

The Obidient movement on Twitter and 2023 general election in Nigeria: an extrapolative analysis

Agbim, Kenneth C.; Etumnu, Emeka Williams; Iredibia, Kingsley Uche

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Agbim, K. C., Etumnu, E. W., & Iredibia, K. U. (2023). The Obidient movement on Twitter and 2023 general election in Nigeria: an extrapolative analysis. *IMSU Journal of Communication Studies*, 7(1), 347-358. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-88027-6>

Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY Lizenz (Namensnennung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.de>

Terms of use:

This document is made available under a CC BY Licence (Attribution). For more information see: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>



THE OBIDENT MOVEMENT ON TWITTER AND 2023 GENERAL ELECTION IN NIGERIA: AN EXTRAPOLATIVE ANALYSIS

AGBIM, Kenneth¹

ETUMNU, Emeka Williams²

IREDIBIA, Kingsley Uche³

^{1,2}Department of Mass Communication, Imo State University, Owerri

³Department of Mass Communication, Hezekiah University, Umudi, Imo State

Corresponding author: AGBIM, Kenneth, kenagbim@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The study highlighted that Twitter can be a powerful platform for political mobilization, it is one among many channels for engaging with voters. However, Extrapolation on Obident Movement in the 2023 general election in Nigeria involves making predictions or projections based on existing trends or pattern. Movements and hashtags on Twitter can draw attention to specific issues, shape narratives, and amplify voices that may otherwise go unheard. They can also facilitate discussions, engage with policymakers, and galvanize support for various causes. The study adopted the survey method and area of study is Imo State. The population is 5,830,489 and sample size of 384 was attained using Wimmer and Dominick calculator. The multistage/cluster sampling technique was adopted and questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The mean and percentage descriptive statistics were used for data presentation. At a mean average of 2.8, there is a greater motivation behind the emergence of the Obident Movement in Nigeria's 2023 election. The movement have had significant impact on voter behaviour and electoral outcomes in the 2023 general election 2.5 (N=378). The study recommended that those in charge of electoral process in Nigeria must ensure readiness as there will be improved voter participation in subsequent election in the country. Furthermore, political movements must look at the broader political and social dynamics leading up to subsequent elections.

Keywords: Obident Movement, election, Twitter, campaigns, candidates

Introduction

Average citizens and democratic activists from all over the world have repeatedly shown that democracy is a universal ideal and has become a wish shared by all people in the modern world. Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, among others, have greatly aided in the success of political campaigns throughout the globe (Okoro et al., 2019). The media assists in carrying out her monitoring job and empowering voters to make educated selections about the parties and candidates they will support or vote for (Nwamara&Etumnu, 2022). In order to better administer and conduct elections,

election management bodies throughout the world have used a variety of cutting-edge strategies, some of which are now regarded as best practice. The adoption of more inclusive and transparent processes, professionalization of the organization, changes to the legislative framework, and enhancements to interactions with external stakeholders are only a few of the electoral reforms that have been implemented (Adamu-Alhassan, 2018). ICTs have indeed been at the heart of the democratic process in many regions of Nigeria, and they look to be reviving optimism for social and political transformation in the country. According to Assibong and Oshanisi (2018), while Nigeria and other countries have recently incorporated technology into their voting procedures, especially in the just concluded 2023 elections, there is still a chance that Nigerian elections might have errors. The introduction of social media has resulted in a new type of political process and campaign, which calls for candidates to be familiar with social media strategy in order to connect with electorate and benefit both them and society as a whole. Greater access to internet information may not necessarily result in more educated individuals, given the difficulty of predominating misinformation and disinformation on social media platforms and how such deception can penetrate the media more broadly. In reality, it has exacerbated ethnic and religious divisions in Nigeria while perplexing the populace, especially during the election season when misinformation, or the purposeful dissemination of accurate information with the aim to do damage, is so prevalent.

The Obidient movement is a social media campaign awareness on various media platforms for the political aspiration of Peter Obi, the Labour Party Presidential candidate in the 2023 Nigeria election. The youngest and presently most well-liked candidate in the race was Peter Obi. According to Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), 71% of those who completed their voter registration were between the ages of 18 and 34, indicating that young Nigerians were yearning for a new era and are set to demonstrate that (Chukwurah, 2022). Young individuals who are seen to be particularly independent-minded, strong-willed, and disdainful of elder politicians who they claim have done nothing for them are the originators of the "Obidient" movement, as it has been dubbed by many. The "Obidient" movement lacks a clear leader and is decentralised with community funding. It is organised by several tiny organisations with the aim of overthrowing the status quo. Young people in Nigeria have started organising peace walks and running campaigns online, particularly on Twitter, using Obi as a platform to express their aspirations and wrath. The research is therefore aimed at looking the tweets on Obidient movement during the last election in order to make inferences on what holds for the future in Nigeria elections.

Statement of the Problem

Online campaigns will be more forcefully waged during the events leading up to the 2023 general election in Nigeria. Attacks intended at promoting candidates, criticising opponents, and undermining INEC are anticipated to be intensified in social media in the lead-up to, during, and even after voting. It is projected that the Nigerian election of 2023 would have a substantial impact on the political climate of the nation. In this setting, a grassroots organisation known as the "Obidient Movement" has drawn attention as it works to promote political accountability, openness, and citizen engagement. This movement which was perpetuated using the Twitter which has a wider coverage and best when it comes to political campaign messages. Social media sites like Twitter have developed into powerful tools for influencing public opinion, disseminating information, and coordinating group actions. On Twitter, movements and hashtags may help influence narratives, bring attention to certain topics, and amplify voices that would not otherwise be heard. They may also encourage debate, interact with decision-makers, and mobilise support for a variety of causes. In order to understand the elements affecting the Obidient Movement in the Nigerian election of 2023, this study looked at its goals, tactics, and effects on political dynamics.

Research Questions

1. What are the motivations behind the emergence of the Obidient Movement in Nigeria's 2023 election?

2. How does the Obidient Movement mobilize and engage citizens in the electoral process through Twitter?
3. What are the roles and impact of the Obidient Movement on voter behaviour and electoral outcomes in the 2023 general election?

Literature Review

Electioneering Campaign

For political parties to realise their goals, they must advertise their principles and ideology, mission and vision, as well as policy framework for actualizing these goals, which can be done by convincing the electorate on how best to achieve their goals, why they want to be in power and the kind of policies to pursue in order to make changes possible once they get power (Uzonwanne, et al., 2016). These functions are obviously discharged by political parties mostly during the conduct of electioneering campaigns. These, both in developed and developing democracies have become the main instrument of communication between the electorate and the contestants. However, issues involved in electioneering campaigns differ from one country to another (Jumbo, et al., 2022). In developed democracies, campaign activities are primarily issue-based and well-focused on what is important and desirable for the electorate. The reverse is the case in developing democracies, particularly in Nigeria, where poverty, ethnicity and the unequal distribution of scarce resources are some of the manifesting tendencies that occupy the front burner of campaign issues in these societies (Opeyemi, et al., (2018). In most of these issues, speeches and campaign rallies are bastardised, and, in most cases, the dis-articulation of campaign speeches from the mainstream concerns relating to what really can promote sustainable economic, political and social developments are overlooked (Gambo, 2021). Campaigns are a distinguishing feature worldwide, of modern representative democracies. For most citizens in most polities, campaigns provide a compelling incentive to think about government. So, campaigns thus are perhaps the main point of contact between officials and the populace over matters of public policy. Campaigning encompasses political advocacy, lobbying, and communication, according to (Idasa as cited in Albert, 2011). Political parties play a central role in electioneering campaigns. Parties are responsible for articulating their ideologies, policy positions, and goals through party manifestos. These manifestos outline the party's vision and plans if elected into office, serving as a blueprint for their campaign messages. Additionally, Baron as cited in Albert (2011) demonstrates that there are four potential motivations for running for office: First off, an unpopular candidate could draw attention to themselves during the campaign time and procedure. Second, an unpopular but public-spirited candidate could run, not necessarily with the goal of winning, but rather in order to inform voters about strategically crucial public policy concerns that should be emphasised during an election year. The candidate's third objective may be to create a group of like-minded individuals for tactical social and political action. The ultimate objective may be to win the election and become president or governor, depending on the position being contested. Campaign strategies in Nigeria typically involve a mix of traditional and modern approaches. Traditional methods include rallies, town hall meetings, door-to-door campaigns, and engaging local community leaders. In recent years, digital platforms and social media have become crucial for reaching a wider audience, with candidates utilising online platforms to disseminate campaign messages, share videos, and engage with voters (Okoro et al., 2019)

Social Media and Electioneering Campaign in Nigeria

In Nigeria, social media has grown to be a potent platform for electoral campaigns, giving politicians and political parties new ways to connect with voters, sway public opinion, and rally support. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp allow political candidates and parties to

directly communicate with a large audience (Shadrach & Apuke, 2020). Candidates can share their campaign messages, policy positions, and engage with voters in real-time. The viral nature of social media enables messages to spread rapidly, amplifying their reach and impact. Social media, unlike conventional mass media, is democratic and unrestricted, therefore politicians may use it to disseminate disinformation about actual or hypothetical opponents in an effort to win people's favour (Alegu, et al., 2020). Social media platforms facilitate two-way communication between candidates and voters. Citizens can interact with candidates, ask questions, express their concerns, and provide feedback. This engagement fosters a sense of inclusivity and empowers voters to actively participate in the political process. Social media platforms offer sophisticated targeting options, allowing candidates to tailor their campaign messages to specific demographics, locations, or interests (Stier, et al., 2018). This targeting capability enables more effective communication with key voter segments, maximising the impact of campaign efforts. Orji (2014) claims that since 2007, social media in Nigeria has grown to be a significant instrument for political communication. However, the 2011 general elections in Nigeria were the country's first actual test of the use of social media for political involvement (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013). Social media has become instrumental in grassroots mobilisation efforts during election campaigns. Political parties and candidates utilise online platforms to organise volunteers, coordinate campaign activities, and rally supporters for events, rallies, and door-to-door campaigns. Real-time monitoring of public opinion and responses to political campaigns is made possible by social media (Okoro & Santas, 2017). Candidates and parties can monitor how the public responds to their messaging, policies, and campaign activities in order to modify their tactics as necessary. Social media platforms offer the opportunity for alternative narratives and perspectives to be shared. Citizens, activists, and non-mainstream candidates can use social media to raise awareness about important issues, challenge dominant narratives, and influence public discourse (Mamman, 2019).

Social Media and Campaign Strategies in Nigeria

Since the introduction of online social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat, social interactions between members of the public have undergone a significant transformation. Numerous areas have seen the value of these platforms in promoting change and earning competitive advantages. The use of online social media platforms for the orchestration of propaganda and campaign techniques has been crucial (Bello, et al., 2019). These platforms are crucial in gaining support from the voters in the political sphere. The social media site Twitter has a growing impact on how social phenomena are shaped. Users freely share their thoughts and participate in debates that have a big influence on society. Twitter makes it simple for people to have discussions with one another and create a narrative regarding political and policy concerns (Adam, et al., 2018). Social media have become powerful tool for political campaigns in Nigeria, allowing candidates and parties to reach a wide audience, engage with voters, and shape public opinion. Effective campaign strategies on social media involve creating compelling and shareable content. This includes well-designed graphics, videos, and written posts that communicate the candidate's vision, policies, and achievements. It's essential to tailor messages to resonate with specific target audiences and address their concerns. Candidates' use of social media has also been taken into account. When Robin, et al. (2011) examined how social media affected the Dutch election, they discovered that while voting patterns in the local elections of 2010 were unaffected, candidates who were more active on social media received more support from voters within the majority of political parties during the national election. Similarly, (Sanne, 2014) examined how candidates used social media during the 2010 Dutch national election and found that those who used Twitter won more votes than those who did not (Sanne, 2014). While social media may be an effective campaign tool, it shouldn't be used in place of tried-and-true campaign tactics. An all-encompassing campaign should include conventional media involvement, ground-level mobilisation, social media outreach, and direct voter encounters. To maximize their impact, effective campaigns in Nigeria frequently combine online and offline tactics.

Twitter and Political Mobilization

Twitter allows political candidates, parties, and activists to disseminate information about their platforms, policies, campaign events, and achievements. It provides a platform for spreading awareness about political issues, mobilizing support, and engaging with a wide audience. Twitter is increasingly shaping the political agenda, a role that was formerly dominated by television. Twitter is now followed by television, or at the very least, broadcast news (Ott, 2017). Twitter serves as a medium for microblogging, and its narrative and interactive design encourage user interaction. It is a social network distinguished for its ease of content generation. A Tweet can be funny or intelligent, but it cannot be sophisticated. On Twitter, hashtags are used to group conversations around particular themes. Campaign-specific hashtags can be developed and used by political campaigns to rally supporters, boost engagement, and magnify their messaging (Opeyemi, et al., 2018). Campaigns using hashtags may spark discussions online, boost exposure, and mobilise support for certain politicians or causes (Hadma, & Anggoro, 2022). Political activists and supporters may connect, plan, and coordinate grassroots events via Twitter. It may be employed to organize volunteers, organize door-to-door campaigns, voter registration drives, or neighbourhood gatherings (Pérez-Martínez, et al., 2017). Twitter's networking features aid in forming groups of people with similar interests who may get together offline. In Nigeria, Political candidates can directly engage with their supporters and potential voters on Twitter. They can respond to queries, address concerns, and provide real-time updates (Chinedu-Okeke & Obi, 2016). Engaging with supporters helps in building trust, fostering loyalty, and creating a sense of inclusivity, which can contribute to political mobilisation. Voters' rights, voter registration, and the election process may all be explained to them over Twitter. Election dates, polling places, and pertinent documentation requirements can all be shared by campaigns. Twitter can help boost political engagement and voting turnout by improving voter education and awareness (Carlos, et al., 2022).

Empirical Review

Opeyemi, et al. (2018) explained that in light of the upcoming general elections in Nigeria, there is need to examine the function of social media with specific reference to Twitter as a vehicle for political mobilisation. Unquestionably, individuals are tweeting, political involvement and participation are increasing, and conversations are starting. The study additionally classified hashtags to the tweets in the dataset and determined the most common terms found there. The study comes to the conclusion that while social media play an important part in political processes, politics is a more complicated process than social media alone. Therefore, it advises that in order to bring about the desired political, economic, social, and developmental reforms, citizens must expand their expression of interest on digital media.

Bello, et al (2019), online social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook provide a flexible and efficient way for people to communicate on a big scale, producing a huge variety of statistics. This skill enables the analysis of significant volumes of data from internet users on practically any subject. On the basis of the political parties' and candidates' Twitter usernames, the researchers gathered a sizable quantity of tweets. They evaluated users' opinions to comprehend their thoughts and measured political parties' and candidates' internet activity. According to the study, the main opposition party employs a two-pronged strategy, promoting its candidates while criticising the ruling party and its nominee, while both the ruling party and minority parties focus on supporting their candidates.

Ahmad, Ersoy, and Dambo (2020), corroborated that the usage of Twitter by political players to communicate information and media coverage have been shown to be causally related by research, according to empirical data. This demonstrates how political tweets may be used to spread information. However, there are clearly no studies on this topic from Sub-Saharan Africa, notably Nigeria. This study aims to close this gap by examining how media coverage of the Nigerian general elections in 2019 was affected by the tweets of two well-known presidential contenders over the course of a four-month period

from November 2018 to February 2019. According to the results of our study, there are connections between general issues, security, anticorruption, and the economy in Nigeria's political discourse, presidential candidates' political tweets on these subjects, and how these themes were ranked in media coverage.

Nkiru and Augustine (2018), raised awareness of Twitter's efficacy in Southeast Nigeria in relation to the two main contenders' 2015 presidential campaigning. In order to determine whether the online platform used by incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) and challenger Muhammadu Buhari of the All-Progressive Congress (APC), as part of a complementary media strategy, was successful in influencing voter behaviour in that region of the country, research was required. According to the data, Twitter did not significantly change voter interest or influence voting decisions, despite the fact that it let people communicate with political candidates and obtain the information they needed. Due to the passage of time after the election, many were unable to recollect whether they used Twitter to cast their ballot.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Uses and gratification theory which was propounded by Katz Blumier and Gurevitch in 1974 (Apuke& Tunca, 2018). According to the notion, individuals choose which media to consume based on how it makes them feel. The theory specifically places direct authority in the users' hands. We may investigate the reasons and satisfactions people may seek via their participation in the movement by applying this theory to the Obidient Movement on Twitter in Nigeria. Information is one of the gratifications people could look for in the Obidient Movement on Twitter. Twitter is a forum for the exchange of information, updates, and viewpoints (Matyek, et al., 2022). Twitter may be used by movement supporters to learn about political problems, laws, or other events that are important to their cause. To keep informed and build their political ideas, they could rely on the movement's tweets and retweets. Twitter is a platform that Obidient Movement supporters may use to express their political opinions, worries, and complaints. They may express their viewpoints with a larger audience and perhaps have an impact on public discourse and policy discussions by joining the movement on Twitter. People using Twitter may feel validated and receive encouragement from others who share their views. The supportive comments, retweets, and interaction they get from other followers may help members of the Obidient Movement feel that their political views and behaviour are justified. This affirmation can increase their dedication to the cause and give them a sense of community.

Method and Procedure

The study adopted the survey method to get inferences and opinions of people on the issue of discussion. When a researcher wants to learn about the traits, tastes, views, or beliefs of a particular group of people, a survey is a viable option (McCombes, 2019; Tayo-Garbson et al., 2019). The population of the study according to City population (2022) is 5,830,489. The sample size for the quantitative data was derived using the Wimmer and Dominick sample size calculator and it is 384. For the sampling Technique, the multistage sampling technique was adopted. Multistage sampling is appropriate for a population that is geographically varied, it becomes simpler to favour it above any other sample approach (Sedgwick, 2015). **Stage one:** The study selected the three senatorial districts of the state, which is, Imo East, Imo West, and Imo North. **Stage two:** The area of study which is Imo state is made up of twenty-seven Local Governments Areas. In this stage therefore, each of the local government are grouped accordingly. Ten (10) of these local government areas were randomly selected and sampled out. They include: Ngor Okpala, Mbaitolu, Aboh-Mbaise, Isiala-Mbano, Orlu, Okigwe, Obowo, Ideato North, Owerri North and Owerri Municipal. They were selected from each of the three senatorial districts that make up Imo State. The reason is that it will be impossible to accommodate the entire 27 local government areas of the State.

Stage three: from the selected LGAs two communities each were randomly selected that is to say 20 communities were used in all, for this study. At stage four the researchers with the aid of researcher

assistants distributed 20 copies of questionnaire non-proportionately to respondents in these communities. Questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was designed in a closed-ended questions format. Likert scale was used to design the instrument with the following numbers attached to each scale strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and then strongly disagree (1). Communication experts in the department of Mass Communication, Imo State University, Owerri validated the instruments. The mean and percentage descriptive statistics were used to analyses the quantitative data.

Results and Discussion

The presentation was made using a field survey frequency table, mean analysis, and percentage. The researcher distributed 384 copies of the questionnaire to respondents; however, 378 of those copies were returned, while the remaining 6 were either lost or incomplete, making them invalid for the research. As a result, 378 copies of the questionnaire were examined for the study. The research findings were used to make inferences into the future about the next general election in Nigeria.

Research Question One: What are the motivations behind the emergence of the Obidient Movement in Nigeria's 2023 election?

Table 1

Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean Score/ Decision
Perceived lack of political accountability or transparency in Nigeria played a role in the emergence of the Obidient Movement	111 29.4%	114 30.2%	79 20.9%	74 19.6%	2.7 Accepted
The main goals and objectives of the Obidient Movement in relation to the 2023 election did not have the interest of many Nigerians	45 11.9%	74 19.6%	129 34.1%	130 34.4%	2.1 Rejected
Obidient Movement's emergence is influenced by broader social, economic, or political factors in Nigeria	187 49.5%	145 38.4%	46 12.2%	-	3.4 Accepted
There are alliances, collaborations, or support networks that have contributed to the growth and impact of the Obidient Movement	102 27.0%	136 36.0%	65 17.2	75 19.8%	2.8 Accepted
Twitter played a significant role in spreading awareness and mobilizing support	136 36.0%	157 41.5%	58 15.3%	27 7.1%	3 Accepted
Average Mean					2.8 Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Decision rule: Given that the benchmark of a 4-point Likert scale is stated at is 2.5, this means that when the calculated mean is from 2.5-4.0 then the item in question is accepted. However, if the calculated mean is 1-2.4, then the item is rejected.

Table 1 above indicated that at a mean average of 2.8, there is a greater motivation behind the emergence of the Obidient Movement in Nigeria's 2023 election. Perceived lack of political accountability or transparency in Nigeria played a role in the emergence of the Obidient Movement (2.7, N=378). The main goals and objectives of the Obidient Movement in relation to the 2023 election did not have the interest of many Nigerians (2.1, N=378), Obidient Movement's emergence is influenced by broader social, economic, or political factors in Nigeria (3.4, N=378), there are alliances, collaborations, or support networks that have contributed to the growth and impact of the Obidient Movement (2.8, N=378), Twitter played a significant role in spreading awareness and mobilizing support (3, N=378). The implication of this result is that many Nigerians feel that their interests have been marginalised over the years and they need a new face in the presidential ticket of the country. The social media especially Twitter remains the viable means to create this awareness on a new candidate from a political party different from the ones that have been in existence and have failed in areas of accountability. In this regard, Ahmad et al (2020) pointed out that political tweets are best used to spread information in this regard. The tendency that Twitter will continue to remain outstanding in this regard in future elections will remain high because of the results it achieved in the general election in 2023. Due to the Obidient Movement's emphasis on political responsibility, political parties and politicians may come under pressure to respond to the issues identified by the movement. As politicians work to win the confidence and support of Nigerians, the movement's existence may result in more openness, responsiveness, and integrity in the political process.

Research Question Two: How does the Obidient Movement mobilize and engage citizens in the electoral process through Twitter?

Table 2

Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean Score/ Decision
Use of Hashtags enable the movement to garner tweets and support.	201 53.2%	177 46.8%	-	-	3.5 Accepted
They give direct messages to Twitter users.	100 33.6%	150 45.8%	78 20.6%	50 13.2%	2 Rejected
They create contents that depicts the achievements of their political candidate in the past.	173 45.8%	127 33.6%	78 20.6%	-	3.2 Accepted
Sensitization of Twitter users on the need for a change of government and political candidates	183 48.4%	181 47.9%	11 2.9%	3 0.8%	3.4 Accepted
Obidient Movement take to ensure transparency, accuracy, and credibility in the information they share on	191 50.5%	182 48.1%	5 1.3%	-	3.4 Accepted

Twitter

Average Mean

3.1

Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2 above revealed that at an average mean of 3.1, Obidient Movement mobilize and engage citizens in the electoral process through Twitter. Use of Hashtags enable the movement to garner tweets and support (3.5, N=378), they give direct messages to Twitter users (2, N=378), they create contents that depicts the achievements of their political candidate in the past (3.2, N=378), sensitization of Twitter users on the need for a change of government and political candidates (3.4, N=378) Obidient Movement take to ensure transparency, accuracy, and credibility in the information they share on Twitter (3.4 N=378).

The data result indicated that Twitter over the years have generated the needed outcome in political campaign messages. It has a way of creating news feeds and sending them directly to the timeline of users with similar interest. In this regard, Bello, et al (2019), maintained that Twitter provides a flexible and efficient way for people to communicate on a big scale, producing a huge variety of statistics. This skill enables the analysis of significant volumes of data from internet users on practically any subject. Twitter provides a platform for grassroots voices to be amplified and heard. The Obidient Movement's use of Twitter can give a voice to marginalised communities and individuals who may otherwise struggle to be heard in the traditional media or political arenas. This can lead to a more inclusive political discourse and a broader view. This gives credence to the uses and gratification theory this study was anchored on. The Obidient Movement's mobilisation efforts on Twitter can encourage citizens to engage actively in the electoral process. By providing information, promoting voter registration, and encouraging voter turnout, the movement can inspire greater civic participation. This can lead to higher voter engagement, increased voter turnout, and a stronger democratic culture in Nigeria.

Research Question Three: What are the roles and impact of the Obidient Movement on voter behavior and electoral outcomes in the 2023 general election?

Table 3

Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean Score/ Decision
The movement has helped to raise political consciousness on both supporters and those not in support	300 79.4%	78 20.6%			3.7 Accepted
It will advance for a more positive political activities among political parties in Nigeria	137 36.2%	139 36.8%	52 13.7%	50 13.2%	2.9 Accepted

The Obidient Movement can serve as an alternative choice for voters who are dissatisfied with established political parties and candidates.	125 33%	153 40.5%	51 13.5%	49 12.9%	2.9 Accepted
The Obidient Movement's mobilization efforts can play a role in increasing voter turnout.	73 19.3%	183 48.4%	91 24%	31 8.2%	2.9 Accepted
It has attracted support from other political movements, civil society organizations, or individuals who share similar concerns and aspirations.	177 46.8%	114 30.2%	87 23%		3.3 Accepted
Average Mean					2.5 Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table above revealed that on an average mean of 2.5(N=378), the movement have had significant impact on voter behavior and electoral outcomes in the 2023 general election. The movement has helped to raise political consciousness on both supporters and those not in support (3.7, N=378), It will advance for a more positive political activities among political parties in Nigeria (2.9, N=378), The Obidient Movement can serve as an alternative choice for voters who are dissatisfied with established political parties and candidates (2.9, N=378), The Obidient Movement's mobilization efforts can play a role in increasing voter turnout(2.9, N=378), It has attracted support from other political movements, civil society organizations, or individuals who share similar concerns and aspirations(3.3, N=378).

The data result corroborated that Obidient Movement in the last general election increased the political consciousness of the people and improved turnout on the election day. However, it did not change the political stand of many as a good number still maintained their position with their various parties. What this holds for the future is that politics in Nigeria will be more intense in the future and the expectations the citizens will form will be very high. On this note, Nkiru et al. (2018) pointed that Twitter did not significantly change voter interest or influence voting decisions, despite the fact that it let people communicate with political candidates and obtain the information they needed. Furthermore, uses and gratification theory which the work adopted postulated that individuals decide the choices they make with various media channels at their disposal. By possibly boosting the electoral strength of its linked candidates or parties, the "Obidient Movement" may be able to influence political outcomes if it manages to mobilize a sizable number of people and garners strong support. The movement's supporters may receive a larger portion of the vote as a result, gaining more seats in legislative bodies or even winning executive posts. Voters who agree with a certain set of values or policies may support the "Obidient Movement" if it is centered on them. As a result, those who identify with the movement's tenets could cast their votes in accordance with those shared beliefs rather than according to their usual party loyalties.

Conclusion

The Obidient Movement's impact on voter behaviour has the potential to produce unexpected future results in elections. If the movement is effective in organising a sizable segment of the population, it may upend the current political order and produce unexpected outcomes in certain seats, or even at the federal level. The results of the election may be rather ambiguous and unpredictable as a result. By highlighting

key concerns such as corruption, good governance, socio-economic inequalities, or youth empowerment, the movement can influence what voters consider important when evaluating candidates and party platforms. This can potentially alter the issues dominating the electoral discourse.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made by the researcher:

1. Since there is greater motivation from the Obidient movement in 2023 election, those in charge of electoral process in Nigeria must ensure readiness as there will be improved voter participation in subsequent election in the country.
2. Social media has been seen to be a veritable tool in enlighten citizens on political movements, more messages and campaign awareness programmes should be channeled towards social media especially Twitter.
3. Political movements must look at the broader political and social dynamics leading up to subsequent elections.

References

- Adam, B., Emilio, F., & Kristina, L. (2018). Analyzing the digital traces of political manipulation: The 2016 Russian interference Twitter campaign. *2018 IEEE/ACM International Conference on Advances in Social Networks Analysis and Mining (ASONAM)*, 258–265.
- Adamu-Alhassan, A. (2018). The Role and Use of Social Media in Elections Campaigns and Voting Behavior in Nigeria: An Analysis of 2015 Presidential Election. *International Journal of Recent Innovations in Academic Research*, 2(6), 117–129. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/USER/Downloads/IJRIAR-09.pdf
- Ahmad, M. A., Ersoy, M., & Dambo, T. H. (2020). Influence of Political Tweets on Campaign Coverage: Building the News Agenda in Twittersphere. *Journalism Practice*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2020.1805793>
- Albert, I. O. (2011), A Review of the Campaign Strategies. *Journal of African Elections*, 6, (2),
- Alegu, J. C., Maku, B. S., Adelaja, K. I., & Raheed, A. A. (2020). Social media, propaganda and electioneering campaigns: The Nigerian experience (1999 – 2019). *International Journal of Sociology and Political Science*, 2(1), 4–13. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/USER/Downloads/SOCIALMEDIAPROPAGANDAANDELECTIONEERINGCAMPAIGN--THENIGERIANEXPERIENCE1999--2019.pdf
- Apuke, O., & Tunca, E. (2018). Understanding the Implications of Social Media Usage in the Electoral Processes and Campaigns in Nigeria. *Global Media Journal*, 16(6), 3–8. Retrieved from <https://www.globalmediajournal.com/open-access/understanding-the-implications-of-social-media-usage-in-the-electoral-processes-and-campaigns-in-nigeria.pdf>
- Assibong, P. & Oshani, O. 2018. The Role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the 2015 Presidential Election of Nigeria. *Journal of Culture, Society and Development*, 38: 1-7.
- Bello, B. S., Inuwa-Dutse, I., & Heckel, R. (2019). Social Media Campaign Strategies: Analysis of the 2019 Nigerian Elections. *IEEE Xplore*, 142–149. <https://doi.org/10.1109/SNAMS.2019.8931869>
- Carlos, K.A.L., Vargas D.S., Estigoy, M.A.S, & Hail, P.N. (2022). Effects of social media on political communication. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4157044>
- Chinedu-Okeke, C.F. & Obi, I. (2016). Social media as a political platform in Nigeria: A focus on electorates in South-Eastern Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 21, (11), 06-22.
- Chukwurah, F. (10 C.E., December). Peter Obi's "Obidient" movement ignites Nigeria's youth . Retrieved June 4, 2023, from dw.com website: <https://www.dw.com/en/peter-obis-obidient-movement-ignites-nigerias-youth/a-63375362>

- Gambo, K. (2021). Political Parties and Electioneering Campaigns: Patterns and Dynamics. In *The Patterns and Dynamics of Party Politics in Nigeria's Fourth Republic 1999 - 2015* (pp. 92–105). Kano: Bayero University Press. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/USER/Downloads/Chapter5.pdf
- Hadma, A. M &Anggoro, J.D. (2022). Political Communication in the Age of Social Media, *Commicast*, 3 (1), 1-7.
- Jumbo, N. C, Macaulay, S.U, Megwa, G.I.O., Okpongpong, G.I, Ukpong, E.N &Etumnu, E. W. (2022). Assessing the role of broadcast journalism in reshaping the political terrain in Nigeria fourth republic. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 28 (3), 9-18. <https://doi.org/10.9734/AJESS/2022/v28i330676>
- Mamman, Y. (2019). The influence of social media on political culture in Nigeria: A political perception of state assembly members from 2015 elections to date. *The Beam: Journal Arts and Sciences*, 12(1), 66-70.
- Matyek, J.G., Kaze, S.Y., Ohaji, K.M. &Etumnu, E.W. (2022). An investigation of social media as a government digital public relations tool: The Nigerian experience. *Journal of New Media and Mass Communication*, 8(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.18488/91.v8i1.3025>
- McCombes, S. (2019). Doing Survey Research | A Step-by-Step Guide. Retrieved June 5, 2023, from Scribbr website: <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/survey-research/>
- Nkiru, C. E., & Augustine, G. M. (2018). Twitter and Election Campaigns: Measuring Usage in Nigeria's 2015 Presidential Election. *Covenant Journal of Communication*, 5(2), 44–65. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/USER/Downloads/762.pdf
- Nwamara, C.A &Etumnu, E.W. (2022). Influence of the mass media on electorate's participation in the 2021 Anambra, State Gubernatorial election in the wake of insecurity. *GVU Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 7 (2), 140-150.
- Okoro N, & Nwafor K.A. (2013). Social media and political participation in Nigeria during the 2011 general elections: The lapses and lessons. *Global Journal of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(3), 29-46.
- Okoro, N. &Santas, T. (2017). An Appraisal of the Utilisation of Social Media for Political Communication in the 2011 Nigerian Presidential Election. *African Research Review*, 11 (1), 115-135. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/afrev.v11i1.9>
- Okoro, N.L., Etumnu, E.W. &Okoro, U.C. (2019). Social media as a modern platform for political discourse in Imo State. *IMSU Journal of Communication Studies*, 3(1), 24-36.
- Opeyemi, M., Dunge, Y., Mato, S., & Chidozie, F. (2018). Social Media, Political Mobilisation and Participatory Politics in Nigeria. *E-Government for Democratic Consolidation and Transformation: Agenda Setting for the 2019 Elections and Transparency in Governance*, (CUCEN, 2018). Nigeria: Covenant University. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/USER/Downloads/SocialMedia.pdf
- Orji, N. (2014). Nigeria's 2015 election in perspective. *African Spectrum*, 49(3), 121-133.
- Pérez-Martínez, V.M., Rodríguez, G., & M TobajasGracia. (2017). Mobilization and political participation on Twitter. Case study of the hashtag #SuperTuesday in the primaries of the presidential elections of the United States 2016. *RLCS, Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 72, 679–703. <https://doi.org/10.4185/rlcs-2017-1186en>
- Robin, E., Jos V. H. & Theo, H. (2011). Social media and political participation: Are Facebook, twitter and youtube democratizing our political systems? In *International conference on electronic participation*, 25–35. Springer.
- Sanne, K. (2014). How political candidates use twitter and the impact on votes. *Computers in human behavior*, 34:131–139.
- Shadrach, I &Apuke, O.D. (2020). Investigating the Effectiveness of Social Media Usage for Political Dialogue in Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 3942. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/3942>
- Stier, S, Bleier, A, Lietz, H. & Strohmaier, M. (2018). Election Campaigning on social media: politicians, audiences, and the mediation of political communication on Facebook and Twitter. *Political Communication*, 35:1, 50-74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2017.1334728>
- Tayo-Garbson, S. U, Njoku, F.C. &Etumnu, E.W. (2019). Owerri residents' perception of women in journalism. *SAU Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 4(1/2), 261-270.
- Uzonwanne, M.C., Ezenekwe, R.U. &Iregbenu, PC. (2016). Electioneering campaign and the Nigerian economy. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, United Kingdom, 4(3), 650-662.