

## **Social Media And The Electorate's Decisions In Nigeria 4th Republic: The Nigerian Conurbation Insight Of QSR-Nvivo From SNS (Social Networking Sites)**

**Ayeni Edidiong (Phd)<sup>1</sup>, Ayeni Adebajji A.W., (Phd)<sup>2\*</sup>, Ake Modupe, (Phd)<sup>1</sup>, Omitola Bolaji O., (Phd)<sup>3</sup>, Abraham Enoima E. (Phd)<sup>4</sup>, Kadiri Kayode I., (Phd)<sup>5</sup>, Okolugbo Chibogu Nicholas, (Phd)<sup>6</sup>, Ogundele Enoch Oluwaseun<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Business and Social Science, Landmark University, SDG8; SDG2, ayeni.edidiong@lmu.edu.ng; ekpoedidiong82@gmail.com, ake.modupe@lmu.edu.ng, oluwaseun.ogundele@lmu.edu.ng; enochogundele1@gmail.com

<sup>2\*</sup>Department of Business Studies, College of Business and Social Science, Landmark University, SDG8; SDG1, Ayeni.adebanji@lmu.edu.ng; adebanjiayeni@hotmail.com

<sup>3</sup>Department of Political Sciences, Faculty of management sciences, Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria SDG8, bolatolaomit09@gmail.com; bolaji.omitola@uniosun.edu.ng

<sup>4</sup>Department of Accounting and Finance, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Topfaith University Mkpatak, SDG8; SDG7, enoima.abraham@topfaith.edu.ng, 0000-0003-2518-8874

<sup>5</sup>Department of Business Administration, Faculty of management sciences, Nigerian Open University (NOUN) SDG8; SDG5, kkadiri@noun.edu.ng; 0000-0001-5617-6513

<sup>6</sup>Department of Business Administration, Faculty of management sciences, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti SDG8; SDG1, chibogu.okolugbo@eksu.edu.ng

**\*Corresponding Author:** Ayeni Adebajji A.W., (Phd)

\*Department of Business Studies, College of Business and Social Science, Landmark University, SDG8; SDG1, Ayeni.adebanji@lmu.edu.ng; adebanjiayeni@hotmail.com

### **Abstracts**

*Studies have shown that those living in established and recognized democracies usually experience election campaigns through the electronic media as election is expected normalcy which is being done in the advanced nations with the aid of electronic media. The increasing influence of media allows electorates to air their opinions on how and what they feel about elections in Nigeria. This provides the populace with an opportunity to analyse real issues and discuss the intent of these politicians. This study intends to provide the perception electorates have of elections in Nigeria in the fourth republic and how this is a representation of the nature of elections in Nigeria. The scope of the study are tweets made on a web application called Twitter a Social Networking Site, established in 2006 and usage is ongoing in Nigeria presently. The study adopts NCapture to capture the tweets and import them into the Nvivo software for further analysis. Content analysis was also adopted for the discussion of findings. The study concludes that the general perception of electorates towards election in Nigeria tilt toward a more adverse facet in Nigerian conducted election. Therefore, a means of controlling or confirming the media information should be set up to arrive at its proper adoption while re-educating the undulation perspective earned from the Nigerian Users on Twitter. The study draws to light that there is a little understanding on the impact of information dissemination on electoral matters, and to this, the study recommends the establishment of courses/subjects that can reorientate the present and incoming generation. This is believed to lead to creating a strong allegiance for the nation as discourse was always pronounced in most discussion on the differences amongst the citizens.*

### **Introduction**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century showcases lives with the airily unconsciousness of imbibing new cultures without any prior intent. This further presented human existence with the social media use of infiltrating the assumed peaceful lives across the globe. Evidences from Trystan, Scully and Jones (2003) were of the intent to reveal the strength of the of social media on viewers attitude alongside the behaviour it manipulates them on. Developed nations such as Britain has been able to reflect a plausible stand point between her two main party (the Labour Party and the Conservative Party) on the loan acquisition for financing (Martin, 2019). Thus, showing the beautiful drawings of the social media. Of a note, the ability of political manifesto determining the success of a campaign has been undermined by the power of the social media (Alotaibi, 2013). Furthermore, Caul and Gray (2000) provided other examples indicating industrial democracies to relate to the consistency of votes to elucidate the predictability experienced in result of conducted elections. This creates to the assurance which

most of the time becomes the truth of certain expression of parties winning the election. It is in lieu of failed predictability with the advent of social media that such means of determining the polls results culminate to vigorously engaging the electorate to determine the sets of leadership.

Apparently, its ability to swerve the minds of the elects based on assumption has been the norms after the Arab spring episode, birthing the Syrian ongoing war. Of a note, the influence of political acclimation has birthed diverse reaction to the differently practiced forms of democracies around the globe. Reference to be called the will of the people, doesn't undermine the ability for it to be finetuned via the ample act of brain washing called the media (Eko, 2013; O'Shea, 2018). The replication of this was also displayed in developing nations such as Nigeria. A few mentions are the #ENDSARS# protest, the 2019 elections and COVID-19 campaigns which effects are visibly felt across the nation. It is on this premise the study intends to present a conceptual review on the social media effect generated from political talk show analysis in the 4<sup>th</sup> republic of Nigeria. The scope of the study is Oyo state. This adoption of this was based on the occurrence of the divergence by the electorate towards the previous government. Thus, demanding the possibility of expanding the occurrence in other regions of the nation. Finally, the conceptual study is designed to proffer admissible solution in the currently engaged social media with an end to reconstruction of solutions as against its perceived violence eruption in the society.

### **Conceptual Framework: Recognized Democracies and Election campaigns**

Established and recognized democracies are noted to practice the accepted will of the people via the collation of agreed polled census. The case becomes different when a sense of personalized independent opinion tends to overall agreed collectivism in the society. This is the current case of the Nigeria society (Elbahnasawy et al., 2016). Thus, scholars opines that the nascent democracy practiced in Nigeria is a confirmation of the discordant of opinions of the political class reflecting myriads of intrigues (Yagboyaju, 2017). Furthermore, the views of Gbadegesin & Onanuga, (2019) reflects the opinionated stand of every political party, which is displayed in their respective manifesto and plans of action as the best for the citizenry. Past events have been so heated that they led to violence creating the end of the past three republics in Nigeria. The use of the social media was affirmation to the accepted democratic reign of the people to create an inclusive participation as well as establish the intent of the officials to be elected. Once again, Adeshina & Ojo, (2020) and Gbadegesin & Onanuga (2019) went ahead to showcase the eruption of unhealthy rivalry heating up the polity by re-establishing further comments. The shocking revelation comes with the acceptance of the large number of Nigerians who accepted that necessity of the dissent to be needed for a sound process of democracy. This was brought to fore that the need for antagonism and democracy are Siamese twins of dissenting voices from the political class to thrive on rational consensus. It is on this note the next session looks at election campaigns.

Gbadegesin & Onanuga, (2019) opines that election can be a fascinating experience. The opinion comes to the occurrence between now and the campaign day, which requested for the preparations for possible twists & turns and in many instances monitor the situation with a little predecay and planning. The difference between the win and losing – that's what happens in the campaign. Notably, it must be stated that there are three sorts of political campaigns which, because of their own internal flaws, almost no prospect of winning on election day. The discussions on the types provided by Nwogu, (2015) were based on the being a campaign, which does not have a compelling message that voters have a clear notion of who they wish to convince voters without any guidance from the beginning and that things grow worse. The second type was of the view that the campaign is conducted by voters with a brief, convincing message and a clear idea that does not have a realistic strategy to convince these people until election day. In the conclusive type, the third sort of campaign has a clear message, a clear electoral concept and an electoral strategy, but does not push forward with the scheme and does not undertake the hard job of being elected day after day. It's a clumsy campaign that apologizes for the reason why she doesn't do as she knows. Irrespective of the sated types of campaign the 21<sup>st</sup> century means have been able to provide individuals that could fit into any of the campaign as the man of the people (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). It should be noted that all these displays are the requirements needed for what the concept of democracy requires for its recognition as it is really hard to come to a joined agreement. The Webster New Encyclopaedic Dictionary (1995) defines democracy as a system in which supreme authority is directly or indirectly exercised via representation in the people. The phrase comes from the Greek phrase (democratic) "rule of the people," formed from (demos) "peoples" and (kratos), "force" or "rule" in the 5th century B.C., according to Lindell and Scott (1999). It is crucial to remember that the Athenian political system was such that democratic citizenship was restricted to a free elite class exclusively. The involvement of slaves and women was excluded. On the concept of what democracy entails, Diamond (2004) posits on the topic in his presentation of "What is democracy?" giving a summary of what democracy is in his view. He stated that democracy is described as a governing system with four main elements, numbering from the system of governmental selection and substitution via free and fair elections to the active citizen involvement in politics and in civic life. The other two entails the protection of the human rights of all citizens and lastly is a rule of law that applies equally to all person's laws and processes. These characteristics has been captured in the new generation use of today's event, the electronic media. On this premise, the next session delves into the current applied means of diverging views, the electronic media.

### **Electronic media and Revolutionary influence**

In the mid-1990, the speculation was the to measure the ability to which electronic media will influence politics with the birth of web 1.0 coming to light. The appearance of the web 2.0 brought about the acknowledgment of the social media with its effects. Studies have been infused with its positive and negative acumen shown in respective political knowledge and participation. All this was from the information that could be harnessed from political stand when diffused with social media information. This assertion was birthed from the urge for delivery and governance as stated by Khemani et al. (2016) alongside his definition for transparency being the citizen access to publicly available information about the actions of those in government and the consequences of those actions. The need for this arose with the unending unprobeable acts of politicians when in government and creating a dump refuse for the created mandate for the elected office. The various means of the electorate media and influence have been replicated in reality from its assumed roles in words, pictorial references, and real-time debate. Furthermore, Fang et al., (2021) stated that Citizens can also contribute information by voting, attendance in government meetings, letters and petitions, tales supplied to the media, protests, involvement in civil groups and campaigning with politicians and service providers. From the position of Guarnizo & Smith, (1998), the normal dissemination are official reports, stories provided to the media, websites, campaign activities, or outreach mediated by grassroots organizations. Thus, creating citizens ability to share information with politicians and service providers in a multitude of ways, such as through electronics polls, attending government-held meetings, letters and petitions, stories provided to the media, protests, participation in civic organizations, and campaigning. As the need for information grows and the cost of IT decreases, smartphones are becoming increasingly prevalent. South African company Onyx Connect has revealed intentions to market a \$30 smartphone, a game changer (Scott, 2017). These and other smartphones certainly assist to drive Internet access to the highest ever in low-income as well as high-income nations. Although nations with low incomes, such as Nigeria are not unexpectedly adoptive, there are still around 60 mobile telephone subscribers per 100 inhabitants; i.e., the typical person in a low-income country has more chance than not of having a mobile telephone subscription. Moreover, persons who are unable to use their own mobile phones often have access to other people's cell phones (Pew Research Center, 2015). Of a truth, the social media has been largely accredited for helping to overthrow Arab rulers from 2011 forward (Howard et al., 2011). The way we pay is also changing with mobile phones. Globally, digital payments currently value US\$2 trillion and are anticipated to increase by 16% by 2021 every year (Statista, 2017). Of course, Aker and Mbiti warn of not being "the silver bullet" for development in mobile phones 2010, but also of the necessity for institutions that enable the delivery of productive public investment which has being tied to the political responsivity of those in office. Therefore, the requirement of the intending office holder comes along with a display of assurance voiced from the partisan participation. It is in lieu of this, the study ventures into the intel of the content of political campaigns.

### **Political campaigns**

The fundamentals of every electoral campaign are quite straightforward. Every campaign must repeatedly convey a convincing message to voters. This is politics' "golden rule." Political campaigns are the process of communication with respect to seeking a correct message, target the message to the proper electorate, and repeat it over and over again (Legg, 2020). This is also driven by the intent of what is practiced with the adoption of the electronics medium to achieve maximum participation. A major characteristic of campaign is the fact that it begins before the day it commences. This commences with the absence of no information about your adversaries will be forthcoming. You'll probably have to hunt for reasons to vote against them and your candidate. This requires campaigners to frequently see opposition research as seeking a single scandal that will conclude the campaign of their opponent. Notably, error campaigns frequently declaring the intent of avoiding negatively campaign (Alotaibi, 2013; Lam et al., 2021). this requires two completely different things as regards looking at your opponent and running a negative campaign. The inability to harness the time and study hard in opposing research, will result to an unprepared feat for what your opponent tells and does and to contrast with your opponent. But more often you uncover behavioural patterns you may exploit to convince folks to vote against your opponent or to vote for you (Lam et al., 2021). This has been the bane of political foetus which leads to party assimilation and affiliation. The study of Leeflang et al., (2014) showed the aid of the digital media, birthed from electronic media made the contribution from the campaigns to strengthening democracy through increasing political participation and diffusion of knowledge in general or during election campaigns. The aspirants' debate has been noted to be more productive and involving to the electorates as it engages the electronic medium of transiting to populace on real time and with the aid of the social media provides further in-depth discussions. Studies have general considered the impact of social media on political related affairs but the missing lane of the "political talk shows has rarely been touched with respect to the developing nation such as Nigeria. Though the application shown in the 2019 Oyo state, Nigeria election reflected the passage of the people's will via the establishment of the debate publicised on the social media on real-time. This episode swerves emotions around while giving the best orator and in some cases in-depth knowledge wins the day, thus leading to the next four years (Nesi et al., 2021). A view into the benefits of having a diplomatic intentional conversion is discussed into next.

### **Political “Talk Shows”**

Discussion programs have a major role in increasing political consciousness. In the political sector, their role cannot be disregarded. Because of these talks, Masses know their leaders, actions and judges who is good and wrong and who should be selected next time to govern (Sharma, 2015). Talks are also a responsible source that demonstrates and communicates their scandals to the public. In these discussions, everything is addressed thoroughly and attentively, which demonstrates that people all know about their leaders (Sharma, 2015). Political discourse also demonstrates that changing people's voting behaviour is important for electoral engagement to a particular level of political awareness. They need to be informed and aware of political concerns as well as their political rights and role as political actors (Khan, 2020). The furtherance of the discussions via social media further imprints on the opinion of the electorate and forms the four-year baton to the individual believed to run the vision. The Nigeria case is not far from this with the experienced political display from the respective social media outlets on different social and economic concerns (Adebanji et al., 2017; Ademilokun, 2019; Javeria Khan, 2020). Of a note, Political discussion also indicates that changing people's voting conduct is vital for the activity of voters at a particular degree of political awareness. They must be knowledgeable and aware of political concerns, functions and above all of their political rights and duty as politicians. These shows effect voting behaviour more directly through the link between several elements and influences, but also directly in some scenarios (Klapper, 1960). The media promote and drive the debate amongst the people and make them select which party to vote (Macleod et.al.1979). Therefore, calling for an incursion of discussing the mass media power in the politics of developing nations such as Nigeria.

### **The power of mass media: The Screen addition from Cultivation theory**

The notion of cultivation was established by George Gerbner to examine if and how television viewing could impact viewers' thoughts and their experience of the common world. Cultivation theory maintains that long-term television impacts are modest, progressive, indirect yet cumulative and important. The impacts of television viewing on the viewers' attitude are emphasized instead of on the conduct (Nwogu, 2015). The notion of cultivation proposes that television should cultivate or mould viewers' understanding of the social reality. Television is viewed as the audience's cultivation. For the cause of this writeup, the consideration will be the screen enabling device of the social media platform. In relation to this, the study adopts the theory of cultivation. Cultivation theorists seek to distinguish heavy and light viewers from two types of spectators. This distinction is based on the time people spend watching small screen, which defines the possibility of being affected. Theory's application: In his view, George Gerbner characterized the political talk show as the major source of influence on the audience's political thinking. A person adjusts his conduct and attitudes according to what he looks at. The political discussion show tends to cultivate a political position in the centre of the road. Heavy political exposure shows according to Gerbner have a constant influence on people's minds. They change according on what they watch on these programmes. He told the audience that political discussion programs cultivate new ways of thinking. The source of information has been the watching of political discussion shows. As Gerbner noted, it is the main source for influencing people's behaviour. Gerbner maintains that the political talk show has a substantial impact on people's political attitude, opinions and judgements. Change among people is gradual and progressively develops among people. People are becoming more conscious of the political environment nowadays as they are up to speed with fresh facts. 'High viewers' are probably more impacted than folks who watch a lot of political broadcasts (Peterson & Skovgaard, 2019). They shape their behaviour through viewing political discussion shows such as connection to certain political parties, voting behaviour, increased accountability and appraisal of political candidates or parties, etc. Furthermore, People are becoming more conscious of the political environment nowadays as they are up to speed with fresh facts. 'High viewers' are probably more impacted than folks who watch a lot of political broadcasts. They shape their behaviour through viewing political discussion shows such as connection to certain political parties, voting behaviour, increased accountability and appraisal of political candidates or parties (Ibáñez et al., 2015). To this end, when an individual looks over more or some kind of political discourse, he/she is developed in the social reality view of the plans. This affirmation was replicated within the Nigeria region at different political expression as stated by Al Jazeera, (2020); CNN, (2021); Nwachukwu, (2019)

### **A Twist of Opinion**

The scope of this study is he Nigerian State with a timeframe of the 2019 general election and its current happenings. It should be stated that Politicians are aggressively colonising social media potential in Nigeria and developed nations, where radical usage of social media is becoming a trend for political campaigns and engagements. In this case, the report of ICIR (2018) on the behaviour of five prominent Twitter candidates before the 2018 Osun State Election of Governors. The survey showed relatively little involvement of citizens/possible voters on Twitter for all contestants. The media are becoming strong forces of political mobilization and ways through which networks participate in the electoral process hoping for democracy and mass participation in politics to be reachable through such media, Michael (2015) finds that social media were more than communication platforms at Nigeria's general elections in 2015. The findings of Adebisi, Ajetunmobi & Olawale (2020) reflected the power harnessed by the electorate with the ability to maintain stronger contact with them. This was shown with Engineer Seyi Makinde's possessing a high level of electorate connectivity with the

people than Mr. Bayo Adelabu's on the respective social media platform (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn). During campaigns, both included their fans in the problem-based campaigns, but Makinde's commitment in February, 2019 became more evident when he sent out messages based on problem-solving solutions (Ojonugwa, 2019). This adoption in developing nations provides the electorate in a democracy with a voice, with its ability to swings both ways. The study concludes that though the literacy level of the Oyo populace is upcoming but the power of mass media should not be undermined to deliver as it did in the 2019 election in Nigeria, with reference to Oyo state. The rightful harnessing by the populace could finetune the electorate decisions to be met. Therefore, a means of controlling or confirming the media information should be set up to arrive at its proper adoption.

The curse of popularity based on positivity is what makes a vying political office holder with limited resources acceptable (Fall et al., 2019), especially in Nigeria (Ali et al., 2016). Information gaps can emerge when distribution systems are not fast, accurate, effective, or flexible (Hall et al., 2012; Abdulraheem et al., 2004). As a result, optimal public information should employ a variety of data collecting, processing, and dissemination strategies (Khan et al., 2010). To support the management of the population's future in the next four years, tools for knowledge transmission are required (Ridley, 2004; Kieny et al., 2016). SNSs allow the general public to participate in the coverage and dissemination of news events. When transmitting, users communicate their ideas, feelings, and worries by suggesting the placement of people in positions of authority over a big portion of their lives (Khan et al., 2010; Sullivan et al., 2012; Ahmed et al., 2010).

The need to create and exchange knowledge related to political/socio-cultural scenarios for possible violent springs amongst others is therefore utilized at little or no cost using the SNS (Odium and Yoon, 2015). This study adopts the existing literature format which was written on how educators reacted to or may respond to election-related matters, along with several comments and letters explaining how it has either changed or would change due to presented politicians. Nigeria's national response to the presented political issues has sustained reliance on science, data, and experiences drawn from other nations, and consideration of the country's peculiar environment to address the unwilling electorate to participate in the election. Also, a way of staying relevant in light of INEC's policy and anticipated events as the political landscape shifts as depicted by OSGF, (2020). In his study of the relevance of SNSs. Telemarketing and electronic media surveillance on the Internet provide considerable potential for the phase of laborperent c practice (Khan et al., 2010). Twitter, a microblogging site that allows tweeting (reporting, sharing, and addressing news events that can provide valuable information), is one of the most common SNSs, according to Signorini et al. (2011). (Mittal and Patidar, 2019; Bae and Lee, 2012).

Twitter users communicate by direct messages or implored responses, which are primarily distributed through retweeting (forwarding) (Odium and Yoon, 2015). With 30.4 percent of all social media users in Nigeria, Twitter is the second-largest SNS behind Facebook. Its use has climbed by 6.33 per cent (GlobalStats, 2020). Twitter has been viewed as a developing broadcasting tool for public health and political education and news, as evidenced by its use during the 2009 HN pandemic preparedness activities, the 2014 Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak, 2010, 2015 and the 2019 General elections in Nigeria (Sullivan et al., 2012; Odium and Yoon, 2015).

The bulk of its users are young people who are known for being very innovative and who are always trying out new things, techniques, or methods in whatever activity they are involved in (Adebisi et al., 2020). Twitter's capacity to capture widespread political trends, collect information, and disseminate knowledge is due to its vast reach, timeliness, and minimal overhead. More importantly, its utility supports its ability to influence public opinion detection in novel and creative ways (Khan et al., 2010; Odium and Yoon, 2015). This study aims to investigate the use of an effective social media tool before and during an election in a developing society, as well as provide a snapshot of electoral determinant tweets to capture early detection of electorate decisions, as well as assess public knowledge and attitudes. This stems from the belief that managing the electoral mantra should be treated as a socio-material procedure (Cleland et al., 2020). Twitter has proven to help affect voter minds, especially when combined with the ability to relive prior memories via videos, pictures, or filmed visuals depicting an appraisal for the targeted candidate around the world (Odium and Yoon, 2015; Vorovchenko, 2015).

When compared to the actual population who has detailed knowledge of the various public electoral contestants and the general population who uses headlines as a guide to decision making, the Twitter community may be less knowledgeable about the dynamics of a particular politician or pending political office holder, but their tweets usually coincide with news events and express their attitudes toward such person records (either validated or not). Tweets about such people or situations can thus provide a unique opportunity for the public and government to listen to their audience/citizens, share information (with or without facts), and formulate viable opined actions toward the respective political officeholders.

## Methods

### Data collection

This study used NCCapture, a free web browser extension that allows researchers to quickly and easily capture content such as web pages, online PDFs, Twitter tweets, and Facebook posts for import into the NVIVO software, to collect tweets (unique and retweets) in batches (a qualitative data analysis computer software that helps qualitative researchers to

organize, analyze and find insights in unstructured or qualitative data like interviews, open-ended survey responses, journal articles, social media, and web content, where deep levels of analysis on small or large volumes of data are required).

### Data sampling

Data captured tweets from July 15 2006 to February 9, 2022, positing the various election periods in Nigeria, with a trail to the beginning of the 4th republic, commencing 1999. Since the Twitter web application started operation on July 15, 2006. On this basis, we can state that the timeline of the data drawn tweets was inclusive to Nigeria fourth republic. On this premise, this study draws on the data generated on the Nigeria related election. This is done to better understand the patterns in information diffusion, public perception, and attitudes toward election-related issues in Nigeria, especially during election season. Each batch of tweets covers 804 weeks, beginning on July 15, 2006, and ending on February 9, 2022. The tweets were collected in English, and the keywords used to identify election-related tweets in Nigeria were based on trending words on Twitter and the most popular Google searches between July 15 2006 and February 9, 2022. Nigeria's 2010 Election, 2015 Election, and 2019 Nigerian Election are among them. All terms that generated a dataset within a specific period were collected using Twitter's advanced search function. The timestamp, username, content (unique tweet), and retweet were all part of the data collected for each tweet (s).

### Data Analysis

To assess Nigeria electoral information dissemination trends, the number of posts (tweets and retweets) were collated from the inception of the use of election-related tweets on the Twitter to the 9th of February, 2022 in Nigeria. Using Microsoft Excel Charts, the descriptive statistics, including the bulk of posts (tweets and retweets) within the country were linked with the segmented time range. Also, a content study was carried out using the NVIVO software to capture natural language processing to collect public information, expectations, and attitudes about Nigeria Election.

	A: election	B: family	C: political	D: polling	E: state	F: stats	G: today	H: today stats	I: votes
1: Internals\#\#NigeriaDecides2023 Nigeria Decides 2023 (@NGdecides2023) ~ Twitter	242	1	63	86	44	1	18	0	134
2: Internals\~indec~ filter~replies - Twitter Search ~ Twitter	100	0	35	30	21	0	5	0	70
3: Internals\~Nigeria~ and ~election~ - Twitter Search ~ Twitter	876	451	123	10	77	0	55	0	142
4: Internals\2019 election nigeria - Twitter Search ~ Twitter	9	0	4	0	1	0	1	0	2
5: Internals\DecideNigeria (@nigeria_decide) ~ Twitter	5	5	3	1	9	0	13	0	1
6: Internals\nigeria 2019 election - Twitter Search ~ Twitter	9	0	4	0	1	0	1	0	2
7: Internals\Nigeria decide 2015 (@nigeriadecide) ~ Twitter	161	0	3	445	76	1	31	0	113
8: Internals\Nigeria Decides 2019 (@NaijaDecides) ~ Twitter	24	1	2	1	7	0	67	0	3
9: Internals\Nigeria Election (@ElectionNigeria) ~ Twitter	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	8
10: Internals\nigeria political parties - Twitter Search ~ Twitter	13	0	181	0	5	0	0	0	1

11: Internals\\Nigeria2015 (@kuskus12) ~ Twitter	30	2	47	17	49	387	410	387	14
12: Internals\\Tweets with replies by INEC Nigeria (@inecnigeria) ~ Twitter	456	0	28	183	109	0	39	0	228

**Table 1** (Extracted Number of tweets as at February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022 on Nigeria Election related discussion

On the gotten date, the nodes and references on the election related discussion were extracted inductively for analysis

Name	Nodes	References
#NigeriaDecides2023 Nigeria Decides 2023 (@NGdecides2023) ~ Twitter	371	2927
~inec~ filter~replies - Twitter Search ~ Twitter	192	1300
~Nigeria~ and ~election~ - Twitter Search ~ Twitter	281	8615
2019 election Nigeria - Twitter Search ~ Twitter	22	84
DecideNigeria (@nigeria_decide) ~ Twitter	46	172
Nigeria 2019 election - Twitter Search ~ Twitter	22	84
Nigeria decides 2015 (@nigeriadecide) ~ Twitter	221	4119
Nigeria Decides 2019 (@NaijaDecides) ~ Twitter	42	458
Nigeria Election (@ElectionNigeria) ~ Twitter	13	70
nigeria political parties - Twitter Search ~ Twitter	51	1000
Nigeria2015 (@kuskus12) ~ Twitter	150	5531
Tweets with replies by INEC Nigeria (@inecnigeria) ~ Twitter	343	5176

**Table 2:** Nodes and References form drawn tweets

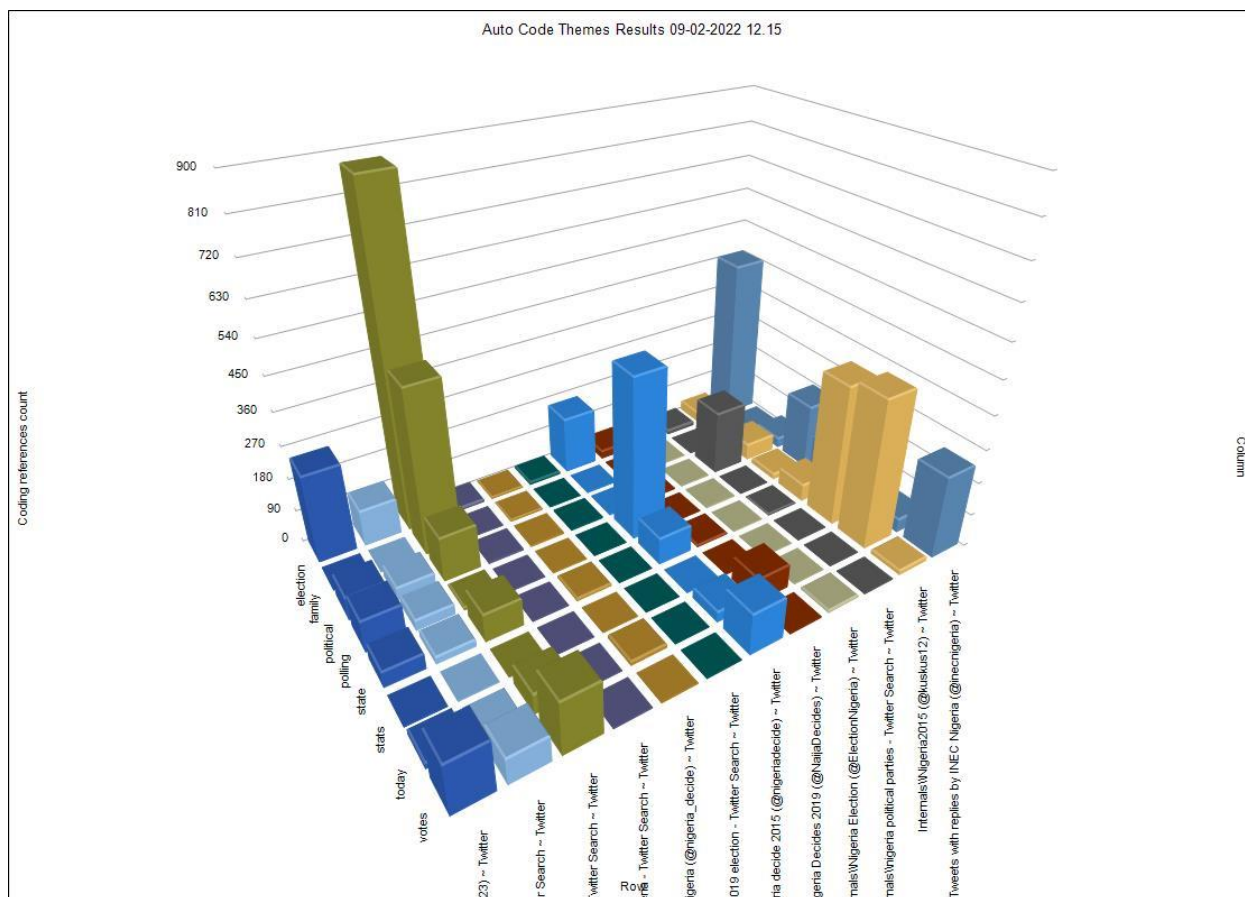
**Trends of information spread over locations**

In Nigeria, tens of thousands of tweets citing election-related discussion and of related keywords from July 15 2006 – February 09, 2020. Furthermore, the highest represented number of tweets across the thirty-six states was found twelve (12) states with the highest being Lagos state with 208 tweeters on the issues of electoral concerns. The lowest tweets were made from the south-south region of the country, with Akwa-ibom having 2 tweets. It must be noted here that the tweets are the originators of the electoral concerns while the retweets can be likened to advertisers of the stated concerns.

**Results**

A total number of 17038 tweets and retweets were captured between 2010, when the Twitter application was adopted for political projection till February 9, 2022. It was noticed that there were upsurges in the election year, particularly the month of the election (2011, 2015 and 2019), via the curated tweets. In the collation process, the different timing of the tweets was streamlined into the months of occurrences. The number of tweets begins to rise in the last quarter before the election set date. The highest tweets around those periods determine the themes of the study. They were;

- i. Election
- ii. Family,
- iii. Political,
- iv. Polling
- v. States
- vi. Stats
- vii. Today
- viii. Votes.



**Fig 1:** Field Study(2022)

The above listed were further validated in the auto code on the premise of collated tweets. For this study, the considered tweets are defined as the organized originated pattern of discussion that was void of insults and addressed issues surrounding the sent tweets. The highest attained in the selected period in line with the election period was 1929 “for election” and the lowest was 389 relating to “stats” (table 1). All discussions surrounding a politician or tagging the illegality of the procedure were removed for ease in analysis.

**Content analysis**

The pattern of thought in the tweets reveals a lot of dynamics. The following themes emerged from the data set:

**Period of Election**

The electorates on election season in Nigeria is usually one that has a negative connotation. Some of the tweets identified that the season of election in Nigeria is the saddest period another tweet stated that bad things happen. Another tweet went further to explain that

“The nation is firmly under state capture, that politicians speak their “shibboleths” and wink inside their own jokes and that the people trapped under their boot are wriggling in undue confidence.”

This is clear that the opinion that electorates have election period in Nigeria is that of one that is unsafe and bad things happen. This kind of perception affects the turnout of voters during elections, it shows that the voter’s education in Nigeria is poor and it explains why the population of people found at the pooling stands are not a reflection of the total number of eligible voters. Another tweet named this season a

“Macabre Tango” meaning

a dance of death. This way of thinking has changed the narratives of election in Nigeria and is still changing it, the people aren’t looking forward to anything new, the talk is usually same old same old.

**Perception of Election**

Perception of electorates of politicians during election is that of inconsistency and lack of regards for the electorates. As stated by a tweet it was said that politicians wait till one year and six months to elections to reactivate their social media account and start acting as lord of social media with sponsored Ads. The picture painted here shows that election and even



campaigns in Nigeria is done shabbily with no respect for the electorates that intend to vote for them, they bombard the masses and show themselves in their faces, so as to be retained in the minds of the electorates for only a short period of time.

Another tweet explained that election would not solve the problem of Nigeria, that instead the solution is “renegotiation through referendum, that with this those who want to continue can do that freely and not by force”.

The attitude towards election is that of nonchalance and hope lost. Another exclaimed that the elected politicians have not done anything for the people who elected them, this was asked in form of rhetorical question. Another tweet made mention that election politics in Nigeria should start with grassroot mobilization as it is paramount to the outcome of election. That one should start from the bedroom, by first convincing once spouse then children, then neighbours, then friends and the list grows like that.

A tweet made mention that elections in Nigeria are characterized by slim margins despite their manipulations and thuggery and that even though bribery exist, it’s not possible to bribe the whole Nigeria to win a presidential election explaining that it is yet another myth. These shows that there are persons of the opinion that since the whole country cannot be bribed whoever wins a presidential election can be regarded as a fair representation, thereby downplaying the effect of corrupt practices during elections. Another tweet showed anger towards Nigerians when it comes to elections, it was stated that Nigerians have a short memory and this affects their decisions at times of voting.

In addition, there were tweets that talked about sharing of experiences as an election observer by monitoring the elections at the polling units. This shows that Nigerians can be patriotic when they choose too. It was clear from the tweets that for the 2019 general elections people were ready and eager to vote, this was emphasized by a tweet that said “imagine people coming from as far as Kubwa to Kurudu Orozo Abuja just to vote. No sitting on the fence, everybody determined to vote, Nigeria is for us all”. to reemphasize this another tweet read

“Last week I was all set to assume the position of APO2, but due to obvious circumstances I withdrew So this week, I decided to exercise my enfranchisement. Gatto be patriotic either way”.

It was also pointed out that

“Don't stay in your house and be Posting "vote wisely"

Here, you are part of the problems in Nigeria”. When people find negative or positive comments or opinion about a thing it tends to inform peoples judgement or views on an issue.

It is also important to know that the kind of tweets posted on days of elections greatly determines the turnout or turnout to that polling point for election, this is a thing in Nigeria has persons have preconceived perception of election being bloody and never crime free. This kind of tweet

“The atmosphere over here looks calm, have you voted yet?”

reassures voters that its safe and they can come out. Election in Nigeria sometimes arouses the curiosity of many this tweet proves that point

“@inecnigeria While we go through this rigorous electioneering process (accreditation and voting), I just hope @inecnigeria is putting in place plans for switching to eVoting.”

Also, this proves the point to

“Senator Akpabio, Gov Udom (all of Akwa ibom state) and the dramatic senator Dino Melaye all casting their votes, I'm just wondering where they left their children”

### **The nature of what is Spent**

Under this theme it was clear that after the time spent in Nigeria persons are only slightly motivated about it. That Nigerians whine about lack of youth participation but forget that violence is the true electoral currency, that if election can be less violent then more people can participate. This explains the lack of participation in election in Nigeria. Another tweet expressed the displeasure that the same leaders that spent years in office are still the same ones in office and this has become a trend. The recycling of leaders in Nigeria must end. With the number of years spent in Nigeria, the people still complain of the same set of leaders, this particular tweet was the most retweeted. It shows that people are observant and it is on the mind of almost everyone and a large number of persons agrees with this. They showed displeasure that the same people that spent a lot of their time calling them names are now the same set preaching for a united nation because its election season, this shows the level of hypocrisy in Nigeria.

### **Family and its role**

The perception of electorates after the candidates who wins or would win, should or has a good family name backing he or she up, though some tweet mentioned that it is not just that family or its name that good party structure wins and not just the popularity of the individuals. It was also mentioned that Nigeria is akin to a dysfunctional family where children disregard parents and parents abuse children and kids cheat each other as a norm and yet everyone is expected to be of good behaviour at a family gathering. This is exactly what is at play in Nigeria we do what is wrong with little or no regard for law or the constitution and then expect magic to happen during election periods. Free and fair elections do not start at

the point of elections. It was clear here that people would rather urge one another to go voting with family and friends. When information about elections is to be passed, it is always encouraged to reach family

“For those who want to change card details or transfer from one location to another, please take your card to the nearest INEC to carry out your transfer or change of name or correction. Pass this message to friends and family. Ask your children above 18 to register too”.

It is clear here that political education in Nigeria is usually few weeks to election and sometimes during election, the urgency to do anything related to elections in Nigeria is when it is closet.

There are also perceptions formed about the politicians too, this tweet reads

“What would @Atiku do for the poorest of the poor in Nigeria? Absolutely nothing! He is focused on Enriching his friends and family only”

the average voter thinks this way about candidates they do not like or favour, but when it comes to their favourites, they make all manner of excuses for them, also this tweet reaffirms

“@GuardianNigeria Obasanjo is the most visible symbol of a corruption ridden political system in Nigeria.”.

Due to the crisis that takes place during election periods people are always advised to let their family know where they are headed. Family plays an important role when it comes to election in Nigeria. Ranging from the dissemination of information to political education and even for safety purposes.

### **Nature of Political Processes**

The tweets showed that political office holders should be stopped from using public funds for electoral campaigns so as to provide a level-playing ground for all political parties and their candidates. It also showed that there are questions on the mind of the electorate which after every election most of the time remains unanswered, this is known because of the recurrence of the yet after about 2 elections. One of the tweets reads thus

“Critical queries and realisms, Will the elections be credible? How will corruption be dealt with? Will the #Nigerian economy be revitalized? What will be the state of Security before, during & after the elections?”

It is also believed that Nigeria does not have a platform that educates voters on matters of election, if this is left as it is, people would form their perception based on hearsay and opinions of people that should not matter in the first place. Political campaigns have been reduced to mere dancing and singing and sharing of “palliatives”.

“Am I naive or too idealistic in wanting more out of our political campaign rallies than the standard song-and-dance, plus abe-igi level banter they typically involve?”

These are some of the questions raised, that needs attending. The perception of the electorates in some areas concerning selling of votes is that of nonchalance.

### **Nature of Polling Units**

It has become a norm in Nigeria for polling units to be disorganized, have very low turnouts, for people to jump queues and vote, shottings, the elites such as the politicians and VIPs stand on the queue for the camera and videos. These tweets confirm this

“My polling unit is so disorganized. Had to start assigning roles to the officials, myself. You, sign the paper. You, cut and give people. They wanted to stop accreditation because ballot paper collection was too slow. After coming 2hrs late! Imagine”.

Several tweets from different polling units showed this

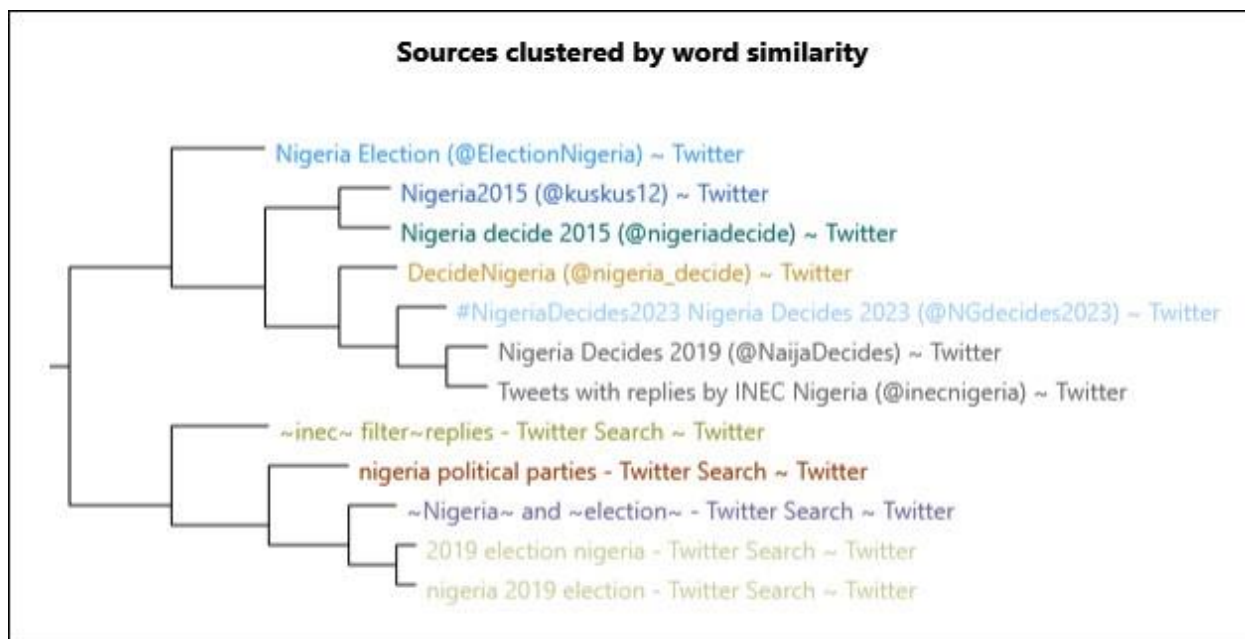
### **Discussion**

In the line of political battle, information is key and with the method of disseminating this goes a long way in electorate perception. Of a note, it has been established that the game of politics is intertwined on the basis of truth and lies with the price of the political chair attainment and the social media has been able to do this. Further evidence was provided in the study via the conducted analysis to create a perception of events in the course of the election by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) with the presence of 17,000 tweets and 1.8million followers as at February 8<sup>th</sup> 2022. The number of followers is linked to 0.85% of the Nigerian population of over 200 million. Statistically this number is insignificant but the consideration of the calibre of people who are the platform vis-à-vis the organisation relates the power of the platform. An example will be the all the existing Nigerian newspapers companies which coverage gets into the crannies of the populace. It was shown in this study how public awareness, perceptions and dissemination via mass media tool, Twitter offered the capacity to promote the attainment of political intent of the electorate and the elected officials. Hitherto, a monitoring and observation path that was established as being able to lead to a direct communication between the two.

**Judicious finding and initial indicators**

The study reflected how twitter was able to promote and aid the warning of potentials elected officials by broadcasting in real time and brining into the fore the past declarations or activities of the politicians into limelight. Furthermore, tweets conducted during the 2015 and 2019 polls reflected in the monitoring of the process. Though to a large extent, the citizens trust seems limited and can easily be swayed.

It was noted that the dissemination of information is very important during an electoral process that determines the navigation of the nation and to this end, the followers of “INEC” were highly placed organisation with foreign agencies and nations tolling the way. Of a note, request have been made by user of Twitters SNS on certain electorate issues from verified bodies and were dully communicated to. The analytics of such comments further reflected the serious engagement and deterministic power held by the Twitter SNS. Generally, the stance of the Twitter SNS must be examined as against the positive and negative impact.



**Fig 2:** Interrelatedness on word clustering on Nigeria Election from Twitter

**Nigerian Elections, needs and politics**

The quick transmission of new information is one of the advantages of a platform like Twitter (conventional platforms like textbooks and journals do not have this type of reach).

Compassion in the form of motivation was revealed in the inquiry as Twitter users spread the message of hope and optimism. As numerous of the collected tweets indicate, the findings emphasize the necessity for further educational measures to boost citizen electoral involvement, especially because the government has already demonstrated Twitter's potential power by banning it for more than six months.

The presence of various Nigerian government organizations and parastatals, as previously stated, supported the induction that there is a need for tweets on electoral engagement since it radiates national allegiance. The outcomes highlight the importance of expanding educational campaigns to boost public engagement in elections, especially since the government has already demonstrated Twitter's potential power by banning it for more than six months. Given the widespread usage of Twitter by Nigeria's transition and administration, the propagation of incorrect information is unavoidable. The prevention, containment, and treatment of such problems are all hampered by a shifted priority that leads to irrational thinking or actions.



13. Fall, I.S., Rajatonirina, S., Yahaya, A.A., Zabulon, Y., Nsubuga, P., Nanyunja, M., Wamala, J., Njuguna, C., Lukoya, C.O., Alemu, W., Kasolo, F.C., Talisuna, A.O., 2019. Integrated disease surveillance and response (IDSR) strategy: current status, challenges and perspectives for the future in Africa. *BMJ Global Health* 4 (4), e001427.
14. Fang, H. A., Boudreau, H., Khan, S., Singh, N. P., Rais-Bahrami, S., King, T. W., Corey, B., & Chen, H. (2021). An evaluation of social media utilization by general surgery programs in the COVID-19 era. *The American Journal of Surgery*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amjsurg.2021.04.014>
15. Gbadegesin, V. O., & Onanuga, P. A. (2019). The enactment of ideology and self-presentation in political campaign videos of the 2015 general election in Nigeria. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 28, 121–130. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2018.11.002>
16. Guarnizo, L., & Smith, M. P. (1998). The Location of Transnationalism. *Transnationalism From Below*, ??? TS-EndNote.
17. Ibáñez, D. B., Calderón, C. A., Arroyave, J., & Silva, R. (2015). Influence of Social Networks in the Decision to Vote. *International Journal of E-Politics*, 6(4), 15–34. <https://doi.org/10.4018/ijep.2015100102>
18. Javeria Khan. (2020). Role of Political Talk Shows in Creating Political Awareness and Changing the Public Opinion Quantitative Research Method. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339439498\\_Role\\_of\\_Political\\_Talk\\_Shows\\_in\\_Creating\\_Political\\_Awareness\\_and\\_Changing\\_the\\_Public\\_Opinion\\_Quantitative\\_Research\\_Method](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339439498_Role_of_Political_Talk_Shows_in_Creating_Political_Awareness_and_Changing_the_Public_Opinion_Quantitative_Research_Method)
19. John Owen Nwachukwu. (2019). N30,000 minimum wage: Workers make fresh demand - Daily Post Nigeria. Daily Post Newspaper. <https://dailypost.ng/2019/03/26/n30000-minimum-wage-workers-make-fresh-demand/>
20. Khan, A.S., Fleischa uer, A., Casani , J., Grosecl ose, S.L., 2010. The next public health revolution: public health information fusion and social networks. *Arn. J. Pub!. Health* 100 (7), 1237-1242.
21. Kieny, M.P., Rottin gen, J.-A., Farrar, J., 2016. The Need for Global Ran dD Coordination for Infectious Diseases with Epidemi c Potential, pp. 460-4 61, 388(10043).
22. Lam, S. Y. B., Cheung, M. F. M., & Lo, W. H. (2021). What matters most in the responses to political campaign posts on social media: The candidate, message frame, or message format? *Computers in Human Behavior*, 121. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106800>
23. Leeflang, P. S. H., Verhoef, P. C., Dahlström, P., & Freundt, T. (2014). Challenges and solutions for marketing in a digital era. *European Management Journal*, 32(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2013.12.001>
24. Legg, S. (2020). Political lives at sea: working and socialising too and from the India Round Table Conference in London, 1930–1932. *Journal of Historical Geography*, 68, 21–32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhg.2019.12.005>
25. Martin, N. S. (2019). Ethnic minority voters in the UK 2015 general election: A breakthrough for the Conservative party? *Electoral Studies*, 57, 174–185. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2018.12.004>
26. Mittal, A., Patidar, S., 2019. Sentiment analysis on twitter data. In: *Proceedings of the 2019 7th International Conference on Computer and Communications Management*, pp. 91-95
27. Nesi, J., Burke, T. A., Bettis, A. H., Kudinova, A. Y., Thompson, E. C., MacPherson, H. A., Fox, K. A., Lawrence, H. R., Thomas, S. A., Wolff, J. C., Altemus, M. K., Soriano, S., & Liu, R. T. (2021). Social media use and self-injurious thoughts and behaviours: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 87, 102038. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2021.102038>
28. Nwogu, G. A. I.; (2015). *Journal of Education and Practice* www.iiste.org ISSN (Vol. 6, Issue 4). Online. www.iiste.org
29. Odi um, M., Yoon, S., 2015. Wh at can we learn about the Ebola outbreak from tweets? *AMI C* 43 (6), 563571.
30. Osayantin, H., Saidu, A., Aifuwa, S.A., 2020. Coronavirus pandemic outbreak and firms performance. *Mngt Hum. Res. Res. J.* 9 (4), 15-25. www.cird.onlin e/MHRRJ .
31. OSGF, 2020. Remarks by the Chairm an, Presidential Task Force on Covid-19 at the National Briefin g of Monday, June 1, 2020. [https://www.osgf.gov.ng/news\\_media/news/post/remar ks-chairman -presidential-task-force-covid-19-national-briefin g-mo nday-june-1-2020](https://www.osgf.gov.ng/news_media/news/post/remar ks-chairman -presidential-task-force-covid-19-national-briefin g-mo nday-june-1-2020).
32. O'Shea, P. (2018). Strategic narratives and US military bases in Japan: How 'deterrence' makes the Marine base on Okinawa 'indispensable.' *Media, War & Conflict*, 175063521881090. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635218810904>
33. Ojonugwa, A. (2019). PDP's Seyi Makinde Wins 27 Of 33 LGAs So Far In Oyo. <https://thewillnigeria.com/news/pdps-seyi-makinde-wins-27-of-33-lgas-so-far-in-oyo/>
34. PDP reclaims Oyo as Seyi Makinde wins. (2019). *TheCable*. <https://www.thecable.ng/breaking-pdp-takes-over-oyo>
35. Peterson, L., & Skovgaard, J. (2019). Bureaucratic politics and the allocation of climate finance. *World Development*, 117, 72–97. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.12.011>
36. Ridley, R.G., 2004. Research on infectious diseases requires better coordination. *Nat.Med.* 10 (12S), S137--S140.
37. Signorini, A., et al., 2011. The use of Twitter to track levels of disease activity and public concern in the U.S. during the infl uenza A H1N1 pan demic. *PloS One* 6 (5), e19467.

38. Sharma, (2015). Role of Political Talk Shows in Creating Political Awareness and Changing the Public Opinion Quantitative Research Method. Available from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339439498\\_Role\\_of\\_Political\\_Talk\\_Shows\\_in\\_Creating\\_Political\\_Awareness\\_and\\_Changing\\_the\\_Public\\_Opinion\\_Quantitative\\_Research\\_Method](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339439498_Role_of_Political_Talk_Shows_in_Creating_Political_Awareness_and_Changing_the_Public_Opinion_Quantitative_Research_Method) [accessed Jun 18 2021].
39. Vorovchenko, T., 2015. # Ebola and Twitter: Lessons Learned. University of Oxford. WHO, 2001. Protocol for the Assessment of National Communicable Disease Surveillance and Response Systems Guidelines for Assessment Teams. <http://www.who.int/emc>.
40. Yagboyaju, D. A. (2017). Religion, culture and political corruption in Nigeria. *Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review*, 5(1), 10. <https://doi.org/10.4102/apsdpr.v5i1.151>

Appendix 2

