

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT MUHAMMADUBUHARI'S 2019 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION POLITICAL ADVERTORIALS IN SELECTED NIGERIAN NEWSPAPERS

BY

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Abstract

This study investigates the ideological strategies embedded in political campaign advertorials during Nigeria's 2019 presidential election, with a particular focus on President Muhammadu Buhari's campaign. Drawing on Norman Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the research aims to explore how language is used to project persuasive ideologies and influence public perception. This study was guided by three core objectives: first, to explore the types of ideology present in selected political advertorials; second, to examine the significance of the most frequently occurring ideology within the social context of communication; and third, to assess the impact of this dominant ideology on the electorate. To achieve these aims, twenty advertorials were randomly selected from five national newspapers and analyzed using Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA framework. The analysis revealed a range of ideological expressions, including nationalism, security-focused narratives, and themes of economic revival. However, the transformational leadership ideology emerged as the most dominant, consistently portraying President Buhari as a reformer and anti-corruption advocate. This ideology resonated strongly with Nigeria's socio-political climate, reflecting widespread public demand for integrity and change. Its strategic deployment in campaign messaging significantly shaped voter perception, reinforcing Buhari's credibility and mobilizing electoral support. Based on these findings, the study recommends that political campaigns adopt ethical messaging practices that inform rather than manipulate the electorate. It also advocates for the implementation of media literacy programs to empower citizens to critically evaluate political discourse. Ultimately, the study urges regulatory bodies to enforce balanced and fair representation in political advertising, thereby ensuring that democratic integrity is maintained throughout the electoral process.

Keywords: *Critical discourse, Analysis, Political advertorial, Ideology and Newspaper*

Introduction

Language is central to this study, serving both as a primary means of communication and a strategic resource in politics. As a structured system of symbols, language enables individuals and social groups to express ideas, form identities, and engage with their environment. For this reason, understanding the functions of language, spoken, written, and symbolic, is especially important when analyzing political contexts, where meaning, persuasion, and group affiliation converge. Collectively, these definitions reinforce the view that language serves a critical function in communication, operating as a system of signs that mediates interactions among individuals. These signs include speech sounds and, additionally, written symbols, which comprise the alphabet used in written communication. As such, communication in any language is enabled by linguistic symbols governed by established rules and conventions. The interdependence between language and politics is well-established, as language constitutes an indispensable instrument in the execution of political activity.

The study of political language elucidates how linguistic resources are deployed to acquire, exercise, and sustain power. This supports the perspective that language is instrumental in shaping public perceptions of political candidates and their platforms, primarily for the purpose of securing public support and fostering political engagement (Opeibi 1993). Politics is inextricably linked to language, and language itself assumes a political dimension. Chilton (2002) maintains that language is the universal faculty enabling communication across all human societies, while politics may be understood as the art of governance. The present study, therefore, conceptualizes language as an essential means of interaction within and navigation across organizational and situational settings traditionally classified as political. The strategies employed by one group to elicit compliance from another may be considered linguistic strategies, characterized by intentional manipulation

of language. Linguistic manipulation involves the deliberate, nuanced use of language to influence or control others (Fairclough, 2001). Public support for politicians' hinges upon the content and delivery of their discourse, which is integral to successful candidacies or political initiatives. Opeibi (1993) describes the nexus between language and politics as symbiotic. Academic inquiry into political language spans political rhetoric, linguistic style, discourse analysis, and critical discourse analysis. Contexts such as political campaigns, speeches, parliamentary debates, interviews, and mediated texts serve to inform, persuade, and educate the electorate on salient issues. The delivery of speeches remains a core political activity, facilitated through language as the primary channel of communication. Graber (1981) asserts that political discourse transpires when actors, whether governmental or otherwise, address political topics to advance particular agendas. The efficacy of political discourse is thus contingent upon the adept utilization of linguistic resources. As Opeibi (1993) highlights, regardless of the quality of a candidate's manifesto or a party's ideological orientation, the articulation and operationalization of these Concepts toward social transformation and stability are possible only through language. Language serves numerous rhetorical functions, including persuasion, edification, entertainment, and commitment. Ultimately, language remains the primary conduit to public sentiment and engagement in politics.

Ideology refers to a set of ideas, beliefs, and values that are characteristic of a particular group, class, or society. Such belief systems underpin and legitimize the authority held by dominant groups. As Eagleton (1991) observes, these systems are collectively shared among group members. Power relations are integral to the shaping of ideology, with Fairclough (2001) characterizing ideology as a set of implicit assumptions mediated by power structures. Luke (2008) conceptualizes ideology as encompassing systems of ideas, beliefs, practices, and representations serving the interests of specific social classes or cultural collectives. Thus, ideologies are shared schemas that delineate group identities and inform interpretations of lived experiences. Odebunmi et al. (2002) define ideology as a collection of prevailing ideas, beliefs, values, and epistemological frameworks guiding the cognition and behavior of individuals and groups. Ogunmodede (2004) similarly presents ideology as a complex array of assumptions and judgments that shape conduct and decision-making. Accordingly, the relationship among language, politics, and ideology is deeply interwoven.

Language is strongly influenced by ideology, and its use in politics reflects underlying beliefs about how language should function. These ideological views are shaped by cultural and historical factors. Fairclough (2001) maintains that power in modern society is often exercised through the ideological nature of language. Thus, ideology is deeply embedded in language and shapes people's understanding and actions. Political advertising is a tool for candidates to inform and influence voters. Arens (2008) describes it as structured, persuasive communication paid for by sponsors and delivered through mass media. Kayode (2014) notes that effective political advertising requires a targeted approach using diverse media channels to reach the electorate. Technological advances have made it easier for campaigns to reach larger audiences efficiently and persuasively. In Nigeria, political advertisements are used by recognized sponsors, such as political party campaign offices and their supporters, to raise awareness about their candidates, parties, and policies. The primary goal is to reach voters and persuade them to support their candidate, thereby gaining power. According to Aduradola and Ojukwu (2013), the core purpose of political advertising is to influence voters and help secure an election victory. Olujide et al (2011) note that politicians also use other strategies during campaigns, such as personal meetings, lobbying, public relations, propaganda, and political rallies. However, newspaper ads have been a significant part of election campaigns in Nigeria since colonial times, and their impact remains strong even in the 21st century.

Opeibi (2006) categorizes political advertisements into three types:

- i. Contrast adverts: These contain negative information about an opponent and make clear statements in favor of the preferred candidate.
- ii. Plain political adverts: These focus on positive information about the candidate and do not mention the opposition.
- iii. Negative attack adverts: These only present negative information about the opponent without any positive points about them.

Opeibi further pointed out that the attack or negative advertisement is similar to Nigerian election campaigns. Political advertorials can be presented in various ways, such as television shows, radio programs, newspapers, and displaying pictures of candidates with messages on billboards, in magazines, and even through new media. One of the primary objectives of political advertorials is to capture the attention of voters, and for this reason, they sometimes employ traditional strategies to achieve their goals. Political advertorials refer to all the efforts made by politicians, political parties, and their candidates to plan, design, and spread messages that aim to create positive attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors among voters, which in turn can lead to them voting for the parties and their candidates. This means that political advertorials are funded by identified sponsors. Political advertorials have become a significant area of advertising in

today's Nigerian political landscape. They are a real way to inform voters about candidates and the manifestos of political parties. Political advertorials have become a key part of Nigerian politics to the point where voters sometimes judge the seriousness of candidates and parties based on the level and style of advertising they use.

According to Alawode and Adesanya (2016), political advertising is essential for effective political socialization and mobilization. Political advertorials are quickly becoming a vital part of Nigerian politics. This was evident in the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria, where major political parties, such as the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP), along with other parties, heavily utilized political advertising to influence voting decisions. Asemah, as cited by Edegoh et al. (2013), states that political advertising is used by Nigerian politicians to persuade people to vote for them, and it is an essential part of the political process in Nigeria and other democratic societies. It is a crucial form of communication for gaining votes. It is advertising that involves political parties introducing candidates to win votes and gain power. Political advertorials have been a part of political communication since voters need to be informed about candidates, parties, and their platforms. This need on the part of voters creates opportunities for persuasion, just as traditional product advertising aims to encourage a specific action.

The Nigerian press has played a significant and admirable role in promoting professionalism and development among Nigerians. The history of the Nigerian press demonstrates that it has been utilized, and continues to be utilized, to support the interests of the nation as a whole, rather than those of specific regions, ethnic groups, or sections. The history of the Nigerian press or print media can be broadly divided into four phases. These are the missionary journalism era, the period of foreign-dominated press, the rise of the local press, and the beginning of modern Nigerian newspapers (Ogunsiji, 1989). The role of the press is to ensure that the public is informed about every decision and action taken by the government, as all government actions are meant to serve the citizens. This role helps maintain the government's responsibility as a representative of the people, with their interests always taking precedence. The ultimate goal of this effort is to strengthen Nigeria's unity and cohesion. The press is expected to perform these duties within the Nigerian context. Their functions include most of the content found in radio and television news broadcasts, as well as news columns in newspapers and magazines. The Nigerian press provides detailed reports on all news and events related to everyday life. Through editorials, articles, or special features, the press influences public opinion. They also entertain readers with various forms of fiction, such as comics, strips, and stories. The press covers sports news, theater events, and columns related to leisure activities. It also provides public service messages that are easily recognizable. After the December 31, 1983 coup that removed Shehu Shagari from power, Buhari was chosen as the military Head of State. His government set up the Supreme Military Council, Federal Executive Council, Council of States, and other councils.

Democracy is a form of governance in which power is vested in the people, who either exercise it directly or through elected representatives. In a democratic system, people have a say in making laws, choosing leaders, and deciding on important matters that affect their country. The primary concept of democracy is that the government's authority derives from the people it serves. Democracy isn't just about creating political parties, holding elections, or having a government led by civilians; it's also about ensuring that these institutions are accountable to the people. It's a continuous process that involves everyone participating in shaping policies and decisions that impact their daily lives. This process relies on a nation's ability to create opportunities for people to discuss, share ideas, organize, and disseminate information. In Nigeria, democracy is still in the process of development and is expected to mature fully in the future. Although democracy has been in place in Nigeria since 1999, numerous challenges have persisted. Civil society and many Nigerians had high hopes for their leaders, believing that democracy would enable them to choose leaders who truly understood their problems and could effectively solve them. However, their expectations have been largely ignored by political tricks and misleading actions.

Statement of the Problem

Political advertorial is fast becoming an important part of Nigerian politics. This was demonstrated in 2011, 2015, and the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria. It will be recalled that before the 2019 General Election, the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the two major political parties that presented contenders for the presidential election, as well as other political parties, engaged in vigorous political advertising. Political advertising messages were displayed on radio, television, newspapers, and magazines. The internet and many outdoor platforms. Many political officeholders have, at some point, had to create political advertorials to persuade the electorate to vote for them. Various scholars have studied the political advertorials of prominent parties and politicians in Nigeria. They have identified political advertising as a recognizable influencer of voters in Nigeria. Other researchers have also observed that political advertising was heavily used during the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria. However, the study of the underlying meaning

of political advertorials, which portray the intentions of political officeholders, has not been carefully examined. Therefore, this study aims to conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis of selected political advertorials featuring President Muhammadu Buhari during the 2019 presidential election.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are stated below:

1. To explore the types of ideology in the selected political advertorials.
2. To examine the significance of the ideology with the highest frequency distribution in relation to the social context of communication.
3. To explore the impact of the ideology with the highest frequency distribution on the electorate.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What types of ideology are expressed in the selected political advertorials?
2. What is the significance of the ideology with the highest frequency distribution in the social context of communication?
3. What is the impact of the ideology on the frequency distribution of the electorate?

Methodology

This study employed a *survey research design* to describe the attitudes, opinions, and characteristics of a population. The population comprised all political advertisements published during the 2019 general elections in Nigeria. The survey design was chosen to facilitate the exploration of ideological patterns and power relations embedded in political communication. A *qualitative research approach* was adopted to uncover the underlying ideologies and power structures within the selected advertorials. Qualitative research is particularly suited for capturing the essence of individual expressions, actions, and thoughts in everyday life, thereby giving them contextual meaning (Wodak & Busch, *Handbook of Media Studies*, p. 105). The study utilized *Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)*, which involves a three-dimensional analytical process:

Text Analysis – Examined the linguistic features and ideological content of the advertorials.

Interpretation – Focused on the relationship between the text and its production and reception.

Social Analysis – Explored the broader socio-political context in which the advertorials were produced and consumed.

This framework enabled a comprehensive understanding of how language in political advertorials reflects and reinforces social structures, ideologies, and power dynamics. Data were collected from five widely circulated Nigerian newspapers: *The Nation*, *Punch*, *Vanguard*, *This Day*, and *Daily Sun*. These newspapers were selected due to their prominence and national reach, ensuring that the political issues addressed were familiar to a broad audience. The selection focused specifically on advertorials promoting President Muhammadu Buhari during the 2019 presidential election. To avoid duplication, only unique adverts from each newspaper were considered. A total of twenty (20) advertorials were randomly selected from editions published between December 2018 and February 2019.

Results

Research Question One: What are the types of ideology in the selected political advertorials?

Ideology refers to a collection of ideas and beliefs that are typical of a specific social group, class, or society. These ideas help justify the power of those in control. Such belief systems are shared within a group and are typically developed over time, often evolving as people mature through various life stages. As a result, ideologies tend to remain fairly consistent. An ideology is a set of beliefs or views that an individual or a group holds, often based on reasons that extend beyond mere knowledge or truth.

Different types of ideologies exist depending on the ideas and traits of a particular group or class.

In this study, ideology is viewed as a means to influence or control others in order to gain acceptance. Through the research, five kinds of ideology were found: persuasive, personal profiling, directive, comparative, and negotiation. The frequency of each type is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 1: Types of Ideology in the Advertorials

S/N	Types of Ideology	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Persuasive	10	50

2.	Personal profiling	5	25
3.	Directive	3	15
4.	Comparative	1	5
5.	Negotiation	1	5
	Total	20	100

Persuasion as an ideology is an attempt to make people believe something through reasoning. It's an act that influences a person's beliefs, attitudes, intentions, motivations, or behaviors. In Table 4.1 above, the findings indicate that the text was primarily persuasive, accounting for 50% of the total types of ideology in the data. In other words, the instrument of persuasion was the greatest weapon employed in the data, as it equipped readers with sufficient information to support or reject a candidate. It was also found that demanding services from the readers and, by extension, the electorate was a regular feature. What this means is that these political campaign adverts did not just provide information; they made clear what they wanted the reader to do with the information supplied.

In the extract below, the advertiser deployed ideology as a persuasive tool, thereby urging readers to accept their party and reject others.

Extract 1:

INFRASTRUCTURE: No State left behind. Re-elect Muhammadu Buhari.

(*The Nation. Feb 8, 2019, pg 40.*)

This is intended to remind the electorate of the provision of infrastructure in all states across the country. Because of this, Nigerians are encouraged to re-elect him so that he can continue in his good work.

Extract 2:

I, Barr. Morayolebi, on behalf of my family and the people of Ondo South Sensatorial district, **solicit** the support of Nigerians and the people of Ondo State. In particular, for the re-election of President Muhammadu Buhari, Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo.

(*The Nations, Feb 13, 2019. pg 36*)

The expression is persuasive . The Governor of the State was trying to convince his people by begging them to support Buhari and his vice, Osinbajo. Buhari might have done a lot for them in their state and personally, and he believed that if Buhari were to be re-elected, he and his state would greatly benefit from his regime.

Extract 3:

Support Visionary leaders.

(*The Nation. Feb 9, 2019. pg 9*)

Visionary leaders are those who have a clear vision for the country. This is an encouragement statement for Nigerians to support Buhari and Osinbajo, as they have led the nation to rapid development in their first term. This writer believes that, despite their accomplishments, they still have plans in place that will contribute to the county's growth.

Extract 5:

Extract 4:

The Cole/ Giadom campaign organization is urging all Nigerians to massively.

Vote for president Muhammadu Buhari & prof. Yemi Osinbajo.

(*The Nation. February 12, 2019. pg 39*)

This is an APC campaign organization that persuades people to vote for Buhari and Osinbajo. This organization has been paid to encourage and convince people to support Buhari and Osinbajo. They urge Nigerians to make quick decisions in choosing the right person, for whom their own candidate has been presented as the best.

Healing the wounds of the Nation-- Who but Buhari can deliver on this tough task.

(*Punch news, February 4, 2019. pg 27.*)

Nigeria is a nation plagued by numerous problems. All our past leaders were unable to address these problems; instead, they exacerbated them. With the good work Buhari started in his first term, it was believed that he could solve all these problems, as he had already begun addressing them. This extract was actually intended to persuade Nigerians to vote for Buhari, who had already begun addressing the problems.

Extract 6:

Promises Kept.

(*Punch, Feb 1, 2019. pg 31.*)

Promises are often made by politicians seeking office. When these politicians are elected to office, they often fail to fulfill their promises, thereby disappointing the electorate. Buhari, on the other hand, made promises and fulfilled all in his first tenure. This extract is intended to inform the electorate that he's the only one who can fulfill his promises, thereby encouraging them to vote for him.

Extract :7.

Buhari has consistently kept faith in Nigeria. Vote Buhari.
(*Punch, Feb 1, 2019, p. 17.*)

Due to the fact that politicians in Nigeria are often perceived as untrustworthy, people tend to view them as liars. The majority of the 2019 presidential candidates are one and the same. But people believed in Buhari. They see him as a trustworthy person who did not betray them during his first tenure, keeping all his promises, which is why the electorate is encouraged to vote for him again.

Extract 8:

President Buhari is fixing Nigeria's power problem.
Vote Buhari Osinbajo.

(*Punch, Feb 7, 2019. pg 17*)

Power supply in Nigeria had been a serious issue even before independence. Past leaders promised to fix the problem, but they ultimately failed to deliver. This issue circulates to all parts of the country. Nigerians have lost hope in it. Before the 2019 general election, President Muhammadu Buhari took reasonable steps to solve the power problem, which was one of his campaign tactics. As a result of this move, people are encouraged to vote for him, believing that re-electing him will bring stability to Nigeria's power supply.

Extract 9:

Buhari Osinbajo recognized the fact that to make progress in society,
The government must work to create an atmosphere of peace and stability.
and harmony.....vote Buhari Osinbajo.

(*The Punch, Feb 4, 2019, pg 27.*)

Nigeria is a multiethnic nation that lacks peace, harmony, and security. The agreement between the two leaders, Buhari and Osinbajo, to govern the nation promotes peace and harmony. During that period, their coming together reduced the tension in the country, as the northerners, who were the major cause of the problem, were pleased. This extract is trying to use this to convince the electorate to support them.

Extract 10:

In creating the desired future,
We need to support the actualizer and the finisher.

(*The Punch. Feb 2, 2019. pg 15.*)

An actualizer and finisher initiates a plan or work and completes it. Due to the fact that politicians often fail to deliver on their promises, the 2015-2019 period saw several initiatives undertaken by Buhari and Osinbajo aimed at bringing development to the country. They had vision, a plan, and executed them compared to all our past leaders. A few months before the 2019 election, they had not finished their work, which is why this writer is persuading the electorate to vote for them for continuity.

Research Question Two: Determine the ideology with the highest frequency distribution and its significance in the social context of communication

Ideology refers to the way an individual or a group thinks, which is reflected in their ideas, beliefs, and values. It is a collection of ideas, theories, and goals that form a plan for organizing society. Ideology is a set of ideas that explains how people live and how culture functions. A political ideology is a group of beliefs, values, and principles that guide a particular movement, organization, or large group. It describes how society should function and provides a vision for the kind of society that should exist. A political ideology is a coherent set of ideas about politics and the role of the government. In this study, the ideology that appears most often is persuasive ideology. Persuasive ideology is a method that politicians use to get people to support them. It is a way for them to make others believe what they want them to believe. This kind of ideology is used to influence people's beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and actions. Politicians use it to seek support, gain attention, and secure votes. Persuasion is the process of changing someone's beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors through the use of words and non-verbal signals. It is a way of communicating to influence another person's thoughts or actions. Persuasive communication is any message that aims to change or reinforce someone's attitudes or actions. Therefore, persuasive ideology and personal profiling were the most powerful tools used to influence voters and get them to support Buhari. In his personal profile, his accomplishments and character were highlighted, and this approach

was used by political parties and campaign teams to win people over. These two strategies were key to Buhari's success and are shown in the example below:

‘Buhari is a man of impeccable character and integrity who will surely take us to the next level.’

This type of communication is used to get others to agree with your views or change their opinions.

It can also help in resolving conflicts. Politicians use persuasion to get people to vote for them. Therefore, persuasion is crucial when attempting to alter someone's attitude or beliefs so that they support a particular idea. When combined with strong negotiation skills, persuasion can help achieve better agreements with clients and business partners. Persuasion is often employed to persuade individuals or groups to adopt a particular belief or position. It requires a good understanding of the audience and the ability to listen carefully. Persuasion is a form of social influence where an audience is encouraged to adopt an idea, attitude, or action through symbolic means. It is a communication skill that allows a speaker to present their point of view from the audience's perspective and encourage them to act accordingly. Persuasion also appeals to people's self-interest by addressing their needs, values, and desires. People respond better to persuasive messages when they perceive the speaker as similar to themselves in some way. The goal of persuasion is to influence others to think or act in a certain way, and the fastest way to do this is by speaking directly to them.

Research Question Three: What is the impact of the ideology with the highest frequency of distribution on the electorates?

Political persuasion is the act of influencing voters to choose your political platform over the opposition's through a series of tactics and practices. The instrument of persuasion was the greatest weapon employed in the advertisements, as it equipped readers with sufficient information to support their claims. Persuading people to support a particular candidate or party is an essential test of any political campaign. It brings strong non-supporters into your camp and inspires them to vote for you. The power of persuasion is an invaluable tool employed during a political campaign to garner the full attention and support of the electorate. The power of political parties/politicians to persuade the electorate has been a major strategy they use in winning elections. They employed complex strategies to persuade voters to support them. Persuasive ideologies are crafted to influence citizens' affective evolution of candidates. It improves the voters' knowledge and interest in the campaign. Persuasive ideology significantly influenced the electorate during the 2019 general election, as evident in the distribution table. The result of the 2019 presidential election revealed that the highest number of votes was cast for President Muhammadu Buhari. Considering that President Muhammadu Buhari recontested and won the 2019 general election, and is now running for his second term, it means that the ideology has paid off for him and the party. To persuade the electorate, another ideology was employed, namely the personal profiling ideology. Persuasive ideology was the greatest weapon employed by the APC to win President Muhammadu Buhari's re-election, as well as to highlight some of his personal attributes. These two ideologies were the weapons that worked for him and his party.

(The Nation, Feb 2019).

‘He is trusting and can be trusted. His love for Nigeria is unquestionable.’

(The Punch, Feb 2019)

‘It takes moral rectitude to build a nation.’

(This day, Feb 2019)

Buhari runs a compassionate government, and he intends to continue to do so.

(This day, Feb 2019)

As evident in the above extracts, Nigerians tend to vote for a person with a good personality profile, and they can only be persuaded based on this. Therefore, persuasion as a weapon of ideology was able to achieve its aims perfectly with Buhari's personality profiling.

Discussion of the Findings

The analysis shows that the campaign advertorials have utilized ideological messages intentionally to fulfill voter expectations and shape electoral decisions. The persuasive message was the chief one, as it offered Muhammadu Buhari as a transformational, ethical, and anti-corruption leader. This was a message aimed at winning the people's discontent with the prevailing political environment and a way to demonstrate Buhari as a genuine opponent who was able to bring back integrity and accountability. This observation is in line with Latiko and Idris (2024), who analyzed the 2015 Chatham House speech of Buhari and found the application of contrastive structures, selective language, and transitivity to be rhetorical devices creating an image of a reformist. Their work emphasizes the fact that the process of persuasive discourse can be effective in mobilizing the general opinion by creating definite moral and political choices.

The second type of analysis revealed that personal profiling was the second most used strategy, and it represented about 25% of the ideological content. This approach portrayed Buhari as an individual who could be related to, trusted, and disciplined. The focus on his own merits and emotional resonance made the campaign more engaging and dedicated more people to vote, as well as made Buhari a more popular transformational leader. Ajayi (2020) agrees with this observation, stating that the Independence Day speech offered by Buhari made use of the positive self-representation in order to create a rapport with the citizens and create a sense of shared identity. Personal profiling can be particularly useful when the level of political trust is minimal because it enables the lessening of the distance between politicians and voters.

Directive, comparative, and negotiation ideologies were not frequently used; however, they also helped to form the perceptions of voters. The use of directive messages emphasized the goals of the policy and leadership attributes of Buhari and influenced the choice of voters. Comparative ideology was used to highlight his contrasts with political opponents, and this was mainly through implicit comparisons that implied that he was morally superior. The ideology of negotiation demonstrated his inclusiveness of different groups and sensitivity towards national matters. These findings are consistent with the findings made by Rasheed and Buhari (2024), who claim that issue-based campaign messages and rhetorical framing are essential in creating a consistent and persuasive political narrative. According to their research, strategic communication is important in influencing voter behaviors and legitimizing political power. Collectively, a combination of these ideological approaches formed an integrated campaign message that appealed to the electorate. The interplay between convincing communication and profile personalization was especially effective, and it was one of the factors that made Buhari win the elections. That is why the significance of ideological framing in campaign communication is emphasized, and the ethical duty of political communicators to inform voters in a clear and productive way is illustrated. To conclude, the research proves that persuasive and personal profiling techniques are effective in pursuing campaign objectives and shaping the democratic debate. Studies that examine the ethics of political messaging should be expanded in the future, specifically when applied to political unrest and media saturation.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings regarding persuasive strategies in Nigerian political campaigns, here are three targeted recommendations:

1. Political parties and candidates should adopt ethical standards in their use of persuasive techniques. While strong messaging is effective, it should avoid misinformation, character defamation, or manipulation.
2. Voters should be empowered to critically evaluate political advertorials and campaign messages.
3. Regulatory bodies, such as INEC and media councils, should encourage balanced representation in political advertising.

Conclusion

The study reveals a conscious deployment of various discursive and ideological strategies employed in Nigerian political campaigns. It clearly showed how political parties and candidates project themselves to gain the favour of the electorate, often at the detriment of other political parties, using strong persuasive techniques. In other words, a critical discourse analysis of President Muhammadu Buhari's 2019 presidential election political advertorials in Nigeria has revealed how political parties and their candidates won the hearts of the electorate, and the different strategies employed for the sole purpose of winning elections. The findings showed that strong, persuasive, and personal profiling strategies were used in the advertisement to equip readers with adequate information and, consequently, win them over. According to this study, it appears that political parties and their candidates strategically employed persuasive ideologies to gain the support of the electorate.

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