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## **New Media and Political Advertising in Nigeria: Prospects and Challenges** (Pp.248-265)

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### **Abstract**

*This paper examines the new media as a tool for political advertising in Nigeria vis- a-vis, the challenges and prospects. The new media, especially the Internet and Global System for Mobile Telecommunication (GSM) have become important political campaign tools in Nigeria and the world over. This paper is guided by the fact that the new media have become so important in the dissemination of political activities. Thus, the study aims at finding out the relevance of the new media and the prospects/ challenges. We adopted the survey research method, employing the questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. Two hundred copies of questionnaires were administered to the respondents, to elicit their opinions concerning the prospects and challenges of the new media as a tool for political advertising. Two theories were chosen to provide the theoretical framework for the study.*

*The theories are technological determinism theory and the agenda setting theory. Findings from the questionnaire administered to the two hundred respondents show that the political parties in Nigeria recognise and make use of the new media for carrying out their political activities, but this they do occasionally. Findings show that there are prospects and challenges of new media as a tool for political advertising in Nigeria. One of the prospects is that the new media can reach a very broad audience while one of the challenges is that the ability to constantly deliver messages via the new media is difficult. Based on the findings, the paper concludes that the extent to which the political parties in Nigeria use the new media is minimal and therefore, recommends that political parties in Nigeria should give due attention to the use of the new media for the dissemination of political activities.*

**Key Words:** Advertising, Political Advertising, Communication and the New Media

### **Introduction**

Political advertising has become part of the political culture of most democracies and Nigeria as a democratic nation is not left out. Political advertising is one of the specialised areas of human communication and business. More specifically, it is an aspect of social advertising, which is part of social marketing. The component of social advertising is political advertising, social-cause advertising, philanthropic organisation advertising and private non-profit advertising. However, political advertising is a marketing function similar in intent and purpose to product marketing (Nwosu, 1992:66). Gana (1992) notes that political campaigns involve canvassing for votes, which is a kind of political salesmanship. Political parties and candidates now use different media to reach their audiences, including the new media. New media is a broad term that emerged in the later part of the 20th century to encompass the amalgamation of traditional media such as film, images, music, spoken and written words, with the interactive power of computer and communications technology, computer-enabled consumer devices and most importantly, the Internet.

One of the important promises of the new media is the democratisation of the creation, publishing, distribution and consumption of media content (Wikipedia, 2011). Therefore, this study focuses on the use of the new media by political parties in Nigeria, for political campaigns.

### **Statement of the problem**

The new media have become veritable tools for political campaigns, because they break boundaries and frontiers, reaching every part of the world. The new media have consequences upon the social, political and economic values of people. New media hold out a possibility of on-demand access to content anytime, anywhere, on any digital device, as well as, interactive user feedback, creative participation and community formation around the media content. What distinguishes new media from traditional media is not the digitising of media content into bits, but the dynamic life of the new media content and its interactive relationship with the media consumer. This dynamic life, moves, breathes and flows with pulsing excitement in real time.

It is against this backdrop therefore, that we investigate the prospects and challenges of using the new media for political advertising.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study are:

- to assess the role of the new media in political advertising;
- determining whether political parties in Nigeria recognise and use the new media for political campaigns; and
- finding out the factors (if any), which hinder the effective use of the new media.

### **Research questions**

Based on the problem and objectives of the study, the following research questions have been drawn to guide the study:

- do the new media play any role in political advertising?
- do political parties in Nigeria recognise and make use of the new media in their political campaigns?
- what are the factors that hinder the use of the new media for political campaigns in Nigeria?

### **The Concept of advertising**

One of the definitions of advertising is that, it is any communication that is paid for, directed at a target audience, through the various mass media like: radio, television, newspaper, magazine, motion pictures, Internet, etc, with

the main aim of creating awareness about goods and services and also selling a candidate. Thus, advertising has to do with informing the people about the existence of something, so as to draw attention to it; it is giving of notice, so as to draw attention. Advertising is unique and special and if anything is to be known about the existence of a product, commodity, item, good, service or a political candidate, etc., then there is need for advertising. Advertising describes any form of communication, which is principally aimed at promoting the sales and patronage of goods and services. Advertising as a planned communication is both an act and art of communication. Individuals and government endeavour to communicate their goods, products or services, as the case may be, to the audience (Asemah 2011). The essence of advertising is to make known in order to sell or buy goods and services. The power of advertising depends on the use of creative and planning skills to achieve its objectives.

Arens (2008:7) says that advertising is the structured and composed non-personal communication of information, usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature, about products, services and ideas by identified sponsors, through various mass media. The definition given by Arens is closely in line with that of Dominick (2007:321), which says that advertising is any form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods and services, usually paid for by an identified sponsor. Advertising is a controlled, identifiable and persuasive communication that is presented via the mass media and designed to develop product demand and to create a company's image. One can go a step further to describe advertising as a form of communication, which attempts to interpret the qualities of products, services and ideas in terms of consumer's needs and wants. Advertising intends to promote the sales of a product or service and also to inform the masses about the highlights of the product or the service features. It is an efficient means of communicating to the world, the value of the product or the service. Advertising utilises different media to reach out to the masses and uses different types of appeals to connect to the customers across the globe.

Advertising is the process of persuading potential customers to buy products or promote its services. It is the branch of marketing that deals with communicating to customers about products, brands and services. Advertising is a form of communication used to persuade an audience (viewers, readers or listeners) to take some action with respect to products,

ideas or services. Most commonly, the desired result is to drive consumer behaviour with respect to a commercial offering, although political and ideological advertising is also common. Advertising messages are usually paid for by sponsors and viewed via various traditional media; including mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television commercials, radio advertisements, outdoor advertising or direct mail or new media, such as websites and text messages (Wikipedia).

### **Political advertising**

Political advertising is a form of marketing communication that is aimed at selling the candidate of a party to the electorate. Political parties now package their political candidates and sell to the people, so as to draw their votes. Modern politics is therefore, incomplete without political advertising. Political advertising encompasses all forms of advertising pertaining to building support for any and all political campaigns, including candidates running for office, ballot measures, political activism, etc. With the advent of the World Wide Web (WWW), no political campaign will be complete without putting the power of social media, political email advertising and the search engine marketing to work for you. The Internet, due to its electronic nature and wide-spread use, is a relatively inexpensive and highly effective way to disseminate information. A properly prepared piece posted to the social networks, for instance, can go viral in a matter of minutes, bringing hundreds, thousands and perhaps, even tens of thousands of people to your site and ultimately, to your message. Political email advertising can achieve essentially the same thing. Using legal and ethical methods, many thousands of people can be reached with what amounts to a click of the mouse button (*Admin in Political Advertising*, 2011).

As noted by Olujide, Adeyemi and Gbadeyan (2010), political advertising is the use of media by political candidates to increase their exposure to the public. The extensive use of television and radio has supplanted direct appearances on the campaign trail, which was popularly used by politicians in the past five decades. Spot advert is the most commonly used technique and it attempts to create a favourable image of the candidate and a negative image of the opponent. It links the candidate with desirable groups in the community and communicate candidate's stand on selected issues.

## **New media concept**

Most technologies described as "new media" are digital, often having characteristics of being manipulated, networkable, dense, compressible and interactive. Some examples may be the Internet, websites, computer multimedia, computer games, CD-ROMS and DVDs. New media does not include television programmes, feature films, magazines, books or paper-based publications, unless they contain technologies that enable digital interactivity (Wikipedia, 2011). New media is an interactive forms of communication that use the Internet, including podcasts, RSS feeds, social networks, text messaging, blogs, wikis, virtual worlds and more. New media makes it possible for anyone to create, modify and share contents and share it with others, using relatively simple tools that are often free or inexpensive. New media requires a computer or mobile device, with Internet access. New media tools can help you:

- connect people with information and services;
- collaborate with other people, including those within your organisation or community; and
- create new contents, services, communities and channels of communication that help you deliver information and services.

The new media are a disparate set of communication technologies that share certain features apart from being new, made possible by digitisation and being widely available for personal use as a communication device. The new media are not only or even mainly concerned with the production and distribution of messages, but at least, mainly concerned with processing, exchange and storage. The new media are as much an institution of private, as of public communication and are regulated or not accordingly. Their operations are not typically professional or bureaucratically organised to the same degree as mass media. These are quiet significant differences that underscore the fact that the new media correspond with the mass media primarily in being widely diffused, in principle available to all, for communication and at least, as free from control.

The term “newness”, according to Nicholas Jankowski, cited by Baghdady in Pecora, Osei-Hwere and Carlson (2008:166) is a relative characteristic, as it is affected by both time and place; in other words, what is new today, is old tomorrow and what is new in one culture or context may be unknown or

outmoded in another. Newness was once defined as application of microelectronics, computers and telecommunications that offer new services or enhancements of old ones. This definition given by Baghdady in Pecora, Osei-Hwere and Carlson (2008:166) implies that when you have more media invented to take over or complement the old ones, then such media are termed “new media”. According to McQuail, cited by Baghdady in Pecora, Osei-Hwere and Carlson (2008), there are four main features that characterise the new media. These are:

- a. decentralisation of encoded content;
- b. a higher capacity regarding transmission, which overcomes the former restrictions of cost, distance and capacity;
- c. interactivity; as the receiver can select, answer back, exchange and be linked to other receivers directly; and
- d. flexibility in deciding on content and usage patterns (McQuail, 1994:21).

### **Theoretical framework/ literature review**

Theories are of great relevance in every academic endeavour. Thus, Asemah (2010:345) notes that theories lend themselves to various texts and analysis, such that the phenomena central to the research get explained, clarified and even predicted as the case may be. Therefore, for us to have a better understanding of this study, the agenda setting and technological determinism theories have been chosen to provide the framework.

The agenda setting theory, as noted by Asemah (2011:176) was proposed by Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw in 1972/1973. The major assumption of the theory is that the media set agenda for the public to follow. The theory holds that most of the pictures we store in our heads, most of the things we think or worry about, most of the issues we discuss, are based on what we have read, listened to or watched in different mass media. The media make us to think about certain issues, they make us to feel that certain issues are more important than others in our society. Wimmer and Dominick (2000) observe that the theory on agenda setting by the media proposes that the public agenda or what kinds of things people discuss, think and worry about is powerfully shaped and directed by what the media choose to publicise.

The theory is relevant to the study in the sense that political parties in Nigeria can use the new media to set political agenda for the public to follow. This is because both the traditional and new media can be used to set agenda for the public to follow.

Technological determinism theory, on the other hand, was formulated by Marshal McLuhan in 1964. The basic premise of the technological determinism theory is that the media are extensions of the human body; it holds that the media not only alter their environment, but the very message they convey. The media bring new perceptual habits while their technologies create new environments. The theory states that technology, especially the new media, decisively shape how individuals think, feel and act and how societies organise themselves and operate.

The relevance of the theory to the study cannot be overemphasised. Since the new media can be used to shape people's behaviour, it goes to say that political parties in Nigeria can use the new media to influence the populace concerning their political activities. Thus, the Internet, GSM, etc, can be used to carry out political campaigns and other political activities.

The rise of new media has increased communication between people all over the world. It has allowed people to express themselves through blogs, websites, pictures and other user-generated media. As a result of the evolution of new media technologies, globalisation occurs. Globalisation is generally stated as more than expansion of activities beyond the boundaries of particular nations. Globalisation shortens the distance between people all over the world by the electronic communication. New media radically breaks the connection between physical place and social place, making physical location much less significant for our social relationships. According to Carry (2010), the media today are more diffused and chaotic than ever. The result, according to Cary (2010), is a new paradigm in political communications. Simply look at your desktop and you will see the ways the new media are changing the political scene from the bottom up. The five new ways the media are changing politics in the world are:

- i. **News You Can Choose:** With the Internet, with YouTube, with TiVo, with cable TV, people are now selective viewers. People approach their news consumption the way they approach their iPod. You download the songs you like and listen to them when you want



to listen to them. That affects the way reporters spend their days and the way campaigns craft their message.

- ii. **Share This:** Sharing is emerging as a way of distributing the news.
- iii. **Like It:** By clicking on a "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" icon, constituents can give politicians an instant "read on opinions and positions" posted on their Web pages, sort of a rudimentary straw poll that is faster, cheaper, but less accurate than a high-priced telephone poll.
- iv. **Connect with Others:** Through the new media like Internet, the politicians can easily connect with people in far places
- v. **Donate Now:** Politicians can use the new media for fund raising. Barack Obama raised hundreds of millions online over the course of his presidential run. Most politicians would rather have thousands of individual givers than a few big corporate donors and the Internet makes that much easier.

Workalemahu, in Pecora, Osei-Hwere and Carlsson (2008:84) notes that if globalisation is an engine, then the media, especially global media, is the fuel that keeps it going. Without mass media and modern information technology, globalisation would be impossible. Thus, one aspect of globalisation is media globalisation, which refers to the worldwide expansion of media production and distribution companies that trade on the emerging global market and is therefore, primarily the global proliferation of a small number of media conglomerates. Advancements in science and technology has given rise to yet another form of global media embodied by the Internet. The Internet's easy accessibility, availability and the speed in which it relays information from all parts of the globe makes it a perfect global advertising medium for the goods and services of any business owner. Its widespread access to consumers of all ages, race, nationality, political, social, economic and religious roots, enables business owners to establish a solid name for their brand and gain a richer return of investment. Through the Internet, entertainers are able to introduce their crafts, showcase their talents and skills to their millions of prospective and would-be fans. Recently, politicians have recognised the impact of utilising the Internet as a means of establishing rapport with their existing and potential supporters and as a way of introducing their platforms to the various target members of the population.

Mobile phones now also serve an effective form of advertising, promotional and campaign media. General members of the population usually have a mobile phone in their possession. With features that are comparable with the Internet, mobile phone advertising and information dissemination enables business owners, politicians and entertainers to reach their prospective audiences from every corner of the globe in a fraction of a second. One major advantage of formulating adverts and campaigns through mobile phones is that the sender is able to reach the receiver while they are travelling, regardless of the area or time of the day (Asemah, 2011).

Asemah (2011) notes that in their media search, politicians best consider forms of interactive media, such as the Internet and mobile phones. Success in their chosen field is characterised by the most number of votes and supporters. To obtain this, politicians must not only be able to communicate their platforms clearly across the target population; they must also be able to provide exactly what the people need. Interactive media allows politicians to gain insight about the reactions of the masses, regarding their platforms and make known to the politician, the pressing needs and concerns of the people that should be addressed. Interactive media in the form of polls and surveys is also a great means of determining the popularity of a politician among the masses and predetermining the success of a politician in an upcoming election.

### **Methodology**

The researcher used the survey research method. A total number of two hundred questionnaires were distributed to advertising and public relations practitioners, politicians, students and lecturers of mass communication, within Jos metropolis. The purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used. Purposively, four towns were selected in Jos metropolis and the simple random sampling was used to select two hundred (200) respondents from the metropolis ( Jos, Bukuru, Anglo Jos and Rukuba)

### **Presentation of findings**

**Table I: Return Rate of the Questionnaire**

| <b>QUESTION</b>           | <b>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</b> | <b>PERCENTAGE</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Returned and found usable | 185                       | 93%               |
| Not usable                | 8                         | 4%                |
| Not returned              | 7                         | 3%                |
| <b>Total distributed</b>  | <b>200</b>                | <b>100%</b>       |

Table I shows that the return rate is 93% while the mortality rate is 7%. The return rate is higher than the mortality rate. The mortality rate of 7% does not affect the study, because it is insignificant compared to the return rate of 93%. Thus, the copies were considered adequate enough to represent the population. The presentation and analysis of the data that were obtained from the questionnaire was therefore based on the one hundred and eighty five (185) copies that were returned and found usable.

**Research Question 1: Does the New Media Play any Role in Political Advertising?**

**Table II: Responses on whether the New Media play any role in political advertising**

| S/N | ITEM   | SA  | A  | U  | D  | SD  | X   | Decision |
|-----|--|-----|----|----|----|-----|-----|----------|
| 1.  | The new media is an important tool for carrying out political advertising  | 81  | 54 | 0  | 15 | 35  | 3.7 | Accepted |
| 2.  | Negative political advertising via the new media will cause the electorates to believe that they are better informed                     | 24  | 19 | 14 | 44 | 84  | 2.2 | Rejected |
| 3.  | Political advertisement through the new media that attack the opposing candidates and parties usually have more impact on the electorate | 18  | 26 | 4  | 38 | 99  | 2.0 | Rejected |
| 4.  | The new media can only have impact on the electorate when combined with interpersonal communication                                      | 77  | 6  | 10 | 12 | 20  | 3.3 | Accepted |
| 5.  | The extent to which the new media have impacted on the electorate is minimal   | 11  | 9  | 2  | 39 | 124 | 1.6 | Rejected |
| 6.  | The new media do not have positive impact on the people because majority of the people do not have access to them                        | 110 | 44 | 0  | 10 | 21  | 4.1 | Accepted |

Table 11 shows the information gathered on whether the new media have any role to play in political advertising. Six (6) items in the table sought to know the opinions and views of the respondents concerning the questions (statements in the table). Three (3) items were accepted while three (3) were also rejected. Items 1, 4 and 6 were accepted while items 2, 3 and 5 were rejected. Item 1, which translated to 3.7 mean table score shows that the new media have a role to play in political advertising. Item 2 which translated into 2.2 table mean score shows that negative political advert through the new media will not make the electorates to believe that they are better informed. Item 3 shows that political advert through the new media, which attack opponents do not have impact on the electorates. Item 4 shows that the new media must be combined with interpersonal communication before they can positively affect the electorates. Item 5 which translated into 1.6 shows that the extent to which the new media have impact on the electorate is not minimal. While item 6 which translated into 4.1 table mean score shows that the new media do not have positive impact on the people because, majority of the people do not have access to them.

**Research Question II:** *Do political parties in Nigeria recognise and make use of the new media?*

**Table III:** Responses on whether political parties in Nigeria recognise and make use of the new media

| S/N | ITEM  | SA  | A  | U | D  | SD | X   | Decision |
|-----|---|-----|----|---|----|----|-----|----------|
| 7.  | Political parties in Nigeria recognise and make use of the New Media in their political activities          | 72  | 60 | 2 | 40 | 11 | 3.7 | Accepted |
| 8.  | Political parties use the Internet to carry out their political activities                                  | 70  | 78 | 0 | 20 | 17 | 3.8 | Accepted |
| 9.  | Political parties use the Global System Mobile Telecommunication  | 102 | 64 | 0 | 9  | 10 | 3.2 | Accepted |
| 10. | The extent to which political parties in Nigeria use the media to carry out political activities is minimal | 150 | 8  | 2 | 20 | 4  | 4.4 | Accepted |

|     |  |     |    |   |    |    |     |          |
|-----|--|-----|----|---|----|----|-----|----------|
| 11. | The new media have not been well embraced by political parties in Nigeria  | 17  | 2  | 0 | 14 | 0  | 4.8 | Accepted |
| 12. | Political parties in Nigeria give attention to the old media than the new media in the dissemination of political activities | 111 | 13 | 0 | 11 | 50 | 3.6 | Accepted |

The above table shows the mean score of the information gathered on whether the political parties in Nigeria recognise and make use of the new media. Six (6) items in the table sought to know the views of the respondents concerning the question. All the six (6) items, were accepted. Items 7,8,9 and 10 translated into 3.7, 3.8 and 3.2 respectively. This shows that political parties in Nigeria recognise the new media as a tool for political advertising. The items show that political parties in Nigeria use the Global System Network (GMS) and the Internet, for disseminating political activities. Items 10, 11 and 12 translated into, 4.4, 4.8 and 3.6 respectively.

**Research Question III:** *What are the advantages and disadvantages of using the New Media for Political Advertising in Nigeria?*

Table IV: Responses on the Advantages and Disadvantages of Using the New Media for Political Advertising in Nigeria

| S/N | ITEM  | SA  | A  | U  | D  | SD | X   | Decision |
|-----|---|-----|----|----|----|----|-----|----------|
| 13. | Compared to traditional media, the new media offers options that are very inexpensive or in some cases, free. | 99  | 62 | 0  | 15 | 9  | 4.1 | Accepted |
| 14. | It enables the politicians and the electorate to engage in conversation, thereby establishing relationships   | 106 | 19 | 12 | 8  | 40 | 3.7 | Accepted |
| 15. | New media offers politicians a chance to reach a broad and diverse audience.                                  | 82  | 63 | 9  | 19 | 12 | 3.9 | Accepted |
| 16. | Irregular power supply is   | 66  | 74 | 0  | 21 | 24 | 3.7 | Accepted |

|     |  |     |    |    |    |    |     |          |
|-----|--|-----|----|----|----|----|-----|----------|
|     | one of the disadvantages of new media in Nigeria   |     |    |    |    |    |     |          |
| 17. | Writers have problems delivering content consistently.                                     | 109 | 44 | 6  | 70 | 16 | 4.1 | Accepted |
| 18. | Lack of technological know-how is one of the factors that hinders the use of the new media | 60  | 58 | 10 | 41 | 16 | 3.5 | Accepted |

Table IV shows the mean score of the information gathered on the advantages and disadvantages of using the new media for political advertising. Six (6) items in the table sought to know the views of the respondents concerning the question. The six (6) items in the table were accepted. This shows that there are several advantages and disadvantages of using the new media for political advertising. Item 13 shows that unlike the traditional media, the new media is inexpensive. Item 14 which translated into 3.7 table mean score shows that the new media give politicians the opportunity of interacting with the electorates. Item 15 which translated into 3.2 table mean scores show that the new media can reach a very broad audience. Item 16 which translated to 3.7 table mean score, shows that irregular power supply is one of the challenges of the new media. Item 17, which translated into 4.1 table mean score shows that writers for new media have problems with delivering contents regularly while item 18, which translated into 3.5 shows that lack of technological know-how is one of the factors that hinder the use of the new media for political advertising.

### Discussion of findings

Findings have clearly shown that the new media have a crucial role to play in political advertising. The data from these items show that the new media are important tools for carrying out political advertising. The implication of the data in table II is that the importance of the new media as a tool for carrying out political advertising cannot be overemphasised. Thus, political parties in Nigeria need to employ the new media in the practice of political advertising and execution of political activities.

Findings show that political parties in Nigeria recognise and make use of the new media for execution of their political activities, but the extent to which they do is minimal as these political parties (People’ Democratic Party, Action Congress of Nigeria, All Nigerian People’s Party, etc.), only use the

new media occasionally. Findings further reveal that political parties use the Internet and the Global System Mobile telecommunication (GSM) for carrying out their political activities. The parties give more attention to the old media than the new media. The implication of the above is that political parties in Nigeria actually recognise the new media as a tool for carrying out political advertising, but the extent to which it is recognised is minimal.

Research question III aimed at finding find out the advantages and disadvantages of using the new media for political advertising. All the items in the table were answered in the affirmative. This indicates that there are actually prospects and challenges of using the new media for political advertising in Nigeria and the world at large. One of the advantages of the new media is that it is relatively cheap, when compared to the traditional media. Politicians will spend less when they use the new media to carry out their political campaigns, than when they use the traditional media. More so, the politicians and the electorate can chart through the new media, thereby, engaging in a relationship. For example, through the GSM, face book, e-mail, etc, conversation can be carried out, leading to the establishment of a relationship between the electorates and politicians. Compared to traditional media, new media offers options that are very inexpensive or in some cases, free. Politicians can create free pages on social networking sites that users can connect to for information about political activities and have conversations with electorates. Politicians and political parties can also buy ads on websites that cost less than advertising in a newspaper or magazine.

New media offers politicians and political parties a chance to reach a broad and diverse audience. Unlike traditional media, which reach only a small portion of a potential market, new media advertising is available instantly and around the world. Users can share information on products, promotions and special events with one another through email, status updates, instant messaging or text messages. Users can also browse one another's stated interests and link to party websites. New media supply politicians and political parties with demographic data and feedback that helps them improve their online political communication and target specific groups of potential audience. For example, specific websites cater to different types of users and politicians can choose to advertise where they expect to find the highest percentage of interested readers. A political party with a social-networking presence can examine its roster of followers or connected users to identify the average age, gender and geographic location of users.

Findings show that there are also several challenges to the use of the new media. One of the challenges is irregular power supply. Nigeria has, overtime, become synonymous with power failure. Constant power supply is an illusion in a nation that claims to be the giant of Africa. Nigerians are faced with a near total black-out situation despite the huge sums of money sunk into the sector by past and present regimes. The staggering unemployment figure has, in some quarters, been adduced to the epileptic nature of energy because most industries have been observed to operate at 40 per cent production capacity while the remaining 60 percent, which would have maximised productivity is wasting.

Lack of technological know-how is another factor that hinders the use of the new media for political advertising. In terms of technology, Nigeria as a country is still backward and this is affecting the use of the new media. One other challenge is illiteracy. In a country where a huge part of the population is illiterate, it becomes difficult to use the new media. The case of Nigerians is that of suffering in the midst of plenty. In the face of abundant resources, most Nigerians still live in abject poverty and hunger. Politicians are paid stupendous salaries for doing nothing at the expense of providing the ordinary Nigerian with food, job, shelter and other necessities of life. Nigerian legislators are adjudged to be among the highest paid in the world yet, the government claims there is no money to execute the wishes of the people. Thus, most Nigerians do not have access to the new media as a result of poverty.

### **Summary and conclusion**

The new media can be used to mobilise support for a party or a candidate, during elections, this is because they are persuasive, informative and educative. Political parties and candidates need to use the new media to carry out their political activities. The new media is useful because it can be used to reach a very large group of people. New media offers politicians and political parties a chance to reach a broad and diverse audience. Unlike traditional media, which reaches only a small portion of a potential market, new media advertising is available instantly and around the world. New media supplies politicians and political parties with demographic data and feedback that helps them improve their online political communication and target specific groups of potential audience. However, one of the challenges of the new media is lack of technology. Base on the findings therefore, the



paper concludes that the political parties in Nigeria use the new media, but the extent to which they do is minimal.

### **Recommendations**

The recommendations given in this paper stem from the fact that political parties in Nigeria have not given adequate attention to the use of new media for political advertising. The paper therefore recommends that:

- a. Political parties in Nigeria should give due attention to the use of new media for the dissemination of political activities.
- b. The new media should be regularly used to carry out political activities. Communication is more effective when it is done on a regular basis.
- c. There is the need to combine the new media with other means of communication, especially interpersonal communication. This is because, interpersonal communication brings the communicator and the audience together, in a face to face communication, thereby making the communication to be more effective.
- d. There is the need for political parties in Nigeria to always combine different advertising strategies when carrying out political advertising. Testimonials and sloganeering may be combined to make an advert to be more effective.

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