

An Analysis of the Influence of Radio Political Campaign Messages on Voters' Electoral Behavior in Kano, Nigeria

Hamid Abdollahyan¹

Department of Social Communications, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

Aliyu Machika²

Department of Social Communications, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

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Abstract: This paper will examine the influence of radio political campaign messages on the electorates' voting behavior in Kano – Nigeria, with a focus on the 2015 general elections. It seeks to ascertain the extent that the electorates in Kano – Nigeria were exposed to radio political campaign messages, as well as the extent to which such messages influenced their voting decisions. Equally, the study claims that Kano people are religiously and ethnically attached to their leaders. Accordingly, the paper seeks to determine whether or not there is relationship between radio political campaign messages; interference of the opinion leaders on the voters' behavior leading to turn out into participating during the elections; and the outcome of the elections result. To achieve this, the paper offers the survey method with the questionnaire as research instrument. Through multi-stage sampling, 435 respondents were selected in the nine (9) local government areas, three (3) each from the three senatorial districts in Kano and administered the questionnaire. We launched this research on the premise of multi-step flow of communication theory. The findings indicate, among other things, that the majority (90.0%) of electorates in Kano were exposed to political campaign messages on radio. Explaining further, respondents (58.3%) said they listen to political party related campaigns and were influenced by them while casting their ballot. The findings further revealed that respondents (65.5%) were influenced by opinion leaders in their choice of political parties or candidates during elections as they perceived their advice/instruction as credible. In light of the findings, it was concluded that political campaign messages aired by local radio stations were an essential factor in the political decisions of the electorates in Kano. Similarly, it was recommended that producers of political campaign messages should make optimum use of their right sense of judgment in packaging their messages to avoid deception on voters. And, that opinion leaders while interpreting the messages to opinion followers should always check the reality or otherwise of the messages produced by parties and candidates to avoid misleading their followers.

Keywords: Radio, Opinion Leaders, Influence, Political Parties, Candidates, Campaign Messages, Elections, Kano, Nigeria.

Introduction

The preparation for the conduct of the Nigeria's 2015 general elections has witnessed a rise in the use of radio as a means of airing political campaign messages. Even, before then, a proliferation of radio stations in the entire country was witnessed. The radio stations that were mainly local stations otherwise known as FM stations were used to air political campaign messages by the government, political parties and candidates. After the conduct of 2011 general elections in Nigeria, Utor, (2011, p. 39) conducted a research in order to find out the reason for lack of participation by the citizens. His findings showed that voters in Nigeria have low levels of political knowledge and information. Moreover, he recommended the use of radio as the channel of disseminating political campaign messages while targeting audience. Buttressing this, Jibo (1996, p. 127) suggest the importance of focusing on the influence of radio political campaign messages. He found out that radio as a medium can help in enhancing the political information awareness of the Nigerian voters.

¹ Email: habdolah@ut.ac.ir (Corresponding Author)

² Email: aliyumachika@ut.ac.ir

Modern day politics demand that political parties serve as a platform through which politicians contest for different elective positions. And in order for these electorates to participate, Adibe (2015, p. 7) observed that they (electorates) are mobilized to vote candidates into various offices. These mobilizations are done through production and airing or publishing of political campaign messages that aimed to educate and influence voters to act during the elections. Supporting this position, Adaba (2015, p. 13) observed that, as Nigerians conducted their 2015 general elections, such political communication in the form of various campaign messages were witnessed. He asserts, that “Radio, which is one of the most frequent medium used by campaign organizers and political parties, witnessed such presence of political campaign messages even higher.”

Today, voters in Nigeria come across various political campaign messages through listening to radio. Pate (2014, p. 3) in a result of a nationwide study carried out by the National Bureau of Statistics in 2011 showed that Nigerians are heavily dependent on radio as major source of public information. The study titled: *Access to Information and Communication Technology* revealed that (80%) of Nigerians have access to radio, though there exist a demographic variation in ownership rates especially among the genders. A result of exposure to medium of the radio shows that (39%) of women listen to the radio at least once a week, while (55%) of men listen to the radio for the same period. In terms of educational background, it was established (66%) of women with a secondary education or higher listens to the radio at least once a week, as compare with (23%) of women with no education. In men, age barrier determines the level of listening to the radio. For example, men aged 45 – 59 and above (61.6%) listen to radio more than other age brackets. Furthermore, residency equally shows difference in exposure and usage to the radio. Urban women that listen to radio comprises (52.2%) against rural women (30.2%). In the same vein (62.2%) of men living in urban areas listen to radio as against (48.8%) of those living in rural areas. It is important to note that, according to the cultural settings of Nigerian culture, rural dwellers believe more in interpersonal communication as means of receiving information.

Agencies like the National Orientation Agency (NOA); civil societies like the European Union (EU) and African Union (AU) that serves as election observers, among others; electoral bodies like the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), in Nigeria were all aware of the pervasiveness of the radio. These bodies, among others, involved radio in enlightening citizens about the political system. With this development, Obot (2009, p. 56) showed that audience members got to know about aspirants and candidates for various elective posts as well as the manifestoes of political parties mostly through the medium of the radio. Additionally, Ukwu (2007, p. 165) stressed that radio as a medium used in Nigeria’s political process had witnessed development in producing knowledge as regards to choice and voting. On this, Obeta (2007, p. 123) offers a piece of advice that any person or group of persons and even government that ignore the role of radio in their life is courting some danger because radio reportage on the political life alone is crucial to its survival and growth. Nigeria is a country that can be described as a nation, where people are mostly guided by their ethnic affiliation and identity. This identity led to the proliferation of local media outfits especially local radio stations. These local radio stations give all the various community leaders in the locality advantages by allowing them to speak to their ethnic community members or tribal members. This is one reason that makes local radio stations more patronized by the various community members. And this also allows community leaders to speak to their co-community members directly.

In Kano, were this research is conducted the proliferation of local radio stations has gone up. These stations usually speak to their listeners mostly in their local language. The stations cover local events like farmers’ programs, etc. This is the reason why during electioneering campaigns, electoral actors i.e. the political parties, candidates and electoral regulatory bodies engage these community leaders to explain to people their political messages. In a study, Kolawole (2015, p. 51) established that majority constituting (59%) of the respondents confirmed that they did not search for information on who to vote, meaning that most of them voted on the advice or instruction of their leaders. The study, *an analysis of the influence of opinion leaders on the voting decision of rural voters: an evidence from Ayetoro, Ogun – state of Nigeria*, showed that (75%) of the respondents believed their community and religious leaders more than other sources of political information.

Kano people are very attached to listening to local radio more than any other medium. A study conducted by Sanda (2014, p. 11) found that in Nigeria and Kano in particular, people listen to radio more than any other form of media. Buttressing this, Belli (2013: 23) asserts that, “radio gives enlightenment to a lot of people. It gets to people more than any other kind of media”. In all corners of Kano state, you find a farmer working on his farm and at the same time listening to radio or meat seller while frying his meat for customers but listening to his radio. Even women that stay at home preparing for daily meals listen to radio. It is on this basis, this research study seeks to establish the extent to which political campaign messages aired on radio by politicians and other political stakeholders targeted at potential voters, influenced the voting pattern of Kano electorates during the conduct of Nigeria’s 2015 elections.

Statement of the Problem

To state a problem one need to go through three stages: 1- to identify it based on primary symptoms 2- to do a preliminary explorative research to make the problem known so you are sure it is not constructed but it really exist 3- to explain it thoroughly. Radio as a medium of communication influences how people experience their political life by its regular broadcast of news material in current affairs, politics and other areas, Morgan, (2011, p. 139). Radio is still the best way for political parties and candidates to influence people, (ibid, p. 143). In Nigeria, the political institutions were in the past employed the use of traditional means of communication to share their political campaign messages to potential voters. However, in recent times, there is a shift from depending much on use of direct or face-to-face meetings, and instead embark on the use of mostly local radio stations to send political campaign messages to the populace, especially potential voters. Kano state which is the main focus state of this research witnesses the proliferation of local radio stations both state-owned and privately-owned stations. Government at all levels struggles to control the political sphere in the state using radio as a means of disseminating their messages during and after elections. This development saw the establishment of many radio stations in comparison to other forms of media, both in Kano and across Nigerian state. The issue is whether the huge political campaign messages by the parties, candidates and other political institutions being aired on local radio have bearing to creation and sustenance of awareness of a party and/or its candidate(s) for election. Furthermore, it is a question for determination whether or not there is a relationship between radio political campaign messages; interference of the opinion leaders on the voters’ behavior leading to turn out into participating during the elections; and the outcome of the elections result.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. To find out the extent to which radio political campaign messages influence voters behavior during the 2015 general elections;
2. To examine the influence of other political campaign techniques used by political parties to influence the decision of voters to their favor;
3. To determine whether frequent exposure to both pro and against candidates radio political campaign messages influence voters’ decisions on the election day;
4. To investigate the extent of the influence of opinion leaders among voters during elections;
5. To examine the correlation between the influence of radio political campaign messages and the opinion leaders in relations to the voters’ behavior and election outcomes.

Research Questions

- a. To what extent do the radio political campaign messages influence voters’ behavior during 2015 elections in Kano – Nigeria?
- b. How do political campaign techniques other than radio used by political parties influence the decision of voters to their favor?
- c. Does frequent exposure to the positive or negative radio political campaign messages influence voters’ decision in favor or against candidates or political parties?

- d. To what extent do opinion leaders influence voters' electoral behavior of their subordinates during elections?
- e. What is the correlation between the influence of radio political campaign messages and the opinion leaders in relations to the voters' behavior during elections and the elections outcome?

Literature Review

Brief history of radio development in Nigeria

Radio started in Nigeria with the introduction of the Radio Distribution in the year 1933 in Lagos by the British colonial government under the Department of Post and Telegraph (P & T). In 1935, the Radio Distribution System was changed to Radio Diffusion System with the aim of spreading the efforts of Britain and her allies during the Second World War through the BBC. The Ibadan station was commissioned in 1939, followed by Kano station in 1944. Later a re-appraisal of radio broadcast objectives gave birth to the establishment in 1950 of the Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS). The NBS began broadcast in Lagos, Kaduna, Kano and Enugu on shortwave and medium wave transmitters. Through a bill by the House of Representatives, the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) was established in 1956. The NBC took up the responsibilities of radio broadcast in Nigeria. The Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) was established 1978. The Voice of Nigeria (VON) which served as the external service was established in 1990. With the creation of more states and each state wanting to propagate its people and culture, the place for radio broadcast began in Nigeria and has spread fast across the length and breadth of Nigerian nation. Today, in Nigeria each state owns and operates several radio stations. This is in addition to private radio stations. The communication of radio in Nigeria, according to Anifowose (2013, p. 19) involves the process by which information and understanding are transferred from one person to another. He further found that radio can be multi-faced as among other things, it can serve to pass messages, improve the capability of calling upon and organizing groups and organizations, enlarge the forum for social dialogue, provide effective capacity building of the community to raise awareness and knowledge of community issues, bring the people's voice to the higher level of their political structure and mobilize community to tackle issues. A study on the *assessment of radio as development tool* conducted by Familusi (2014, p. 6) found that (57.6%) of respondents believe that radio is the most important instrument and tool for communication development. Radio ranked as the most popular means of disseminating information, regardless of the continent, (Omensea (1997, p. 31). He further observed, that illiteracy is no barrier to radio messages since such messages can be passed in the audience' own language.

As observed earlier, in Nigeria, Kano people still uses radio as the most source of information due to its attachment with local environment. Even as we live in modern day technology where there are provisions of multimedia and computers and internet, radio still maintains its leading role in information dissemination in Kano particularly, and Nigeria in general. The use of internet and other multimedia technology still faces working challenges. For example, in most rural areas where more than or at least half of Nigerians live, internet signals are weak and hence people cannot rely on it. Again, there is still non constant supply of electricity at the local level which hinders the utmost use of television, and so on. In that kind of settings, really, radio can't be so easily substituted. Another advantage of radio program is that it can be done almost anywhere through the use of a tape recorder (Nwuzor, 2000, p. 29). A study carried out by Ariyo (2013, p. 21) on *the role of mass media in the dissemination of agricultural technologies among farmers in Kaduna North Local Government Area of Kaduna State* revealed that the respondents have different degree of accessibility to radio, television, telephone, internet, and newspaper/bulletin. However, radio was found to be more accessible (46.3%) and also the major source (60.19%) of information on agricultural technologies to the farmers. This has just introduced us to a brief history of radio development. Therefore, the following sub-section would take us through the role being played by the mass media during the conduct of elections in Nigeria

Mass Media and Elections in Nigeria

Over the years, mass media have proven to be veritable sources of information during elections in Nigeria. The mass media have been used to propagate political ideas often known as propaganda, and also used as an instrument of political mobilization by different political parties in the country. The

Nigerian mass media is always alive to its duty before, during and after election given its prime position as the vital source of information about elections in democracies and societies in transition around the world. In the view of Graber (2001, p. 278) media coverage is the very lifeblood of politics because it shapes the perception that form the reality on which political action is based. Media do more than depict the political environment they are the political environment. Media are the prime source of information we have about political activities. This is due to the media's commitment in fulfilling their obligation as spelt out in section 22 of the 1999 Nigeria's Constitutions. According to the section, the "press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times, be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people".

Essentially, the media's contribution to the electoral process is anchored on the "Agenda setting" function that is integral to the informing, educating, mobilizing and crusading roles of the media. Also, the media's participation in the electoral process find reasonable explanation and justification in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulates in Articles 21 (3) that "the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; thus shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures." The declaration gives a filling to the public service responsibility of the media which include mobilizing the people for political action. In Nigeria, the media and election coverage are like Siamese twins. The media much more than any institution in society are one of the best instruments for mobilizing the people during election as well as informing them on the latest development as regards electoral activities in the country. Mass media and elections in Nigeria can be clearly seen under the following aspect; uses of propaganda during elections, the press and political mobilization during elections, the press at the scene of elections, and the press after elections. It was through the mass media that the electorates got to know the mind of candidates and also narrow down the voters' wide range of choice before the voting. The mass media, according to Opene (2012, p. 19) therefore, "provides avenue for letting the people know what trends are, in terms of election periods, and what it means to exercise their franchise, civic rights, to vote and voted for." The mass media during the 2015 general elections were able to let the electorates know that their votes will count.

Also, during the 2015 elections, the mass media served as an institution through which the politicians attempted to reach the electorates in order to win elections. Therefore, the connection between the politician and mass media can be seen from the perspective of the politician who wants to win an election. In the process, they (political actors) through the publication, disseminating and/or airing of their prepared political campaign messages work hard to capture the attention and interest of the voters that the mass media controls. The medium of the radio among other forms of media is believed to be more influential on the electorates' voting behavior in Kano has been deliberated in the following subsection.

The Radio and Voters' Electoral Choice in Nigeria's Election

Most of the studies carried out in Nigeria have come to term that political campaign messages have some bearings in deciding who a voter should vote for or against, (Opeibi, 2005, p. 72). He found that "both political actors and their supporters deploy different persuasive strategies to elicit support and woo voters in order to gain and control power." It is significant to note that radio political campaign messages are instrumental in influencing the way a particular voter think, decide and make choice in his quest to participate in election in Nigeria (Abagen, 2009, p. 220). One sure means of achieving this aim is through the use of medium of the radio. Through coverage and presentation of news, information, facts, figures, editorials, and other analytical pieces about an issue, radio exert considerable influence on the creation of awareness on that issue (Enahoro, 2010, p. 300). There is no doubt that political campaign messages sponsored and aired on radio serve as means of raising political consciousness in Nigeria. Tejumaiye (2008, p. 85) further revealed that even the elections' regulatory body, that is, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) uses radio to air its political information in order to educate the electorates on the election processes and as well persuade them on the need to vote, though not on whom to vote.

Buttressing this, Oriavwote (2000, p. 51) found that voting behavior is dependent on the consideration of a significant number of political campaign messages, and that radio was the best medium used among others. He went further to reveal that influence of political campaign messages strategy on voting behavior is not significantly different between rural and urban voters in Nigeria. He also suggest that the implications of his research findings for campaign managers, party workers, candidates and political parties are that a flexible approach has to be adopted in preparing and planning their various political campaign messages. To conclude, it is arguable to say that voters rely on some stimuli with which they already had contact to make their decisions (Pechmann, 2001). Thus, it is understood that while the political campaign messages are being planned, radio widely distribute those political campaign messages, and in the end, voters are primed to then recall the framing or construction of such messages that have salience with them while they are voting.

Theoretical Framework

Applying the Multi-Step Flow of Communication Theory

Based on problematic of research, the problem has several angles and each angle need to be addressed theoretically. This study, therefore, used multi-step flow of communication theory as its theoretical basis. Lazarsfeld (1944) *originated this idea when he said that ideas flow from mass media to opinion leaders before being disseminated to a wider population.* Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) further elaborated it by adding that *“the multi-step flow of communication theory assumes that opinion leaders are affected more by “elite media” than run-of-the-mill, mass media”.*

According to the multi-step flow theory, opinion leaders intervene between the “media’s direct message and the audience’s reaction to that message.” Opinion leaders tend to have the great effect on those they are most similar to be based on personality, interests, demographics, or socio-economic factors. These leaders tend to influence others to change their attitudes and behaviors more quickly than conventional media because the audience is able to better identify or relate to an opinion leader than an article in a newspaper or a news program.

Similarly, Straubhaar, LaRose & Davenport (2013, p. 415) observes that *this media influence theory shows that information dissemination is a social occurrence, which may explain why certain media campaigns do not alter audiences’ attitudes.* An important factor of the multi-step flow theory is how the social influence is modified. Information is affected by the social norms of each new community group that it enters. It is also shaped by conflicting views surrounding it. Many studies testing to earlier two-step flow theory have suggested that information actually tends to travel in multi-step flow processes with many different flow directions and iterations, (Burt, 1999; Harik, 1971; Robinson, 1979; Weiman, 1982) in Stransberry (2012, p. 16). The multi-step flow model has dominated research in information for the last four and half decades (Bunnett & Manheim, 2006). As an example, US former Vice President, Al Gore applied the multi-step flow theory to garner support for his nonprofit, The Climate Project. Gore recruited individuals who were educated on environmental issues and had the ability to be influential in their community and amongst their friends and family. He then trained his opinion leaders on the information he wanted them to disseminate. This ultimately enabled them to educate many Americans about The Climate Project and Gore’s overall ideas about climate change. The multi-step flow theory is used very often in politics especially during conduct of elections. Researches show that with so much mudslinging, a trusted opinion leader is often sought after for candidate or issue information. Since the amendment of the two-step flow of communication theory into a multi-step flow theory, even advertisers often use opinion leaders in their advertisements to give a stronger effect. For many, studies have shown that opinion leaders have a larger influence on individuals than would the media. The media reaches everyone and the multi-step flow theory can be reshaped to fit any scenario. As mentioned earlier, Kano people are attached to their ethnic or tribal affiliations. They often believe in what their community leaders inform them or advise them to do. For example, when government announced the vaccination campaign against polio, they refused their children to be vaccinated for fear of inconsistency in the vaccine. However, when the various leaders in the community accepted to be vaccinated they equally agreed. These people attach importance to the community leaders, and refer to them for any societal activity. This development justified this research’s application of multi-step flow of communication theory.

Research Methodology

This study adopted survey method in order to determine the influence of radio political campaign messages on voters’ electoral behavior in Kano – Nigeria. It is also interested in the relationship between voters’ ethnic and tribal affiliations and the opinion leaders’ interference on the populace voting attitude while making decision to cast their ballot. And to get better understanding on how such political campaign messages influence voting behavior of electorates, both purposive sampling technique and simple random sampling technique were used. This is because a simple random sample gives every member of the population an equal opportunity to be chosen. This technique was chosen because a study sample is supposed to be unbiased representation of the population under study. This gave the opportunity for every class, age group, gender to be equally represented in the sample. Since this study is an analysis of the influence of radio political campaign messages during the 2015 elections, eligible voters in Kano, Nigeria were studied. Kano is made up of three senatorial districts which each district having at least 14 local government areas. Three (3) local government areas were purposively chosen from each of the senatorial district. A 25-itemed questionnaire was used as research instrument for this study. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section (A), demographic components; section (B), influence of radio and other media during elections; section (C), respondents’ exposure to political campaign messages; and section (D), influence of opinion leaders. 145 copies each of the questionnaire were administered randomly in all the nine (9) selected local government areas, giving a total of 435 copies of the questionnaire. The entire adult men and women registered voters constitute the population of the study. However, a sample size of 435 was chosen. Out of the 435 copies administered, 400 were correctly filled and returned. The distribution of the three local government areas chosen and the number of questionnaire administered per each of the three senatorial districts in Kano is presented in (table 1), thus:

Table (1): Showing the distribution of questionnaire administered in each of the three senatorial districts.

Senatorial Zone			Local Government Area	
			For Voters	
Label Name	Identity No.	Number of Local Governments	Number of Voters	
KN	Kano North	1	3	145
KS	Kano South	2	3	145
KC	Kano Central	3	3	145
TOTAL		9		435

Results and Discussion

This section of the paper presents and analyzes the data collected by the researcher in the course of the study. It shows the computation and analysis of data using descriptive statistical analysis methods of frequency and percentages. Four hundred (400) questionnaires were filled and returned out of the 435 questionnaires distributed to the respondents. Hence, data collected from the 400 registered voters who eventually took part during the 2015 general elections in Kano – Nigeria were computer-analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). This section would start by presenting the demographic characteristics of the respondents. These include the age distribution, gender affiliation, educational background and employment status of the respondents. In terms of the age distribution, respondents ranged in age from 18 to 59 years with mean of 30.76% and standard deviation of 9.92%. Eighteen (18) years was set as the starting age qualification for respondents because according to the rules of voting set by the Nigeria’s Constitution and upheld by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) only citizens of 18 years and above are eligible to vote during elections. And the 59 years was not set as the age limit for the respondents. However, it coincidentally happened that none of the respondents that received and filled our questionnaire turned out to be more than 59 years.

Equally, in terms of educational qualification, statistically it shows that respondents are in different levels of education namely primary, secondary, tertiary, and other levels. The percentages are as follows: primary (7.3%), secondary (13.8%), tertiary (75.5%), and others (3.5%). Among men frequency percentage of primary, secondary and tertiary were (6.0%), (9.5%), and (81.8%). Other levels such as certificate of participation in small scale training and adult education certificate, etc. included (2.8%) of men. Among women (10.4%) were in primary, (24.3%) in secondary, (60.0%) in tertiary and

(5.2%) in other levels, such as certificate of attendance in adult education, handcrafts and other home management classes.

Furthermore, the statistics results for the employment status of the respondents showed that 69 people (17.3%) were employed in civil service. About 31percent (125 people) worked in businesses. Education and military force included 137 (34.3%) and 13 people (3.3%), respectively. Fifty six participants (14.0%) reported working on other jobs (other jobs refers to employments that were not listed in the questionnaire). This discussion presented the first part of our descriptive analysis of the data on demographic characteristics of the respondents and is therefore, summarized in (table 2) below:

Table (2): Frequency distribution of age, gender, education and employment status of the respondents

Age category no.	Level of characteristics	Frequency (no. of responses)	Percentage %
1	18 – 24 years	107	26.75%
2	25 – 34 years	159	39.75%
3	35 – 44 years	86	21.5%
4	45 – 54 years	34	8.5%
5	55 and above years	14	3.5%
Total		400	100.00%
Gender category	Gender Affiliation	Frequency (no. of responses)	Percentage %
1	Male	258	71.3%
2	Female	142	28.8%
Total		100	100.00%
Educational category	Educational level	Frequency (no. of responses)	Percentage %
1	Primary	29	7.3%
2	Secondary	55	13.8%
3	Tertiary	302	75.5%
4	Others	14	3.5%
Total		400	100.00%
Employment category	Employment status	Frequency (no. of responses)	Percentage %
1	Civil service	69	17.3%
2	Business	125	31.3%
3	Education	137	34.3%
4	Military force	13	3.3%
5	Others	56	14.0%
total		400	100.00%

The second part would present the analytical discussion of the results obtained from the respondents' reaction on the questionnaire administered to them. In order to get the accurate results from their responses, questionnaire variables were drawn from the set of research questions of this study. The data obtained was used to determine the extent to which radio political campaign messages influence voters' behavior during the 2015 elections in Kano, Nigeria. The interpretation of the data is given, thus;

The result of participants' ability to listen to radio in (table 4.3) shows that majority (85.5%) said yes, they listen to radio every day. Listening every week and every month categories included (4.3%) and (2.8%) of the respondents. Twenty-three people (5.8%) reputed listening "every now and then" to radio and five people (1.3%) chose "very rarely". Two people (0.5%) did not answer. As for the participants' choice between local and national radio stations show that majority (90.0%) of the respondents chose local radio stations over (7.8%) who chose listening to national radio stations. Others (2.0%) did not answer the question. This confirms to the claims that Kano people are attached to their locality and hence are more interested in knowing happenings around them than considering national issue. This is their reason for choosing local radio stations over national radio stations. Furthermore, the results of participants' listening to campaign messages show that majority (90.0%) representing 360 people

listened to campaign messages via radio, 37 people (9.3%) said they don't listen to campaigns, while 3 persons (0.3%) did not answer the question. In the same vein, the results of participants' type of campaign they mostly listen to show that that majority (58.3%) of the respondents representing 233 people consider party related campaigns than the other forms of campaigns. The second group of the respondents (37.5%) chose other campaigns than the political ones, while some 17 people (4.3%) left the question unanswered. This confirms to the fact claimed by this research that Kano people are the most politically conscious people especially in the entire northern Nigeria. Hence, the reason why they always listen to political campaign messages on radio.

Regarding the result of factors affecting participants' political decision, majority (57.6%) of the respondents believed religious factor (religious leaders) affect the more. Some others (14.3%) believed in tribal/ethnic leaders as the best factor affecting their decision. Another (10.5%) chose party leaders and some very few (2.5%) indicated they are being influenced by traditional rulers. Here, majority of the respondents confirmed the claim that they (Kano people) always turned to community and religious leaders for political information because they felt there were truthful. Asked whether the choice to vote for or against party or candidate was influenced by opinion leaders, majority (65.5%) said they were influenced by opinion leaders in their voting choice. Explaining further, (45.0%) said the influence of opinion leaders come through the weekly sermon they have for their followers. On how the opinion leaders influenced electorates' voting decision, majority (63.8%) said the influence of opinion leaders come through their interpretations and commentaries about political development during sermons and other preaching sessions where the electorates gathered to listen to them such as mosques and churches. This confirms to the claims that respondents did not search for information on who to vote for, meaning that they depended on the advice/instruction of their leaders. However, attempting to explain the respondents' ability to make personal voting decision, majority (51.8%) answered 'yes' that they can make independent decision. Asked further how they can make such an independent voting decision, some (11.8%) said through evaluation of candidates while some others by considering what the opinion leaders say. Here, as claimed the demographic educational difference of the respondents shows that those with higher educational level can have a second thought over the opinion leaders' interference and finally make their own decision. However, those with little or no educational background mostly accept the advice/instruction of the opinion leaders and cast their ballot based on that.

In this study, the result shows that majority (70.5%) of the respondents said radio was the medium through which they received campaign messages followed by some other (8.5%) who chose interpersonal communication as their preferred medium. On how the participants reacted to the campaign messages, the majority (51.3%) of the respondents said they take it if they think it is right. Regarding whether the participants were affected by exposure to positive or negative political campaign messages, majority (55.0%) of the respondents said they were affected by positive campaign messages. Also (71.3%) said they either contemplate changing or changed their decision making on who to vote as a result of frequent exposure to positive campaign messages. On a similar move, (65.8%) of the respondents believed their voting decision was influenced by negative political campaign messages. Equally, some 263 people (65.3%) said they were affected to the extent of considering changing their voting decision or even changed their voting decision due to frequent exposure to negative political campaign messages during their ballots cast for candidates and parties in the 2015 elections in Kano, Nigeria. The (table 3) here presents summary of the data gathered:

Table (3): Shows the data computation of the responses of the respondents on the questionnaire administered to them.

• Participants' listening to radio	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes, every day	342	85.5
Yes, every week	17	4.5
Yes, once a month	11	4.3
Every now and then	23	5.8
Very rarely	5	1.3
No answer	2	.5
Total	400	100%

• participants' choice between local and national radio stations	Frequency	Percentage%
Local radios	361	90.3
National radios	31	7.8
No answer	8	2.0
Total	400	100%
• Do participants listen to campaign messages	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	360	90.0
No	37	9.3
No answer	3	.8
Total	400	100%
• Type of campaigns participants mostly listen to	Frequency	Percentage%
Party related campaigns	233	58.3
Other campaigns	150	37.5
No answer	17	4.3
Total	400	100%
• Factors affecting political decision of respondents during voting	Frequency	Percentage%
Religious leaders	228	57.0
Tribal/ethnic leaders	57	14.3
Trade leaders/associations	21	5.3
Party leaders	42	10.5
Traditional leaders	10	2.5
Others	38	9.5
No answer	4	1.0
Total	400	100%
• How opinion leaders influenced electorates' voting decision	Frequency	Percentage%
They hardly influence my voting decision	11	2.8
They don't influence me in any way	17	4.3
Through their interpretations and commentaries about political development during sermons and other preaching sessions	255	63.8
In all my voting decision	35	8.8
Well in a positive way of course, because it gives the right direction and counseling to the masses	18	4.5
No answer	64	16.0
Total	400	100%
• Whether or not opinion leaders influence listening to campaigns	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	262	65.5
No	125	31.3
No answer	13	3.3
Total	400	100%
• In what ways does opinion leaders affect participants	Frequency	Percentage%
They have a weekly sermon for us	180	45.0
By their follow up interpretation of the campaign messages	30	7.5
Consulting with the traditional rulers	13	3.3
As a result of association's meeting and decision taking	25	6.3
Follows community leader's choice	15	3.8
No answer	137	34.3
Total	400	100%
• How participants go about making their voting decision	Frequency	Percentage%
There are people who are respected and I follow their words	143	35.8
I usually make my own decision	210	52.5
While I consult with respected people, eventually it is me who makes the final decision	26	6.5
No answer	21	5.3
Total	400	100%
• Can participants make an independent personal voting decision	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	194	51.7

No	181	48.3
No answer	25	6.3
Total	400	100%
• How the participants' make and independent personal voting decision	Frequency	Percentage%
I make my own decision based on evaluation of the candidates	47	11.8
By developing a firsthand appraisal of the situation	27	6.8
I have my own capacity to make political decision	28	7.0
I vote without considering what opinion leaders say	16	4.0
By comparative analysis of the various party and candidate's manifestos	10	2.5
No answer	272	68.0
Total	400	100%
▪ Through which of the media participants received campaign messages	Frequency	Percentage%
Interpersonal communication	34	8.5
Radio	282	70.5
Television	30	7.5
Newspaper	16	4.0
Magazine	3	.8
Others	23	5.8
No answer	12	3.0
Total	400	100%
▪ How do the participants reacted to the campaign messages	Frequency	Percentage%
Indifferent	11	2.8
Subject messages to my own personal scrutiny and critical assessment	74	18.5
They don't in any way influence my decision	33	8.3%
I take it if I think it is right	205	51.3
I take an independent decision	7	1.8
No answer	70	17.5
Total	400	100%
▪ Whether frequent positive campaign messages affect participants' decision	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes, of course	220	55.0
Yes, but I consult with other sources	104	26.9
Not so much as to construct my entire decision	23	5.8
Not at all	39	9.8
No answer	14	3.5
Total	400	100%
▪ Do you contemplate changing your decision making due to exposure to positive campaigns	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	285	71.3
No	105	26.3
No answer	10	2.5
Total	400	100%
▪ Participants indicating been influence by negative campaigns	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	263	65.8
No	122	30.5
No answer	15	3.7
Total	400	100%
▪ Have you ever considered changing your decision due to frequent exposure to negative campaigns	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	263	65.8
No	129	32.3
No answer	8	2.0
Total	400	100%

From the foregoing, the analyses of the research questions have been addressed in various tables above using descriptive statistics of frequency and percentages. This study had presented results obtained from the responses of the research's participants. Five set of research questions were established through which data were obtained by administering of questionnaires to the participants. The data obtained was used to determine the extent to which the radio political campaign messages influence voters' behavior during the 2015 elections in Kano – Nigeria?

The results shown in the above mentioned tables involved a comparison of the means of the ranking of how political campaign messages aired on radio (both the positive and negative types of political campaign messages) drive or influence the voting behavior of electorates in their decision making on a given political party or candidate. Furthermore, this study through the established research questions attempt to accomplish the assumption that opinion leaders aside the mainstream media also exert a considerable level of influence on the voting behavior of electorates in their decision making as they are set to participate in an election. Hence, this study establishes the relationship between the influences of media, specifically the radio on the voting behavior of electorates in Kano – Nigeria in relation to the influence of opinion leaders on the same matter.

Additionally, the results displayed in (tables 3) which examined the extent to which radio political campaign messages influence voters' behavior during the 2015 elections in Kano – Nigeria are in conformity with results obtained in this study in respect of the influence of opinion leaders on the same unit of analysis, i.e. Kano people as shown in (tables 3). However, it has been established that, while radio target the audience directly, the opinion leaders target their followers indirectly because the information they passed followed certain communication processes, thereby applying multi-step flow of communication theory. Equally, the correlation between the two factors seems to be on the educational level of the respondents (registered voters). While the radio target voters with high educational background, opinion leaders focused on those who cannot understand the contents of the message directly received from the media and therefore seek to influence their decision making through their interpretation of the messages as we have seen in the data presented in (table 4.2 and 4.3) respectively. The results of the radio influence on electorates' decision making during elections by voters reflect the outcome of the validation carried out.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The objective of this study is to ascertain the level of influence of radio political campaign messages on the voting behavior of electorates during the 2015 elections in Kano – Nigeria. The findings of this study, therefore, indicated that the media, specifically the radio through its airing of various political campaign messages projected the 2015 general elections in Kano – Nigeria. This infers that the mass media generally during the said elections supplied people with information which was in some quotas interpreted by opinion leaders and passed on to their opinion followers for use while making decisions to vote. The masses in Kano having regard for the local radio stations were thus reacted in accordance to its reflection. Here, it could be said that variably two models were used. The first is the medium of radio and opinion leaders who served as guidance to the majority of the masses (registered voters) in Kano. The second are the political campaign messages that were produced and managed by the political actors, especially the political parties and candidates that were set to express their campaign messages with the aim to influence the voting behavior of the electorates and vote for them during 2015 elections. From the practical perspective, the results of the study suggest that voters' demographic characteristics and the somewhat urban/rural divide are necessary considerations in the formulation of political campaign messages. The caliber of the respondents and the accessibility of the medium through which the messages would be disseminated are also of important considerations. The implication of all these is that the results of this study have both practical and theoretical relevance. Practically, the combination of the one of the main stream media, the radio and opinion leaders, a sought of oral media, so to say suggest that producers and managers of political campaign messages ought to adopt flexible approach to political campaigns in their quest for influential campaigns on voters' electoral behavior. Theoretically, this study contributed to the body of knowledge of political communication and marketing, and as well adds to the stream of research findings in political communication (Oriavwote,

2000, p. 261). And hence, this type of study could be recommended for use by the academia, politicians, research students, candidates and party workers. Having gathered that political campaign messages exert powerful influence on the society and especially on the voting behavior of electorates, the researcher recommends that producers of political campaign messages should make optimum use of their right sense of judgment in packaging their messages to avoid deception on voters. Such messages should be packaged in such a way that if followed by the masses would not be harmful to any individual or the society. Furthermore, opinion leaders who equally found to exert considerable level of influence on the opinion followers through interpretation of the political campaign messages should always check the reality or otherwise of the messages produced by parties and candidates to avoid misleading their followers. They should also try to avoid sentimentalism, ethnicity and religious bigotries in their quest to hold on to the followers' decision making during elections, as that could have negative consequences on the society.

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