

An Analysis Of Audience Perception Of Peoples Democratic Party's (Pdp) Propaganda Campaign In The 2015 Nigerian General Election

Abdulgaaffar Olawale Arikewuyo*

Aishat Abdulrauf-Salau

*Department of Mass Communication Faculty of Communication and
Information Sciences
University of Ilorin*

*Corresponding author; email: olawale7@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The 2015 Nigerian general elections have come and gone. Though the election was scored high by local and international observers, it was not without flaws. The pre-election period witnessed one of the highest level of propaganda in the country. During this period, propaganda was at its peak as the PDP took advantage of its opportunities as the ruling party to spread negative messages about the opposition. However, while this large and well-orchestrated propaganda have been found successful in the past, the dominance of the PDP in the propagandistic war of the last election failed to produce the desired result. This study therefore sought to ascertain audience perception of the use of propaganda by PDP in the just concluded 2015 presidential election by examining the effectiveness of propaganda in political campaigns. Thus, premised on the theory of propaganda, this study surveyed 324 randomly selected respondents from the University of Ilorin. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) and results were reported descriptively. Findings were discussed in details and suggestions for further studies were recommended.

Keywords: *propaganda, campaign, audience perception, general elections, Nigeria.*

INTRODUCTION

The most studied communication form is that of election campaign, with research going back at least until 1940, when Lazarsfeld et al. (1944 cited in McQuail 2005) made a detailed inquiry into the presidential election of that year. Since then thousands of democratic elections have been an object of research forming the premise for this present study. In a democratic

election, political parties' campaign effectively to mobilize and disseminate information that allows voters to make more informed choices (Huber & Arceneaux, 2007). During such period, campaign propaganda is used effectively or ineffectively as the case maybe.

Campaign propaganda is a form of advertising in which case the product being sold to the people is the political candidate (DBQ Project, 2012). According to Agu (2007), one of the first definitions of propaganda was offered by Walter Lippman in his book "Public Opinion" in 1922 where he described propaganda as "an effort to alter the picture to which men respond and to substitute one social pattern for another." Also, electioneering activities was commonly referred to as an exercise in "propaganda"-a word which did not have the pejorative connotations it has since acquired (Rallings, Broughton & Farrell, 1995). Essentially, the term "propaganda is of particular use in describing the one directional flow of communication from political elites to the electorate prior to the growth of widespread public opinion research". In Matthew's (1987) observations, politics began to be more packaged for consumption by the readership of the newspaper (cited by Rallings et al, 1995).

Furthermore, propaganda as defined by McQuail (2006) is the process and product of deliberate attempts to influence collective behavior and opinion by the use of multiple means of communication in ways that are systematic and one-sided. Propaganda is carried out in the interest of the source or sender, not recipient. It is almost certain to be in some respects misleading or not fully truth and can be entirely untrue, as with certain kinds of disinformation. It can be psychologically aggressive and distorted in its representation of reality. Its effectiveness is varied, depending on the context and dispositions of the target audience more than on message characteristics.

Accordingly, Saunders (2013) talks about propaganda and distortion as a way by which individuals, politicians and organizations manipulate information by presenting only one side of a story, and then suppress and ignore the other information, and also by giving too much attention to viewpoints from experts. Similarly, Jowett and O'Donnell (1999, p. 6) define propaganda as "the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist". There is always an element of manipulation which is negative that is attached to propagandized messages.

Additionally, McNair (2011) says that propaganda involves an element of spin. Spin is often used with reference to the manipulation of political information". Thus, spinning is one of the ways in which advertising is used for bad purposes. Although, a spin refers to a concept which is given

a positive or negative connotation. It signifies a heavily biased portrayal in specific favor of an event or situation. Also, Bennett (2003, p.130) notes that, “a “spin” is a generic term for strategic political communication that attempts to frame or re-frame an event or a statement in a way that is politically profitable for one side and detrimental to another, though at its core it may simply be a red herring.” It is a term closely related to smear campaign, rumor bombs and ‘flak’. Spinning often, though not always, implies deceptive and/or manipulative tactics. It has to do with giving public biased information or to present information in a way meant to influence public opinion.

Several scholars have worked on propaganda, among them Jacques Ellul (1965), who focused on propaganda as a “technique itself” as cited in Jowett and O’Donnell (2005, p. 34). He described propaganda as a psychological phenomenon rather than something that people manufacture. He also highlighted the importance of propaganda making people to participate in important events such as elections, celebrations, and memorials, notwithstanding the several other ills of propaganda, such as making people lose their sense of history and ability to reflect critically which he also pointed out. An extensive study of Jowett and O’Donnell, (2005) shows an almost chronological discourse of scholars who have worked on propaganda. It is noteworthy that it is not just enough to apply propaganda techniques, the propagandist has certain objectives to achieve by dishing out propagandized messages. Harold Lasswell, (1927) one of the pioneers of scholarly works on propaganda, discussed four major objectives of propaganda, (as cited by Severin and Tankard, Jr. 2010, p. 108) and they include; to mobilize hatred against the enemy, to preserve the friendship of allies, to preserve the friendship and if possible, to procure the cooperation of neutrals, and to demoralize the enemy. However, as aptly pointed out by Severin and Tankard (2010), these objectives are obviously wartime objectives that would not apply in other peacetime types of persuasion. Nevertheless, in relation to this research, these objectives acceptably tally. This is so because propaganda in political communication is somewhat the same as is obtained in wartime.

Therefore, this study sought to:

- i. Determine audience perception of PDP propaganda campaigns in the 2015 Nigerian general elections.
- ii. Ascertain audience perceived ineffectiveness of PDP propaganda in the 2015 general elections political campaigns

POLITICAL ADVERTISING

Elections into any political office are always characterized with numerous activities. There are various political strategies that contestants employ to

emerge as winners in a general election. These political strategies include lobbying, personal contacts, political rallies and campaign. However, these strategies have now become less effective for mobilizing support and woo voters for election (Opeibi, 2006 cited in Olujide, Adeyemi and Gbadeyan, 2010). Political advertising is now seen as the most suitable tool to gain the attention and support of electorates.

One factor that has aided the introduction of political advertising is the nature of modern states which has made it impossible for direct democracy as practiced in the ancient Greek City States of Athens to be practiced. Representational democracy, where citizens elected delegates who will act on their behalf in the government has become the order of the day. Consequently, it became necessary for those interested in elective posts to seek endorsement from the electorates. With this came the issue of persuasion of the electorate by politicians. The main weapon used for the job is advertising. Osunbiyi (1999:1) explains, "...advertising in this modern age of highly competitive market-economy, has become a push-button work with a powerful communication force and a vital marketing tool helping to sell goods, services, images and ideas through channels of information and persuasion. Hardly exists anything that advertising has not been equated with the ability to sell.

Consequently, in the political sphere, Osunbiyi (2002 :28) viewed political advertising as "... a form of communication that is geared towards persuading individuals and groups to take certain course of action favourable to a political party, its programmes and candidates by emphasizing the benefits accruable to the target audience through a medium that is paid for. Thus, political advertising is simply defined by, Olujide, Adeyemi and Gbadeyan (2010) as the use of media by political candidates to increase their exposure to the public

Accordingly, McNair (2007:87 cited in Foster, 2010) in his study of political communication, places advertising alongside public relations as the two most important means of delivering political messages. However, whilst this is undoubtedly true, it does not necessarily mean that advertising is particularly effective in influencing political opinion. This statement notwithstanding, it is evident that advertising performs a very significant role in politics. Outlining the roles of political advertising Okpoko (2008), encapsulates them thus: to sell and market a colorful candidate, to sell and market a vibrant and dynamic political party, to serve as an instrument of political education and mobilization, to inform and convey the people's needs, aspirations and yearnings to the government and to sell and market government party programmes or manifestoes to the people.

ANTECEDENTS TO POLITICAL CAMPAIGN PROPAGANDA IN NIGERIA

The turbulent nature of Nigeria's political scene has imposed on the voters the task of having to sieve through an army of candidate who have battled through different levels of primaries. There is no continuing association with the various factions, no continuing core of supporters and typically, the appeals that dominate one campaign are unlike those emphasized in the previous campaign. All these constitute a great burden on the voters. It is the realization of this fact that gave birth to the science of packaging political candidates, parties and manifestoes for sale to the electorate in form of political advertising.

Political advertising has in recent time become popular in Nigeria in contrast to the past when political strategies such as political rallies, speeches and personal contacts were used. One important thing about political advertising is that it is interesting and sometimes offers the electorates reliable information about the candidates. Nigerian electorates are now being exposed to more political adverts than ever before and this has consequently made them conscious about the kind of political decisions they would want to make in the choice of their candidates for elective post. Political advertising started in Nigeria in 1963, when the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo of the Action Group (AG) used skywriting advertising during rallies to send campaign messages prelude to the 1964 General elections (Tejumaie, 2008). At that time political advertising was a unique attempt at promoting politics and politicians.

However, the negative usage of political advertising in the form of propaganda in Nigeria did not begin until during the second republic when the leading party, National Party of Nigeria (NPN) and the opposition Party, the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) engaged in various forms of negative/ attack advertising at national and state levels.

Conversely, Osunbiyi (2002) argues that the negative use of political advertising in Nigeria was not evident until in the third republic when the National Republican Convention (NRC) and Social Democratic Party (SDP) extensively used negative adverts during their campaigns. Despite the fact that the two parties used some elements of the Nigerian national symbols (i.e. the eagle and horse) they went ahead to use them negatively. In December 1990, the SDP published an advertisement with the caption "Enough is enough. Don't allow the Nation's wealth to be flown away again". The advertisement has the word 'flown' dressed with wings on either side, giving the word the image of an eagle which is the symbol of the NRC and part of the Nigerian coat of arms. The NRC retaliated in 1991 with one of its advertisement in

which , it showed a horse, the like of SDP's symbol lying down lifeless with a man attempting to whip it into standing up then it say 'Dem horse don Kaput'. This sort of negative adverts continued throughout the campaign and stopped after the election.

Subsequently, political advert wars in the media continued in the Fourth Republic (Olujide, Adeyemi & Gbadeyan, 2010). In Lagos State for example, there were such wars between Alliance for Democracy (AD) and the Progressive Action Congress (PAC). AD informed the electorates that the Opposition Party, PAC want to finish Lagos and the electorate should not "gree". The PAC replied with "Let's do what?" and urges the Electorates to vote for their party and candidates. Also as Tejumaiye (2008:79) observed, "...during the 1999 election, political advertising emerged as a veritable means of contemporary politics in Nigeria. Yet, some of the characteristics of the 1999 political advertising in Nigeria included ... attack political advertisements".

Unfortunately, these political propaganda adverts did not end with the 1999 elections, they continued into the 2003 electioneering campaign. In Kwara State for example, the All Nigerian's People Party (ANPP) and the Opposition Party, People's Democratic Party (PDP) engaged in various forms of attack advertising. The advert for ANPP urged the Electorate not to "serve the son" because they have "served the father". The PDP gave its own bombshell by reminding the electorates of failed promises by the ANPP. Apparently, the statement of the ANPP was in respect of the fact that the governorship candidate of Kwara state at the time was the son of a prominent politician in the state.

Accordingly, election in the year 2007 was also not devoid of negative political advertising. In fact, election campaign in Nigeria witnessed the most intense form of political advertising as candidates used not only advocacy and issue based messages, but also attack political advertising messages extensively. The major political parties PDP, Action Congress (AC), and ANPP used messages that were as critical of candidates as they were thought provoking. The PDP, the incumbent political party at the time, used attack political advertising messages a great deal against the presidential candidate of ANPP, General Muhammadu Buhari. Some of the political advert used against General Buhari included series of articulated, planned and well circulated attack messages based on General Buhari's past military dictatorial and despotic deeds when he was the Head of State and Commander in Chief of Nigerian Armed forces. These messages were hard sell aimed at destroying whatever remained of the credibility of General Buhari.

This trend continued even as the 2011 electioneering campaign was approaching. As such Maduabuchi (2010) noted how political advertising in the past two decades has assumed a new dimension with the increasing use of propaganda during election campaigns. For example a particular political aspirant was in fact said to have gone as far as setting up a think-tank group, made up of seasoned and influential journalists, whose briefs was to unearth negative stories on his opponent, which would be used in campaigns and adverts against them. The irony is that the much of it will get into the media as political adverts and jingles in the 2011 general elections.

Prior to introducing propaganda into politics in Nigeria, political candidates concentrated more on selling themselves and their programmes. However, the manner of political advertisement displayed during the 2011 election was more of mudslinging and character assassination than any before it. It is instructive to note that there was a high level of bad blood between candidates of the major political parties; especially the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) candidates.

Unfortunately, this propagandist attitude continued during the 2015 general elections as the pre-election period especially was full of campaigns of calumny, hate, deceit and war. Specifically, the 2015 election campaigns period was full of propaganda, especially between the two major parties Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressives Congress (APC). Due to the cost-effective nature of the internet when compared to traditional media like television or direct mail, candidates use websites to convey their qualifications personal and professional achievements and policy positions and link to external sites carefully selected by the campaign (Mosier, 2013) as well as propagate propagandist messages. Political parties streamed pictures and features against opposition candidates to voters. Adding to the appeal of online messaging in the 2015 election campaign was the fact that internet access was no longer confined to a desktop computer rather people were able to access information about their political candidates on their laptops, e-books, tablets, androids and smart phones. Thus, social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook were used extensively during this period (Bloomberg, Mosier, Chartrand & Engelman, 2012).

PROPAGANDA AND ITS IMPACT ON THE NIGERIAN AUDIENCE

Propaganda is an essential part of political communication. Political communication as a whole is simply communicating about politics purposefully. As such, there are three components that make up political communication; political organizations, the media, and the audience. These three have to be functional and present for there to be an established political

communication (McNair, 2011). The mass media is in the middle of both the political parties and the audience. This gives an accurate picture of what exists in real life where the mass media is used by government to pass all forms of persuasive information including propagandized information to the audience, and in the rare cases where public opinion polls are examined also through ‘citizen journalism’, the government likewise get to know what is in the minds of the people.

The audience is however not a passive audience that is susceptible to the magic bullet information gotten from the politicians through the mass media, and can selectively choose what information to believe and emulate based on certain reasons one of which could be that the information is anchored on some belief or schema of the receiver. This is replicated in the Nigerian political scene as was obtained by the results of the 2015 general elections. Despite the torrents of propagandized and persuasive information that the political parties dished out through the media, the voters made their choice of candidates and voted in APC, the party that was mostly rubbed in the muddy waters of propaganda. This reinforces McNair’s position that ‘the citizen’s right to choose presupposed the availability of alternatives from which a meaningful selection could be made, and a rational, knowledgeable electorate capable of exercising its rights. Thus, democracy is real only when it involves the participation of an informed, rational electorate’ (McNair, 2011, p. 16).

Additionally, apart from the initial position of the mind of the receiver of a message, the audience, source credibility is another thing that determines how much of information that is disseminated is believed. In the context of the Nigerian presidential elections and the release of propaganda laced documentaries, one factor that may have reduced the believability and therefore limited a change in the perception of the electorate is the media source through which the documentaries were released. The documentaries were majorly played by African Independent Television (AIT) and the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) which were major and obvious PDP supporters, this may have made the propagandized intentions of the documentary obvious, thereby limiting the effect on the electorate, particularly because NTA has always been seen as government mouthpiece.

Consequently, the opinions of individuals pertaining to propaganda are in negative terms. David Broder, a Dean of Political Journalists, claims that “trivial is too kind a word” for the content of today’s campaigns, arguing that “the ads people are seeing are relentlessly negative loaded words and nasty implications about the opposition candidates. Geer (2006), argues that negativity poisons the political debate by presenting arguments that are “ridiculous, irrelevant, and irresponsible,” dragging down the discussion “to

the level of tabloid scandal.” In the same vein, Geer (2006) observes, there is an unusually strong association between negativity and deception. Consider the fact that we rarely label negativity as “tough, competitive politics” or “heated exchanges” between combatants. Instead, it is almost always equated with being “dirty”.

The public also share this distaste for negative advertising. The ordinary citizen’s perception of the electoral process is marked by cynicism and dissatisfaction with the nature and tone of the contemporary campaign discourse. According to Geer (2006) data in poll after poll in the United States of America, confirm in July 2000, that nearly 60% of the public, according to a Gallup Poll, are dissatisfied with how candidates conduct their campaigns. A major part of the public’s unhappiness with elections was tied to negativity. Only 19% of the public felt that negative advertisements even had “a place in campaigns.” The vast majority do not even think you can learn anything of value from negative advertisements. In the 2000 Vanishing Voter survey, 75% of the public thought that candidates [were] more concerned with fighting each other than solving the nation’s problem. Observations from the 2015 Nigerian general elections have also indicated the situation in Nigeria is not too different.

Accordingly, some scholars are of the opinion that negativity has detrimental effects on the political process. Agreeing to this argument, Geer (2006) wrote that negative advertising disenfranchises voters by turning them off from the political process. Similarly, Baran (2001) confirms that politicians can attack an opponent on whatever ground of weakness presents itself, and this negativity can ‘demotivate’ voters generally. There is a consensus among policy-makers and political elites that attack advertising in campaigns, is dangerous to the well-being of society. Hardly a day goes by during an election season without some discussion of “negativity” and its adverse impact on our electoral process. We are, in effect, awash in a sea of negativity about negativity.

Surprisingly, another group of scholars believe there are some positive sides to negative advertisement. They state that despite the fact that studies have shown that the use of “attack advertising” by politicians can result in negative perceptions of both candidates, in fact the opposite should be expected where attack adverts will give a positive perception of both candidates. The problem is that the public are all too quick to criticize the system and wring their hands over the ill-effects of negativity. It is necessary to pause, reconsider starting assumptions, and marshal systematic data that will allow us to assess more fully these fears and concerns. At one level, everyone understands that conflict is part and parcel of politics. But at another level, there is a desire to sweep such disagreements under the rug and talk instead about “points of

agreement.” It may be more civil and even understandable to downplay these core disagreements. The problem with this approach, however, is that public often fail to appreciate the important role negativity can play in democratic government. Certainly the advocates of responsible party government understood the role of criticism and attack in a competitive party system.

WHY PROPAGANDA FAILS

Propaganda is believed to be so powerful and likened to such theories as the hypodermic needle, and the magic bullet theory of the all-powerful media paradigm. This is in part because initial studies on propaganda first began when the powerful media paradigm was dominant. Eventually, such scholars as Lasswell (1927), in his war study, began to discuss the manipulations behind every propaganda work and McGuire (1964) investigated factors that induced resistance to persuasion, producing work that changed the focus of persuasion research.

Furthermore, haven established that propaganda is aimed for persuasion, and going by Petty and Caccioppo’s (2004) postulates of persuasion, it is safe to say that the first limitation to propaganda, the major reason why propaganda would fail, lies in the “active-ness” of the audience. The audience is an active audience capable of making choices and rejecting some ideas. Persuasion theorists always take this fact into consideration. They recognize people’s choice to being persuaded based on logic or sentiments, as with the theory of social judgement that says people receive messages on latitudes and only accept messages that fall on their latitude of acceptance.

Consequently, McGuire (1964) introduced the concept of resistance to persuasion by examining how people create defenses against persuasion messages (Jowett and O’Donnell, 2012). McGuire’s theory of inoculation, like the social judgement theory and elaboration likelihood model all point to the fact that people’s ability to resist strong persuasive messages lies in stronger innate values, beliefs or ‘cultural truisms’. In this point lies why propaganda fails, which is the basis for this research. As with the Nigerian political pre-election scene, most people already had a mindset that wasn’t compatible with the propaganda dished out by incumbent party and candidates, and so the propaganda messages kept being rejected and resisted till it would be assumed that it didn’t work. This assumption is drawn from the fact that despite the propaganda messages from PDP, the results of the election was still not in their favor.

THEORY OF POLITICAL PROPAGANDA

This theory was propounded by Harold Lasswell in the 1930s. Although some scholars argue that the theory has being in existence since 1928. It is the first systematic theory of mass communication which focuses attention on why media might have powerful effects. It identifies personal, social, and cultural factors that can enhance media's power to have effects and focuses attention on the use of campaigns to cultivate symbols. Accordingly, Lasswell opined that propaganda is successful based on the use and manipulation of symbols. He defined propaganda as the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols. The word attitude is taken to mean a tendency to act according to certain patterns of valuation. The existence of an attitude is not a direct datum of experience, but an inference from signs which have a conventionalized significance.

He further added that the patterns upon which this inference is founded may be primitive gestures of the face and body, or more sophisticated gestures of the pen and voice. Taken together, these objects which have a standard meaning in a group are called significant symbols. The elevated eyebrow, the clenched fist, the sharp voice, the pungent phrase, have their references established within the web of a particular culture. Such significant symbols are paraphernalia employed in expressing the attitudes, and they are also capable of being employed to reaffirm or redefine attitudes. Thus, significant symbols have both an expressive and a propagandist function in public life. By examining the propaganda symbols used by PDP during the last elections, and the extent of effect and impact that it had on the electorate, this paper therefore hinges on Laswell's political propaganda theory.

METHODOLOGY

The survey method was used to collect data from 324 randomly selected academic staff of University of Ilorin. The data collection was done in two weeks with the help of questionnaires. The distribution spanned through departments and faculties in the University. Subsequently, data collected was analyzed descriptively using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS

The demographic data of respondents were first analyzed before the main study variables. As can be seen in Table 1, the demographic distributions of respondents ranged from their age, level of education, religion and region.

Table 1*Demographic Characteristics of Respondents*

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage %
Age		
18 – 32	24	7.4
33 – 47	180	55.6
48 – 62	84	25.9
62 and above	36	11.1
Level of Education		
OND/NCE/DIPLOMA	0	0
HND/B.Sc.	93	28.7
PGD/M.Sc./Ph.D.	231	71.3
Religion		
Islam	240	74.1
Christianity	84	25.9
Region		
North	156	48.1
South	54	16.7
East	30	9.3
West	84	25.9

Table 1 shows the highest number of respondents were between the age group of 34 to 47 with 180 representing 55.6%. This was followed by those in age group 48 to 62 with 84 accounting for 25.9% of respondents, while 36 respondents representing 11.1% were 63 years and above, and the least number of respondents were within the age group of 18 to 32 accounting for 7.4%. Additionally, most respondent had PGD/M.Sc./Ph.D qualifications representing 231 (71.3%), while the rest had B.Sc degrees accounting for 93 respondents' representing 28.7%, and no respondent had NCE/OND/ diploma. Additionally, most respondents were from the Northern part of the country accounting for 156(48.1%), while the rest were from the Western, Southern and Eastern parts of the country representing 84 (25.9%), 64 (16.7%) and 30 (9.3%) respectively.

Table 2*Respondents who voted in the 2015 General Elections*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	234	72.2
No	90	27.8

Results from the survey shows 234 representing 72.2% of respondents voted, while 90 respondents representing 27.8% did not vote. This indicates that majority of respondents voted in the 2015 general election. This result is particularly significant to the research because the more respondents that voted, the more the researcher was able to determine audience perception of why PDP propaganda failed in the last general elections

Table 3*Respondents Media Use*

Media Use	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Television	294	90.7	30	9.3
Radio	288	88.9	36	11.1
Newspaper	222	68.5	102	31.5
Magazine	138	42.6	186	57.4
Facebook	186	57.4	138	42.6
Twitter	210	64.8	114	35.2
WhatsApp	270	83.3	54	16.7
Instagram	144	44.4	180	55.6
Blogs	234	72.2	90	27.8
BBM	225	69.4	99	30.6

Table 3 shows the proportion of respondents who make use of the various media platforms as a medium of information. It indicates that most of the respondents representing 90.7% used television. This was followed by those who use radio accounting for 88.9%, while 88.3% of respondents use WhatsApp. Furthermore, 68.4% of the respondents use Twitter, and 57.4% use Facebook, while 44.4% and 42.6% make use Instagram and magazines respectively. Additionally, 72.2% of respondents use blogs, while 69.4% use BBM.

Table 4

Audience Perception of /and ineffectiveness of PDP propaganda campaign

Response	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The PDP campaigns failed because they were too direct	5.6	44.4	35.2	14.8
The PDP campaigns failed because people had made up their minds against the party.	11.1	24.1	53.7	11.1
The PDP campaigns failed because the people knew they were ill motivated	13.0	31.5	44.4	11.1
Using propaganda had negative effects on the PDP campaigns	9.3	37.0	37.0	16.7
The propaganda campaigns worked against the PDP because they are lacking in substance.	18.5	44.4	24.1	13.0
The propaganda campaigns were not well articulated and strategized	18.5	33.3	40.7	7.1
PDP propaganda failed because it is not in tune with reality.	11.1	33.3	35.2	20.4
The campaigns were used to cover up for Jonathan's deficiencies	3.7	25.9	59.3	11.1
The campaigns for Jonathan were personality based	3.7	38.9	53.7	3.7
The campaigns were aimed at destroying the APC	11.1	42.6	38.9	7.4
The PDP campaigns lied about political reality	18.5	38.9	46.3	7.4
The campaigns were insensitive to people's plight	7.4	38.9	50.0	3.7

(continued)

Response	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The campaigns in the 2015 election were filled with lies	7.4	35.2	50.0	7.4
PDP failed in the 2015 general election because the election was free and fair	22.2	25.9	51.9	0
PDP failed because they failed to mobilize their electorates for the elections	3.7	57.4	35.2	3.7
PDP failed because Nigerians were tired of the party	22.2	35.2	35.2	9.3
PDP failed because their campaigns were appealing to the people's emotions	14.8	44.4	27.8	13.0
PDP failed because people were yearning for a change	9.3	35.2	35.2	20.4
PDP was insincere to Nigerians	3.7	42.6	46.3	7.4
PDP lacked good governance attributes	7.4	42.6	40.7	9.3
PDP misguided Nigerians	11.1	38.9	42.6	7.4
PDP was too corrupt	14.8	27.8	29.6	27.8
PDP was ethnocentric	13.0	33.3	42.6	11.1
PDP was disorganized	11.1	25.9	46.3	16.7
PDP had too many distractions	3.7	25.9	48.1	22.2

Results in Table 4 indicates 44.4% and 5.6% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively that the PDP campaigns failed because they were too direct, as such the failure of the party might not be fully attributed at the direct attack the party had on the opposition. Also majority of the respondent with 53.7% agree that the PDP campaigns failed because the people had already made up their minds against the party. Results also show that 44.4% and 11.1% of the respondents agree to the fact that the PDP campaigns failed because the people believed they were ill motivated, they also agreed that the propaganda mechanisms used in the campaigns of the PDP had some negative effects on the outcome with 37.0% and 16.7% agreeing and strongly agreeing.

Additionally, respondents disagree with the fact that the propaganda campaigns worked against the PDP because they lack substance. Therefore, even though the campaign did not lack substance it failed due to other

reasons. However, 40.7% of the respondents agree that the campaigns were not well articulated and strategized while a substantial number of the respondents agree that the propaganda used by the PDP failed because it was not in tune with reality.

Furthermore, 59.3% of the respondents agreed that the campaigns were used to cover up for former President Goodluck Jonathan's deficiencies while 53.7% agree that the campaigns were personality based and as such 43.6% and 11.1% disagree that the campaigns were aimed at destroying the APC. Also 46.3% agreed that the PDP campaigns lied about political reality, 50.0% also agree that the campaigns were not sensitive to the people's plight. The campaigns in the 2015 general elections were filled with lies according to 50% of the respondent. Majority of the respondents, believed that the failure of the PDP in the 2015 general elections was because the election was free and fair and also disagreed that the PDP failed to mobilize, as such the findings of this study states that the failure was not because the PDP did not mobilize. Also a total of 57.4% of the respondents disagree that the PDP failed because Nigerians were tired of the party. Also 59.2% of respondents disagreed that the failure of PDP was as a result of their campaigns which were appealing to the people's emotions but majority agree that the failure was because the people were yearning for a change.

Moreover, 53.7% of respondents agreed that the PDP was not sincere with Nigerians, 50% agreed that the PDP lacked good governance attributes while others do not agree. Also, 42.6% and 7.4% agree and strongly agree respectively to the fact that PDP misguided Nigerians and also 29.6% and 14.8% also concur that the PDP was too corrupt. 42.6%, 46.4% and 48.1% of the respondents agree to the statement that the PDP was ethnocentric, disorganized and had too many distractions respectively.

DISCUSSIONS

This study has been able to establish the fact that the PDP campaign failed at the 2015 general elections due to certain factors. One of which is based on the fact that audience had already made up their minds, as a result they had already lost confidence in the PDP. Another factor which could have led to the loss of the PDP is as a result of the fact that people had believed that the campaigns were geared towards the success of the party and as such propaganda was not effectively used in the campaigns. The campaigns were also not in-tune with the realities of time because of the perception the people already had for the PDP. It can also be said that the agitation for change, and because the people did not want the party in power again, are some of the major factors that contributed to the failure of the PDP at the general

elections as such the directness of the campaigns are not serious factors that contributed to the failure of the party. Also the use of propaganda contributed to the failure of the party and also because the party failed to be in-tune to the realities in the society. The study has also been able to help discover that the campaigns were used to cover up the deficiencies of the Goodluck Jonathan administration while advancing that the propaganda campaigns were not well articulated. This study also helped to establish the fact that the campaigns of propaganda that characterized the electoral period were not in tune with reality. As such the attitude and perceptions of people were not studied to help understand if it was achieving its desired aims and objectives. This study has also been able to help understand that the campaigns PDP in the 2015 general elections were used to cover up for the deficiencies of former president Goodluck Jonathan and were more of personality based campaigns which were highlighting the bad sides of the opposition. Findings from this study also indicate that PDP campaigns lied about a number of political realities while establishing the fact that the campaigns were not sensitive to the people's plight. Findings in this study also indicate that the failure of PDP in the 2015 general elections was not really as a result of the free and fair elections or failure to mobilize electorates. It was not also due to the fact that their campaigns were appealing to the emotions of the people but basically because the Nigerian people were yearning for a change.

Also the study was able to find out some of the perceived causes of the failure of the PDP campaign at the 2015 general election as such findings revealed that the PDP was insincere to Nigerians and as well lacked good governance attributes. It also revealed that the PDP was somewhat misguided, corrupt, ethnocentric, disorganized and had many distractions.

CONCLUSION

The propaganda messages used by the ruling party in the last Nigerian General elections failed because they went overboard with the use of it, they focused on spilling dirt about their opposition rather than seeking how to show themselves in good light. They focused on exposing the weakness of their opponent APC, rather than building on their own strength, these were strong contributors. Above all, as seen by this research, their propaganda failed because most people had made up their mind against the party despite their powerful propaganda messages.

To this end, this paper recommends that more research could be done on this area of research, with an increased population and sample size as it will allow for more opinions which may well buttress this conclusion, or may create new dimensions on why propaganda could fail, especially on the Nigerian

political scene. The paper also recommend that political parties should carry out audience studies and opinion polls before beginning campaign operations, in order to have a good direction on where and how to carry out proper campaign that will serve their interest rather than be of disservice to them in the long run.

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Biodata

Abdulgaffar Olawale Arikewuyo is a lecturer at Department of Mass Communication, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. He holds a Diploma in Mass communication from the Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria, Bachelor and Master's degree in Mass Communication from University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. His research interests are Broadcast Journalism and political communication.

Aishat Abdulrauf-Salau is a lecturer at Department of Mass Communication, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. She holds a Bachelor and Master's degree in Mass Communication from Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria. Her research interests are development communication, political communication and new media.