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POLITICAL RHETORIC, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND 2019 NIGERIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION: CANDIDATES USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract
Globally, social media has redefined the way political communication is done. At the forefront of this development is the increased usage of social media. Social media programs such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, and a slew of others have not only become an integral part of people's everyday lives, but have also changed how they receive, process, distribute, and exchange data. Although, previous researchers have studied the use of social media for political mobilization during election in Nigeria, they did not investigate the political rhetoric used by presidential candidate on social media. Consequently, this study is set out to examine the political rhetoric used by candidates during 2019 Nigerian Presidential Election in Nigeria on social medial. The study is premised on uses and gratification theory. A content analysis was conducted to answer the research questions. The unit of analysis was each post in Facebook and Twitter pages of President Mammadu Buhari and Presidential candidate. The study found that *social media posts studied, half of them representing 51.9 percent used deliberate or political/legislative rhetoric. The study also found that metaphor was the most rhetorical device used by the social media posts, simile came second, rhetorical question came third and propaganda came fourth. The study concludes that both candidates used deliberate or political/legislative rhetoric during the 2019 Presidential Elections for political mobilization and participation. This means both politicians' messages on social media were geared toward convincing people that what they do or think now will either work in their favour or work against them in the future. It is recommended among others that rhetoric as an art of persuasive speaking should go with ethical principles. Pathos-based persuasion should not be used to manipulate voters by exploiting their emotional frameworks.*

Key Words: Political Rhetoric, Social Media, Political Mobilization and Participation.

Introduction

Social media has transformed the way political communication has been conducted in most parts of the world. Social media platforms have provided politicians with a wealth of opportunities to campaign and communicate with their electorate in novel and creative ways. The use of Social media for political communication purposes has been studied by many scholars including Wattal, Schuff Mandviwalla, and Williams, 2010; Dimitrova, Shehata, Stromback, & Nord, 2014; de Zuniga, Molyneux, & Zheng, 2014; Dimitrova, Shehata, Stromback, & Nord, 2014; Meti, Khandoba and Guru, 2015; Mustapha, Gbonegun, and Mustapha (2016); Okoro and Santas, 2017; Apuke & Tunca, 2018). Wattal, Schuff Mandviwalla, and Williams (2010) point out that US politicians play a significant role in this respect, with Barack Obama serving as the most notable example of how to use social media effectively during his 2008 election campaign. However, social media is seen to have the

ability to boost citizens' political discourse and engagement. Social media platforms offer users the perfect means of disseminating political views together with general information throughout their networks (Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2012). Furthermore, from the standpoint of how people utilize social media for political engagement and mobilization, Vitak, Zube, Smock, Carr, Ellison, and Lampe (2011) list a number of political initiatives that are made possible by common social media elements. Posting political updates on friends' walls, writing and sharing political notes within their networks, commenting on friends' posts, sharing political opinions, joining political groups, supporting candidates, and downloading political applications are some examples of these political activities. Friends of the users can then view these political actions on their News Feed.

However, whether the use of social media for politics influences citizen s participation is still subject to debate. Boulianne (2015) points out that there are four main theories put out by the literature to explain how social media use could impact political involvement. According to one theory, users of digital networks are more exposed to weak relationships and are thus more likely to hear about chances for participation and to be requested to join in civic life (Gil de Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012). Second, users discover news through posts made by other users, and since contacts introduce them to the news, this kind of information might have an impact (Bode, 2012). Social media may therefore help people become more informed about political problems, which encourage involvement in public life (Xenos, Vromen, & Loader, 2014). Third, social media users are more likely to get in touch with political groups and be requested to take part on their behalf. Fourth, social media users' engagement is contagious as their connections' political posts influence them (Bond Fariss, Jones, Kramer, Marlow, Settle, & Fowler, 2012).

Previous research on the mediating function of interpersonal contact in the relationship between media use and citizen involvement is consistent with the arguments provided above for the association between social media and participation (Shah, Cho, Eveland, & Kwak, 2005). In line with the first and second justifications put out above, individuals may learn about the challenges impacting their communities and how to resolve them through political involvement through interpersonal connection. However, academics have long acknowledged that personal networks support the development of engaged citizens (Huckfeldt, Sprague, & Levine, 2000). According to earlier research, participants' likelihood of interacting with newly available information and politically engaged persons improves with network growth, which is consistent with the third hypothesis (Huckfeldt, Mendez, & Osborn, 2004). With regard to the fourth explanation, research on social media sites explains contagion as the outcome of exposure and social learning (Vitak et al., 2011). According to this theory, people are more likely to follow their friends' example and engage in political activity if they interact with others on SNS more frequently.

Research conducted in Nigeria on the usage of social media for political engagement shows a favorable correlation. Accessing political information through social media has been linked to improved social capital, online political expression, and offline political actions including voting and campaign volunteerism, according to Mustapha, Gbonegun, and Mustapha (2016). Similarly, Onyechi (2018) discovered that students in Nigeria who use social media more often are more likely to engage in political campaigns during election seasons. Others have shown that social media access and opinion expression are linked to engagement and mobilization in Nigeria (Abubakar, 2012; Dagona, Karick, & Abubakar, 2013). For example, Chinedu-Okeke and Obi (2016) investigated how much South-eastern Nigerian voters used social media for electioneering and discovered that social media-based political campaigns significantly influenced voters' participation and decision-making in Nigeria's 2011 and 2015 elections.

According to this, Okoro and Santas (2017) evaluate how social media was used for political communication during the 2011 Nigerian presidential election in order to ascertain whether or not voters' selection of presidential candidates was impacted by their usage of social media. The findings show that social media use impacted most respondents' selections of presidential candidates. In a similar vein, the respondents believed that the popularity of the two chosen presidential candidates stemmed from their usage of social media throughout their campaigns. The use of social media in Nigeria's 2015 presidential electioneering activities is examined by Ekwueme and Folarin (2017). Results indicate that social media was crucial in raising awareness, encouraging participation, and disseminating information about candidates. The use of social media in the campaigns and electoral processes of Nigeria's general elections in 2011 and 2015 is also examined by Apuke and Tunca (2018). The results demonstrate that social media was used because it was interactive and that it was used to shape the opinions of many young people and raise their level of political consciousness. These findings thus demonstrate that social media usage had an impact on voting patterns in the elections of 2011 and 2015. Additionally, it was discovered that social media was utilized to notify the public of the results in a number of states around the nation during the results collation process in the 2015 elections, making it more difficult for results to be manipulated. However, the above studies with regards to social media and presidential election in Nigeria did not investigate the political rhetoric used by presidential candidate on social media. Consequently, this study is set out to examine the political rhetoric used by candidates during 2019 Nigerian Presidential Election in Nigeria on social medial.

Statement of the Problem

Globally, social media has revolutionized the way political communication is done. At the forefront of this development is the increased usage of social media. Social media programs such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, and a slew of others have not only become an integral part of people's everyday lives, but have also changed how they receive, process, distribute, and exchange data. During elections, political parties and politicians utilize a variety of websites to spread their message, gather support, stay in constant communication with the public, and encourage voters and candidates to get involved in politics (Vitak, Zube, Smock, Carr, Ellison, & Lampe, 2011; Meti, Khandoba, & Guru, 2015; Abubakar, 2012; and Ekwueme & Folarin, 2017). Through the various social media platforms available, politicians spend time and effort preparing arguments to convey to voters, and the arguments they make frequently include similar rhetorical features. Regardless of the specific policy at hand, politicians can cite endorsements from relevant authorities, emphasize a moral rationale for supporting the policy, carefully articulate costs and benefits, question the motives of opposition actors, present evidence from historical or other countries' experiences, and so on. Although, Okoro and Santas (2017) and Eshemokha (2017) explore the use of social media and political mobilization in 2011 and 2015, both studies did not investigate the political rhetoric used by presidential candidate on social media. Consequently, this study is set out to examine the political rhetoric used by candidates during 2019 Nigerian Presidential Election in Nigeria on social medial.

Objectives of the Study

1. Find out types political rhetoric used by political candidates on social media for political mobilization in the 2019 general elections in Nigeria.
2. Determine the prominent political rhetoric used by political candidates on social media for political mobilization in the 2019 general elections in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Social Media Use for Political Mobilization and Participation in Nigeria

According to Marcus (2011), the traditional media, which included radio, television, newspapers, magazines, and other outlets, dominated the world before to the emergence of new media and had either directly or indirectly prevented the general public from participating in the political process. This is due to the fact that the traditional media has never provided enough room or airtime for the public to voice their opinions on politics, government, or the electoral process. Thus, conventional media critics like (Blumler and Gurevitch, 1995 quoted in Abubakar 2011) contend that people became jaded and disinterested in politics as a result of being exposed to sponsor political messaging that included just meaningless platitudes. They contend that citizens are prevented from engaging in political discourse because there is a lack of meaningful discussion in the traditional media that might educate the public on the details of topics, policy ideas, and related debates.
Social media, on the other hand, are web-based, interactive media. They are a part of the emerging media genre known as social networking, which enables users to communicate with friends, express themselves, exchange private information, and post their own opinions online (Adegbola & Gearhart, 2019). Undoubtedly, the widespread availability of these internet-connected gadgets contributes to democratization by providing individuals with increased chances to participate fully in the political process. This implies that voters are now authors of the messages rather than only passive recipients of digital messaging. Kuhus (2011) notes in his study "Life in the Age of Self-Assembling message," which is referenced in Adibe, Odoemelam, and Chibuwe (2012), that this development has occurred thus:

> The necessity to share the communication experience has completely changed, and now it is more important to share in it. People today have more influence thanks to technology, especially social media, which has undercut existing authority and made users the experts.

This suggests that instead than letting media companies set the hours and contents of consumption, consumers may now consume media as required and desired. These days, one can communicate with anybody, anywhere, at any time. Once more, using social media is less expensive than watching the ludicrous political ads on traditional media. The new medium is adaptable, accessible and inexpensive. They encourage the democratization of media, redefine what geographical distance means, and provide faster and more frequent contact. They are portable owing to the mobile nature; they are interactive and open to all (Adegbola & Gearhart, 2019).

Political parties feel obligated to participate in and channelize public political discourse in democracies. Politicians and media have historically brought up and moderated such political conversations. But in a political setting, the conventional mass media system has evolved (Chadwick 2006; Gil De Zúñiga, Jung, and Valenzuela, 2012). Based on the quick growth of Web 2.0 technology and related social media, internet users may now utilize politically aligned people to generate content independently. Professional journalists, who previously contended that the spread of social media use and other elements (such as discussion culture, average age, etc.) have a significant influence on the significance of public internet-based discourses within the political landscape in particular nations, are no longer acting as an institutionalized gatekeeper as a result (Howard 2006; Papacharissi 2002; Tewksbury 2006).

According to Facebook (2020), there are currently over 1.4 billion users on the social media platform globally, while Twitter has over 900 million users overall (Forbes 2019). These platforms' rapid expansion has made it possible for politicians and regular people to engage in political discourse and distribute political information in public. Moreover, there is a contention that politicians and political parties should actively participate in social media-based political communication, especially during election campaigns. Politicians in the United States are already seen to be at the forefront of this, with Barack Obama serving as the most notable example of how to use social media effectively during his most recent campaign (Waltal, Schuff, Mandviwalla & Williams, 2010). It is unclear, though, how important social media is to political players outside of the United States. It appears that the majority of politicians are hesitant to incorporate social media into their day-to-day operations. For instance, research indicates that the majority of German politicians oppose the use of social media for political communication (Beckedahl, Lüke, & Hirsch, 2018; Christmann, Melcher, Hagenhoff, Gissendanner, & Krumbein, 2018). Scholarly study, however, is lacking in examining the causes of politicians' hesitancy as well as the challenges they may encounter in reaching out to voters online, the majority of whom are young. Generally speaking, the field of study on social media in political context is still relatively new and has primarily concentrated on American politics. It is unclear whether social media is still relevant for politics in other nations or what makes using social media for politics successful in certain nations.

Social media has a lot of possibilities for promoting cooperative political engagement. Social media platforms that are easily accessible provide regular people with the chance to engage more directly and actively in their political systems (Adegbola & Gearhart, 2019). According to Arthur (2012), social media platforms have the capacity to enable diaspora groups to participate in domestic social and political processes. Social media is used by users for a variety of purposes, but at its core, it is all about the human mind. Individuals use social media to voice their opinions and, occasionally, to show rage and discontent. Encouraging individuals to participate in politics involves more than just encouraging them to cast ballots on Election Day. Elections themselves are not as crucial as the intervals between them. Getting people involved on a more personal level is crucial, even though marches and demonstrations are more methods of mobilization. Teaching individuals about topics and how to communicate and express their thoughts are all part of being politically engaged (Barrett, 2017; and Ekman & Amnå, 2012).

A rising number of African political players involved in election processes are utilizing blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other social media platforms in their campaigns. Facebook, Twitter, and political blogs have been utilized by political parties as well as independent political advocacy and interest organizations as mediation platforms to interact with the public (Bartlett, Krasodomski-Jones, Daniel, Fisher & Jesperson, 2015; and Omotayo & Folorunso, 2020). In a similar vein, voters have used social media to engage in the election process. There are several noteworthy instances of social media being extensively utilized in Africa to promote political participation among the populace. It is commonly acknowledged that using social media to conduct political campaigns is a strategy that industrialized nations have found success with (Barrett, 2017). Newspaper reading was the only type of media usage that was found to be predictive of voting in studies looking at the connection between students' media consumption and political activity in Nigeria. Students predominantly obtained news through social media (Tesunbi & Nwoye, 2014). This is consistent with research showing the importance of traditional media, particularly print, in Nigerian politics (Jibo & Okoosi-Simbine, 2003). On the other hand, it has been discovered that using social media to get political information is linked to improved social capital, online political expression, and offline political actions including volunteering for campaigns and casting a ballot (Mustapha,

Gbonegun, & Mustapha, 2016). Similarly, Onyechi (2018) discovered that students in Nigeria who use social media more often are more likely to engage in political campaigns during election seasons.

According to Ekwueme and Folarin (2017), social media was crucial in promoting participation, raising awareness, and disseminating information about candidates. Similar to this, Apuke and Tunca (2018) claim that social media was used in the general election of 2015 because of its participatory character and that it helped shape the opinions of many young people by raising their level of political awareness. These findings thus demonstrate that social media usage had an impact on voting patterns in the elections of 2011 and 2015. Additionally, it was discovered that social media was utilized to notify the public of the results in a number of states around the nation during the results collation process in the 2015 elections, making it more difficult for results to be manipulated.

Going by the perspective that social media use has been connected with civic engagement and political participation in the current research literature on social media and politics, this study is undertaken with the view of finding out social media platforms available to the users in Nigeria during 2019 general election and ways citizens actively participate in 2019 general election in Nigeria using social media.

Empirical Studies

In a study titled Liking Obama and Romney (on Facebook): An experimental evaluation of political engagement and efficacy during the 2012 General Election Pennington, Winfrey, Warner, and Kearney (2015) investigated how Facebook users' political participation during an election is affected by Obama and Romney in comparison to those who do not follow politicians.

The findings of Pennington, Winfrey, Warner, and Kearney's study, albeit not being statistically significant, are still relevant for scholars examining Facebook's relationship to political efficacy and involvement. Facebook offers a variety of opportunities for users to engage in political discourse, such as writing on their own wall, connecting with campaign pages, and responding to postings from friends. According to Pennington, Winfrey, Warner, and Kearney's research, just following a candidate's page won't likely boost participation or effectiveness during an election. They found that merely following a candidate's page is not likely to boost effectiveness or involvement in an election. Future research, according to Pennington, Winfrey, Warner, and Kearney's study, should look at how Facebook users react to politicians and how online users debate politics on social media. This would be a crucial subject for more research given the possibility that people in one's social network may express political views during an election year.

In a study titled Online media use during 2013 Japanese upper-house election: A content analysis of comments on candidates Facebook pages Xue (2014) conducted an analysis of the online media usage patterns of candidates and voters in the recent Japanese Upper House election campaign. More precisely, this study looked at the Facebook sites of politicians and investigated if Facebook actually functioned as a platform for political discourse and communication between candidates and voters. One of the primary conclusions drawn from this study, according to Xue, is that there was a clear correlation between the content of visitor comments and the posts that the candidates had written. When candidates addressed politics in their statements, the topics tended to be more election-related and political in nature. For a more complete understanding of how internet media was utilized during the election campaign and how it may be used going forward, Xue advised readers to also consult other research on the subject.

The study conducted by Abdu, Alamai Musa, and Halilu (2018) investigated the correlation between young political involvement offline and their use of Facebook, as well as their interaction with political personalities, perceptions of the quality of Facebook information, and political interest. Because more young people are frequently demonstrating a stronger reliance on Facebook as their online platform for securing the political information they need to make an informed political decision, Abdu, Alamai Musa, and Halilu's study concluded that youth offline political participation is largely dependent on the use of Facebook.

The experiment of using social media for political involvement in the nation during the 2011 general elections was studied by Okoro and Kenneth (2013) Okoro and Kenneth used a questionnaire-based survey study approach to collect data. They discovered that while many people used technology to contribute significantly to political discourse, others used it to harass opponents, disseminate hate speech, false rumors, and messages. These actions are thought to have contributed to the violence and tensions that were observed in many regions of the nation prior to, during, and following the elections. However, the study demonstrates that important lessons might be drawn from the social media experiment conducted during Nigeria's 2011 general elections. Among them are the following: social media provide the finest form of participatory democracy; technology encourages better accuracy and openness in the political process; and it expedites the dissemination of election results. According to Okoro and Kenneth's study, there should be regular public education on the use of social media platforms for political purposes, particularly among young people. Leading this effort should be the government, utilizing resources like the mass media, the National Orientation Agency, state and federal information ministries, and others.

Dungse, Mato, Makinde, and Chidozie (2018) examined social media's function in political mobilization using Twitter as a case study. A qualitative approach was used to extract and analyze tweets. Among other conclusions drawn from the data collection and themes related to important conversations, these include the fact that most online conversations are driven by citizen demands made through the use of hashtags for advocacy, information, mobilization, and call to action. The study conducted by Dungse, Mato, Makinde, and Chidozie came to the conclusion that although social media plays a significant part in political processes, it is not the sole element affecting political results because politics is a more intricate process.

Kamuhabwa (2021) explored Aristotle on rhetoric and political persuasive skills with examples from Political Campaigns in African Politics. By ethos a political speaker persuades the electorate through his/her personality and the quality of his/her party to distinguish himself/herself from his/her opponents. He/she also wins credibility by using proper logos by which he/she persuades through the strength, integrity and clarity of his/her arguments. Being of a selling ethos such as having good character, being experienced and a person of exposure, educated, rich etc. does not necessarily guarantee persuasion. Conversely as well, being poor in logos and pathos does not necessarily make a contestant lose credibility. One can still win it depending on the party he/she belongs to. What is needed for one to speak persuasively is a skillful and well-balanced combination of ethos, pathos and logos.

Borah (2014) used content analysis of both the 2012 Presidential candidate's official Facebook pages to understand how politicians use social networking sites to reach out to voters. Borah study found study found that both candidates used several similar strategies in reaching out to their fans. Both the candidates' most common purpose for the posts was to promote their candidacy. However, in case of attack and contrast posts, Romney used the strategies more

frequently. Overall, Romney led a more aggressive campaign on Facebook, using negative strategies and fear appeal.

Bărbieru (2021) analyzed the electoral campaign and political communication through social media and highlights the capacity of the Internet to transform the way of action of politicians, political parties, governmental organizations, the media and last but not least, of the citizen / voter. New media is at the moment the concept that has succeeded in transforming the understanding of mass communication, causing radical changes in the communication manner, in the strategies and conduct of the electoral campaign. Virtual / social space exploits communication in all its forms, and politics benefits from these advantages, with the Internet providing the opportunity for politicians to interact directly with voters.

Bossetta (2018) that political communication on social media is mediated by a platform's digital architecture the technical protocols that enable, constrain, and shape user behavior in a virtual space. A framework for understanding digital architectures is introduced, and four platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat) are compared along the typology. Using the 2016 U.S. elections as a case, interviews with three Republican digital strategists are complimented with social media data to qualify the study's theoretical claim that a platform's network structure, functionality, algorithmic filtering, and datafication model affect political campaign strategy on social media.

Theoretical Foundation

This study is premised on uses and gratification theory

Uses and Gratifications Theory

The Uses and Gratifications Theory is the most popular theory in mass communication research for explaining user motives, choice, usage, adoption, and acceptance of media technology (Katz, 1959). Uses and Gratifications Theory, first proposed in 1974 by Katz, Blumberg, and Gurevitch, focuses on why and how individuals utilize media (Anaeto, Onabanjo & Osefiso, 2008). It postulates how a set of gratifications by media users are determined in terms of their needs. Thirty-five requirements were defined by Katz, Gurevitch, and Haas (1973) and categorized based on the social and psychological functions of mass media. These categories were cited in Harper (2002, p. 318) as follows:

i. Cognitive needs - acquiring information, knowledge and understanding
ii. Affective needs - seeking to satisfy emotional, pleasurable or aesthetic desires
iii. Personal integrative - needs strengthening credibility, confidence, stability and status
iv. Social integrative needs - strengthening social contacts with family and friends
v. Tension release needs - seeking escape and diversion.

According to the Uses and Gratification hypothesis, user requirements and goals determine the intended behaviors of different media. Users are therefore perceived as goal-oriented, with information, entertainment, social interaction, and personal identity being the primary requirements or purposes that drive their usage of virtual communities like social media (McQuail, 1987). The core of the Uses and Gratification Theory, according to Okoye (2008), is to analyze media behavior in terms of how people generate and satiate wants. According to Okoye, the Uses and Gratification Theory method has continued to be the most popular way to address the crucial subject of what people do with the media, even in the face of criticism.

In justifying the uses of social media to gratify users need for news, according to Baran and Davis (2009), the majority of people choose to obtain their news online because they believe that the benefits of doing so such as having access to news at any time, being able to choose only the stories they are interested in, having more details, greater depth, a wider variety of approaches, more sophisticated reports, alternative perspectives, and useful links make the extra work which includes waiting for the server to connect them to their search engine, identifying the websites they are interested in, choosing specific reports, reading them, looking for alternative stories, and obtaining related links worth the extra effort.

Uses and gratification theory is significant to this study because it provides possible reason why an individual or group of people would want to make use of a particular social media, create their own content i.e, making their own inputs into the media content and thereby not being compelled to consume without some form of critical evaluation. Thus, the services offered by the component that make up social media which among other things enable an individual or group to create, distribute, rate, comment and aggregate mass media is a fine example of the relevance of Uses and Gratification Theory, especially in a bid to assess the social media use for political mobilization and participation during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria.

Because social media users believe the platform would satiate their curiosity and information needs and enable them to become active participants in the political communication process, the idea is also pertinent to our study. More so, how politicians use social media to persuade users by appealing to their emotions with convincing evidence at the appropriate time to make a convincing argument via different types of persuasive appeals as logos, ethos, pathos, and kairos. Therefore, they are able to select specific messages on a variety of social media platforms to connect to political activities within and outside their geographical location. Kaye and Johnson (2002) offer a more upbeat perspective on the compatibility of online political communication with uses and gratifications, arguing that it allows a person to simultaneously satisfy several wants. In 1996, they polled 308 people via a web-hosted survey that was performed both during and after the US presidential election. According to this poll, voters visited political websites primarily for four reasons: social usefulness, amusement, advice, and information gathering/surveillance. These four elements closely match the kinds of applications mentioned in the previously described offline non-political model. Nonetheless, prior implementations of the Uses and Gratifications Theory in a political setting make it abundantly evident that the primary motivators are oversight and guiding.

Methodology

A content analysis was conducted to answer the research questions. The unit of analysis was each post in Facebook and Twitter pages of President Mammadu Buhari and Presidential candidate. Coders accessed the posts by logging into Facebook and Twitter. They coded each post between December 2018 and March 2019. The primary variables coded were for the types of rhetoric, rhetorical device and appeal of the rhetoric. The types of rhetoric included three kinds: deliberate or political/legislative, Judicial or Forensic/ Legal and epideictic or ceremonial/demonstrative. The rhetorical device coded had 24 devices such as hyperbole, metaphor, and simile among others. Appeal of the rhetoric included Ethos, Logos, Pathos and Kairos.

Results and Discussions

A total of 665 posts sourced from the Twitter and Facebook pages of Atiku and Buhari have been used for analysis and presented in two main tables in this section.

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Table 1: Types of Rhetoric in Candidates, Parties and Affiliates

Rhetoric	Atiku	Buhari	Total	Percentage
Deliberate or Political/legislative	270	75	345	51.9
Judicial or Forensic/ Legal	149	35	184	27.7
Epideictic or Ceremonial/Demonstrative	119	17	136	20.7
Total	**538**	**127**	**665**	**100**

Source: Author's Field Work, 2022

Table 1 shows that out of the 665 social media posts studied, half of them representing 51.9 percent used deliberate or political/legislative rhetoric. Hence, candidates were mostly concerned with the future of Nigerians and the nation at large. Accordingly, social media posts advised users or electorate to vote candidates and party that will secure the future of the nation and not on sentiment or instant gratification like persuading the voters to get Nigeria Working Again of Atiku/PDP or sustaining change slogan of APC and move to the Next Level. This implies that most of the social media post sourced from different accounts used deliberate or political/legislative rhetoric. The second most common sort of rhetoric found in the social media posts gathered from Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram was judicial, forensic, or legal rhetoric. From the table, 27.7 percent of the social media posts used judicial or forensic/ legal rhetoric. It is used when communication is intended to accuse or defend someone like when Atiku used it to accuse APC and President Buhari for postponing the election whereas Buhari used it to defend the postponement by appealing to Nigerians not to lose hope in the nation's electoral system. Accordingly, he urged Nigerians not to allow the unexpected postponement by INEC to prevent them from exercising their civic rights. Afterwards, he said that his administration remains committed to a credible electoral process in which every vote counts.

Epideictic or ceremonial/demonstrative rhetoric was used in other social media posts. These social media post mostly commend candidates for their successes and achievements. These include commending Buhari's administration for the construction of second Niger-Bridge, fight against corruptions, blocking all sources of financial leakages, implementation of Treasury Single Account (TSA), establishment of Nigeria Center for Disease Control, extension of Abuja-Kaduna Rail Line Change of Democracy Day in commemoration of June 12, 1993 annulment of election among others. However, epideictic or ceremonial/demonstrative rhetoric were used to critic his administration such as debt profile, Fulani/herdsmen crisis with farmers, division of the country due to lopsided appointments of Service Chiefs among others. On Atiku's part, epideictic or ceremonial/demonstrative rhetoric was used in social media posts to commend and criticize both him and the party (PDP). For instance, Atiku was commended by affiliates for the banking consolidation process as the Chairman of National Economic Council, telecoms revolution, human capacity development, scholarship to students among others. He was criticized for the privatization of public enterprise in Nigeria as many Nigerians said that the process was marred by corruption.

Table 2: Frequency of Rhetorical Devices in Social Media posts sources from Candidates, Parties and Affiliates

Rhetorical Device	Atiku	Buhari	Total	Percentage
Hyperbole	6	9	15	2.2
Metaphor	287	47	335	50.2
Paradox	5	2	7	1.1
Simile	147	24	171	25.7
Rhetorical Question	14	9	23	3.5
Irony	4	2	6	0.9
Personification	3	4	7	1.1
Analogy	8	2	10	1.5
Parallelism	3	1	4	0.6
Parenthesis	5	3	8	1.2
Satire	3	5	8	1.2
Sarcasm		1	1	0.1
Anecdote	4	2	6	0.9
Propaganda	10	9	19	2.9
Epigraph	4		4	0.6
Euphemism	4	2	6	0.9
Oxymoron	2		2	0.3
Aphorism	6	2	8	1.2
Pull Quotes	17	2	19	2.9
Allusion	6	1	7	1.1
Total	**538**	**127**	**665**	**100**

Source: Author's Field Work, 2022

Data contained in table 2 reveal rhetorical devices that were identified from the 665 social media posts sourced from the social media pages of candidates. Out of the 20 devices, 50.2% was for metaphor, 2.9% for pull quotes, hyperbole had 2.2%, 1.1% went for paradox, simile had 25.7%, rhetorical question had 3.5%, Irony had 0.9%, personification and analogy got 1.1% and 1.5%, parallelism got 0.6%, parenthesis got 1.1%, satire got 1.2%, 0.1% went to sarcasm, euphemism received 0.9%, 0.3% for oxymoron and aphorism got 1.2%. The table indicates that metaphor was the most rhetorical device used by the social media posts, simile came second, rhetorical question came third and propaganda came fourth. Some of the least rhetorical devices used include sarcasm, parenthesis and satire.

Some of the examples of rhetorical devices among the social media posts sourced from the Twitter, Facebook and Instagram pages of Atiku and Buhari have been documented below:

A. Atiku

S/No	Rhetorical Device	Expression	Date of the Posts
1.	Metaphor	No one deserves to die over an election	4 Dec 2018
2.	Metaphor	Together we can make Nigeria working Again	19 Feb 2019
3.	Metaphor	Anti-democratic forces are at work	1st Mar 2019
4.	Anaphora/Epiphora	Our government will be 100% for 100% of Nigerians, 100% of the time	24 Jan 2019
5.	Metaphor	NNPC needs to be more than an election slouch fund for every government in power	10 Jan 2019
6.	Metaphor/Allusion	Young Nigerian aren t just leaving Nigeria because of bad pay & working conditions . They are leaving because there is no hope	24 Jan 2019
7.	Metaphor/Simile	As our campaign train moves to Kwara State one of our key priorities remains JOBS	5 Dec 2018
8.	Metaphor	We have a solid team to deal with debt	10 Dec 2018
9.	Metaphor	INEC is being exposed	26 Feb 2019
10.	Metaphor	I am also committed to appointing industry professionals	16 Jan 2019

11.	Simile	I watched with pride as @ Peter Obi laid out our vision to get Nigeria Working Again	14 Dec 2018
12.	Rhetorical Question/ Irony	What does the Buhari government not want Nigerians to know?	8 Dec 2018
13.	Metaphor	I am 100% confident we will get Nigeria Working Again	5 Jan 2019
14.	Simile	10 things Atiku will do as President	Dec 10, 2018
15.	Metaphor	Congratulations to Super Falcons	01 Dec 2018
16.	Simile	The overwhelming Arsenal defeat of Tottenham is just the booster I needed to hit my first campaign in Sokoto tomorrow	02 Dec 2018
17.	Metaphor	Port-Harcourt has been my business home for decade	11 Feb 2019
18.	Metaphor	I will be making a broadcast on Twitter and Facebook at 9am tomorrow	20 Feb 2019
19.	Metaphor/Irony	They are never aware of anythings, a party of jokers	10 Feb 2019
20.	Metaphor/ Allusion	I am saddened by the loss of lives at the APC presidential rally in Jalingo and Taraba States today	07 Feb 2019

Source: Author's Field Work, 2022

B. Buhari

S/No	Rhetorical Device	Expression	Date of the Posts
1.	Metaphor	We will continue to work to protect your interest and deliver our mandate	10 Dec 2018
2.	Metaphor	I have blocked all the leakages	5 Jan 2019
3.	Metaphor	The hard work to deliver a better Nigeria continues, building on the foundations of peace, rule of law and opportunity for all	10 Feb 2019
4.	Metaphor	I was pleased to spend time on my farm in Daura, this morning.	22 Feb 2019
5.	Alliteration	Agriculture will continue to be one of the priorities of our administration	24 Feb 2019
6.	Metaphor/Anaphora	I appeal to all Nigerians not to lose hope in our electoral system	19 Feb 2019
7.	Metaphor/Hypophora	Where did all the money go? The last time there was a focus on infrastructure was when I was in charge of Petroleum Trust Fund (PTD), more than 20 years ago.	14 Feb 2019
8.	Metaphor	It is understandable that we all want to live comfortable lives	4 Jan 2019
9.	Metaphor	We have restored qualified pensioners that were arbitrarily removed from the payroll	14 Jan 2019
10.	Metaphor/Alliteration	Our administration has a deliberate policy to close Nigeria's significant infrastructural deficit	11 Jan 2019
11.	Metaphor	Join @ProfOsinbajo and I on the next level of a prosperous strong and stable Nigeria	19 Dec 2018
12.	Synthatic Personalisation /Homophily	Today in Maiduguri I visited our wounded troops	2 Dec 2018
13.	Litotes	Now, we are doing a lot more, with a lot less. And we shall continue to do our best	10 Dec 2018
14.	Alliteration	In every zone of the country, our administration has infrastructure projects ongoing: roads, rail, housing, power and health.	11 Dec 2018
15.	Anaphora	We are committed to keeping our promise to complete all stalled projects	11 Dec 2018
16.	Metaphor	I assure you that we will do even more in our second term	19 Jan 2019
17.	Anaphora	I won't use government money for my campaign in 2019	10 January 2019
18.	Metonymy	In Onitsha I had the honour of commissioning the Zik Mausoleum, completed by our administration	5th January 2019
19.	Metaphor	I'm also happy to note the progress being made in our airports and seaports on the implementation on the ease of doing business	4 February 2019

Source: Author's Field Work, 2022

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Social Media Rhetorical Strategies

Appeals	Ethos	Logos	Pathos	Kairos	Total
Atiku	74(11.2)	25(18.4)	408(61.4)	31(4.7)	538(80.9)
Buhari	22(3.3)	11(1.7)	88(13.2)	6(0.9)	127(19.1)
Total	**96(14.7)**	**36(5.4)**	**492(74.5)**	**37(5.6)**	**665(100)**

Source: Author's Field Work, 2022

Table 3 shows that pathos rhetorical strategies or technique of persuasion (492) was most prevalent among the social media posts sourced from Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, followed by ethos (96), Karios came third (37) and logos (36). In terms of priority, Atiku used pathos (408) strategy or mode, followed by ethos (74), while karios (31) and logos (25) came third and fourth respectively. For Buhari, pathos had (88), ethos (22), kairos (6) and logos (11).

From the above table, all the social media posts sourced from Atiku and Buhari had more of pathos followed by ethos then Karios and logos came third and fourth respectively. This means that during the electioneering, messages or posts were directed at appealing to the electorates emotion followed by projecting candidate s credibility or competence. The plan behind the employment of ethical reasoning by candidates, parties, and affiliates is that users of social media are more inclined to be persuaded by the moral character and professional background of candidates. Politicians achieve this by giving the electorate the sense that they are capable of alleviating their suffering and experiences, making them a person worth entrusting with the affairs of governance. However, all the posts paid little attention reason, evidence or proof. Although, timeliness of the mode of persuasion or rhetorical strategies is apt in terms of electioneering period, some posts factored in the season (Christmas) or events (wounded troops in North-East) to either appeal to the emotion of electorates or project the image of candidates.

Below are how candidates used pathos, ethos, logos and karios in their messages during the 2019 presidential election in Nigeria. For instance, Atiku Abubakar from time to time invoked the feeling of Nigerians and his plan to ameliorate their pain.

> "So, let me reassure you my friends: we are going to win these elections. And to our long-suffering citizens, I say do not despair, our time is now, and together we shall reshape the destiny of our beloved country (Tweeted by Atiku Abubakar in 19 Feb 2019)
> And to the Nigerian electorate, I call on you to save your beloved country from dictorship by voting against President Buhari's desperate war against the judiciary. Our country is falling apart under the leadership of President Buhari and it is time to stand up for democracy" (Tweeted by Atiku Abubakar in 25 Jan 2019).

The choice of words in both posts can invoke a sense of motivation among the social media users to participate in the 2019 general elections. During the electioneering, electorates were placed at the centre of the messages to maximise the impact on electorate s emotions, and

thus, motivate them to participate. Both candidates in the 2019 general elections in Nigeria used social media posts for political mobilization by appealing and attracting voters by projecting their credibility and reputation (ethos appeals). Since, trustworthiness is a valuable component in politics, both Buhari and Atiku made use of ethos as a strategy, and built trustworthiness with the general public. For instance, Muhammadu Buhari assured Nigerians of his determination not to use government funds for all his campaigns.

> "I won't use government money for my campaign in 2019 (Muhammadu Buhari 10 Jan 2019). I have blocked all the leakages that is why they don't like me. with your votes, I will take our economy back" - Muhammadu Buhari 11 Jan 2019.

In summary, pathos, ethos, logos and Karios were used as persuasive appeals by candidates in the 2019 general elections for political mobilization.

Conclusions and Recommendations

From the presentation of results and discussions, the study has established that both candidates used deliberate or political/legislative rhetoric during the 2019 Presidential Elections for political mobilization and participation. This means both politicians' messages on social media were geared toward convincing people that what they do or think now will either work in their favour or work against them in the future. Politicians use tweets and posts to persuade users to vote them and ignore their opponents. The study also ascertained that metaphor was the most rhetorical device used by the social media posts, simile came second, rhetorical question came third and propaganda came fourth. The employment of those rhetorical devices is crucial to the effectiveness of rhetorical reasoning. They take words and alter their meaning by connoting or implying something different. These devices were used purposely and strategically by both candidates to describe things in a way that brings them to memory. They were also used in social media posts during electioneering to convey meaning, provoke a response from electorates or users. Additionally, political candidates during the 2019 Presidential Election employed more pathos as a persuasive strategy to appeal to the electorate's emotions to evoke feelings in ways social media was used in political mobilization. This sort of appeal seeks support by offering persuasive reasons and eliciting diverse emotions about the candidate, opponents, and policy proposals. Based on the conclusions, the study makes the following recommendations;

1. Since logos was the least used persuasive appeal during the 2019 Presidential Election, this study recommended that politicians should use social media to engage and mobilize voters for policy development using proof, statistics and data rather than projecting their credibility and appealing to voters' emotions as a way of increasing online engagement and political participation.
2. It is recommended that further studies be conducted using 2023 Nigerian Presidential election to compare findings with regards to utilization of rhetoric devices employed by candidates for political mobilization and participation.

3 It is recommended that Rhetoric as an art of persuasive speaking should go with ethical

principles. Pathos-based persuasion should not be used to manipulate voters by exploiting their emotional frameworks.

4 It is also recommended that, Logos-based persuasion requires proper reasoning and truth-telling. False speech that persuades voters to believe politicians are trustworthy is dishonest and hence unethical.

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