**THE IMPACT OF RADIO ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

**ABSTRACT**

The study is on the impact of radio for political participation in Uyo metropolis: Case of Nigeria 2011 general elections. This study has three major purposes: (1) determine the usefulness of radio-based political campaigns to voters’ decision making during the election, (2) identify the problems associated with the use of radio-based political campaign during the election, and (3) ascertain the level of contribution of radio-based political campaigns in addressing challenges associated with the use of traditional media for political campaign during the election. Sample for the study was selected using quota and purposive sampling techniques. The respondents for the study comprised voters in Uyo metropolis, who were 18 years old before the 2011 Nigeria general election and had registered for voting in the election; as well as web consultants, and campaign managers of political parties. Data for this study were collected using both questionnaire and interview schedule. Findings from the study indicated that majority of voters did not access or come in contact with radio-based political campaigns during the election. Radio-based political campaign was relatively successful in addressing challenges associated with the use of traditional media for political campaign for candidates and voters. Based on these findings the study recommended that urgent improvement of radio infrastructure in Nigeria is needed. Factors that drive up cost of radio use should be addressed by radio operators and the government to bring down cost. Candidates and political parties should raise more competent radio campaign management teams to improve effective use of radio for political campaigns during future elections.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background to the Study**

Political participation is a process through which individuals or groups of citizens get involved in designing representative decision- makers to enhance an effective governance and societal welfare. The participation can come in form of voting, rally, contesting, partnership, among others. To embark on this task of electing leaders, people must be mobilized in order to get enlightened via enlightenment campaigns, sensitization, information dissemination and advocacy programmes directed at Community Leaders, Age Grades, Development Associations, Opinion Leaders, Artisan Guides and other grassroots movements in order to increase their awareness and foster attitudinal change towards active involvement and participation in politics. (Ikelegbe, 2005).

According to one of the political activists, Anthony Gramsci (2010), “the ruling class or party through agent of socialization ( eg radio) indoctrinated others, their beliefs systems and values towards politics”. This emphasize more on the need and advantages of radio in helping to educate people (rural people) on the aim of embarking on politics and the gain achieved from such in a persuasive and convincing mood to lure them into participation for such as it helps to build an organised and healthy and peaceful community, state, country and the world at large. It is also known that the impact of radio manifests in emergence of political movements by instant group with aim to achieve objectives. This implies that radio aim at reaching the diversified and heterogeneous people (rural dwellers) in their various destinations simultaneously and also in their different language for both old and young to partake. This is because in most rural areas, old and young women are in a greater number (non-educated ones) and with their votes, one wins any election. There are various ways one can participate in politics. These ways could be through political rally, partnership, contesting, criticism, voting and so on. The above participation means are very crucial in our rural areas, especially where we have a large country (eg Nigeria).  From the above statement, Democracy stands as the most widely embraced system in politics and governance as means “Rule by the people,” which implies direct participation and representative terms of rule by the people. But, in most community many people are still showing apathy, alienated, indifference to political participation especially cities populated by businessmen.  The more information and education even enlightenment on the importance of political participation are made known to the people, the more interest, sympathy and joy they derive from participating in it by the greater extent of the knowledge they acquire about it.

Therefore, mass media particularly radio play a crucial role in fostering an environment of good governance and political awareness in society. As the watchdog and interpreter of public issues and events, the media has a special role in every society. In information-based society; the media have a disproportionately visible and influential role says International Foundation for Election Systems,(2011).

IFES (2011) added that democracy cannot exist in the absence of the press. This is because democracy is based on popular will and popular opinion depends on the public’s awareness and knowledge. It is the mass media that brings up, promotes and propagates public awareness.

Fischer, (2002) says the main responsibility of the press is to provide comprehensive, analytical and factual news and opinion to the people on everyday issues and events of popular concern. To fulfill its duty and responsibility, the press must work according to the fundamental principles of professional ethics, as well as norms and values of journalism.

Goodman, N. (2010) opines that democracy can neither be sustainable nor strong without a free press. On the other hand, press freedom will not be possible without democracy. Therefore, the mass media and journalists must be committed to democracy. For this, the press must be perpetually involved in the establishment and promotion of a democratic culture.

The press must remain ever vigilant to protect and enforce people’s freedom of thought and expression and citizens’ right to all information relating to the various aspects of their life and future.

Held, D. (2006) also observes the fact that access to information is a citizen’s right and must be taken to heart, and information must be presented in a simple and palatable manner. Right to information is inherent in democratic functioning and a pre-condition for good governance and the realization of all other human rights, including education and health care. The main objectives should be the promotion of transparency and accountability in governance so as to minimize corruption and inefficiency in public office and to ensure the public’s participation in governance and decision making.

Media must be credible and trustworthy. Trust is the most valuable asset for any media. Once lost, it cannot be earned back. It is for this reason that all media must uphold their principles to provide accurate and factual news and other programmes.

Jones, D. W. (2001). Press must understand the difference between politics in general and party politics. Media should not be a vehicle, or used as an advocate for any political party or ideology.

Public and political issues should be clearly understood, analyzed and presented in an impartial manner.

During elections/political campaigns, equal time slots or opportunity must be allocated to each of the legitimate political parties and candidates.

In the course of elections, messages that encourage goodwill and harmony among all the ethnic groups, religions, genders, cultures, languages, regions and communities should be broadcast.

Media plays the role of watch-dog in reporting corruption, complacency and negligence. In a changing, competitive landscape, compliance to good governance has never been taken so seriously, as people demand more transparency from both the government and private sectors. Responsible practices from government, universal principles on human rights and the fight against corruption have assumed great importance.

To this end, the research looks into the impact of radio in political participation using Uyo metropolis area of Akwa Ibom state with the view to know the level of media mobilization.

**1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In Nigeria, recent elections have been characterized by an unprecedented use of radio for political campaign by many political parties, particularly by parties in the opposition who often face hurdles in their attempts to have equal access to the traditional media for political campaigns. In Nigeria, it is not unusual to hear about accusations of unequal or limited access to the media by political parties in opposition as they seek to reach voters. There are more government controlled media in Nigeria than private owned media. It is generally assumed that within a democratic political system citizens should have sufficient opportunities to communicate their preferences toward political decision makers. Of equal importance, however, is the mobilization aspect, citizens have to be mobilized and recruited in order to be able to participate. It is in this regard that limiting access to the media for political campaigns for political parties hurt their ability to recruit or gain supports of voters and enable the parties realize their objectives.

The 2011 Nigerian elections witnessed an increased use of radio for political campaigns by political parties. Though it assumed that the use of radio for political campaigns may hold a lot promises for political parties, challenges likely to be faced by citizens in the area of accessing radio for political information during political campaigns in Nigeria may pose a challenge to the relevance of radio use for political campaign. Other issues that raise concern are likely challenges inherent in the use of the medium for political campaigns. There are also questions concerning voters’ dependence on the medium for decision making as it relates to choosing of candidates and parties during elections as well as role radio could likely play in addressing challenges associated with the use of traditional media in political campaigns during elections; and the impact it has on voters during the election. These identified issues are important in that they could greatly impact on the challenges that could arise in the use of radio for political campaigns. This study intends to address these questions.

**1.3 Research Questions**

1. To what extent did voters in Uyo metropolis come in contact with radio-based political campaigns during the 2011 Nigeria presidential election?

2. What were the problems associated with the use of radio as a medium for political campaign during the 2011 presidential election in Uyo metropolis?

3. To what extent did radio-based political campaigns aid voters’ decision- making during the 2011 presidential election in Uyo metropolis?

**1.4 Objectives of the Study**

1. Determine the extent, voters in Uyo metropolis came in contact with radio-based political campaign during the 2011 presidential election.

2. Ascertain the problems associated with the use of radio as a medium for political campaign during the 2011 presidential election in Uyo metropolis.

3. Find out the extent to which radio-based political campaigns aided voters’ decision making in the 2011 presidential election in Uyo metropolis.

**1.5 Significance of the Study**

Studies on the use of radio as a tool for political campaign in the 2011 Nigeria general elections are few and thus, have necessitated the need for this study. In view of the growing use of radio as a medium for political campaign in Nigeria, this study is thus timely as it offers opportunity for empirical enquiry on the use of radio for political campaigns in Nigeria with specific reference to determining the relevance of radio-based political campaigns to voters’ decision making during the 2011 general election in Uyo metropolis in Nigeria; identify the problems associated with the use of radio-based political campaign during the 2011 general elections in Uyo metropolis and also, determine the contribution of radio-based political campaigns in addressing challenges associated with the use of traditional media for political campaign during the 2011 general election in Uyo metropolis and determine the impact of radio-based political campaigns on voters during the 2011 Nigeria general election in Uyo metropolis.

Furthermore, this study is important in that its findings will fill the knowledge gap that exist in the body of knowledge on the suitability of use of radio as a medium for mobilizing society towards political causes in Uyo metropolis; determine the relevance of radio-based political campaigns to voters; determine the contribution of radio in addressing challenges associated with the use of traditional media in political campaigns particularly in Uyo metropolis, as well as examine the impact of radio-based political campaigns on voters in Uyo metropolis.

It is assumed that the findings of this study will be of interest to political campaign managers, web consultants, political parties, media scholars and the general public who may have interest in radio-based political campaigning.

**1.6 Scope of the Study**

This research intends to examine the impact of radio on political participation during Nigeria 2011 presidential election in Uyo metropolis.Unlike other Nigerian elections, the 2011 presidential election was characterized by a significant use of radio in political campaigns. This particular reason influenced the choice of the 2011 Nigeria presidential election as the case study for this research.

**1.7 Limitation of the Study**

It was difficult to authentically verify if all members of the sample of the study had actually registered for voting in the 2011 Nigerian General elections. Criteria for being part of the population for the study were that voters should be of voting age (18 years old) before the 2011 Nigeria general elections and should have registered for voting in the election

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1 Radio**

One of the most popular and widely accepted medium of communication is radio. It is not difficult to see the reason why radio stands out as the premier mass media. Ashley Butner, in a paper published in the Carolina Papers in International Development makes an observation that has a wide universal acceptance, that:

Radio has been cited over and over as the ideal medium for communication, especially in developing nations, because it transcends literacy and geographical barriers and its relative low cost in comparison to other technologies makes it most accessible to most people (Butner, 2003:12).

Radio commands the widest audience amongst the various types of mass media. According to a media usage survey by AudienceScapes (2009), 89 percent of Nigerian adults get news and information from the radio on at least a weekly basis. Radio is therefore an important tool in communicating critical information to the masses.

World over, the impact of radio on the lives of people whether positive or negative - is well documented. In Rwanda for instance, radio was used negatively in fuelling ethnic animosity and hate at the height of the infamous genocide in 1994 that left close to a million ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus dead. Politicians all over the world understand the power of radio and would not hesitate to use it for their own selfish gain. In the same breath, radio has been used in many instances to foster peace and reconciliation and drive a socio-economic and political development agenda. The advent radio broadcasting and the widespread ownership of radio receivers over time dramatically changed the mass communication landscape. As Girard (2001) puts it, until the radio came on the scene, access to information was a preserve of the literate few of the society and who were invariably to be found in the urban centres where they had access to newspapers and other forms of the written word. Radio changed all that since one did not need to know how to read and write in order to access information on radio. Radio as a medium of communication grew rapidly in the 1920s and the succeeding decades saw it become entrenched as an enduring form of mass media. Demers (2002) notes the explosion of radio across the globe in the 1920s, where in 1921, there were 5 licensed radio stations in the United States of America, and five years later, there were 58. Elsewhere, Radio Argentina began broadcasting in 1920 and by 1926; there were numerous radio stations all over Latin America. On the African continent, the first radio station was established in 1924 in South Africa (Mytton, n.d.) and progressively over the succeeding decade in other regions of the continent; thus 1927 in Nigeria, 1932 in Zimbabwe, 1935 in Congo and Ghana and 1936 in Nigeria. These stations were primarily set up to serve the interests of the white settlers and their colonial governments. As the agitation for political emancipation from colonization, radio programmes targeting the indigenous communities started to be aired albeit under tight control and regulation by the colonial administrations.

In the 1960s a majority of the countries in Africa gained political independence. In the succeeding three decades, governments maintained a tight control on media particularly radio broadcasting. The leading broadcasting houses across the continent were often owned and controlled by government. However this scenario began to change with the wind of democratization that swept across Africa and indeed the whole of the world starting in the late 1980s and intensifying into the 1990s. The fall of the Berlin wall in the early 1990s was a watershed in matters of democracy and governance across the world. Processes surrounding that event had ripple effects that were felt globally. Not long after the fall of the Berlin wall, the clamour for greater democratic space and personal freedoms gained urgency leading to the fall of numerous dictatorial regimes in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, central and South America. Of course the mass media was a key player in the whole process and that continues to be the case even now. Radio as the common man‘s mass medium of choice and compulsion is therefore an important tool and enabler of the democratization process anywhere in the world. Nigeria‘s democratic development has been accompanied by a corresponding growth in the number of radio broadcasters such that whereas there was only one recognized radio broadcaster – the state- owned Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation - in the early 1990s, there were 105 licensed radio broadcasters in Nigeria in the year 2020 (Communication Commission of Nigeria 2014). With expanded democratic space came the liberalization of the mass media including the airwaves. Mytton (n.d.) observes that before 1987 there were only five or six privately owned independent radio stations on the entire continent in Gambia, South Africa, Swaziland, and Liberia. By the turn of the century there were more than 450 independent radio stations in Africa.

A common characteristic of this proliferation of independent radio stations has been that they are mainly commercial FM stations based in the urban centres with entertainment as the main menu on offer. In Nigeria for instance, the most popular FM radio stations are based in Nairobi, and even though a number have progressively extended their reach to the rural areas, their business model is purely commercial and therefore profit driven and self-serving. The significance of this is that there little or no focus at all on developmental information in the broadcast content. In fact some FM radio stations are purely no-talk radio stations that play music only throughout their time on air. Under these circumstances, the task of disseminating developmental information is in essence left to the government through the public broadcaster which as it were would most often than not transmit generic information, without taking into account the specific needs of different categories of listeners as influenced by their special geographic, social, cultural, economic and even technological circumstances. In some instances such information may not be relevant at all to some of the communities receiving it since it may not address their unique circumstances that may be specific and so much different from other communities in the country. This scenario reinforces the case for a radio broadcasting model that puts the needs and the aspirations of a specific community at the core of its operations.

**2.1.1 Community Radio**

When radio fosters the participation of citizens and defends their interests; when it reflects the tastes of the majority and makes good humour and hope its main purpose; when it truly informs; when everyone‘s words fly without discrimination or censorship, that is community radio often be overlooked by commercial or mass-media broadcasters. It is a type of radio that is operated in the community, for the community, about the community and by the community. According the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) community radio represents the democratization of communications as it enables members of a community to gain access to information, education and entertainment. Members of the community recognize themselves and identify with community radio, in addition to communicating among themselves. Typically, community radio operates on a not-for-profit basis with community ownership and control built into its structures. Community radio has variously been referred to by different names; thus rural radio, farm radio, pirate radio, alternative media among others. However, there are subtle differences between and among these forms of community radio. According to the World Association of Community Broadcasters (1998); Community radio responds to the needs of the community it serves, contributing to its development within progressive perspectives in favour of social change. Community radio strives to democratize communication through community participation in different forms in accordance with each specific social context.

A study by Farm Radio International in 2008 under the auspices of the African Farm Radio Research Initiative (AFFRI) revealed a number of telling facts about farm (community/rural) radio. Thus:

Radio is the most effective means of reaching the rural communities

Farm radio is an effective social lubricant

Radio forums strengthen rural decision making structures

Radio programmes created by communities attract high listenership

Farm and development radio content is more effective when generated with and alongside the local communities.

**2.2 The 2011 Nigeria General Elections**

Odion (2012), identifies election is an act of choosing or selecting candidates who will represent the people of a country in the parliament and in other positions in the government. Election is a form of procedure recognized by the state or an organization, whereby all or some of the members of the organization choose a smaller number of persons or one person to hold office of authority in the organization. Elections are important and highly organized media of popular expression. This implies that it is through the system of elections that the masses express their wishes (Akindele, 2011). Uwagboe (2009) maintains that elections are at best, means by which the people choose and exercise some degree of control over their representatives. Elections are further seen as formal decision-making process by which a population chooses an individual to hold public office.

Democracy as a political system imposes responsibility on officials to be accountable to the people, and they must return to the voters at prescribed intervals to seek their mandate to continue in office. For this reason, when elections are called, politicians and supporters will begin to oil the political machines in other to influence policy by competing directly for the votes of the electorates in what are called campaigns. The essences of elections, according to Ejeba (2012) as cited in Odion (2012), are to: ensure that voters freely choose those who will represent them; enable voters to make choices among the parties, candidates' and programmes; ensure that elected officials are accountable to the electorate; promote citizens sense of belonging in government; promote public confidence, trust and support for government and its programme; and also, provide the mechanism for collective efforts towards the development of the country.

Ejue and Ekanem (2011:287), further states that in Nigeria, the constitutional right to vote for every Nigerian citizens who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years are contained in sections and subsections of 77 (2); 117 (2), 132 (5) and 178 (5) of the 1999 constitution. This right exists as embodied in the universal declaration of human right and the entire body of international human rights law. These rights are recognized at least in principle by most countries and form the heart of several national constitutions. These authors stress that one of the most critical means through which individuals can influence governmental decision-making is through voting. Voting is a kind of formal expression of preference for a candidate for a particular office or for a proposed resolution of an issue that concerns one state or country.

Jinadu (2011), in his studies on elections in Nigeria, states that the first major election in Nigeria can be traced to the 1964 general election which was the first after the end colonialism by the British colonialists. The election was contested between Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) and Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). Since then few elections have been held which were subsequently followed by military dictatorships. After 13 years of absence of democratic system of government, in 1999, Nigeria finally returned to democratic rule. Since then government has transited democratically through elections. Examples of such elections were the 1999, 2003 and 2007 general elections.

The 2011 elections included elections into the National Assembly, which consists of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The Senate has a total of 109 members elected from single-member constituencies and the House of Representatives has 360 members, also elected from single- member constituencies. Members of both houses of the National Assembly are elected for a four- year mandate. There were elections into gubernatorial offices in the 36 states that make up the federation, State Houses of Assemblies in the 36 states of the federation and for the position of office of the president of Nigeria. The 2011 Nigeria’s general elections were held from April 9 – May 6, 2011(Common Wealth Observer Group, 2011).

The Common Wealth Observer Group (2011), in its reports on the 2011 general elections held in Nigeria, stated that of the 63 registered political parties that participated in the April 2011 elections, 54 fielded candidates for the federal and/or state elections, and 20 for the presidential poll. The political parties that participated in 2011 election include:

Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN): Nuhu Ribadu; African Democratic Congress (ADC): Peter Nwangwu; African Renaissance Party (ARP): Yahaya Ndu; All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP): Ibrahim Shekarau; Better Nigeria Progressive Party (BNPP): Ifeanyichukwu Nnaji; Congress for Progressive Change (CPC): Muhammadu Buhari; Fresh Democratic Party (FDP): Chris Okotie; Hope Democratic Party (HPC): Ambrose Awuru; Liberal Democratic Party (LDP): Chris Nwaokobia; Mega Progressive Peoples Party (MPPP): Rasheed Shitta-Bey; National Conscience Party (NCP): Dele Momodu; National Majority Democratic Party (NMDP): Akpona Solomon; National Transformation Party (NTP): John Dara; People for Democratic Change (PDC): Mahmud Waziri; Peoples Democratic Party (PDP): Goodluck Jonathan; Peoples Mandate Party (PMP): Nwadike Chikezie; Social Democratic Mega Party (SDMP): Pat Utomi United National Party for Development (UNPD): Ebiti Ndok. 21 parties, led by the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) had opted for a working alliance with Goodluck Jonathan under Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) platform.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in its 2011 reports on the elections indicated that total voter registration in 2011 was 74 million with 40 million valid votes and 1.3 million invalid votes. Gberie (2011) observed that the 2011 elections were deemed to be the most organized, free and fair in the country’s history, though, they were far from flawless. International observers such as Common Wealth observer group described the votes as a ‘significant improvement’ over previous ones which were generally characterized by mass electoral irregularities, making the processes not to be deemed as free and fair as well as resulting in voters losing confidence in the electoral process.

**2.3 Radio and 2011 Nigeria Presidential Election**

The 2011 general elections witnessed a remarkable use of social media as a political participation tool in Nigeria. During the election, many political parties and candidates incorporated radio in a significant way, into their electoral campaigns. It had been noted that three major issues underlined the tremendous use of social media tools during the 2011 elections. Firstly, the use of social media in Nigeria’s 2011 elections reflects a global trend towards “radio elections” or “e-electioneering”. Around the world, rapidly expanding access to radio, increased availability of radio ready smart-phones and other communication devices, as well as the evolution of web-based new media – personal websites, social networking sites, blogs, e- newsletters, have redefined methods of political participation, leading to a significant shift towards the use of social media in the electoral process. Previously, network television and newspapers dominated coverage of electioneering and were the primary sites of election-related information. But today, the social media has become a major election information sharing platform globally.

The second issue that underlines the use of social media in Nigeria’s 2011 elections was the tendency of some Nigerian politicians to tap into the opportunities offered by the social media for on-line campaigning. During the 2011 general elections, many politicians, particularly the presidential aspirants, used social media tools to connect with voters and constituents. Facebook and Twitter appear to be the most widely used social media platforms by the politicians. The third issue that underscores the use of social media in Nigeria’s 2011 elections is the tendency of Nigerian civil society and the electorate to take up social media as a tool for improving the efficiency of election observation. (Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre, 2011:1:3)

Study conducted by radio World Stats (2012), placed Nigeria as having above 45 million radio users in the year 2012, topping all other African countries. techloy.com (2012), as cited in Iwokwagh and Okworo (2012:385), in its study on the growth of social networks in Africa, recorded that Facebook users in Nigeria had crossed the 4 million mark, having experienced a rapid growth rate in 2011 which made it the 15th fastest growing country on Facebook globally, and the 35th country in the world ranking of countries on Facebook. Nigeria is the third Twitter nation in ranking, in Africa after South Africa and Kenya, with 1.67 million tweets, while South Africa reportedly generated over 5 million tweets, and Kenya 2.48 million tweets (Punch Newspapers, February 7, 2012). Iwokwagh and Okworo (2012:385) then concluded that it was not surprising therefore, that Facebook was extensively engaged by Nigerians who actively participated in the political process and the 2011 Presidential Election in particular.

It is worth noting that prior to the use of radio as a tool for electoral campaigns in Nigeria, political rallies, personal contact and speeches; and political adverts on the mass media, were popularly used for mobilizing electorates’ support for elections. Campbell (2011) found that although the 2011 general election was the first to include widely available social media, Nigeria now holds the continent’s record for most tracked reports of social media use during an election, with nearly half a million examples cataloged by the proprietary software at the Social Media Tracking Centre in Nigeria. Social media facilitated the transmission and exchange of information during the elections. Four ways by which the social media were used were: through the massive use of blackberry messenger; YouTube, Skype, Facebook, twitters, GSM, SMS (Oladimeji, Olatunji and Nwogwugwu, 2020).

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**3.1 Research Design**

Due to the nature of this study, the study combined quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. These methods had been chosen because they were the most appropriate methods required to generate needed data for the study. Descriptive survey method of data collection was used in collecting data that was used to answer research questions one and three of the study. This was because data type needed to answer research questions one and three could easily be gathered by the use of descriptive survey method.

**3.2 Population**

The population of the study had all inhabitants of Uyo metropolis, who were of voting age (18 years old) before the 2011 Nigeria’s general election and had registered for voting in the election. The limiting of the age of participants from Uyo metropolis of Akwa Ibom.

**3.3 Sampling Techniques**

According to Asika (2001:74), ‘the sample is precisely the part of the population.’ It is small part of the population intended as a representative of the whole. Quota sampling technique was used to draw sample from the inhabitants of Uyo metropolis, who were of voting age (18 years old) before the 2011 Nigeria’s general elections and had registered for voting in the election. Quota sampling technique was used for the study because it ensured that the major characteristics of the population of the study were proportionally represented in the sample. According to Asika (2001), this sample technique enables the researcher of the study to represent the major characteristics of the population by sampling a proportional amount of each.

Purposive sampling technique sampling technique was used to identify and select the campaign managers of the political parties that participated in the 2011 Nigeria’s and also web consultants, for the study.

**3.4 Sample Size**

Part of the sample for this study was drawn from residents of Uyo metropolis of Akwa Ibom state, who were of voting age (18 years) before the 2011 general election and had registered for voting in the election. In order to get a relatively reliable figure of this part of the population, the Independent National Electoral Commission’s record list of registered voters of the areas in the 2011 Nigeria’s general election was obtained by the researcher. Based on the record, there were a total number of 476,428 registered voters in Uyo metropolis council (INEC, 2011).

**3.5 Instruments of Data Collection**

This study employed questionnaire as the instrument used to gather data from selected residents of Uyo metropolis, who were of voting age (18 years) before the 2011 Nigeria general election and had registered for voting in the election. The questionnaires have both open- ended and closed ended questions. The questionnaires have been divided into sections and were targeted at answering relevant research questions suited for this instrument of data collection.

Copies of the questionnaire were administered using purposive sampling technique. The use of this sampling technique in the distribution of copies of the questionnaire was to ensure that only individuals who met the criteria of being part of the population of the study were given the chance to supply data for the study. The researcher personally administered the instrument and collected data with a view to answering research questions one and three of the study. A total of three hundred and eight-four questionnaires were distributed among respondents in districts in Uyo metropolis and respondents.

This study also employed Interview schedule as the instrument for gathering the qualitative data.

**3.6 Methods of Data Analysis**

The data collected from copies of questionnaire administered was statistically analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. The descriptive analysis included the use of frequencies, percentage, and charts. These methods had been used to ensure that data generated in the study was properly analyzed and clearly interpreted. The qualitative data collected from the in-depth interview was analyzed using qualitative method. This method had been used to ensure that data generated was properly analyzed and clearly interpreted. Data analyzed was presented in narrative form.

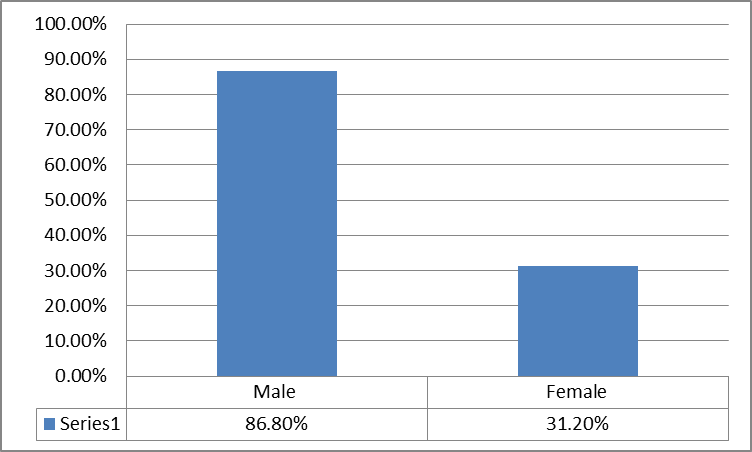
**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATIONANDANALYSIS**

**4.1 Data Presentation**

A total number of 384 copies of questionnaire were administered and retrieved.

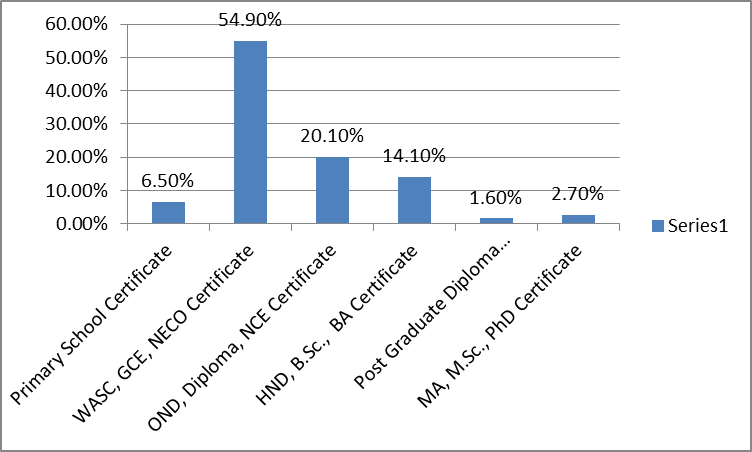
Figure 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents



(Source: fieldwork, 2020.)

Figure 2 indicates that majority of respondents are male, thus, making up 68.8% of respondents of the study while female respondents make up 31.2%.

Figure 2: Educational Status of Respondents



(Source: fieldwork, 2020.)

Figure 3 shows that majority of the respondent have at least secondary school level education. Only 6.5% have primary school level education. The respondents are all educated, thus, knowledgeable enough to answer the questionnaire items reasonably well.

Table 2: Major source of campaign information for respondents during the election

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Medium | Frequency | Percentage |
| Television | 110 | 28.6 |
| Radio | 139 | 36.1 |
| Family and Friends | 27 | 7.1 |
| Newspaper | 29 | 7.6 |
| Magazine | 0 | 0 |
| internet | 48 | 12.5 |
| Billboard | 17 | 4.4 |
| Out Door Political  Campaign/Speeches | 8 | 2.1 |
| Pamphlets, Posters | 6 | 1.6 |
| Total | 384 | 100 |

(Source: fieldwork, 2020.)

Table 1 shows that majority of respondents identified radio and television as their major sources of political campaign information during the 2011 Nigeria’s presidential election thus making up 36.1% and 28.6% respectively. Only 12.5% of respondents identified radio as their major source of political campaign information during the election. Overall, these data particularly those that identify television and Radio as the main sources of information for Nigerians conforms to data from other studies which has identified television/radio as the most prevalent single source of information among Nigerians. Factors responsible for the low use of radio for accessing radio-based political campaigns information during the election have been identified by this study.

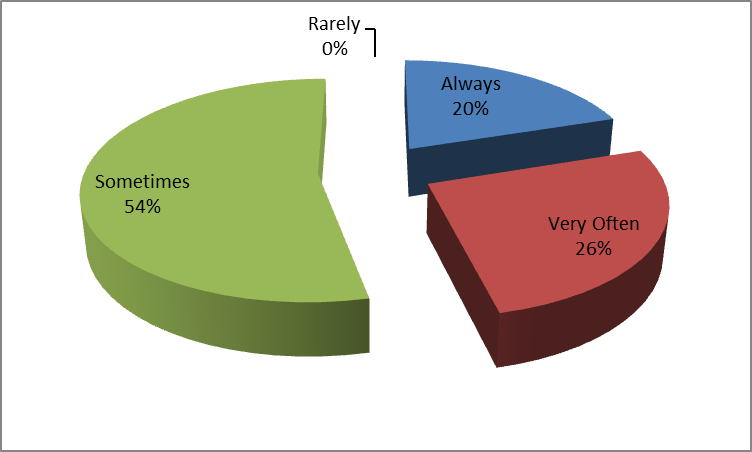
Table 2: Respondents who accessed radio-based political campaigns sites

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
| Respondents who accessed radio- based political campaign sites | 110 | 28.6 |
| Respondents who did not access radio-based political campaign sites | 274 | 71.4 |
| Total | 384 | 100 |

(Source: fieldwork, 2020.)

Table 2 shows that majority did not access radio-based political campaigns sites during the election. Only 28.6 % of respondents accessed radio-based political campaigns sites during the election. Thus, very few respondents utilized radio to access radio-based political campaigns during the election. In contrast to the data from this study, data from studies carried out in the United States by PEW research radio project in 2009 found that the proportion of Americans going online for election-related news and information has more than doubled since the end of the 2000 general election. Six in ten radio users went online in 2008 for campaign news, up from 52% at a similar point in 2004 and 33% in 2000. Moreover, because the total population of radio users has also grown over that time, the overall size of the online political news consumer audience has grown from 18% of all adults in 2000 to 44% of adults today.

Figure 6: Frequency of accessing radio-based political campaigns by respondents who accessed radio-based political campaigns during the election



(Source: fieldwork, 2020.)

Figure 6 shows that majority of respondents did not visit radio-based political campaign sites very often during the election. Only 46.4% of respondents reported that they visited the campaign sites either always or very often during the election, while 54% of respondents indicated that they accessed radio-based political campaign sites only sometimes. This data indicated that respondents of the study who accessed radio-based campaign sites of candidates during the 2011 presidential election spent did not spend much amount of time visiting the campaign sites.

Interestingly, findings from a study by Miller (1996) found that in some cases, priority determines number of visit to radio and the length of time spent surfing. Just as data from this study has determined, the study by Miller (1996) found that younger radio users have more time at their disposal than those in their 30s and 40s who could not use much of the time for radio activities online. Those aged 50 and other have more free time than the middle age and therefore can also use it for online radio activities.

Table 3: The major way difficulties in accessing radio-based political campaign information affected respondents during the election

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| RESPONSE | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| It poorly affected knowledge about the parties and candidates | 8 | 7.3 |
| Could not fully follow activities and events in the election | 51 | 46.3 |
| Depended less on radio for political campaign information | 32 | 29.0 |
| Could not participate in the election as a result of the challenges | 7 | 6.4 |
| Did not significantly affect my ability to use radio to access campaign information | 12 | 10.9 |
| Total | 110 | 100 |

(Source: fieldwork, 2020.)

Table 3 shows that majority of respondents reported that they could not follow activities and events in the election on radio like they would have liked to due to the challenges faced in accessing radio-based political campaign information during the election. While 7.3% of respondents reported that the difficulties faced in accessing radio-based political campaign information resulted in them having poor knowledge about the parties and candidates in the election, 46.3 % reported that the challenges associated with accessing radio-based campaign hindered them from following activities and events in the election online like they would have liked.

Further 29% of respondents indicated that the difficulties they faced in accessing radio-based political campaign information during the election forced them to depend solely on other media rather than on radio for political campaign information.

Only 6.4% of respondents reported that they did not participate in the election as a result of being unable to access information from radio-based political campaign sites due to challenges associated with accessing radio-based political campaign information during the election. Lastly, 10.9% of respondents reported that the challenges associated with accessing radio-based political campaign information did not significantly affect their ability to fully utilize radio to access radio-based political campaign information during the election.

The analysis of the above data showed that the challenges as well as the impact of the challenges experienced by respondents in accessing radio-based political campaign information during the election clearly highlighted the drawbacks of use of radio-based political campaigns in the areas during the election. The nature of these draw backs include: lack of skills on the part of voters in the area to access online political information, inability of some voters to afford browsing data to access online campaign sites, network challenges often from poor radio services, inadequate electricity to use radio, inability to afford computer devices to access online campaign sites, among others. The nature of the impact of these draw backs on voters have being highlighted above.

Table 4: Major way radio- based political helped overcome difficulties faced in getting political campaign information from traditional media

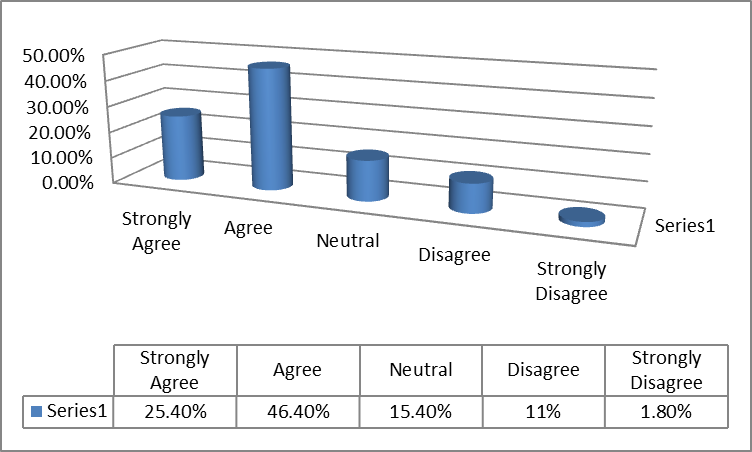
|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| RESPONSE | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| Able to receive instant feedback on campaign issues | 25 | 22.7 |
| Greater opportunity to interact with other voters and the candidates | 23 | 20.9 |
| Access to political campaign information anytime one wanted | 25 | 22.7 |
| Cheaper to access political campaign information from it | 26 | 23.6 |
| Use of radio did not make much difference | 11 | 10.0 |
| Total | 110 | 100 |

(Source: fieldwork, 2020.)

Table 4 shows that radio-based political campaigns helped respondents overcome difficulties faced in getting political campaign information from traditional media in diverse ways. 22.7% of respondents reported that radio-based political campaign enabled to receive instant feedback on political campaign issues from candidates of PDP and CPC during the election while 20.9% respondents indicated that radio-based political campaign offered them greater opportunity to interact with other voters and the candidates in the election as the campaign sites of both PDP and CPC were interactive and as such offered voters and candidates opportunities to interact. Furthermore, 46.3% of respondents reported that radio-based political campaigns enabled them to access political campaign information from PDP and CPC campaign sites at any time and cheaply. Only 10.0% of respondents reported that the use of radio did not make much difference in overcoming difficulties associated with getting political campaign information from traditional media.

The analysis of the above data showed that radio in many ways impacted positively in resolving challenges associated with the use of traditional media for political campaigns during the election.

Figure 3: Level of Agreement on whether radio-based political campaigns increased respondents’ participation in election



(Source: fieldwork, 2020.)

Figure 13 shows that majority of respondents were of the view that exposure to radio-based political campaigns during the election increased their participation in the election. 71.8% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that exposure to radio-based political campaign increased their participation in the election. Analysis of the data showed that respondents identified that the information acquired from the online campaign sites increased their understanding of many campaign issues during the election hence enabled them to engage fully in the election. The volunteer page and donation page on the online campaign sites of the parties enabled respondents to actively participate in the campaigns of the parties during the election.

Only 12.7% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that exposure to radio-based political campaigns did not have influence on their level of participation during the election. Thus, exposure to radio- based political campaign can influence an electorate’s level of participation in an election.

Other studies have found similar findings regarding how radio impact on political participation. Shah, Kwak, and Holbert (2001) found that individuals who use the web for information and news exchange are likely to be motivated politically than those who use radio for entertainment purposes. Furthermore, Tolbert and McNeal (2003) found a positive correlation between radio usage and both voter turnout and campaign contributions. The study concluded that radio provided the public with political information in a more convenient, detailed and low cost form which motivates political participation.

**4.2 Discussion of Findings**

The discussion of findings for the study has been arranged based on the research questions of the study.

Majority of voters did not access or come in contact with radio-based political campaigns during the 2011 presidential election. Data gathered via survey showed that of all 384 respondents surveyed in the areas, only 225 respondents had access to radio, and only 110 (28.6%) respondents out of the 225 respondents with access to radio, accessed radio-based political campaigns sites during the 2011 Nigeria’s presidential election, highlighting the challenge affecting the use of radio-based political campaigns for political campaigns in Uyo metropolis.

In contrast to the low use of radio-based political campaign information in Uyo metropolis, in the United States where radio has played an increasingly key role in elections, Rainie (2005) found that in 2004, at least 75 million Americans, 37 percent of the adult population, used radio to get political news and information, discuss candidates and issues, or participate directly in the political process. The number of online political news consumers increased from 18 percent of the U.S. population in 2000 to 29 percent in 2004. And, in those same four years, the number of registered voters who cited radio as one of their primary sources of news about the presidential campaign increased by 50 percent.

A variety of factors have been identified by the respondents and interviewees of the study as factors responsible for the low consumption of radio-based political campaigns by voters in Akwa Ibom.

Data gathered from interviewees and respondents in this study showed that there were problems associated with the use of radio as a medium for political campaigns during the 2011 Nigeria presidential election in the areas. Challenges encountered with the use of radio-based political campaigns by the parties and candidates during the election were the problem of illiteracy among voters since the medium required voters to be literate to use it effectively. There were also the problems of technical challenges which hindered parties from effectively using radio to campaign. Inadequate electricity to run computers and radio link facilities was also a problem. Furthermore accessing adequate technical manpower to man the e-campaigns by the parties and candidates was also a problem. Discerning the motivations behind comments or opinions of some of the visitors to the sites was a challenge as some of the commenting voters could not express themselves clearly.

From the perspective of voters, challenges encountered in accessing radio-based political campaigns of different political parties and candidates during the election included, not being able to afford the cost of browsing data for accessing radio, network challenges often from poor radio services by radio providers, being unable to connect to radio due to electricity failures as well as not possessing radio skills required to optimally use radio to access radio-based political information. Similarly, these challenges have also been highlighted by some empirical studies such as the one on radio access and use among students of the University of Ilorin in Nigeria, carried by Udende (2010), which found that majority of respondents were of the view that the general (public) power outages, not have a laptop/desktop to access radio, network failure and non –connectivity were factors that hindered them from accessing radio.

Majority of voters in Uyo metropolis who accessed radio-based campaigns sites of People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and Congress for progressive Change (CPC) during the election reported that radio- based political campaign was useful to their decision making during the 2011 Nigeria’s presidential election. About 47.2% of respondents rated the usefulness of radio-based political campaigns to them as high or very high while 44.5% of respondents rated it as moderate. Furthermore, data from the study showed that 67.3% of voters agreed or strongly agreed that information on these campaign sites influenced their views about the candidates.

Analyses of the ways radio-based political campaigns aided voters’ decision making during the election revealed that the PDP and CPC radio-based campaigns sites gave respondents more information on their candidates and their positions on campaign issues during the election.

Respondents indicated that their engagements with components in the PDP and CPC online campaign sites such as the parties’ manifestos page, visions and missions page, interactions with other users of these online campaign sites, the candidates and parties’ views on campaign issues and interaction with the parties’ candidates online were means by which radio-based political campaigns contributed in aiding voters’ decision making during the election.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.1 Conclusion**

The use of radio-based political campaigns in the 2011 presidential election may have contributed relatively less significantly in the mobilization of voters in Uyo metropolis to participate, vote for, or support a candidate or political party when compared to other media used for political campaigns during the election due to majority of voters in the areas did not access radio-based political campaign information during the election.

However, despite the challenges of the use of radio-based political campaigns in the areas during the election, there was no doubt that it indeed changed the way voters and candidates interacted. It empowered the voter to assess the candidates’ electoral credentials and points of view and further enabled the voter to contribute to the electoral debates.

Significantly, radio- based political campaign impacted on voter’s decision making during the 2011 Nigeria’s presidential election in the areas. Majority of voters who accessed radio-based campaign sites in the areas during the election reported that radio-based campaigns helped them to make up their minds on choice of candidates during the election. Furthermore, radio-based political campaign was relatively successful in addressing challenges associated with the use of traditional media for political campaign for candidates and voters in the areas.

Although the use of radio-based political campaigns in the 2011 general election was a new phenomenon in Nigerian elections and its use in the elections was fraught with challenges, with the growing numbers of radio users in Nigeria particularly among the voting population, it is likely that its use by political parties, candidates and voters will continue to grow as they overcome challenges that limit the potentials of radio-based political campaigns in Nigeria.

**5.2 Recommendations**

In view of the poor radio infrastructure in Nigeria as identified in this study, urgent improvement of radio infrastructure in Nigeria is required to ensure improved accessibility to radio by Nigerians in different parts of the country. This can only be achieved when radio service providers invest more in building their capacity to provide quality service to customers.

The issue of high cost of using radio services in Nigeria have been highlighted in this study as a factor that discourages many voters from fully taking advantage of the opportunities that radio offers. Many Nigerians have not accessed radio-based political campaigns due to the high cost of browsing data to access radio sites. It therefore becomes necessary that factors that drive up cost of radio use be addressed by radio operators and the government to bring down cost.

In view of the fact that some political parties and candidates in Nigeria do not have competent radio campaign management teams, as identified in this study, candidates and political parties should raise more competent radio campaign management teams so as to improve on the effectiveness and efficient use of radio for political campaigns during future elections. This they can do by exposing them to further trainings on the management of radio for political campaigns.

In view of findings from this study which has shown that most Nigerians access radio via mobile phones, radio-based campaign managers are encouraged to also build campaign contents that are better suited for mobile phone radio browsers.

Findings from this study have shown that some voters are unable to use radio effectively due to language barrier and low literacy level, in view of these, radio campaign managers are encouraged to provide radio-based political campaign contents in local languages also so as to enable many Nigerians who are not fluent in English language to easily follow campaign messages or contents on radio and make their views available. Sustained government efforts at increasing the literacy levels in the country will have greater positive impact on radio use in the country.

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**QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear Respondent,

I am an undergraduate student of ………………………………………………. carrying out a research on the topic “the impact of radio on political participation”

The questionnaire is aimed at obtaining data which will be used to determine the impact of radio in political participation. Your response to the questions asked will be treated confidentially and it is for academic purposes only. Thank you.

INSTRUCTION

Below are some questions. Please tick [√] as applicable to you.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sex: Male [ ] Female [ ]

Educational Status:

Primary School Certificate [ ]

W A S C, G C E, N E C O, S S C E [ ]

Professional/Diploma/NCE [ ] HND/BSc/BA Degree [ ] Postgraduate Diploma [ ]

MA/MSc [ ] Ph. D Degree [ ] Others [ ]

SECTION B: VOTERS’ EXPERIENCE WITH radio BASED POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

Which is your major source of Information in the 2011 Nigeria’s presidential election?

Friends and family [ ] Television [ ] Radio [ ] Newspaper [ ], Magazine [ ] radio [ ]Outdoor advertising (e.g. billboard) [ ] Outdoor political Campaign [ ] Pamphlets/Leaflets [ ]

Did you have access to radio during the 2011 Nigeria’s presidential election? Yes, I had access to radio during the election [ ]

No, I did not have access to radio during the election [ ]

Have you come in contact with radio based political campaign?

Yes, I have come in contact with radio-based campaign [ ] No, I have not come in contact with radio based campaign [ ]

7 Did you access radio based political campaigns during the 2011 Nigeria’s presidential election?

Yes, I accessed radio-based campaigns during the election [ ] No, I didn’t access radio-based campaigns during the election [ ]

Which activity did you carry out mostly when you visited the candidate’s radio-based campaign site(s) in Nigeria’s 2011 presidential election?

Checking Out News Feeds and Profiles of Candidates [ ] Post Your Views on candidates' Wall [ ]

Check out What Politicians Are Saying [ ]

Engage in chat on campaign issues with other voters on the campaign site [ ]

Others (Please Specify) …………………………………………………………..

SECTION C: PROBLEMS FACED BY VOTERS IN ACCESSING radio- BASED POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

What was the major difficulty you faced in accessing radio-based political campaign during the 2011 Nigeria’s presidential election?

I could not always afford the cost of browsing data to access radio [ ] There were network challenges often resulting in poor radio connections [ ]

I experienced electricity failures resulting in inability to always access radio [ ] I had inadequate knowledge on how to operate radio [ ]

I did not encounter any significant challenges [ ]

In what major way did difficulties you encountered in accessing radio-based political campaign affect you during the 2011 Nigeria’s presidential election?

It poorly affected my knowledge of the parties and candidates during the election [ ] I could not follow activities and events in the election like I would have liked [ ]

It forced me to depend mainly on other media than radio for information [ ] I did not participate in the election because of that [ ]

It did not affect me in any way during the election [ ]

Despite these challenges, would you still rely on radio for political information in future elections in Nigeria?

If my access to radio gets better in future, I will [ ] I will not, I prefer other media to radio [ ]

I will, no matter the challenges [ ]

SECTION E: THE USEFULNESS OF radio BASED POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS TO VOTERS’ DECISIONS

News and information from radio based political campaigns influenced your opinions about candidates or parties in the 2011 Nigeria’s presidential election. Strongly Agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]

Exposure to candidates’ radio based campaign sites was helpful to you in your decisions on your choice of candidate or party in the 2011 presidential election. Strongly Agree [ ] Agree [ ] Neutral [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ]