In the present study, this is considered only through the use of Facebook, while acknowledging that other forms of networking exist. The *'affective ties'* such as; who likes whom, or who trusts whom. This type of relationships considers the expression of political affection through Facebook. Here the use of language by affiliated party members are considered along with the type of graphics that were posted on the various political party's Facebook pages. The affections would be considered within a broad spectrum of an expressive love of one's own party and on the other hand an expression of hatred of the opposition party. The *'proximity ties'* basically examine who is spatially or electronically close to whom. Again, bearing in mind that the use of social media relies on the availability of a computer or a smart phone along with Internet connection, proximity of the electorates to the political party's Facebook page will hugely depend on these prerequisite electronic devices.

The network ties are typically multiplex, that is, actors could possibly (and usually) share more than a single tie. An example of a multiplex tie could be where academic colleagues might have a formal tie (a dean of research and a cluster head) and an affective tie (they are friends) and a proximity tie (their offices are on the same floor). The studies will not extent to the level of the multiplex of social network relationships. This is simply because the focus of the study is the understand relationship of a single tie. That is how political use social media (Facebook) for their political campaigns parties during the 2011 general elections.

Network researchers have distinguished between strong ties (such as family and friends) and weak ties (such as acquaintances) (Katz, Lazer, Arrow, and Contractor, 2004). This distinction can involve a multitude of facets, including affect, mutual obligations, reciprocity, and intensity. Strong ties are particularly valuable when an individual seeks socio-emotional support or in the case of political aspects where an individual aims at having a higher political power after the elections. The strong ties always but not usually the case entail a high level of trust, belief and commitment (Kadushin, 2004).On the other weak ties are more valuable when individuals are seeking diverse or unique information from someone outside their regular frequent contacts also through a political point of view an individual will have a weak tie to an

opposing party, the tie exist in the sense that they tend to have an understanding of what their opponent(s) is doing so as to construct a good critiques of their opponent's political strategy. Strong tie is not very important in this study because it deals with personal tie and the nature of this study is impersonal.

The weak ties may be non-directional or vary in direction. For instance, through the use of Facebook as it is the case with the study, political parties may randomly send out a post and the response might come from any member of the Nigerian society and perhaps not necessarily interested in politics as would have been expected. While on the other hand the same post may only catch the attention of the affiliated members of the said political party or their opposition party. The variations of content between ties are of importance where they are used. This is of significant interest in the study since the researcher intends to understand how aspects of language and graphics are being used by political parties in Nigeria during political campaigns.

From the above explanation of social network theory, it would be understood that there are various types of relationships between nodes through the use of ties nonetheless the study will predominantly focus on non-multiplex relationships within the theory. Through this relationship, the types and nature of ties have been explored and have been explained in relevance to their application to the use of social media during political campaigns in Nigeria. Here the researcher will look at the various relations types that political parties create using their official Facebook page and how it has played a role in political involvement of electorate during elections. The focus of such use through Facebook is on the use of languages and graphics bearing in mind that Nigeria is one of the most culturally diverse countries in Africa and arguably the rest of the world. Such cultural diversity will in doubt express themselves on Facebook during the campaign period. Therefore the use of languages and graphics through Facebook within the fames of social network theory guided the researcher's perspective as she attempted to understand political parties' involvements during the 2011 presidential elections.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

Central to the study is an exploratory analysis of the use of social media by political parties in Nigeria during the 2011 presidential elections. The emphasis in a comparison between the way in which the selected political parties -the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive Congress of Nigeria (APC)] used Facebook during the 2011 presidential elections. Facebook was selected because it enables both synchronous and asynchronous communication. The theoretical framework was used as a lens to analyse the data, as participants' engagements in political campaigns during the election was examined at the point of the nodes. The data, analysis and discussion in this chapter were collected from twenty participants; ten of them from PDP and the other ten from APC political party respectively. Data was also collected from the party's official Facebook page and has been juxtaposed with the interview data to make meaning on how Facebook [social media] was used during the political campaign. The constructed meanings were sparingly supported by literature where necessary and were guided by the theory of social networks.

Three major themes emerged from the analysis of the data. These themes were firstly, the usage of Facebook by the political parties. The reason why the parties used it were presented from the participants' perspectives and how the electorates adapted to the use of Facebook during the 2011 presidential elections. The effectiveness of the usage was also analysed. The second theme was the usage of language of Facebook by political parties and their electorates during the elections. The question was posed as to the dominant language used, and how the Nigerian society communicated with each other through Facebook was a core concern of this theme. The theme also considered the extent of the language being use to sway electorates. The last theme was the use of graphics during the campaign period. An understanding of how they were used and the possible outcomes were part of the concerns of the analyses of this theme. Considering that there are two political parties that are being analysed, the analysis of

their activities will not necessarily be presented concurrently. The reason being that their engagement on Facebook did not parallel each other and neither did they occur simultaneously; although they were vying for power supremacy. Nevertheless, there will be an attempt to discuss their activities comparatively since this constitutes the core of the study.

The usage of Facebook by political parties

The manner in which Facebook is used by individuals, social groups or a political party could be used as an indicator of social events. An example would be an indicator of a political candidate's popularity, considering the number of followers s/he has on his Facebook page. Theoretically, such indicators would be considered as strong or weak ties depending on the number that are followers of the said event or posts on the page. The case study for this dissertation was the event of the 2011 presidential elections that saw the emergence of the usage of Facebook by political parties in Nigeria. From the interview data undertaken for this dissertation, a wide range of reasons as to why the PDP and APC became engaged with Facebook as an online lobby for votes.

With regards to the reason why PDP got into the use of Facebook, Salman recalls that *'…in 2007 PDP witness the hallmark in the electioneering. But social media became stronger in the 2011 general election through Good Luck Jonathan.'*(Salman, 07/09/2014).This indicates that although the use of Facebook by the PDP party in 2011 presidential elections became clear to the Nigerian society, the participant seems to suggest that the idea of using Facebook had long been in the minds on the main political candidate of the PDP. Usage could be traced as far back as 2007, just a year after Facebook was invented. The use of Facebook by the presidential candidate also concurs with literature as stated by Kidafa, Odoemelam and Elechi (2011b) who note that President Goodluck Jonathan publicised his intention to run for the presidency through Facebook. The party immediately informed his 217,000 fans on his Facebook page of his decision. Twenty-four hours later more than 4,000 fans joined his page as a result of this gesture, and by the end of the elections he had over half a million followers. Such moves by the incumbent president was a smart mimic of President

Obama's campaign strategy in 2008 which could be argued to have made a significant contribution to him to become the first black president in America. One of the participants who claimed to have been with the PDP for two years before the elections claimed that

> *'During that period, we were told at one of the party's meetings that President Good Luck has just opened a Facebook page so as to communicate directly with his supporters for election purposes. At that time different questions were asked by the people and he was able to reply to them via Facebook'* (Respondent 1, 12/08/2014)

Unlike the approach used by the PDP, the APC presidential candidate and his advisers did not seem to have comprehended the value of using Facebook for election purpose. They started using Facebook only very late in the political campaign. This delay in using social media suggested that the traditional method of communication through newspapers and posters on the streets was their main communication campaign strategy whilst Facebook was just for the sake of being there and not as a campaign tool par say. This is evident as one of the participants explained that

> *'In 2011, the influence of social media was minimal, the party [APC] has a website where we communicate to the public, but the spread of information was not so good even though we were able to reach people through our Facebook page.*(Respondent '2'18/10/2014)

From this analysis the approach used by the APC in 2011 followed the same trajectory of President Obama's 2008 opponent, John McCain, who poorly harnessed the potentials of social media. According to Graber, Doris A, and Johanna L.Dunaway (2014) McCain instead focused his campaign on traditional media to reach his party faithful, which limited the number of people with whom he was able to communicate. Such similarities between the election of America in 2008 and that of Nigeria in 2011 have similar outcomes as a result of the use of social media.

The adaptability towards the use of Facebook

One of the unavoidable differences between these two political parties in their use of social media was their adaptation to the entire social media fraternity. Judging from the fact that the PDP was more flexible and innovative in their use of Facebook, the data revealed this was only partly a reflection of their swift adaptation towards the use of social media. Adaptability was considered to mean the ability to change and/or to be changed to fit to new circumstances.

The embracement of social media by the leaders of the PDP and their presidential candidate did not go unrecognised and drew appraisal from some of the participants. According to a participant interviewed in Nigeria, the swiftness of the PDP in adapting themselves towards the use social media was the only reason he voted for the party. The justification of the participant was based on the premise that if a leader can adapt to something like technology that changes so rapidly, then he can change the current state of the country rapidly. From this perspective it could be understood that social media has played a significant part in gaining more support from the youth of Nigeria –a country which has predominantly a youthful population. According to the Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics (2012) the population of Nigeria was approximately 166.2 million of which 43.4% is made up of youth, defined as people in the 16-25 year old age group. The adaptation to the use of social media helped the party to reach out to those youth who felt they were not part of the country's political activities. As (Respondent '3'10/10/2014) explained, "*I was very much interested in the PDP during the elections and it caught the attention of many of us and [it made us] feel more like a Nigerian"*. The adaptation strategy of the PDP political campaign caught the imagination of most rural youth as well, who could read comments from the President himself in spite of the geographic distance between them. In response to how the PDP actually strategized to win the hearts of the electorates through their Facebook page, who calls himself a *bona fide* supported of the PDP, said that

> *Comment and every necessary information were being posted on the page as*
> *soon as any new information comes up for the public to know about, as for the*
> *registered members[like myself], most of us did not usually have time to write*

on the page maybe due to my tight schedule at the time. But I commented on posts that project the interest of the party, and also shared posting. (Respondent '4' 20/10/2014)

The continues posting of necessary information for public interest seems to have been the key factor that kept the electorate and those undecided abreast with the activities of the PDP. This did not happen with their counterparts. Although a majority of the postings were mostly positive information, the PDP's swiftness towards technological changes did not only prove their resilience in the phase of technological changes but also their concern for youths. An example is seen by the President himself showing his concern and interest on a Facebook posting of himself.

Figure 4.1: Goodluck pro- presidential campaign
Source: PDP Facebook page

Charismatic gestures by a presidential candidate in a country known for military leadership and only experiencing their second democratic election since independence in 1960 was well appreciated by the youths. The appreciation seems to have been fanatically welcomed, perhaps due to the fact that it was done on Facebook as explained by a participant in Nigeria: "*I consider myself a fan of social media were i spend most of the time to chat with my friends and to see something from the president on Facebook to me it was like he is one of my friends I just chat with, you understand*". *(Respondent '5', 08/08/2014)* Such adaptations by the PDP towards Facebook as an integral part of their campaign strategy had a resounding effect on their opponents vying for the same positions. The flexibility not only created strong social network ties between the PDP presidential candidate and the youths, but also created new ties, especially in the rural part of Nigeria and also amongst those who previously seem not to have been interested in political activities.

As a political party, the APC was not in one accord in their use of Facebook as indicated by one of the participant in South Africa "*each local government has a Facebook account which they use to reach out to people, most especially people in their constituency only*"*(Respondent '6' 19/07/2014)* This indicated that the party as a unit in the campaign was interested in the traditional media approach and they were sadly left behind with the demands of the changing times.

Nevertheless, after realising the potential of Facebook, they took to it almost at the end of the campaign exercise. Their process of adaptability on Facebook seems not to have been directed to the youths as was the case with the PDP. They rather turned their attention to a negative campaign against the PDP on their Facebook page. This is seen by the post of an APC member during the campaign, illustrated in Figure 4.2

Figure 4.2: APC doctors rescuing Nigeria.

Source: APC Facebook page

The post depicts the current state of Nigeria as being chronically ill and in need of medical attention. According to the post, the only medication that could cure Nigeria was the APC, shown here as a bottle of mediation and a drip set for infusion. While those who are shown to stand by the side of the sick Nigeria are the political party members, dressed as medical officials and doing everything possible to arrest the situation.

The effectiveness of the usage by the political parties

It is one thing to strategize a political campaign using various forms of social media as communication tools, and it is another thing for it to be as effective as intended. The difference between these two positions lies in the nature of the message sent to a target population. Politically speaking, there is no one definition of what makes an effective political massage as each consultant will have their own views in this regard. With regards to the Nigerian political landscape, there are contextual issues that play significant roles in the effectiveness of a political campaign. These include issues of faith, culture and economy. Therefore, such issues should and perhaps must be part of a political campaign. Pertaining to the use of Facebook as a tool of communication for campaign purposes, the youth of the Nigerian society have shown their interest is not on issues of faith, but in culture, sport, farming and economy as it would be for the adult and aging segment of the society.

The PDP on their part seems to have grasped such demographic difference and likewise the interest of the youth in politics such as documentation of youth groups as part of the party

63

agenda and their level of education. Therefore, they strategized their campaign to meet such expectations and this accounted for its effectiveness. One of the participants in South Africa recalled that

> *'It is highly effective, especially among the youth and the learned because they are the ones that use phones for Facebook and Twitter. Making use of social media has really helped the party to get across to the general public cheap and faster.'(Respondent '7', 10/10/2014)*

The cost of the use of social media in Nigeria, when compared to the other forms of communication, coincided with what might be expected by reading the literature from other countries (Marett, 2010; Graber & Dunaway, 2014). Local commentator, first name O.M Olabamiji (2014), remarked that within the contemporary Nigeria, Facebook provided an opportunity for political parties to be in touch with large numbers of voters quickly, constantly and at a low cost. Beside the cost effectiveness of the use of social media, the participants also revealed that the opportunity provided by the PDP political party to be criticised by the entire public enable those who were not satisfied with the state of affairs of the country to voice their opinions. Such was the views of one participant who claimed that "*no party can do without it [social media] because it is used as a means of criticizing the government and to get us involved with our country*" (Respondent '6, 23/08/2014). The PDP's understanding of the need for disclosure by the youths amongst other things was vital for their use of Facebook during the 2011 political campaign.

The general consensus of both political parties was that the use of social media was effective in Nigeria. The most significant difference between the two parties was that the APC party did not consider the use of Facebook to have a massive impact during the initial stage of the elections, but realised it later. Such nonchalant perception was also seen in literature by the government of the countries that experienced the 'Arab Spring', as well as the campaign of John McCain in 2008 presidential elections in America. This also concurs with the study first name by Ibagere Elo (2013) who stated that social media is perhaps the best tool to assess the popularity of a candidate, especially by the young people and craft the best language to use as a campaign slogan.

Through the use of social media during political elections, all the respondents to this study, both in Nigeria and South Africa, agreed that at the snap one can able to reach out to a lot of people through Facebook. Therefore, none of them expressed their desire to be willing to wait

for the next morning to buy a newspaper to read the political message through the traditional media. Additionally, social media was used to monitor the ballot box during the voting and that also reflected Nigeria's willingness to completely change and becoming a democratic state exemplary enough to be emulated by others.

Figure 4.3: Ballot box during elections

Source: APC Facebook page.

An example of the ballot box is shown above and the one of the comment that comes under it which indicate how people follow up the voting process especially on social media.

The Nigeria soldiers apprehended a truckload of Ballot papers thumb-printed for the All Progressive Congress (APC) ahead of the gubernatorial election scheduled for June 21 in Ekiti State. The APC agents were arrested around Ita Awure on the Ilesha-Ado Road in Ekiti State. The ballot papers were being conveyed in a white lorry with the number plate APP 952 XL, Marked "Adewole Odunayo Enterprises". The Progressive Party, APC's Agents, Biodun Erinfolami, Olufemi Ose and Akanbi Oluwasegun were paraded by the Commander of the 32 Airtilery Brigade, Akure, Brig. Gen Aliyu Mamman.'

Although APC showed some increased interest towards the use of social media at the latter stage of the campaign by creating blogs in their website, it was not as innovative for the Nigerian society when compared to that of their main rival the PDP.

The use of language and political propaganda

Conventionally social media and their websites use non-formal language for communication between one another. Although language is very important and the choice of words used tends to play a crucial role, sometimes it may curtail the meaning of an entire message if it is not well structured or communicated. Nigeria as a society has more than a hundred and fifty local or indigenous languages that are broadly categorized into three groups of the Igbo's predominantly on the east, Yoruba's predominantly in the south and the Hausas found in the northern part of the country.

It is noteworthy that the English language was used by members of both political parties on all the Facebook pages. One of the participants, a PDP member, explained that

> *This aspect depends on the type of audience you are addressing. There are some parts of Nigeria, whereby local language have to be used. For instance, in the northern part of Nigeria, where the level of illiteracy is very high, their native language has to be used to communicate with them because the most important thing is for the message to get across to the target audience.*(Respondent '8 and 9, 02/11/2014).

Such an approach by the PDP party again seems to have accounted for their effectiveness in the use of social media during the elections. They created strong ties with their constituencies through the use of various languages across the cultural regions of Nigeria. One of such examples is a post on the PDP pages seen below.

Figure 4.4: Comments from supporters on northern and Niger delta

(Note: names and photographs have been deleted for ethical reasons)

Nnamdi's comment on the figure above was based on the PDP's propaganda on medical infrastructural development that was shown on Facebook. The Nigerian youths used this opportunity to complain about the level of corruption by some of the politicians. The APC also used various languages to catch the attention of their members and possibly win the vote of other new members. One of the participants said,

> '*In 2011 the members [were] trying to reach out to the public in the language they understand through their personal Facebook account. The party has [a] national agenda which they work with.* (Respondent '10 and 11',14/10/2014).

Unfortunately again the APC member demonstrated the sluggishness of the APC in using Facebook for political campaigns, even when it came to the use of language for propaganda purposes.

The APC also used the opportunity of Facebook to demonstrate the importance of people in the Nigerian society in the process of democracy. This was used in some of the Facebook posts that were put up by the APC political party in retaliation to the propaganda made by the PDP on their infrastructure development and the effective use of national resources.

Figure 4.5: APC historic revolution.

Source: APC Facebook page

These approach used by the APC was meant to tell Nigerians that they are the ones with the power and not the party that they think is in office. Going by the comments by the side of this post, it's clear that the APC is rallying electorate away from the PDP by telling them it is time to react to the problems plaguing their country. This is a similar message to the earlier illustration of Nigeria in a sick bed. Furthermore, one of the APC participants said that he kept on asking himself if

'... *Nigerian been told that they are selling the bright future of your children to the rich by just been paid 10 thousand Naira and asking you to vote for the wrong party [PDP] and they are still laughing at it, all I can say that I pity your condition.'(Respondent '12' 03/06/2014).*

It would be realise that the use of language by both parties was directed to winning the heart of their voters in the form of propagandas on the part of the PDP and retaliations on the part of the APC. Nevertheless, the level of effectiveness of this approach seems to have been different between the two parties.

The effective use of language through propaganda by the PDP party was much appreciated by a participant who almost always identified himself as a bonafide member of the PDP and this is what he said.

> *'PDP gives room for public opinion, every political party has its own manifesto, so PDP works according to their own manifesto when it comes to the opinion of the public. However, the opinion of the public may sway the party to act on the best interest of the public if they realised that the interest of the public is a stake.'(Respondent 13,01/07/2014).*

The manifesto of the PDP party accounted for their effective use of Facebook, and this was also a source of information for the party as well who seems to have made some corrections of what needs to be done from the comments they got from the member of the public. Nevertheless, not all the comments were from the PDP and they were of any productive use to the party. An example of comment that some member of the APC said to the PDP is seen below.

Figure 4.6: Comment of Facebook on 22/09/2014.

Considering the number of cultural difference in Nigeria one would have expected to find many types of local languages written on the Facebook page of both the PDP and APC Facebook pages. But the dominant language on the Facebook page was English and perhaps pidgin English [a local language that is widely spoken by all Nigerians]. One of the reasons for this was because most of those who are into Facebook in Nigeria are educated youths. That notwithstanding some other forms of language were frequently found on the Facebook page of both political parties, these languages are found in appendix'D'. In the political campaigns, there were room to explore propaganda but the most important thing was to know the weakness

of your opponent and the PDP and APC explore their opponent's weakness at various angles. They both made their information interesting to your reader by using the language that could be read by all although this was limited to the educated youth specifically. This approach also allowed for the use of graphical illustrations such as cartoons [as would be seen in the next theme] to pass information to the readers, and also to discredit the opposition party in such a way of creating a funny posture of them.

The use of graphics to impact political campaign

For the purpose of the study graphics was understood to relate to visual art which may involve pictures, drawing and engraving. This section of the analysis will be mainly on the types of graphs that were commonly used by both PDP and APC members and were all found on their respective Facebook pages. The format of presentation in this section will be led by the graphs and the messages that were embedded in them. Additionally, the views of the participants will also be part of this section. The section is divided into two subsections namely the PDP oriented use of graphics and the APC oriented used of graphics.

Amongst other things, the use of graphic on Facebook is easier for the purpose of marketing as it could be interpreted easily just by having a look at it. This perhaps accounts for why Nigerian politicians have allowed themselves on Facebook. This is made possible because it's easy to upload pictures on Facebook on the condition that one has access to the internet service. These two characteristics have made Facebook attractive for its uses and likewise political parties in Nigeria.

The PDP oriented used of graphics

This picture below was a post by the PDP political rally held in Abia state

Figure 4.7: Aspirant for state assembly election

Source: Facebook page.

The state is noted for disunity by the PDP members and the party decided to put this picture on Facebook to demonstrate their unity and majority. This was in an attempt to build credibility in the public.

One of the outstanding benefits of Social media is that it has been able to get the attention of people who are not usually interested in politics and that are what was experienced during the rally of the PDP. It also provides certain information about party's aim, target, and objectives across those who were time constrained to attend the campaign programmes. However, not all comments posted Facebook were complimentary, particularly those that come from the opposition. An example amongst other were seen such the comment posted by

Anthony below:
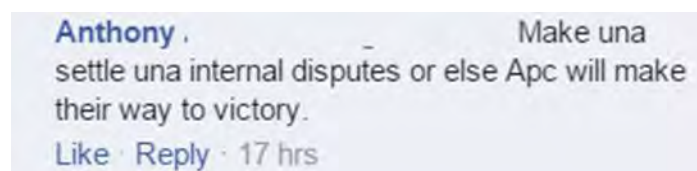
Figure 4.8: Uncomplimentary comment

Source: Facebook page

From the comment it is evident that Anthony is from the opposition party and this action of his show the non-directive nature of social network being used as a theoretical framework. He seems not to be interested in the in the show of unity as much as he is interested in the internal dispute of the party.

Many of the PDP's graphics were aimed at letting their opponents, with whom they were vying for the same political position, know how powerful they were. From this point of view many of their posts were of campaign rally pictures, especially those in the states that had an impressive turn out of supporters (see Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9: Turn out crowd during the campaign

Source: Facebook page

It could not be concluded that one of the intentions of these postings was to intimidate their opponents, or to sign a warning of those who had the intentions of coming to campaign in the same state.

Nevertheless, there were individual members who could not resist expressing their opinion in response to the pictures found on the PDP Facebook page. An example of such comment is seen below.

Figure 4.10: Facebook comment from supporters

Source: Facebook page.

Besides the comments seen on Facebook, one of the participants in Nigeria who also referred to himself as a *bonafide* member of the APC, gave an in-depth explanation of what he regarded that Nigerians needed, rather than the political show-off exhibited by the PDP during the presidential elections of 2011. This is what he said:

> *What Nigerian need now is justice in terms of basic necessities of life? We can't continue living on false hope or going to Israel to pray 4 votes. Graduate are looking for jobs, parents can't access their pension. NYSC charges N4000 for call-up letters, people can't afford rents, employers are exploiting & owing employees' salaries. Oil major[s] are selling their investment to re-invest in Ghana, vehicles cleared with 160k now cost 350k. Increase in fuel price, but no Refinery, $20 billion spent to generate less electricity, another $20 billion spent on defence yet the army is ill- equipped. N20billion interest is to be paid on recent $1billion loan. Oil theft, religious and sectarian violence are hallmark of your presidency.(Respondent '14' 05/10/2014).*

The popularity of Facebook was also evidenced by the APC party on their Facebook page, which was similar to that of the PDP. This was done in states that they were most powerful, for example the Imo state. According to one of the APC participants who acknowledged the importance of social media, it was valuable to show graphics of the rally and their benefits to those who were not fortunate enough to attend the rally, or where rally is not being held at their state. This is what he said,

> *'Social media also allowed the party to get across to the people who are not chanced to listen to jingles in such a way of access to audiovisual to give people the true procession of APC out for their acceptance. For example; the crowd they can see following the members, stomach infrastructure, its enable the public to see what the party is doing.APC also uses info graphics to tell people how they want to get there,*

they were also able to get the attention of the professionals and the skilled. (Respondent 15:20/09/2014).

An example of one of the APC's rally is seen below

Figure 4.11: APC supporters turned out for rally.

Source: Facebook page

There were also comments that were posted by some of the APC members and they express emotional connections to their political leaders. An example of such a comment is seen below.

Figure 4.12: Emotional expression of APC supporters

Source: Facebook page

Although APC might not have been the political party in power at the time of the election, that did not stop some of the opposition party members discrediting the APC should they ever accent to power.

> *If the APC person becomes president they will be the only President that has Militant as spoke person. Nigeria is now the Giant of Corruption again and even worse than now as stealing and corruption is endorse by your administration 1. Bribery scandal 2. Police pension scam 3. Oduahgate 4. Bart Nnaji NEPA scandal 5. Allison jet scandal 6. Kano Election delegates bribe 7. Subsidy scam 8. Immigration job scam 9. Missing $20 billion. It's better we let the Nigerian people stay where they are with the PDP. (Respondent '16' 25/10/2014).*

As part of the lobbying strategy of the PDP, much of the campaigning was used to show the massive work they had done to improve on the country's infrastructural development. For this purpose, pictures were frequently seen on the PDP political party's Facebook page.

Figure 4.13: Credit picture by PDP

Source: Facebook page.

The use of such construction work illustrations sparked a massive amount of reaction amongst Facebook users during the campaign period, and there was much appreciation from the public in general. One of the participants [a PDP member] said that the "*PDP government use it [pictures infrastructural graphics] to project their programmes to gain acceptability by the populace*" (Respondent *17' 10/10/2014)* The comments from
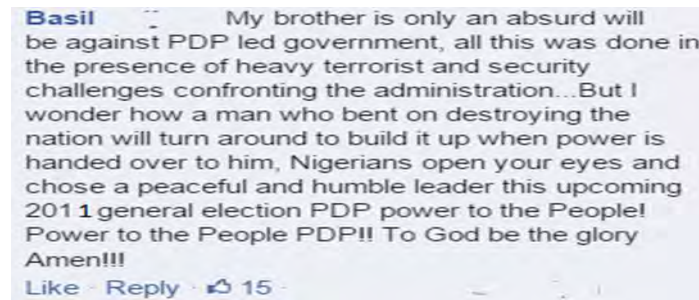
Figure 4.14: Comment from Basil

Source: Facebook page

Infrastructural projects undertaken by the PDP party had a wide range of reactions; from extreme appreciation to extreme condemnation. The comment from Basil (Figure 4.14) was an overwhelming expression of how politicians can change when given a post of responsibility. The comment above shows that the participant is from the PDP party, but was skeptical of the party's leadership until he read the post on infrastructural development. The PDP also posted information on health, food security and medical concerns to show their engagement with developmental issues. An example of such post could be seen below in Figure 4.23.

The PDP also tried to show their concern for education. This was continuously evidenced by the posts that were put up by the party. The concern for education was generally intended for those of the northern part of the country where the level of illiteracy was below the national average.

Figure 4.15: Difference between the educated and the illiterate

Source: www.pdpofficalfacebookpage.com

According to literature, education in the northern part of Nigeria is perceived as a form of colonisation by the Europeans through Christian education. The idea is possible and has some credibility because most of the northerners are Muslims. There is a belief that the Islamic insurgents in Nigeria, known as the Boko Haram, were born out of such notions. Based on such misconceptions or ambiguity in terms of education, the PDP was therefore swift in taking a stand on Facebook by using the President himself to show the concern the party has for education and not for vandalism. This could be seen from Figure 4.15

The PDP's use of graphics on their Facebook page was not limited to expressing their popularity and infrastructural achievements, but to some extent was used to attack the APC during the elections. This created a strong tie between the members of the political parties, although one cannot say the strength of the tie was based on mutual love or hate. Although there were many of such attacks found on the PDP's Facebook page, the researcher decided to select only one. The selected picture below is of that of the APC leader about to be judged for alleged corruption charges, as have been depicted by the PDP members. One of the APC participant commented about the picture of their leader on the Facebook page of the PDP:

"*I was very angry sha, the PDP knows they are the ones to be judge[d] for corruption and now they are trying to say it's us, they are the people who have been in power and stilling [stealing]*

77

from Nigerians. (official Facebook page of APC). Some of the debatable comments were found as post by the picture as well. The post is seen in Figure 4.16

Figure 4.16: PDP charged to court.

Source: Facebook page

The following comments after the picture above were found from both APC and PDP member. The PDP put up the post, and was supported by Solomon, a member of the PDP party.

Official Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Nigeria

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know the APC's 7(seven) cardinal SINS against Nigeria? The manifesto of the party says it all.

1. Deceit and propaganda, 2. Violence and destruction. 3. Lust for power. 4. Greed for money and insatiable acquisition of wealth. 5. Multiple and over-taxation. 6. Promotion of religious/tribal divisions and 7. Lack of respect for democratic tenets and principles.

Like · Comment · Share

👍 84 people like this.   Top Comments ▾

🗐 64 shares

Solomon _ Apc are the most confuse set of people in the world.....the nigerian army has destroyed one of the biggest camps of B'haram in Borno....All their mouths are shut witout a single critics...APC-Association of past nd present criminals/confusionist/chameleon......they are jus hungry 4 power wit out abiding wit the rules nd law of power....their devilish mission will nt see the light of the day in nigeria! UP PDP!

Like · Reply · 👍 14 ·

Figure 4.17: PDP supporter comment on Facebook

79

These are the reply from some of the APC member from the same post
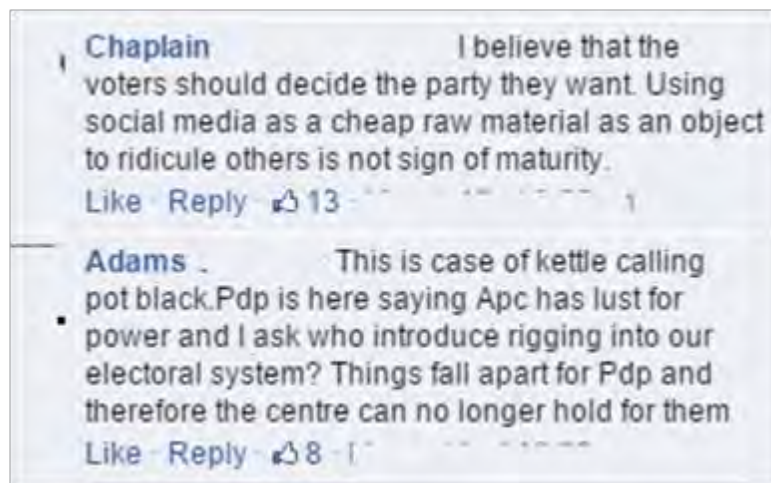
Figure 4.18: APC supporters responded to PDP comment against their manifesto

Source: PDP Facebook page

The PDP party also used their Facebook page to show some aspect of the Nigerian culture and political affiliation. This was seen at most of the political rallies held across the country where most of the party members would have their dress sewn to represent the party colours which were red, green and with umbrella. An example of the picture could be seen below.

Figure 4.19: PDP display party logo on traditional attire

Source: PDP Facebook page

The APC oriented use of graphics

Unlike the PDP, the APC did not orient much of their campaigning towards infrastructural development or education. However, they used some of areas and ideas where the PDP did not do an excellent job. The APC ran a more negative campaign than the PDP, some of which worked while other parts did not. In an attempt to understand why their efforts received so much negative criticism, one of the research participants said that *'the voice of the opposition is very large and we have our strength in meiotic'* the strength he was referring to was based on the notion that most people would love knowing the worst things about a party to which they are not affiliated.

The APC's choice of using a negative campaign was effective - one of the participants agreed that it was more effective than the traditional form of communication on which the party had initially relied for a majority of the time of the campaign. This is what the participant said:

> *'In terms of talking directly to people of lies and who they are [the PDP], it would have been very difficult for a traditional media to do that, the candidate talking to people in the language they understand on Facebook. Our candidate was able to convince people through this platform, and say the entire bad thing the PDP is doing to our country. I think by this, more votes were gained through talking to the right people on social media. ('Respondent 17:6/08/2014)*

Although social media seems to have influenced the social lives of many people as indicated by the literature, some of the electorates in Nigeria did not know who they would vote for, and such negative graphic images gave them a reason to vote for the APC.
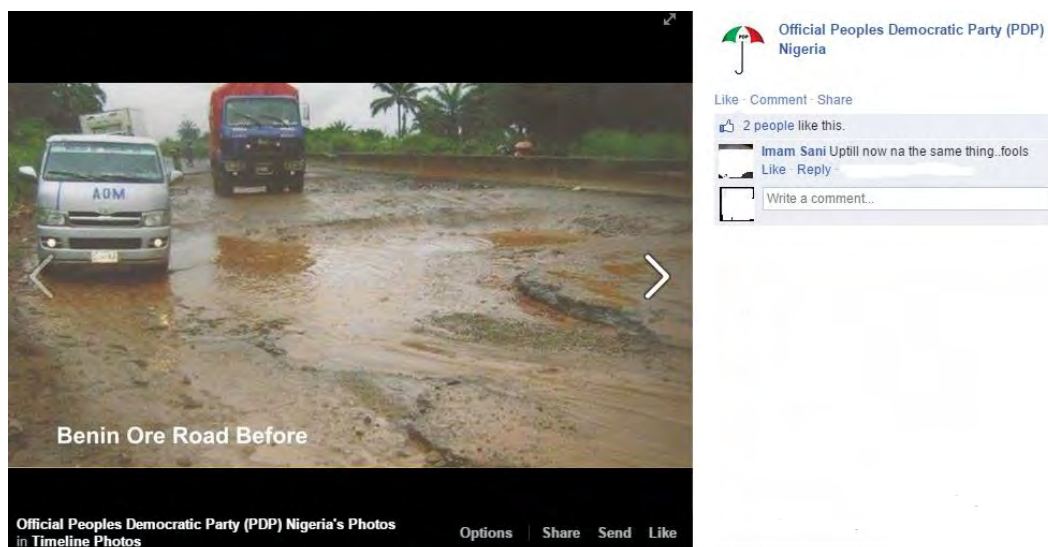
Figure 4.20: Discredit post of PDP by APC on Facebook

Source: PDP Facebook page

There was also suspicision that rival parties posted negative comments on the Facebook pages of each. Graphic images like the one illustrated in Figure 4.18 were constantly being posted on the Facebook pages of the PDP, and was suspected to have been done by members of the APC. Some of the comments that followed such types of negatively campaign images could be seen below (Figure 4.21)
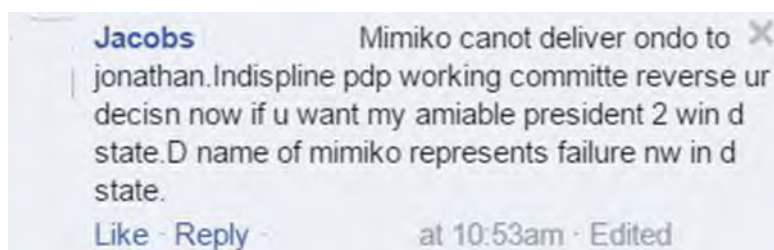
Figure 4.21: The use of propaganda by APC supporters

Source: Facebook page

Here Jacobs is complaining about the unsatisfactory service delivery from one the PDP's top government members. He also comments on the level of party indiscipline amongst the PDP members. He even goes further to associate the name of a PDP member [Mimiko] with failure.

Such comment also provoked other types of graphics that were posted by the APC members both on their Facebook page and on the Facebook page of the PDP. These graphics were there as a result of party disunity; allege corruption and poor service delivery by some of the high ranking PDP party officials of the government. An example of the picture is seen below. (Figure 4.22)

Figure 4.22: Discredit post displaying an obituary of PDP

Source: APC Facebook page

In spite of these negative campaigning by the APC, there were instances where some of the post by the PDP party was provoked a lot of reactions from the APC members. Nevertheless, the reaction was not only from one political party to another, but even with members of the same PDP party. An example of this was when the PDP put up a post about their achievements during the last three years in the country. The example below (Figure 4.23) seems not to have been accompanied by a graphic image, but rather only a discussion. The reason for this is because most of the posts that provoked similar debates had already been shown; so not putting up further graphics was done to avoid redundancy and hence focus on the debates that were usually provoked by such images. An example of such a debate has been presented below (Figure 4.23) in which "Afeez" provides the other side of exactly what the PDP was trying to achieve on the post they put on their Facebook page.
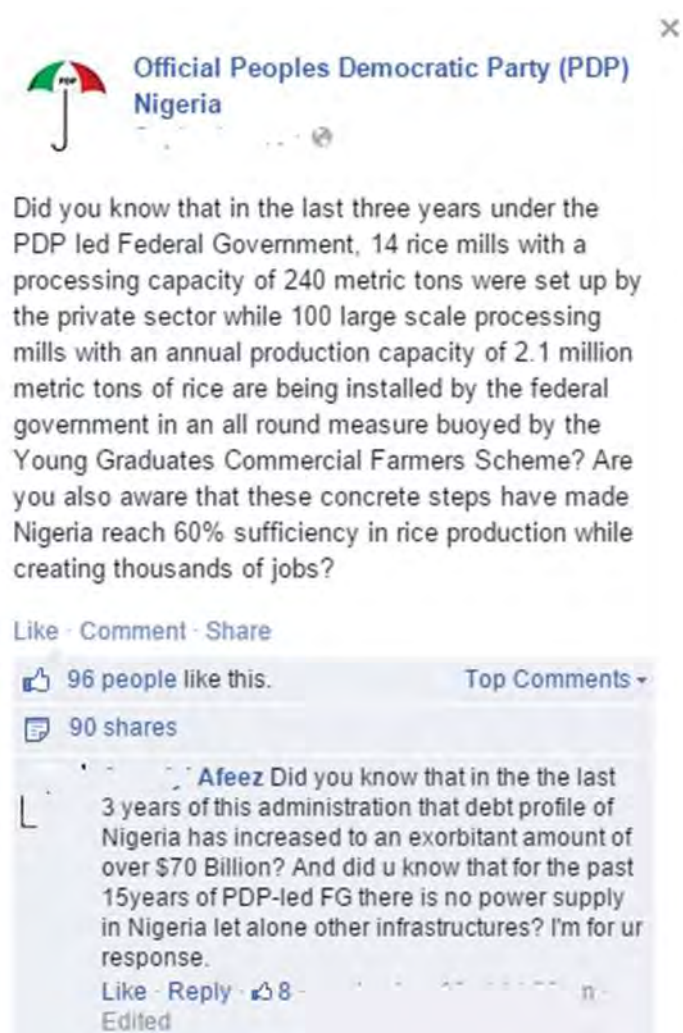
Figure 4.23: Debate of the achievement of opposition party

Source: Facebook page.

The uses of graphics were not only used to directly condemn what the PDP did but some of the posts were also very artistic and well-crafted. They were use to provoke an insight into the state of the nation under the PDP led government. One such example is Figure 4.24

Figure 4.24: Discredit graphics of PDP

Source: Facebook page.

Another graphic image that was commented upon by the participants of the APC can be seen below in Figure 4.25

Figure 4.25: Stomach infrastructure

Source: APC Facebook page

The distribution of food during the political campaign seems to have been one of the main strategies used by the PDP, as can be seen by the above picture (Figure 4.25). When one of the APC participants was ask about his views on the distribution of food for campaign purposes to the lower classes of the Nigerian society, this what he said,

I cry every day when I see thousands of Nigerian dying in poverty, thousands of children hacking in the traffic because their parent couldn't afford to send them to school, thousands of man and woman dying of stroke, hypertension and [a] lot more because no job and keep thinking how to survive, thousands of graduate[s] with good grades now a conductor, bike man, touts just to live and earn income, thousands of people voting for the wrong people just because of two cups of rice and beans, thousands of people dying on the roads just because of pothole on the road(bad road), thousands of youths wasting their talents just because there is no investment no equipment, thousands of politician [PDP] embezzling the country's monetary funds and no law enforced on them for their wrongs deeds, thousands of leaders lying to their followers 'vote for me I will do this', thousands of youths now an armed robber just because they lack something to eat. (Respondent '18'9/09/2014)

Another participant in South Africa, who was passionate about the level of poverty and the unequal distribution of the national wealth, commented that

'The PDP has been distributing rice since they have been in power, then they do not need to campaign. But rice distributed during election time is the evidence that it deliberately keeps the people hungry so as to use something trivial as rice to buy the conscience of the hungry masses'. (Respondent '19'15/08/2014).

The Facebook graphics were also used and commented on by some of the APC members who highlighted the negative things being done by the PDP party, as seen in Figure 4.26

Figure 4.26: Religions believe in politics

Source: Facebook page

The comment from the image can be seen as follows
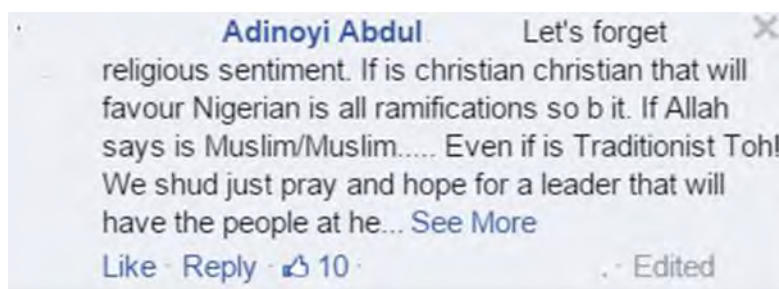
Figure 4.27: Neutral comment on religious believes.

Source: Facebook page

There were other comments not directed towards religion but were based on the leadership history of Nigeria, specifically to the leaders in the north. One such example is seen below in Figure 4.28.

Figure 4.28: Comment on leadership history in Nigeria

Source: Facebook page.

Such reactions were retaliated by the PDP when they put up a post in response to some of the comments on their level of service delivery and corruption (Figure 4.29)

Figure 4.29: Service delivery and corruption.

Source: Facebook page

The APC also used graphic images to predict that the 2015 election would go in their favour (Figure 4.30). Although the predictions regarding the 2011 election came true, the 2015 elections are yet to be proven, irrespective of what the posts on the APC Facebook page may have suggest.
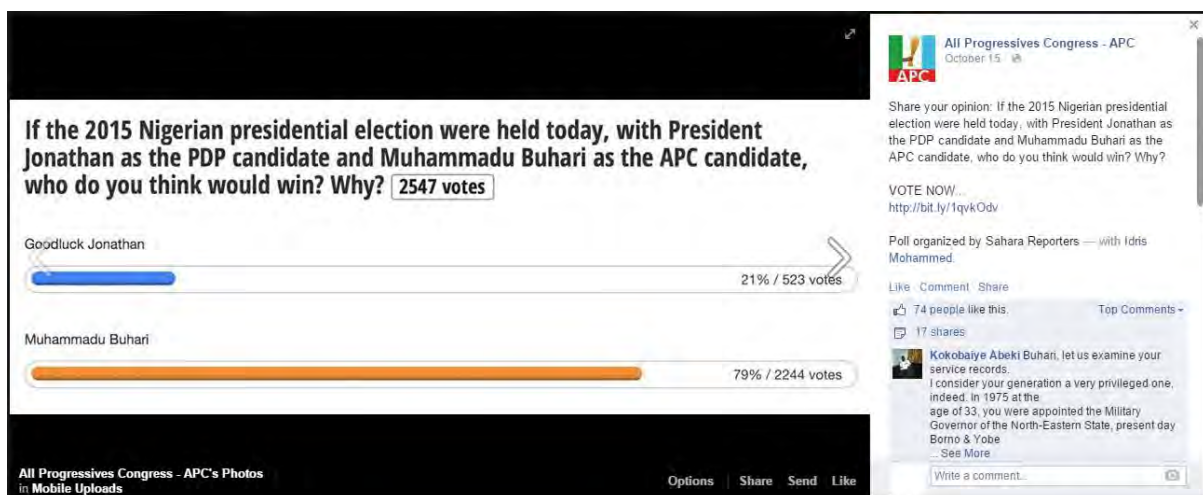
Figure 4.30: Prediction of 2015 vote.

Source: Facebook page.

CONCLUSION

This chapter analysed and discussed the data that was collected through interviews and from reading through the Facebook pages of the PDP and APC political parties. The chapter commenced by identifying three themes:. 1.The usage of *Facebook* by the political parties; 2.The usage of *language* on Facebook by political parties and their electorates during the elections, and the dominance of English for reasons that have been explained; and 3. The use of *graphics* during the campaign period. These themes were explained using a literature survey to relate to the analysed data. The theoretical framework served as a lens through which the interactions on Facebook were considered, that is, the cross level relationship which is the point of analysis in the study where individual participation was understood from the point of how the individual use Facebook page (ties) of the PDP and APC, political parties (organization) during the 2011 general elections in Nigeria.

The next chapter will conclude the study, and will comprise a synthesis of the previous chapters; a conclusion of the findings with respect to the conceptual framework; and finally suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is the concluding chapter of the study titled'A comparative analysis of the use of Social Media by the People's Democratic Party (PDP**)** and All Progressive Congress of Nigeria (APC) during the 2011 Political Election Campaigns'.The purpose of the study was to explore how political parties in Nigeria, especially the PDP and APC, used social media during the 2011 Nigerian presidential elections with emphasis on the use of Facebook by these political parties. The key research question that the study seeks to answer was how did the PDP and APC political party use Facebook during the 2011 presidential elections? The research was also interested in unpacking the impact the use of Facebook had on PDP and APC respective political parties. This chapter is divided into the following sections, a summary of the finding and the recommendations.

Summary of the findings

.

The summary of the findings presented in this section has been arranged to reflect the objectives of the study that were introduced in Chapter One. The reason for this approach was because the study aimed at attaining these objectives. The summary is presented under the following subheadings;

An understanding of how the PDP and the APC adopted to the use of Facebook during the 2011 political campaign

The political landscape of Nigeria is unique just as it is with any other country in which a similar study would have been carried out. The uniqueness of the Nigerian context results from the demographic distribution which is mostly youth, the religious diversity, and the culturally oriented of the Nigerian society. The political adaptation towards the use of Facebook was not the same for both parties. The PDP was more flexible and innovative with their use of Facebook: this was evident by their presidential candidate of Jonathan Goodluck announce his candidacy through Facebook which was overwhelmingly appreciated by the youths as revealed in literature and the study. From a theoretical point of view, such move is considered non-reductionist and applies to a variety of small groups of people [political members only] and also to entire Nigerian society. On the other hand, the APC presidential candidate, Mr.

Abudusalam Abubakar, used the traditional approach of a press conference to announce his candidacy. This latter format was comparatively slow and not 'catchy' in the eyes of the youths who are considered as the most indecisive and mercurial with regards to political candidates in Nigeria. The result of the two political parties approach therefore showed that PDP was swift in adapting to the use of Facebook, although the APC later on joined in the use of Facebook in a a catch-up movement, as have been revealed by the study.

The content of posts on Facebook also saw considerable amount of difference between both parties. While the PDP was interested in posting graphics of their infrastructure developments and their concern for the youths, health and education, the APC on the other hand was interested in posting graphics that were aimed at discrediting the works of the PDP, and suggesting that they had performed poorly. In general both political parties employed a significant effort to adapt to the use of Facebook during the 2011 presidential elections.

Reasons for the PDP and APC to have made use of Facebook as a medium of communication

One of the most obvious and unavoidable reasons for both political parties to make the most out of their use of Facebook during the 2011 presidential elections was to have political power supremacy over other contenders. Although this reason seems to have been obvious as it would have been in any other democratic society; the presence of the large youthful population in Nigeria (72 million youths) is a significant reason for both parties to use Facebook as a medium for political communication. Communication is quicker than the traditional methods, as have been shown in the literature and both political parties revealed that they made the most out of such communication advantages. But again the target for the communication was directed towards the youthful population of Nigerians. The consensus revealed was that these youths used Facebook to express their opposition to bad governance and corruption, and also to broach issues of trust and concern. The concerns of youths made up a significant part of the messages and graphic posts that were found in the study. Such feedback from the emerging electorates also helped the political parties to assess the needs of their youths, as was seen by their comments on Facebook. This could be said to have been the reasons why the political parties communicated through Facebook during the 2011 presidential elections.

Furthermore, these reasons were found to be present in the literature as the use of social media in today's campaign is not only important, but was deemed to be critical since millions of Nigerians are involved in using social media daily. Olabamiji (2014) has also concluded that it is the contemporary opportunity for political parties to be in touch with large numbers of voters quickly, constantly and at a low cost through the use of social media.

From a theoretical stance, there has been evidence of social interaction patterns that strongly deviates from randomness. The individuals who made use of Facebook varied greatly among themselves as to their degree of involvement. The individuals involved have a greater priority affinity to interact amongst themselves. For instance, some individuals have many more contacts than others and therefore were more likely to become involved in the political Facebook moment. This could as well be used to determine to the spread of information within the Nigerian society through Facebook.

The impact of Facebook on the political campaigns of PDP and APC Party

Although the study could not provide any empirical evidence with any degree of certainty, anecdotal evidence suggests that the use of Facebook had a substantial impact on the entire outcome of the election in 2011.In particular, the study did realise that the use of Facebook had an impact in terms of the youths' participation in political activities in the elections. From a theoretical perspective, the communication ties created by Facebook accounted for strong political participation and such ties were not formal. Furthermore, the strength of the tie was determined by the quality of the postings that were on Facebook. Posts on infrastructure, propaganda and party popularity received stronger responses, and therefore stronger ties, than posts on religion and culture.

The impact of the use of Facebook seems to be growing in terms of the interest expressed by the voters, judging from the number of youths that participated towards the eve of the voting compared to those that participated when the political campaign officially started. The impact of the use of Facebook on the PDP was almost equal to that of the APC as some of those who made contributions were from either political party and vice versa. The common ground that was exhibited was not on political positioning or affiliation, but on issues of patriotism, as could be discerned from most of the comments on Facebook and the interviewed participants of the current research. In this regard the impact of the use of Facebook during political

elections had a socialising effect with greater emphasis on expressing grievances and concern on the state of the nation than in the interest of a political party.

The influence of Facebook on electorate decision and political participation

During the elections and through social media, most Nigerians were able to see large numbers of campaign-related content coming through, whether they like it or not, since all it needed was to click 'like' on a political party's Facebook page.

This was a similar outcome to President Obama's presidential campaign in 2008, and his eventual emergence as first black President of the United States. Obama's success was credited largely to his active use of Facebook to mobilise millions of volunteers, voters and to lobby for financial support. Although the political influence with regards to this study was limited to the participants' use of Facebook during the 2011 presidential elections and not other social media as well, some parallels can be seen with the outcome of the elections as it was the case of president Obama in 2008.

Social media and Facebook specifically, had a general influence on both political parties as the youths of Nigeria could become aware of, and perhaps understand, the political debates and situations in other parts of the country within a short space of time. There was also an influence in the manner at which rural youths participated in the elections as the Facebook platform gave them a voice with which to articulate the issues surrounding their communities. Such issues included, but not limited to health care, education and infrastructural development. From this perspective one would understand why the PDP frequently used the Facebook to showcase their concerns and investments in these areas.

The comments that followed the posting of information on Facebook was the PDP indicated that voters were influenced to consider the PDP, who posted a great deal of information on the Facebook page. At the same time, the APC, through the posts on the poor state of other parts of the country, as well as highlighting issues of corruption, also attracted their voters. Therefore the influence of the use of Facebook on the electorates from both parties was considered to be significant to the outcome as well as significant in improving political participation of the youths.

The extent of the use of Facebook by both political parties in Nigeria during the 2011 election

The literature surveyed in this study showed that social media is perhaps the best tool to assess the popularity of a candidate especially by the young people and craft the best language to use as a campaign slogan (Ibagere, 2013). The study revealed that through the use of Facebook, politicians were informally free with the public to the Facebook participants this was a reflection of what a democracy should be like. This informal move by the PDP and the APC politicians was appreciated by the voters, a fact that was reflected in the comments posted on the Facebook page of each political party, and reflected in the current research dissertation. The researcher found this to be significant considering the juvenile state of Nigerian's democracy which emerges from a recent post of military coups as a form of regime-change or leadership. Therefore, the free and direct connection through Facebook helped politicians of both parties and the voters to communicate their humour, indicating their approachability and accessibility to the public.

One of the notable limits to the use of Facebook by these political parties was the use of language. The main language of communication was English, which therefore meant that it was limited to the educated elite, since local languages were not the dominant languages of communication on either of both political parties Facebook page. Therefore, creating a user-friendly language such as English was a strategy for users of Facebook during political campaigns. This was seen as vital and was an essential requirement for these political candidates to get into office. In general, the study found that social media had been used to attract the attention of people who were not interested in politics: it also assisted them by providing information about the parties aim, target and objectives to those who were time-constrained to attend the campaign programmes.

Recommendation for further studies

While it is not the primary purpose of an academic dissertation to make recommendations, a number of interesting points arose from the current research that are worth recording.   Since this is a relatively new area of study, a similar study should be done for the upcoming elections in 2015 in Nigeria. The study should aim at evaluating the use of Facebook by the said political parties and evaluating their level in social media engagement from the 2011 elections. This will

provide a better understanding of how Facebook and other social media could or should be effectively be used in the Nigerian context. There should be a study that considers the use of Facebook for each political party, and not just a comparison of the two political parties as have been done here. The reason for such a study would help provide an in-depth political party's use of Facebook and the finding could be best use for further interventions should there be need for any.

Periodic public enlightenment on the use of social media platforms for political purposes, especially among the youths, should be done routinely before elections in Nigeria. The government should be at the vanguard of this campaign, using such instruments like the ministries of information at both state and federal levels, the National Orientation Agency, the mass media, among others.

Politicians and political parties, as well as their supporters should be cautioned in using social media to post/twit dysfunctional messages. Although such instances did not erupt or were not found to occur during the study, it would be of the interest of the stakeholders to maintain peace and tranquillity before and after elections in the country.

CONCLUDING THE STUDY

The study set out to investigate the effectiveness of the use of Facebook during the 2011 political campaigns in Nigeria.The study was presented in chapters' beginning with an introductory chapter that provided an overview of the study. The second chapter was divided into two sections; the first covered an elaborate and comprehensive literature on the use of Facebook and social media in general which was divided into three sections. The third chapter described and explained the research methodology that the researcher used in answering the research questions introduced in chapter one; the theoretical framework was also presented in this chapter. Chapter four discussed and analysed the data gathered through the data collection instruments which were interviews and content analysis of the Facebook page of the PDP and APC political party. The overall findings indicated that it was evidently proved that social media played a crucial role in the general election campaigns by specifically engaging the youths, although it may not have been a necessary influencing of the outcome of the election.Personally, the researcher has gained much insight on how the political parties used Facebook for election purposes and how this could influence and get youths involved in political issues of their country with Nigeria as an example.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adeyanju & Haruna 2012. Uses Of Sms In Campaigns: An Assessment Of The 2011 General Elections And Post Election Violence In Northern Nigeria,. *In:* Wilso, D. (Ed.) *The Media, Terrorism & Political Communication In Nigeria.* Uyo: Acce.

Adibe, K., Odoemelam, C. C. & Chibuwe, A. 2012. Social Media, Electioneering And Sustenance Of Democracy In Africa: A "Swot" Analysis. *Africa Media & Democracy Journal* 1.

Alabi, O. F. 2013. A Survey Of Facebook Addiction Level Among Selected Nigerian University Undergraduates. *New Media And Mass Communication,* 10**,** 70-80.

Bauer, N. W. & Gaskell, G. (2003). *Qualitative Researching With Text, Image And Sound.* London: Sage Publications.

Bimber, B. 2012. Digital Media And Citizenship. *The Sage Handbook Of Political Communication, London, Sage***,** 115-126.

Buisier, J. 2011. Egyptian Youth Rise Through A Social Network. *Daily Campus News.* Http://Www.Smudailycampus.Com/News/Egyptian-Youth-Rise-Through-A-Social -Network

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Method In Education* (7thed.). New York: Routledge.

Dundas, C. W. 2014. *Electoral Essays And Discourses*, Author House.

Eze, C. I. 2007. "Adaptation And Utilization Of Icts In Sub-Saharan Africa: Problems And Prospects" In Nwosu. *In:* Oludayo, U. & Soola, J. (Eds.) *Communication In Global, Icts And Ecosystem Perspectives – Insights From Nigeria.* Enugu: Precision Publishers Limited.

Fraenkel, J. R. &Wallen, N. E. (2008). *How To Design And Evaluate Research In Education.* New York: Mcgraw-Hill

Graber, D. A. & Dunaway, J. L. 2014. *Mass Media And American Politics*, Cq Press.

Henning, E., Ronsburg, W. &Smit, B. (2004). *Finding Your Way In Qualitative Research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Herring, S.C. (2002). Computer-Mediated Communication On The Internet. *Annual Review Of Information, Science And Technology, 6*(1), 109-168.

Herring, S.C. (2004). Slouching Toward The Ordinary: Current Trends In Computer Mediated Communication. *New Media & Society, 6*(1), 26-36. Doi: 10.1177/1461444804039906

Ibagere, E. 2013 The Mass Media, Nigerians' Political Awareness And Their Capacity To Make Political Choices. *European Journal Of Arts And Humanities* 1**,** 68-78.

Kadushin, C. (2004). Introduction To Social Network Theory. Boston, M

Kidafa, Odoemelam & Elechi 2011a. Social Media And The Challenges Of Regulation: An Analytical Approach. *Acce.* Ota: Covenant University.

Kidafa, M., Odoemelam, O. & Elechi, I. 2011b. Social Media Electioneering: Comparative Analysis Of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan And Muhammedu Buhari's Facebook Contents. *Acce.* Covenant University: Ota.

Krause, J., Croft, D. P., & James, R. (2007). Social Network Theory In The Behavioral Sciences: Potential Applications. Behavioral Ecology And Sociobiology, 62(1), 15-27.

Katz, N., Lazer, D., Arrow, H., & Contractor, N. (2004). Network Theory And Small Groups. Small Group Research, 35 (3), 307-332.

Marett, A. 2010. Participating Online: The Internet And Its Role In Political Participatory Behaviour In The Context Of The New Zealand General Election 2008.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative Research And Case Study Applications In Education*. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass

Mouton, J. (2001). *How To Succeed In Your Master's And Doctoral Studies: A South African Guide And Resource Book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers

Neuman, W. R., Bimber, B. & Hindman, M. 2011. The Internet And Four Dimensions Of Citizenship. *The Oxford Handbook Of American Public Opinion And The Media***,** 22-42.

Neuman, W. L. (2006). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative And Quantitative Approaches*. (6[th]ed.). New York: Pearson International, Inc.

Newby, P. (2010). *Research Method For Education.* Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd

Nnadozie, U. 2007. History Of Elections In Nigeria. *In:* Attahiru, J. & Oke. (Eds.) *Elections And The Future Of Democracy In Nigeria.* Nigeria: Nigerian Political Association.

Odoemelam, C. C. & Adibe, K. N. 2011. Political Conflicts And Political Communication In Africa: An Analysis Of Social Media Role. *Paper Presented At Acce.* Ota: Covernant University

Okoro, N. & Nwafor, K. A. 2013. Social Media And Political Participation In Nigeria During The 2011 General Elections: The Lapses And The Lessons. *Global Journal Of Arts Humanities And Social Sciences* 1**,** 29-46.

Olabamiji, O. M. 2014. Use And Misuse Of The New Media For Political Communication In Nigeria's Fourth Republic. *Developing Country Studies,* 4.

Obasi,N.K,2002,The Structure Of Nigeria Government.

Omotola, S. & Aiyedogbon, G. 2012. Political Participation And Voter Turnout In Nigeria's 2011 Elections. *Journa Of African Elections,* 11.

Peters, L. (1998). The New Interactive Media: One-To-One But Whom To Whom. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning, 16*(1), 22–30.

Slavin, P. E. (2007). *Educational Research In An Age Of Accountability.* New York: Pearson Education, Inc.

Spottswood, E. L., Walther, J. B., Holmstrom, A. J., & Ellison, N. B. (2013). Person-Centered Emotional Support And Gender Attributions In Computer-Mediated Communication. *Human Communication Research*, *39*(3), 295-316

Www.123 Independenceday.Com/Nigeria/Political.System.Html. Accessed 6-11-2014 By 3:52:49 Pm.

Zazcek, D. & Bonn, M. (2006). Online Friendships. Their Prevalence And Quality. *New Voices In Psychology, 2*(1) 83-107.

APPENDIX B

Research Consent Statement

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES   NOVEMBER 2014

 Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Sumbo Olorode, I am collecting datas to complete a study on " A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY THE PEOPLES DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND ALL PROGRESSIVE CONGRESS DURING THE 2011 POLITICAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN."

The study is conducted under the supervision of University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, center for culture, communication and media studies (CCMS). I am writing to request your participation to be interview some of your party members.

The aim of the study is to investigate the effectiveness of the use of social media in political campaign and how PDP and APC use Facebook the catch the attention of their electorate .

Participation in the study is voluntary, the data will be kept safely foe five years for the purpose of verification, should you request, an electronic copy of the final thesis will be sent to you on completion.

Your willingness to participate will be highly appreciated.

Thank you,

Should you have any questions, my contact details

Sumbo Olorode

Center for culture, communication and media studies .

University of KwaZulu Natal, Howard Campus,

Cell - +27749277547   , email; sumboolorode@yahoo.com

Supervisor contact; 0313736875   , email; teertoma@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the project. Before we start I would like to emphasise that:
- your participation is entirely voluntary
- you are free to refuse to answer any question
  you are free to withdraw at any time

APPENDIX C

Interview questions

Which of the social media site do your party mostly use during political campaigns?

How did your party use the social media for political campaigns during the 2011 election?

How did you party adopt the use of social media for political campaign?

Why did you party use facebook as a medium to communicate to their electorate?

How effective has this medium served it purpose?

How are your target audience on your official facebook page?

What of language do your party use on their facebook page?

Do you party use graphics images to transfer information to the public?

How does the use of social media impact political campaign in your party?

What was the extend of the use of social media in Nigeria?

Did the use of facebook influence political party to vote?

APPENDIX D

Appendix

Listing of Internet Slang and Acronyms

No	Slang and Acronyms		Meaning
1	1	Means =	One, exclamation mark
2	2	Means =	To, Too or Two
3	4	Means =	For or Four
4	AFAP	Means =	As Far As Possible
5	A&F, AAF	Means =	Always And Forever
6	A3	Means =	Anywhere, Any time, Any place
7	AA	Means =	Alcoholics Anonymous
8	AAB	Means =	Average At Best
9	AAK	Means =	Alive And Kicking
10	AAMOF	Means =	As A Matter Of Fact
11	AAP	Means =	Always A Pleasure
12	AAR	Means =	At Any Rate
13	AAYF	Means =	As Always, Your Friend
14	ABD	Means =	Already Been Done
15	ABH	Means =	Actual Bodily Harm
16	ABN	Means =	*sshole By Nature
17	ABT	Means =	Absolutely
18	ABT	Means =	About
19	ADM	Means =	All Day Long
20	ADMIN	Means =	Administrator
21	ADN	Means =	Any Day Now

No	Slang and Acronyms		Meaning
22	AEAE	Means =	And Ever And Ever
23	AEAP	Means =	As Early As Possible
24	AFAIAC	Means =	As Far As I Am Concerned
25	AFAIC	Means =	As Far As I'm Concerned
26	AFAICS	Means =	As Far As I Can See
27	AFAICT	Means =	As Far As I Can Tell
28	AFAIK	Means =	As Far As I Know
29	AFAIR	Means =	As Far As I Remember
30	AFC	Means =	Away From Computer
31	AFD	Means =	All F***ing Day
32	AFT	Means =	About F***ing Time
33	AGW	Means =	All Going Well
34	Aight	Means =	Are you alright, Yo
35	ALOL	Means =	Actually Laughing Out Loud
36	ANY1	Means =	Anyone
37	AYSOS	Means =	Are You Stupid Or Something?
38	B	Means =	Be
39	B4	Means =	Before
40	Bb	Means =	Bye Bye, Goodbye
41	BBIAB	Means =	Be back in a bit
42	BBL	Means =	Be back later
43	BBS	Means =	Be back soon
44	BD	Means =	Big deal
45	BRB	Means =	Be right back
46	BRB	Means =	Be right back or Bath-room break
47	BRT	Means =	Be right there
48	BTW	Means =	By the way

No	Slang and Acronyms		Meaning
49	C	Means =	See
50	CSWS	Means =	Can't Stop, Won't Stop
51	CU	Means =	See you
52	CUL	Means =	See you later
53	Cuz	Means =	Because
54	CYA	Means =	See you
55	CYS	Means =	Check your settings
56	da	Means =	The
57	dat	Means =	That
58	der	Means =	There
59	DIAF	Means =	Die in a fire
60	Dunno	Means =	Dont know
61	FAQ	Means =	Frequently asked questions
62	FOAD	Means =	**** off and die
63	FTL	Means =	For the loss
64	FTUW	Means =	For the uber win
65	FTW	Means =	For the win
66	FWIW	Means =	For what it's worth
67	FYI	Means =	For your information
68	G2G / GTG	Means =	Got to go
69	GAL	Means =	Get a life
70	GFY	Means =	Good for you
71	GG	Means =	Good game, Good going
72	GIYF	Means =	Google is your friend
73	Gonna	Means =	Going to
74	HAND	Means =	Have a nice day
75	HS	Means =	Holy sh*t!

No	Slang and Acronyms		Meaning
76	HTH	Means =	Hope this helps
77	IACL	Means =	I am currently laughing
78	IANAL	Means =	I am not a lawyer
79	IANARS	Means =	I am not a rocket scientist
80	IC	Means =	I see
81	ICYDK	Means =	In case you didn't know
82	IDGI	Means =	I don't get it
83	IDK	Means =	I don't know
84	Iggy	Means =	Igloo
85	IIRC	Means =	If I recall correctly
86	ILY or ILU	Means =	I love you
87	IMHO	Means =	In my honest opinion
88	IMNSHO	Means =	In my not so honest opinion
89	IMO	Means =	In my opinion

Source: ngureco»HubPages Tutorials and Community

http://ngureco.hubpages.com/hub/Whats-The-Meaning-of-Lol-Lmao-Rofl-Brb-Afk-Ty-Thx-Np-and-Listing-of-Internet-Slang-and-Acronyms