

APPRAISAL OF INEC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN PROMOTING VOTERS EDUCATION DURING 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF AMAC METROPOLIS, ABUJA

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ABSTRACT

T*his research work assesses the campaign strategies INEC used in enhancing voters education during 2019 general elections in Nigeria. The literature and theories used for investigating and supporting this area mainly focused on the four most important concepts for this study, Strategic Communication, Communication Strategies, Political Education, Voters Education, Political Participation, Voting and voters Behaviour, The Independent Electoral Commission (INEC), the 2015 General Elections, The 2019 General Elections, INEC Voter's Education Strategies and Voter's Apathy and Elections in Nigeria. Through self-administered questionnaire, data was collected from 384 respondents and were*

Introduction:

Information, education and communication are effective tools for behaviour change, especially in the global efforts by governments, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders and groups that promote democracy or political education which is significant for inclusive political process. Communication is central to live; it connects people, groups, communities and societies and is necessary for effective decision-making (Elegbe, 2010). It is an everyday affair, cutting

descriptively and inferentially analyzed. The findings generated from study objectives and the hypotheses showed that INEC use various media outlet such as the mainstream media, social media, town hall meeting, workshop among others for voters education. The level of voters' education is high. INEC voter education campaign is very much related to the knowledge voters have on the 2019 general election. INEC campaign strategies has significance effect on the level of voters' education during the 2019 general election. INEC campaign strategies has significance effect on the enhancement of voters' education during the 2019 general election. Pre-election and post-election voter education and enlightenment programmes on radio and television nationwide have shown significant success. Thus, INEC should not relent in using mainstream media that both urban and rural areas have access for voters education. This will ensure grassroots enlightenment forums and outreach activities in Local Government Areas .

Keywords: *Awareness Campaign, General Elections, Voters Education & Nigeria*

a cross boundaries of age, gender, works et cetera. It is also essential to human survival and communication exchange can lead to physical, cognitive, attitude and behavioural change. An understanding of the process of communication therefore enables those engaged in the promotion of democratic consciousness among the electorates; to develop persuasive messages which can be sent through various channels to provide target audiences with relevant information to influence their political or elections knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. Such an intervention programme that has been designed to promote social change will have a greater chance of success if it includes multiple levels of communication. The new advances in information and communication technology has tremendously increased people's appetite for information and communication especially as it concerns elections. This communication strategy is key for the successes of any electoral process

and most especially in countries that experience high voters' apathy such as Nigeria.

For instance, voters apathy, electoral fraud and manner of voting manipulations in Nigeria were evident in 1964/1965, 1979, 1983, 1993, 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 general elections (Ezeoguori-Oyewole, 2020; Nwagwu, 2016; Orji, 2015, Osinachukwu & Jawan, 2011). Studies have shown a significant level of improvement in 2015 and 2019 general election (Beetseh and Akpo, 2015; Enwere and Ladan- Baki, 2015; Ezeoguori- Oyewole, 2020; Nwagwu, 2016). This success was attributed to the introduction of Smart Card Reader technology and INEC but without adequate voters' education in the ICT adoption and usage (Oduola, Hassan & Sawaneh, 2020). Consequently, there is no enough efforts from Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) aimed at promoting voter education in the country; which led INEC to increase it budget on voters' education during 2019 general elections to 5.3 Billion naira (INEC, 2019).

Voter education is essential to ensuring that voters can effectively and efficiently exercise their voting rights and express their political will through the electoral process (Akintayo, 2011). If voters are not prepared or motivated to participate in the electoral process, questions about the legitimacy, representativeness, and responsiveness of elected leaders and the electoral body (i.e., the electoral commission) may arise. In this case, it's the INEC. Nigerians may not be informed about elections or have faith in the electoral system if voter education is not provided. Voter education is a very deliberate and focused endeavour. It is aimed at eligible voters and covers both specific electoral events and the electoral process in general. INEC should regard the effort to properly educate and enlighten Nigerians about the elections as commendable. Nigeria where the larger percentage of voters fall within the age bracket of 18-40, there is the crucial need to educate these age brackets who are predominantly youths on proper conduct and acceptable behavior expected of them during the election. This is also linked with several violent activities during the election whereby youths are prone to unleash mayhem (Akintayo, 2011).

It has therefore become pertinent for researchers to assess INEC communication strategies of voter education. It is belief that INEC has all the resources to embark on the campaign that will help Nigerians have access to basic information on their voting rights. Against this backdrop, this study assess the campaign strategies INEC used in enhancing voters education during 2019 general elections in Nigeria. To achieve this, the following objectives have been set: 1) To identify the various campaign strategies INEC used for voters education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria; 2) To examine the level of voters education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria; 3) To measure the impact of INEC campaign strategies in enhancing voter education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria; and 4) To investigate whether INEC campaign strategies has enhanced voters education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Voter's Apathy and Elections in Nigeria

Credible elections are becoming increasingly recognized around the world as a critical component of democracy, democratization, and good governance. Elections in democracies are critical for ensuring the representation of popular will and, as a result, for ensuring the political system's legitimacy. As a result, evidence of worldwide political indifference, a lack of psychological involvement in public events, emotional detachment from civic duty, and political abstention is troubling. As a result, there is a persistent interest in learning more about the causes and characteristics of political abstention. In mature and emerging democracies, settled and volatile societies, large and thriving economies as well as small and troubled economies, among youth, women, and other marginalized groups as well as mainstream dominant interests, voter apathy, a subset of political apathy, has thus emerged as a major issue. Several elements that influence voter indifference have been discovered in the relevant literature. Among these are broad psychological elements and communal memory of historical and current events. Individual, social, and

regional patterns of trust, efficacy sentiments, political participation, and disengagement are among the others. Despite the fact that there is factual evidence that global voter turnout is dropping, scholarly attention to voter apathy in the context of voter turnout in Nigeria is minimal, despite the country's electoral system's issues.

Voters Education

The term "voter education" refers to the dissemination of information, materials, and programs aimed at informing voters about the specifics and mechanics of a particular election's voting process. Voter education includes information on who is eligible to vote, where and how to register, how voters can check voter lists to ensure they have been properly included, what types of elections are held, where, when, and how to vote, who the candidates are, and how to file complaints.

The goal of civic education, which is a broader concept, is to impart knowledge of a country's political system and context. Information on the government system, the nature and powers of the offices to be filled in an election, the major economic, social, and political issues confronting the country, the value of democracy, equal rights for men and women, and the importance of peace and national reconciliation could all be included in civic education.

Women's participation in elections can be boosted by voter and civic education, especially in post-conflict countries where women have not traditionally played an active role in the electoral process. As a result, both men and women should have access to voter and civic education. The information delivered should be gender-sensitive and tailored to women's needs. Women's participation in elections can be boosted by civic education, which promotes positive images of women as voters, leaders, and participants in all aspects of the political process. Voter education equips the electorates with necessary information that educate them on their right to select the candidate of their choice. It contains vital aspect like when, where to register and vote casting (ECI, 2016). Election Management Bodies (EMBs) organise regular voters' education updates or

broadcasts through messages, aired on radio and the print media. The EMBs modify its operation to be in tune with contemporary media trends for example, the maximum use of the internet. Elections cannot be generally said to be credible unless the voters are aware of the right choice. In addition, detailed information on voting methodology should be available ahead of time of Election Day. Voters' education activities could be directed by either the EMBs or other stakeholders like the civil society in disseminating information on what is required of the electorates throughout the electioneering process.

Different electoral education bodies emerged with various duties. One of such is the National Electoral Education Plan (NEEP) which forms strategic framework for the conduct and implementation of the Electoral Education Campaign Project (EECP) in partner with Civil Society Organization. The Electoral Education Campaign project (EECP) seeks to raise public awareness and create discussions around all aspects of electoral processes by supporting grassroot initiatives. The National Electoral Education Plan (NEEP) provides guidance to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that carry out electoral education activities developed by the electoral education forum, a body that coordinates campaigns to ensure that they are integrated into the overall electoral outreach effort. The current electoral education campaign will be influenced by the social and political context of the upcoming electoral cycle. The necessity of engaging the public through direct outreach initiatives that are participatory in character, as well as the role of key community influencers, has been underscored by lessons learnt from prior elections. Voter education, voter information, and civic education principles are all part of the electoral education effort.

Political Participation

Political participation is the wilful, non-coercive participation of electorates in politics of the nation. For Conway (2000), political participation is a political commitment. He added that it could equally be thought of as the citizens' rights and obligations manifest in formal political

settings. Similarly, Gil de Zúñiga, Jung and Valenzuela (2012) had noted that the concept, 'Political Participation alludes to activities undertaken by the electorate in active participation in processes leading to selection of governmental representatives or leaders. Again, Gil de Zúñiga et al., (2012) described political participation as a movement that affects government activity; either directly or indirectly in constituting those involved in governance.

The success of any Nigerian electoral process depends to a large extent on the level of support and participation of the people. Hence, it is crucial to discuss the importance of elections as a foundation for democracy and educating the public on the upcoming electoral process (Dadalos 2008). The public therefore needs to be engaged through direct 36 outreach activities of a participatory nature that should address democratic values and key notions of civil participation. Radio, with its singular voice touch can also bring candidates to the electorate through audience participation programmes. The public is also allowed to voice and air its opinions freely through the media. Thus, radio-television programmers should explore the remote touch of the media to advantage in dealing with political aspirants.

Theoretical Framework

Cosmopolitan democracy is a political theory that investigates the implementation of democratic principles and values at various levels, from global to local. It's about what global governance of the people, for the people, can entail. David Held, Daniele Archibugi, Richard Falk, and Mary Kaldor are among the academics who support cosmopolitan democracy. The Cosmopolitan Democracy paradigm avoids a single hierarchical type of leadership by allowing everyone to make decisions that impact them. Democratic practice should be reinvented to take into account the will of stakeholders, depending on the nature of the challenges at hand. This can be accomplished either directly or through elected officials. Unlike those ideas of global governance endorsed by classic World Federalism philosophers such as Albert Einstein, the model proposed by cosmopolitan

democrats is decentralized - global governance without world government.

Although cosmopolitanism has its roots in an inherently moral conception of the person as having allegiances to the larger world, it was only until it was tied to peoplehood that it gained political relevance. Immanuel Kant's fundamental contribution to modern cosmopolitan thinking was to extend republican political philosophy into a broader and primarily legal framework. With this developed the idea of a global political community that extended beyond where one was born or lived. As a result, cosmopolitanism became associated with modern western thought's universalism and political ideas aimed at global administration.

Cosmopolitan political theory has received a lot of attention recently, and it has tended to eclipse social theory's contribution (Cohen 1996; Lu 2000; Vertovec and Cohen 2002; Tan 2004). When it comes to linking Cosmopolitan political theory to Nigerian voter education experience, the cosmopolitan approach stresses that maintaining truly stable democracy necessitates a unique method of thinking, organizing, and conducting peaceful, credible, free, fair, and inclusive elections. The cosmopolitan view of governance, which is based on cosmopolitan political theory, emphasizes inclusivity and accountability, both of which appear to be lacking in the Nigerian politics. Nigeria has been governed by members of a political class whose thirst for wealth acquisition and accumulation has been insatiable since the country's formal independence in 1960.

There have even been instances where persons who were barely scraping by before being chosen or elected to positions of power have suddenly become affluent and property-owning members of society. There is little doubt that the wealthiest people in Nigeria are those who have either personally or through proxies held governmental office. The fact in Nigeria is that the country is ruled by a very greedy and rapacious ruling class whose primary goal is self-aggrandizement, and the wellbeing of the citizens matters very little or nothing to the members of this class.

It is therefore imperative for INEC to ensure adequate voters education so as the country can experience peaceful, credible, free, fair and inclusive elections.

METHODOLOGY

The research method to be use in this study was the descriptive survey. Thus, the questionnaire was used to answer the study research questions and test the hypotheses raised which has to do with INEC campaign strategies and voters education during the 2019 general elections. The population of this study consists of the residents of Abuja metropolis. According to the Bureau of Statistic, the population of Abuja is 1,967,500 (NPCN, NBS (web) 2019) . The sample size of this research work was determined through Krejcie and Morgan Determining Sample Size for Research Activities. Therefore, the total population of Abuja metropolis is 1,967,500, 384 served as the sample size for this study. Because Krejcie and Morgan determining sample table size of any population above 1 million, should be 384. Thus, the sample size of this study was 384 respondents and this size was considered representative and manageable of the study population. In this study, the purposive sampling procedure was used in selecting the respondents, distribution of questionnaire. This procedure is chosen because the voters in Abuja metropolis are the targeted respondents. In other to ensure its validity, the instrument was designed as guided by literature. Reliability looks at the consistency of the variables. Thus, the instrument was tested using Cronbach Alpha reliability test to ascertain the consistency of the instrument. In the analysis of this research, the data collected through responses given in the questionnaire was classified, tabulated and analyzed using percentages, frequency and infrequent statistic. Also Spearman correlation and regression analysis was used to test the research hypotheses. After administration of questionnaire only 370 questionnaires, which make up 96 percent of the total sample size, were recovered.

Demographic Variables of the Respondents

Those within the age of 26-36 years old form the bulk of the respondents. They account for almost one-third (32.7%) of the total respondents. While Age bracket 46 years and above represents 25.4% of the respondents and those within the age bracket 18-25 years old represents 21.6%. Males represented 68.7 percent of respondents while the other 31.3 percent were females. Checking the level of education respondents have completed, the data shows that overwhelming majority 97% have completed their tertiary education. From the researched sample, 226 (58.7%) of the respondents were married, while 152 (39.5%) are single. Islam represented 54.9 percent of respondents while the other 45.1 percent were Christians. Over half (58.9%) of respondents civil servants. Respondents that have accumulated between. Thus, majority of the sample are enlighten about government activities.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES OF DATA BASED ON RESEARCH

Research Question 1: What are the various campaign strategies INEC used for voters education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria?

The first objective identify the various campaign strategies INEC used for voters education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria. This involves the use of various media outlet such as the mainstream media, social media, town hall meeting, workshop etc. Table 1 provides the details.

Table 1: Respondents Views on Campaign strategies INEC used for Voters Education during the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria.

INEC Voters Education Strategies	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD	OVERALL (%)
Pre-election and post-election voter education and enlightenment programmes on radio and television nationwide.	5.1	8.4	6.8	24.1	55.7	4.17	1.18	83.4
Grassroots enlightenment forums and outreach activities in Local Government Areas.	5.1	7.8	6.2	26.2	54.6	4.17	1.17	83.4

Interface with traditional leaders and Faith-based groups ahead of 2019 elections.	4.6	8.1	5.7	33.8	47.8	4.12	1.12	82.4
Forums for target groups such as civil servants, labour unions, professional associations, students, academic communities, media, political parties etc.	4.6	10.0	10.3	30.8	44.3	4.00	1.17	80
Workshops for Radio/TV stations on voters education for 2019 elections.	5.9	6.8	5.4	37.0	44.9	4.08	1.14	81.6
Production of movielets/drama sketches on election	0.0	19.5	8.9	23.0	47.8	4.02	1.38	80.4
Production and distribution of leaflets, pamphlets, stickers, INEC-branded wears and use of posters	13.2	13.8	15.1	28.9	28.9	3.46	1.38	69.2
Dissemination of elections messages as SMS.	9.2	14.9	7.8	29.7	38.4	3.73	1.35	74.6
Use of social media and websites	6.2	8.9	10.5	33.2	41.1	3.94	1.20	78.8
Interactive session with popular Artists/INEC Youth Ambassadors for peaceful elections	8.1	6.5	8.1	25.1	52.2	4.07	1.26	81.4
TOTAL						3.98	1.12	71.18

Source: Researchers field work 2021 Note: 2.5 is the cut-off point between agreement & disagreement on table

Generally, majority of the respondents (71.18%) agreed as they can identify with various campaign strategies INEC used for voters education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria (M=3.98, SD=1.12). Specifically, the re-election and post-election voter education and enlightenment programmes on radio and television nationwide (83.4%). The grassroots enlightenment forums and outreach activities in Local

Government Areas (83.4%). The interactive session with popular Artists/INEC Youth Ambassadors for peaceful elections (81.4%). The Workshops for Radio/TV stations on voters' education for 2019 elections (81.6%). This means the citizens have been receptive to INEC voters' education campaigns as they are familiar with the various strategies being used to drive home voters' enlightenment programmes.

Research Question 2: What is the level of voter's education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria?

The second objective examine the level of voters education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria. Since the returned of democracy in 1999, INEC have been engaging in voters education as there are always issue of voters apathy during elections. Thus, table 2 provides details on the level of voters' education in the just concluded general election after various voter education initiatives embarked by INEC.

Table 2: Respondents level of Electioneering Education during the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria.

Voters Education Level	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD	OVERALL (%)
I was aware of the 2019 general election	4.6	9.7	10.3	22.2	53.2	4.1	1.20	82
I know the major political parties that participated in 2019 elections	4.3	10.8	6.8	25.7	52.4	4.11	1.19	82.2
I know the major presidential candidates in the 2019 elections	3.8	10.3	6.5	33.8	45.7	4.07	1.13	81.4
I know the voting procedure of the election	3.2	11.9	10.5	35.7	38.6	3.95	1.12	79
I know how the card reader works	4.9	6.8	12.4	35.9	40.0	3.99	1.11	79.8
I know the person that worn the 2019 presidential election	0.0	18.4	14.1	21.6	46.0	3.96	1.17	79.2

I am knowledgeable about election irregularities during the 2019 elections	13.0	13.8	13.5	30.3	29.5	3.49	1.38	69.8
TOTAL						3.95	1.19	79

Source: Researchers field work 2021 Note: 2.5 is the cut-off point between agreement & disagreement on table

Generally, respondents level of voters education is high ($M=3.95$, $SD=1.19$). Specifically, they were aware of the 2019 general election (82%), aware of the major presidential candidates in the 2019 elections (82.2%) and know the major presidential candidates in the 2019 elections (81.4%). Furthermore, the respondents know the voting procedure of the election, how the card reader works and the person that worn the 2019 presidential election. This shows that INEC voters' education campaign is yielding positive outcome as the electoral knowledge of the voters have appreciated.

Research Question 3: What is the impact of INEC campaign strategies in enhancing voter education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria? The third objective measure the impact of INEC campaign strategies in enhancing voter education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria. INEC voters education is expected to increase voters turnout, improve the credibility of the election, reduce voters fraud and ensure that the citizens fully participated in the electoral process. However, the need to test the impact of the campaign is now capture in Table 3.

Table 3: Respondents view on the Impact of INEC Campaign Strategies in enhancing Voter Education during the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria.

Impact of Voters Education	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD	OVERALL (%)
It ensures high voters turnout	9.2	14.3	7.6	30.3	38.6	3.75	1.34	75
It increase voters awareness of the voting procedure	6.2	8.9	10.0	33.8	41.1	3.95	1.19	79

It increase voters participation in 2019 election	7.8	6.5	7.8	24.3	53.5	4.09	1.25	81.8
It ensures that vote counts	7.8	15.1	10.3	19.7	47.0	3.83	1.36	76.6
It ensure proper conduct and acceptable behavior expected of them during the election	6.5	14.3	5.1	24.1	50.0	3.97	1.31	79.4
TOTAL						3.92	1.29	78.4

Source: Researchers field work 2021 Note: 2.5 is the cut-off point between agreement & disagreement on table

Overall, the impact of INEC campaign strategies on voters education is high (M=3.92, SD=1.29). Particularly, the campaign have increase voters awareness of the voting procedure (81.8%), ensure proper conduct and acceptable behavior expected of them during the election (79.4%), ensures high voters turnout (75%) and ensure proper conduct and acceptable behavior expected of them during the election (79.4%). The study also shows that there is increase voters participation in 2019 election.

Research Question 4: Does INEC campaign strategies enhanced voter's education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria?

The fourth objective investigate whether INEC campaign strategies has enhanced voters education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria. Table 4 provides the details.

Table 4: Respondents view on whether INEC Campaign Strategies have enhanced Voter Education during the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria.

Enhancement of Voters Education	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD	OVERALL (%)
Media campaign increase my awareness on the election	4.6	8.1	5.7	33.8	47.8	4.12	1.12	82.4
Social media campaign increase my knowledge of the election	4.6	10.0	10.3	30.8	44.3	4.00	1.17	80
Campaign makes me to participate in 2019 election	5.9	6.8	5.4	37.0	44.9	4.08	1.14	81.6

Campaign ensures that vote counts	0.0	19.5	8.9	23.0	48.6	4.02	1.18	80.4
It ensure proper conduct and acceptable behavior expected of them during the election	13.2	13.8	15.1	28.9	28.9	3.46	1.38	69.2
It allow for successful election as well as ensure their willingness to participate actively in the process	9.2	14.9	7.8	29.7	38.4	3.73	1.35	74.6
It reduce voters apathy during the elections	6.2	8.9	10.5	33.2	41.1	3.94	1.20	78.8
TOTAL						3.91	1.22	78.14

Source: Researchers field work 2021 Note: 2.5 is the cut-off point between agreement & disagreement on table

Generally, the study shows that majority of the respondents (78.14%) agreed that INEC campaign strategies has enhanced voter education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria ($M=3.91$, $SD=1.22$). Specifically, media campaign increase citizens awareness on the election (82.4%). The campaign makes voters to participate in 2019 election (81.6%), ensures that vote count (80.4%) and reduce voters apathy (78.8%). Therefore, mainstream media and social media have contributed to the knowledge of the electorates.

Results of Test of Hypotheses

H₁: INEC campaign strategies is related to voters' education during the 2019 general elections.

In order to investigate whether there is relationship between INEC campaign strategies and voters' education during the 2019 general elections, Chi-Square test of independent was analysed. Thus, table 5 is the Chi-Square on relationship between INEC campaign strategies and voters' education during the 2019 general elections

Table 5 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3598.619 ^a	1008	.000
Likelihood Ratio	1012.749	1008	.452
Linear-by-Linear Association	219.741	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	370		

a. 1072 cells (99.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .00.

Data in this study showed a significant conformity ($X^2 = 0.000$, Alpha level $\alpha = 0.00$) between campaign strategies and voters education. This shows that INEC voter education campaign is very much related to the knowledge voters have on the 2019 general election. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H₂: INEC campaign strategies has a significant impact on voter's education during the 2019 general elections.

In order to hypothetical test the effect of INEC campaign strategies on voters' education, the second hypothesis measured the impact of campaign strategies on voters education during the 2019 general elections using linear regression analysis.

Table 6: Impact of complain strategies on voters Education

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.871 ^a	.758	.757	2.32560

a. Predictors: (Constant), INEC Campaign Strategies

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6227.608	1	6227.608	1151.468	.000 ^b
	Residual	1990.294	368	5.408		

Total	8217.903	369			
a. Dependent Variable: Voters Education					
b. Predictors: (Constant), INEC Campaign Strategies					

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.192	.527		4.163	.000
	INEC Campaign Strategies	.437	.013	.871	33.933	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Voters Education						

Result of the regression table 6 revealed that the independent variable, (INEC Campaign Strategies) predicts 75.8% variance on the voters' education Alpha level $\alpha = 0.00$. It is therefore; statistically correct to say that INEC campaign strategies has significance effect on the level of voters' education during the 2019 general election. As such, the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H₃: INEC campaign strategies have enhanced voter education during 2019 general elections.

In order to investigate whether the campaign strategies have enhanced voters education during the 2019 general elections linear regression analysis was runned.

Table 7: Regression Analysis on campaign strategies and enhancement of voters education during the 2019 general election

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.984 ^a	.969	.969	1.16163
a. Predictors: (Constant), INEC Campaign Strategies				

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15454.044	1	15454.044	11452.632	.000 ^b
	Residual	496.575	368	1.349		
	Total	15950.619	369			
a. Dependent Variable: Enhancement of voters education						
b. Predictors: (Constant), INEC Campaign Strategies						

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.042	.263		-.161	.872
	Strategies	.689	.006	.984	107.017	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Enhancement of voters education						

Result of the regression table 7 revealed that the independent variable, (INEC Campaign Strategies) predicts 96.9% variance on enhancement of voters' education Alpha level $\alpha = 0.00$. It is therefore; statistically correct to say that INEC campaign strategies has significance effect on the enhancement of voters' education during the 2019 general election. As such, the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

Voter education is critical to ensuring that voters can exercise their voting rights and express their political will effectively and efficiently through the electoral process. Questions regarding the legitimacy, representativeness, and responsiveness of elected leaders and the electoral body, in this case INEC, may arise if people are not prepared or motivated to engage in the electoral process. As a result, it's important for scholars to evaluate INEC's voter education communication tactics. It is belief that INEC has all the resources to embark on the campaign that will help Nigerians have access to basic information on their voting rights.

The study found that the various campaign strategies INEC used for voters education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria which includes the use of various media outlet such as the mainstream media, social media, town hall meeting, workshop etc. INEC engage in the re-election and post-election voter education and enlightenment programmes on radio and television nationwide. The grassroots enlightenment forums and outreach activities in Local Government Areas. The interactive session with popular Artists/INEC Youth Ambassadors for peaceful elections. The Workshops for Radio/TV stations on voters' education for 2019 elections (Table 1). This means the citizens have been receptive to INEC voters' education campaigns as they are familiar with the various strategies being used to drive home voters' enlightenment programmes.

Voter education consists of providing information on who is entitled to vote, where and how to register, how voters can check voter lists to ensure they have been properly included, what types of elections are held, where, when, and how to vote, who the candidates are, and how to submit a complaint. Ealier, Uhunmwuango and Aibieyi, (2012) study found that voters' education and electoral conduct in democratic societies revolves around certain institutionalized process of determining popular choice in direct and popular representation in in-direct or representative democracies. Similarly, Oduola, Hhassan and Sawaneh (2020) examine *voters' education and credible election in Nigeria: issues and challenges of 2019 general elections*. Voter education and functional electoral institutions are critical to the proper conduct of the electoral process, especially in order to grow and sustain the democratic process in Nigeria, in order to reverse this unpleasant trend.

This study found that the level of voters education during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria was high (79%). Data in this study showed a significant conformity ($X^2 = 0.000$, Alpha level $\alpha = 0.00$) between campaign strategies and voters education (Table 5). This shows that INEC voter education campaign is very much related to the knowledge voters have on the 2019 general election. As depicted in table 2, they were aware of the 2019 general election, aware of the major presidential candidates in the

2019 elections and know the major presidential candidates in the 2019 elections. Furthermore, the respondents know the voting procedure of the election, how the card reader works and the person that worn the 2019 presidential election. This shows that INEC voters' education campaign is yielding positive outcome as the electoral knowledge of the voters have appreciated.

However, after acknowledging challenges it faces in the management and conduct of election; INEC (2017) state that in order to deliver on the second objective of "voter education, training and research", INEC completed 46 of the 50 activities outlined in the plan, either entirely or partially. In partnership with GSM service providers and certain media organizations, the Commission conducted voter education programs and campaigns using ICT resources. It also held physical campaigns at secondary and tertiary campuses, as well as establishing the INEC Citizen Contact Center (ICCC). Election observers and monitors were given election monitoring training. However, admitting the major hurdles, which included funding and delayed permission of some works that were never completed. The Commission stated that the sensitization initiatives had mixed results, with low voter turnout in some cases and a large proportion of voided votes in others. The study found that hat campaign strategies has significance ($R^2 .758$, Alpha level $\alpha = 0.00$) effect on the level of voters' education during the 2019 general election. Particularly, the campaign have increase voters awareness of the voting procedure , ensure proper conduct and acceptable behavior expected of them during the election, ensures high voters turnout and ensure proper conduct and acceptable behaviour expected of them during the election. The study also shows that there is increase voters participation in 2019 election (Table 6).

It has been widely acknowledged that one of the greatest obstacle to Nigeria's democratic journey is the pervasive state of ill-prepared of voters education, insecurity of lives and property, illregularities as evidenced by the spate of armed robbery attacks, assassinations of political opponents, ill-prepared of voters education towards the forthcoming elections in

Nigeria, electoral fraud, coupled with the seeming helplessness of security agencies to handle criminal acts (Ezeoguori- Oyewole, 2020).

The essence of voters' education can never be over emphasised (Fivaz & Nadig, 2010), hence the need to start early in order to reach the goal by making the process more effective. Election's frameworks offer an extraordinary chance to the voter in exercising their civic franchise by voting candidate of their choice. In the 2019 general election, the Nigerian government spent over 100 Billion Naira to deliver the general election (Maclean, Egbejule & Alfa, 2019), yet the process had several challenges resulting in electoral malpractices like vote buying, rigging, violence, intimidation and harassment of the electorates, electoral officers and militarisation.

The study found that INEC campaign strategies has significance effect on the enhancement of voters' education during the 2019 general election ($R^2 = 969$, Alpha level $\alpha = 0.00$). Specifically, media campaign increase citizens awareness on the election. The campaign makes voters to participate in 2019 election, ensures that vote count and reduce voters apathy. Therefore, mainstream media and social media have contributed to the knowledge of the electorates (Table 7). Uhunmwuango and Aibieyi, (2012) examine INEC's voter education tactics and their implications for hitch-free political education and participation among Nigerians. Their paper concludes that voter education is critical in any democratic system because proper orientation of secondary school children on the importance of voting and participation in our country's democratic system will not only instill high levels of motivation and encouragement in the students, but will also instill trust in the government. This technique will undoubtedly lead to a long-term democratic system in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Voter education consists of providing information on who is entitled to vote, where and how to register, how voters can check voter lists to ensure they have been properly included, what types of elections are held, where, when, and how to vote, who the candidates are, and how to submit a

complaint. INEC engage in the re-election and post-election voter education and enlightenment programmes on radio and television nationwide. The grassroots enlightenment forums and outreach activities in Local Government Areas. The interactive session with popular Artists/INEC Youth Ambassadors for peaceful elections. The Workshops for Radio/TV stations on voters' education for 2019 elections . This means the citizens have been receptive to INEC voters' education campaigns as they are familiar with the various strategies being used to drive home voters' enlightenment programmes. However, after acknowledging challenges it faces in the management and conduct of election; INEC (2017) state that in order to deliver on the second objective of "voter education, training and research", INEC completed 46 of the 50 activities outlined in the plan, either entirely or partially. In partnership with GSM service providers and certain media organizations, the Commission conducted voter education programs and campaigns using ICT resources. It also held physical campaigns at secondary and tertiary campuses, as well as establishing the INEC Citizen Contact Center (ICCC). The essence of voters' education can never be over emphasised (Fivaz & Nadig, 2010), hence the need to start early in order to reach the goal by making the process more effective. Election's frameworks offer an extraordinary chance to the voter in exercising their civic franchise by voting candidate of their choice. In the 2019 general election, the Nigerian government spent over 100 Billion Naira to deliver the general election (Maclean, Egbejule & Alfa, 2019), yet the process had several challenges resulting in electoral malpractices like vote buying, rigging, violence, intimidation and harassment of the electorates, electoral officers and militarisation.

Recommendations

Based on the research results, findings of the study and the conclusions drawn above, the study proposes the following recommendations for researchers, policy makers, INEC, the electorates, for future studies, and to inform the optimum utilization of voters' education strategies.

Pre-election and post-election voter education and enlightenment programmes on radio and television nationwide have shown significant

success. Thus, INEC should not relent in using mainstream media that both urban and rural areas have access for voters education. This will ensure grassroots enlightenment forums and outreach activities in Local Government Areas

The interface with traditional leaders and Faith-based groups ahead of elections is very important for sensitization. Also, forums for target groups such as civil servants, labour unions, professional associations, students, academic communities, media, political parties etc should be encourage at all time to increase the political socialization in the country.

In recent time, the use of social media and websites have been promising to reach the youth and online users with political information; therefore, it should be utilize for voters education before and during elections.

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