

FORMS OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGN BY ELECTIONEERING CANDIDATES IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF 2019 GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION IN CROSS RIVER STATE

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ABSTRACT

There is no ambivalence that Political campaign is instrumental to all political aspirants who are vying for different positions. During the 2019 governorship election in Cross River State, Political parties and their candidates will be sponsoring advertisements through different media like radio, television, newspaper, magazine, billboards, posters, among several others. The ultimate goal behind such political actions is to woo the electorates so as to enhance victory. The study employed survey method and the questionnaire serves as the statutory instruments. The paper used cultivation analysis theory to buttress the study. The findings reveals that electioneering candidates employed campaign during elections in Nigeria. However, the paper concluded that political campaign is very sacrosanct to electioneering candidates in Nigeria and all the political actors at various level involved in one form of campaign or another. Most aspirants used radio and television for campaign during the elections in Cross River State, while some used social media platforms, billboards and posters/pamphlets during election. The study recommended that political candidates should be circumspect when campaigning for elections because it is a platform that gives them the opportunity to seek votes from the electorates.

KEYWORDS: Political, Campaign, Electioneering, Election, Forms And Candidates.

INTRODUCTION

The coloration of political campaign in Nigeria has taken a different dimension. Political campaign is the avenue in which political aspirants market themselves before the electorates during general elections. This is a period where electioneering candidates test

their popularity. During this time, different gimmicks are employed to ensure that their campaign messages are effectively packaged to convince the electorates so as to gain their mandates.

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The trend of political campaign over time has been very rigorous in Nigeria, the issue of campaign of calumny and character assassination has been on a top gear and it is not healthy to democracy. The advent of democracy in Nigeria brought the establishment of different political parties, namely National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon (NCNC) which later metamorphosed into National Convention of Nigeria Citizens, Action Group (AG) to the reign of Social Democratic Party (SDP) and National Republican Congress (NRC), presently, there are 45 to 56 political parties in Nigeria. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressive Congress (APC) seem to be the dominants political parties that have been handling key offices in Nigeria. As the 2019 elections draw closer, Political gladiators and political parties will be launching sundry campaigns in preparation for the election.

It is salient to be circumspect when campaigning for the forth coming general elections. Leadership as they say is an in-born quality, though it varies to some individuals. Most people are born with exceptional leadership qualities that pave way for them from grassroots politics to national politics, while some are perceived not to possess such enviable qualities. Such people are described as autocratic leaders. They are desperate for powers by every means, irrespective of the negative effects, thereafter. It is affirmatively true that every human being is a political animal. Those who are willing to blend with political trends can mend themselves to acclimatize with the system. While others who are not workable, tussles to gain power by all cost.

Brain (2009, p.8) asserted that a political campaign can be an exciting experience. A great deal will happen between now and election day and with a little forethought and

planning, you can be prepared for all the twists and turns and, in many cases, control the situation. This manual is designed to help one anticipate what will happen and be better prepared.

There are three types of political campaigns to a large extent, the first is the campaign that does not have a persuasive message to deliver to voters and does not have a clear idea of which voters it wants to persuade. This type of campaign lacks direction from the beginning and the situation will only get worse.

Second is the campaign that has a concise, persuasive message and a clear idea of which voters it can persuade, but lacks a reasonable plan of what to do between now and election day to persuade these voters. This type of campaign wastes time, money and people as it wanders aimlessly toward election day. It is often distracted by the day's events, by things the opponent's campaign does or by things the press says, spending more time reacting to outside factors than promoting its own agenda.

Thirdly, the kind of campaign that has a clear message, a clear idea of its voters and a plan to get to election day but it fails to follow through on the plan, not doing the hard work day after day to get elected. This is a lazy campaign that makes excuses as to why it cannot do what it knows must be done and in the end makes excuses as to why it lost. The winning political campaign is most often the one that takes the time to target voters, develops a persuasive message and follows through on a reasonable plan to contact those voters directly.

From the foregoing, it is unarguably that the success of political campaign does not solely determine the chances of winning election but goes a long way to help aspirants who affirmatively possess the needed credentials as well as political pedigree to serve the people. In an organized setting, political candidates are

chosen based on statesmanship, how well you have contributed meaningfully for the growth of the society, as well as your track records, etc.

In Nigeria, the pattern of political campaign is quite different from what is happening elsewhere. It has been observed that most of our political candidates are involved in campaign of calumny and hate speech. There is no doubt that, it is during electioneering campaign, candidates projects their manifestos to sell their aspirations to the people whom they are seeking political mandate.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Democracy is the government of the people, by the people and for the people. It is quite obvious that democracy has played a sacrosanct role in entrenching electioneering candidates by launching disparity campaign strategies during general elections. Like during the military era, certain privileges were not there. Everything is coordinated by the military leaders, and there is nothing like election.

Political campaign is perceived to be an avenue or platform where political or electioneering candidates test their popularity before the electorates. It also provide the candidates the opportunity to showcase their aspirations to their constituents by way of presenting manifestos. There is no doubt that, it is during this period most candidates propagate unrealistic ambitions and unfulfilled promises. Unfortunately the electorates are hoodwinked by their campaign messages.

It is very imperative to know that the high percentage of those that win election are attributed to their campaign methods, while some manipulated their ways to the positions they occupy. It is on this premise that the researcher wish to investigate forms of political campaigns as employed by electioneering candidates in Nigeria, and to find out if all

political aspirants use the same form of campaign.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

THIS PAPER SEEKS TO

1. Examine forms of political campaign by electioneering candidates in Nigeria
2. Determine the relevance of political campaign to electioneering candidates in Nigeria
3. Find out the extent to which political campaign has helped electioneering candidates in Nigeria
4. Find out if all electioneering candidates employ political campaign during election

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

THE FOLLOWING RESEARCH QUESTIONS WERE SET OUT TO GUIDE THE STUDY

1. What form of political campaign adopted by electioneering candidates in Nigeria?
2. Of what relevance is political campaign to electioneering candidates in Nigeria?
3. To what extent has political campaign helped electioneering candidates in Nigeria?
4. Do all electioneering candidates employ political campaign during election?

LITERATURE REVIEW

NIGERIAN ELECTION

The evolution of electoral democracy in Nigeria has been protracted and difficult. Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, the country has organized nine general elections and numerous regional/state/local elections. Of these elections, the 1979, 1993, and 1999 polls were conducted by military regimes to allow for transition to civil rule, while the other elections were conducted by incumbent civilian regimes to consolidate democratic rule. Elections organized by incumbent civilian regimes have

been the most problematic (Agbaje and Adejumobi 2006). With the exception of the 2011 and 2015 elections, these elections have been characterized by attempts by the ruling parties to contrive and monopolize the electoral space and deliberately steer the process in their favour. This pattern was reflected in the “simulated” landslide victories recorded by the ruling parties in the 1964, 1983, 2003, and 2007 elections (Ibeanu 2007).

The 1964 federal election was contested by the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA), which was a coalition of predominantly southern parties, and the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA), whose base of support was in northern Nigeria. The Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) and its allies in the NNA took advantage of their control of the federal government to contrive a controversial victory (Dudley 1973). The 1983 general elections were also manipulated by the incumbent National Party of Nigeria (NPN), which won the presidency and gubernatorial elections in seven out of the nineteen states in 1979, and thereafter attempted to extend its political power throughout the federation. The allegations of vote manipulation in the 1983 elections triggered violent protests in some parts of Nigeria (Hart 1993).

The 2003 and 2007 general elections were also allegedly manipulated (Lewis 2003; Suberu 2007). The 2007 elections, in particular, severely dented Nigerias democratic credentials due to the national and international condemnation they elicited. However, on a positive note, the elections led to a great deal of soul-searching among the Nigerian leadership. The president at the time, Umaru Musa YarAdua, publically acknowledged that the election that brought him to office was fundamentally flawed. He therefore set up the Electoral Reform Committee (ERC) to suggest measures that could improve the conduct of

elections, restore electoral integrity, and strengthen democracy in Nigeria. Some of the ERC’s recommendations were reviewed and adopted as amendments to the Constitution and Electoral Act. The government also tried to restore the integrity of elections in the country by appointing credible leadership to the INEC. Its part, the INEC adopted series of internal measures aimed at restoring public confidence in the electoral process (Kuris 2012). All of these measures contributed to the relative successes of the 2011 and 2015 general elections Orji (2015, p.75-76).

CONCEPTUAL EXPLANATION

The concept of elections have been viewed by disparity scholars. It is seen as the process whereby new leaders are elected by the public to represent them. Ezegwu, Enem and Ndife (2017, p.53) posited that elections are generally conceived as means of peaceful change of leadership in societies. There are ways of selecting people that represent the citizens in the government (Asadu, 2008). Election is the process of making formal decision on who to hold a political office. Araba and Braimah (2015) remark that elections is an integral part of a democratic process which empowers the citizenry to determine fairly and freely who should lead them at every level of government periodically and take decisions that shape their socio-economic and political destinies. Kogah (2008) averred that elections are the hallmark of participatory democracy and that which permit the electorates to legitimately exercise their franchise under conditions which theoretically speaking, should be devoid of rancour.

From the foregoing, it is quite obvious that election gives the people the opportunity to choose who they want to represent them in public offices. This process enables the public to legitimately exercise their franchise. Elections are sort of participatory democracy

that accord the electorates the privilege to assess electioneering candidates and choose who they want to exercise their franchise.

Election, according to Ezirim (2010) is an informed act of collective decision that occurs in a stream of connected antecedents and subsequent behaviour involving the participation of people in the act of electing their leaders and leading to their own participation in governance. Iyayi (2004) cited in Ezegwu and Osuagu (2013) stated that election is a formal act of collective decision-making that occurs on a stream of connected antecedents and subsequent behaviours.

They involve the participation of people in the act of electing their leaders and their own participation in governance. Elections are not necessarily about election's day activities, although they form an important component. They encompass activities that come before, during and after elections.

THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGN

Ezegwu, Enem and Ndife (2017,p.53) stated that a political campaign is an organized effort which is to influence the decision making process within a specific group or people. Chile (2011) stated that campaigns refers to a systematic efforts in coordinating all relevant activities over a long period of time to obtain a specific and all-encompassing objective. Aduradola and Ojukwu (2013, p.106) defined political campaign thus:

The mobilization of forces either by an organization or individual to influence others in order to effect an identified and desired political change. It shows people and particularly, political candidates' ability to sensitize the political community in relation to making the community see them as potentials and better representatives of the people.

Asemah, Nwamuo and Edegoh (2004) submitted that a political campaign is an organized effort which seeks to influence the decision making -process within a specific group. In political or electoral campaigns, representatives are chosen or referendums decided. In modern politics, the highest profile political campaigns are focused on candidates for the position of the Head of State or Head of Government, usually a President or Prime minister. The campaign messages which often contain the issues that candidate intends centre to share with the electorates. The messages which often centre on policy issues, summarizes the main ideas of the campaign and are often frequently repeated to create a lasting impression in the minds of the voters.

From the above submission, it is a truism that political campaign is a systematic and planned bids which tilts towards enhancing the decision-making process within a particular cluster. For example, it is during political campaigns/ rallies that candidates project their campaign messages to the electorates who digest and filter their manifestos to understand whether or not their ambitions are realistic.

Often times, political actors utilize pernicious propaganda during political campaigns. They make promises that they cannot keep over the years and it has become a recycling or recurrent decimal. It appears some electorates are beginning to understand their sneaking pattern and are reacting accordingly.

Ginsberg (2009) cited in Olujide, Adeyemi and Gbadeyan (2011, p.180) see political campaign as organized effort by a political party or candidate for public office to attract the support of voters in an election". He believed that political campaign includes five basic elements; professional public relations, polling, broadcast media, direct mail and internet. In democracies, political campaign refers to electoral campaigns, wherein representatives

of particular States are chosen. Any political campaign thus is made up of three main elements; message, money, and machine (Pistekova, 2008). The message is the statement and it is one of the most important features of a political campaign.

Pistekova further concluded that hundreds of thousand dollars on opinion polls spent to find out what is the right message to win the elections. Other important feature of a successful campaign are machine, the human capital and the people who are loyal to the cause and help the candidate. This crowd of people usually requires managers that make the tactical decisions and manage the volunteers. The last important element of a political campaign is money. The candidate organize meetings large donors and send emails to small donors just to raise the money for the campaign because the cost are enormous (Pistekova, 2008).

HATE SPEECH CAMPAIGN

The issue of hate speech is a ticking timing bomb that is lying fallow waiting to explode. There have been severe attacks as regards to hate speech, our political road map has faced with gruesome uproar . Hate speech is an affront to democracy, it incites genocide, it also caused war. Therefore we should shun hate speech and embrace politics that is devoid of falsification and calumny.

Community Empowerment for Progress Organisation & rOg_agency for open culture and critical transformation (2016, p.1) posited that this is a tricky question, since there is not a single internationally accepted definition of hate speech. But in broad terms, hate speech is a communication that denigrates people on the basis of their membership to a particular group. This can include any form of expression, such as images, plays and songs as well as speeches. Some definitions even extend the concept of

hate speech to include communications that foster a climate of prejudice and intolerance - the thinking here is that these kinds of communications may fuel discrimination, hostility and violent attacks later on. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), UN treaty, calls on governments to prevent hate speech. Article 20(2) says: “any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law. Working towards a consensus on hate speech, as of end of May 2016, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Microsoft, signed a code of Conduct on online hate speech with the UN.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OFFENSIVE SPEECH AND HATE SPEECH

There is no one definition of hate speech, rather it is sometimes difficult to judge what is an offensive comment and what hate speech is. But basically a nasty comment about an individual isn't hate speech, unless it targets that person as a member of a particular group. There are real-world examples of hate speech having disastrous, deadly results. Recent examples include:

1. 1994 genocide in Rwanda, where it is widely believed that hate speech played a significant role in the massacre of 800,000 Tutsis and Hutus.
2. In the aftermath of the December 2007 presidential elections in Kenya, violence erupted, mainly between Kenya's three largest ethnic groups. More than 1,100 people were killed. A popular radio broadcaster, Joshua Arap Sang, was accused of using his position to encourage ethnic attacks.

Text messages were widely circulated calling on one group or another to “exterminate” ethnic rivals. Since then, Kenya has passed new laws prohibiting hate speech. Violence shall be

prohibited by law. Working towards a consensus on hate speech, as of end of May 2016, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Microsoft, signed a code of Conduct on online hate speech with the UN.

CAMPAIGN MANAGER

Ditsu (2017,p.1) opined that the Campaign Manager acts as a liaison between the Electoral Commission and the candidate, thus allowing the candidate to focus solely on their campaigns, without becoming tied down with administrative activities. The campaign manager effectively co-ordinates the campaign team for the candidate, as well as acts as an adviser throughout the campaign period - including areas such as advertising, polling and getting the electorate to vote. They may also be asked to supervise and execute the campaign strategy, once determined by the candidate.

Association of International Certified Professional Accountants (2018, p.6) stated that a campaign manager helps “brand and sell his or her clients to voters”. To do this, the campaign manager becomes intimately familiar with the candidate, learning not only about the candidates political viewpoints and aspirations, but also about the candidate’s family life, personal history and finances. As such, a candidates campaign manager should be someone they can trust completely and with whom they can be completely candid. How does a candidate find someone he or she can trust to always have the candidates best interest at heart? CPAs can get recommendations from elected officials, including party and community activists whom they admire.

CPAs should interview several campaign managers, talking to them at length to learn as much as possible about the managers’ experience and methods. How does each campaign manager respond to negative press,

false accusations made by an opponent, or criticism on the candidates social media sites, for example? How does the manager build a budget and develop messaging? While a campaign manager may offer advice that the candidate isnt expecting, their values should always align. Campaigns can be a very stressful time, and a good campaign manager will serve as both a team mate and a coach, helping the candidate achieve their goals

KEY FUNCTIONS OF THE CAMPAIGN MANAGER

1. Act as a liaison between the candidate and the Electoral Commission.
2. Manage and coordinate the activities of the campaign team.
3. Schedule the campaign team on polling days to ensure that there is enough support across all board and at all times.
4. Manage the online and social media aspect of the campaign, that is setting up a schedule of posts, ensuring that comments and feedbacks are within the spirit of the campaign and replied to if necessary.
5. Coordinating emails with the candidate to ensure that information is received and acted upon.
6. Ensure that there are regular meetings between the candidate and the campaign team.
7. Where a candidate is summoned to appear before the Electoral Commission, it is the duty of the campaign manager to ensure the candidate do the right thing at the right time.

MUSIC IN ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN NIGERIA

According to Titus and Aboyemi (2011, p.168-169) Music performance are central to artistic expression and experience in African tradition. Nketia (1974) defined music performance as the act of playing musical instrument, singing

with the voice, dancing with the body, or acting in a music drama. Musical performance in Africa maintains an integral relationship with other aspects of life. A notable feature of this interaction, is the fact that music is often performed in a multimedia context in which dance, elaborate costume, mime, poetry and drama are featured in a total theatre spectacle.

The location of this total theatre spectacle within the context of religious, social and political activities underline the indigenous perception of music. As an expressive idiom combines musical and are characterized by an engaging interaction between professional musicians. (Okafor 2002) observes that 'we forsake the conscious, constructive use and power of music to our loss' In interpreting this fully, it means the product of music in the electioneering campaign must be able to function at the best and highest levels of the country's political development.

In the traditional Yoruba society, songs and music occupied a unique place in the preparation, mobilization and prosecution of war. The importance of songs in instigating conflict is aptly captured by a Yoruba proverb that says "orin ni isaaju ote", meaning songs herald hostilities (Olawajaju, 2011). Scholars such as Olutoye and Olapade (1998) and Ilesanmi (1998) examine the importance of drums, chants and songs among the Yoruba and aver that more than their entertainment roles, they perform religious, social and military purposes.

As a communicative device, songs are employed for inspiring warriors and for launching verbal assault in inter-personal conflicts. In many instances verbal assaults often result in physical assaults such that thought is provoked about the linguistic process that accentuates a conflict. Song of assaults are almost always accompanied by cheering, laughing and savouring of the exchanges, until the conflict intensifies into brawl. What this

imply is that the metaphors or linguistic devices employed in songs are not innocent and should be taken seriously. Songs of assault have a long history, and can function not only on a personal level but also as politically effective weapons.

Campaign and post-election pretest song in Hausa language songs are situated within this frame, and like war songs. This communication through artistic medium open up danger and provocation against the person the artist sings about.

FORMS OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGN IN NIGERIA

Political campaign is the process whereby, electorates are invested with campaign messages about prospective candidates who are vying for sundry public offices. It is a planned and consistent efforts made by party members to canvass for the candidates of their choice. It is a moment where candidates tussle for power by testing their popularity before their constituents. However, in the Nigeria political landscape, there are several forms of political campaign which is squarely articulated below.

- **RADIO AND TV CAMPAIGN:** Radio and TV campaign are electioneering campaigns that package messages about prospective candidates who are vying for different positions for election in the society and these messages are presented on radio and television for electorates to access and weigh their candidature.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN:** These are electioneering campaigns that are carried online in different social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WeChat, WhatsApp, Tango, Instagram etc. The new technology has brought this form of communication that cuts across different audience and as such, politicians or

electioneering candidates use social media to campaign for the election.

- **BILLBOARDS CAMPAIGN:** This is one of the most common form of political campaign that is used by electioneering candidates who are vying for top positions such as presidential candidates, senatorial candidates, House Representative/ House of Assembly candidates as well as Governorship candidates.
- **POSTERS CAMPAIGN:** Posters campaign are forms of political campaign carried out by electioneering candidates across every level of elections, ranging from Presidential to Governorship and House of Assembly elections including local government Chairmanship election. During the general elections in Nigeria, posters are pasted in all the nooks and crannies of the States where elections would take place.
- **PAMPHLETS/ LEAFLETS CAMPAIGN:** Pamphlets and leaflets are synonymous with posters, though leaflets or pamphlets are often distributed to the public by hand. This is one of the forms of political campaign that requires campaign team to meet one on one with the electorates and most times the leaflets is distributed during political rallies where the candidates are also available to speak with the public to invest their manifestos to them.
- **RALLY CAMPAIGN:** This is a sort of campaign that political or electioneering candidates used to reach out to electorates to enable them canvass for their votes during the elections. During this period for instance, candidates visit their different constituencies to seek for their votes.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CULTIVATION ANALYSIS THEORY

Cultivation Analysis will give credence to this study. According to West and Turner (2010,p.378) in Owolabi, Ajijola & Wonuola

(2017,p. 91) Cultivation Analysis is a theory that predicts and explains the long-term formation and shaping of perceptions, understanding, and beliefs about the world as a result of the consumption of media messages. The findings of Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorelli (1976) formulate the assumptions of the Cultivation theory (Anaeto, Onabajo & Osifeso, 2008; West and Turner, 2010). The assumption of the theory include the fact that television shapes viewer's society's way of thinking and relating (West & Turner 2010). This ideas reinforces scholars' comments that exposure to television contents establishes a common culture. This is because from what is portrayed in television, heavy viewers will cultivate the perceptions of reality. (West & Turner, 2010; Anaeto, Onabajo & Osifeso 2008; LittleJohn & Foss, 2008);

This theory is relevant to the study, its basic tenets posited that which predicts the long-term formation and shaping of perceptions, understanding, and beliefs about the world as a result of the consumption of media messages. And secondly, television shapes viewer's society's way of thinking and relating (West & Turner 2010). This ideas reinforces scholars' comments that exposure to television contents establishes a common culture. The fact that political aspirants put up their campaign messages on the media goes a long way to project the credibility of the candidates during manifestos investiture, as well as election debates.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed survey method. Ohaja (2003) posited that survey is a study of the characteristics of a sample through questioning that enables a researcher to make generalizations concerning the researcher's population of interest. Survey studies could be use for both large and small population to discover the relative incidence, distribution and interrelation of variables.

Table 1. Forms of political campaign adopted by electioneering candidates in Nigeria

Nature of Response	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Radio/TV	40	33.3%
Social media	10	8.4%
Billboard	20	16.6%
Posters/pamphlets	30	25%
Rally	20	16.7%
Total	120	100%

Source: Field Work, 2018

From the table above, 40 or 33.3% of respondents said political candidates adopts radio/television for electioneering campaigns in Nigeria, 10 or 8.4% said political candidates used social medial for political campaigns in Nigeria, 20 or 16.6% said political candidates

used billboard for political campaigns in Nigeria, 30 or 25% said political candidates used posters/pamphlets during political campaign in Nigeria, while 20 or 16.7% said political candidates used rally as one of the campaign strategy during elections in Nigeria.

Table 2. Relevance of political campaign to electioneering candidates in Nigeria

Nature of Response	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Very relevant	60	50%
Relevant	40	33.3%
Not relevant	20	16.7%
Total	120	100%

Source: Field Work, 2018

The table explains that 60 Or 50% of respondents said that political campaign is very relevant to electioneering candidates in Nigeria, 40 or 33.3% said political campaign is relevant

to electioneering candidates in Nigeria, while 20 or 16.7% of respondents said political campaign is not relevant to electioneering candidates in Nigeria.

Table 3. The Extent to which political campaign has helped electioneering candidates in Nigeria

Nature of Response	No of Respondents	Percentage %
High	65	54.2%
Moderate	40	33.3%
Low	15	12.5%
Total	120	100%

Source: Field Work, 2018

This table shows that, 65 or 54.2% of respondents said that the extent which political campaign has helped electioneering candidates in Nigeria is high, 40 or 33.3% said the extent which political campaign has helped

electioneering candidates in Nigeria is moderate, while 15 or 12.5% said the extent which political campaign has helped electioneering candidates in Nigeria is low.

Table 4. Electioneering candidates employ political campaigns during election

Nature of Response	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	95	79.1
No	25	20.9
Total	120	100%

Source: Field Work, 2018

The above table shows that 95 or 79.1% of respondents said yes, electioneering candidates employed campaign during election, 25 or 20.9% said electioneering candidates does not employ campaign during general elections in Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study examined forms of political campaign by electioneering candidates in Nigeria: A study of governorship election in Cross River State.

The findings that emanated from this indicates that 40 or 33.3% of respondents said political candidates adopts radio/ television for electioneering campaigns in Nigeria, 10 or 8.4% said political candidates used social medial for political campaigns in Nigeria, 20 or 16.6% said political candidates used billboard for political campaigns in Nigeria, 30 or 25% said political candidates used posters/pamphlets during political campaign in Nigeria, while 20 or 16.7% said political candidates used rally as one of the campaign strategy during elections in Nigeria.

This study also shows that the relevance of political campaign to political aspirants is enormous. 60 Or 50% of respondents said that political campaign is very relevant to electioneering candidates in Nigeria, 40 or 33.3% said political campaign is relevant to electioneering candidates in Nigeria, while 20 or 16.7% of respondents said political campaign is not relevant to electioneering candidates in Nigeria.

The imperativeness of political campaign to electioneering candidates has been measured, findings shows that 95 or 79.1% Of respondents said yes, electioneering candidates employed campaign during election, 25 or 20.9% said electioneering candidates does not employ campaign during general elections in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

Political campaign is very sacrosanct to electioneering candidates in Nigeria, all political actors at various levels involved in one form of campaign or another. Most aspirants used radio and television for campaigns during the elections in Cross River State, while some use social media platforms, billboard and posters/ pamphlets during elections. From the data presented and analyzed, the imperativeness of political campaign to electioneering candidates has been measured, findings shows that 95 or 79.1% Of respondents said yes, electioneering candidates employed campaign during election, 25 or 20.9% said electioneering candidates does not employ campaign during general elections in Nigeria. Therefore, the assertions of respondents who presumed that political campaign is consequential to aspirants in Nigeria is magnificently high, and this form the basic findings of the study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Political candidates should be circumspect when campaigning for elections because it is a platform that gives them the opportunity to seek votes from the electorates
2. Campaigns of hate speech and calumny should be avoided as it is not healthy for democracy.
3. The media should properly scrutinize electioneering campaign messages packaged by political aspirants to shun unnecessary indoctrination.
4. Political aspirants should abstain from campaign of calumny and character assassination for the growth of democracy.
5. Aspirants should at all times keep their campaign promises made to the electorates as this will go a long way to ensure their continuity for those who wish to contest for the second term.

6. Electoral education should be given to voters to ensure that they understand the parameters in which they assess candidates who are vying for election.

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