

Changing Civic Engagement: Creating Better Processes for a Broad, Balanced and Connected Public Communication in Osun State

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Preface

A popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or, perhaps both.

James Madison

The Positive Agenda Nigeria is a non-governmental organisation dedicated to focusing on good governance through government-citizen interaction. The organisation deploys evidence-based advocacy for a robust communication between elected representatives and citizens. Thus, this study is a follow-up to the work done during the 2018 Osun governorship election where we monitored the campaign atmosphere on both physical and virtual spaces where candidates engaged the citizens to see the quality of campaign promises. This report - *Changing Civic Engagement: Creating Better Processes for a Broad, Balanced and Connected Public Communication in Osun State*- is an assessment of the government-citizen communication in the last one year of Governor Gboyega Oyetola's administration in Osun State. One, the study looked at how the government is appropriating the existing communication infrastructure to communicate policies and governance-related issues. Two, we examined the culture of interaction between the government and the people. We intended to know how open or close the government has been in its engagements with the people. The results are briefly captured in the executive summary.

At this juncture, let me acknowledge the team that worked assiduously for the achievement of this feat. Special thanks to our data collectors both online and offline. The good job you did ensured this came out as scheduled. I also appreciate the efforts of Prof. Ayobami Ojebode who accepted to write the foreword and did so within a short period of time despite his tight schedule. I equally say a big thank you to those professionals in Osun who made themselves available for interview. My immense appreciation also goes to Mr. Animashaun Mojeed Adekunle and Dr. Olusegun Fariudeen Liadi for their wonderful editorial work on the manuscript of the report.

Before I conclude, let me emphasise that a robust people engagement enhances democratic culture and open governance. Consequently, enhancing democratic culture and open governance are the essence of this report. I hope the government would take a cue from the report and improve her communication where necessary in the next one year and beyond.

Thank you.

Rasheed Ademola Adebisi

Co-Convener

Positive Agenda Nigeria

Foreword

The 2016 United States presidential election and the controversial role of Cambridge Analytica alarmed the world and alerted it to the role of large data in politics and policy. Using data sourced most times without the owners' consent, Cambridge Analytica succeeded in guiding the composition and dissemination of the campaign messages of the Republican Party in a way that played on the fears and aspirations of the American individual person and subgroups. The razor-sharp, surgically targeted messages were almost irresistible because they were like sincere whispers of a close friend telling each voter about the deepest and unutterable secrets and fears of their hearts – secrets and fears that were detected through large data analysis. The world woke up to this perversion when it was too late; Cambridge Analytica disbanded itself, but it all left us with a message: data matters in policy and politics.

But have we not always known that? We very much do. That is why at the end of nearly all academic publications in the human sciences, we have policy recommendations. No matter how remotely connected to policy the study is, we attempt to ram in some policy recommendations. The result of this is known: very rarely does any policy maker take our recommendations seriously for obvious reasons. These reasons include first, many of our studies are not policy-engaged – they are only policy-appended or policy-relevant. Second, the policy makers do not read our journals and books. Third, there is a plain aversion to intellection among our bureaucrats and politicians. There are more reasons.

The foregoing situation is what makes this publication of immense importance in my view. Here is a detailed, data-driven publication that seeks to engage governance, right from the start– not at the end. Its focus is sharp– citizen engagement and communication infrastructure. Its audience is defined– policy actors. Its language is also largely devoid of our cryptic academic jargons which policy actors find discouraging.

Anyone who would govern at this age needs a voice like the one we hear in this report, the voice of a credible interrogator of the specific aspects of our society and governance. It is my hope that the target audience of this report will take it seriously, and amend its communication strategies accordingly.

Prof. Ayobami Ojebode
University of Ibadan
Ibadan, Nigeria

Executive Summary

Before and during his inauguration as the 5th Executive Governor of Osun State, Alhaji Isiaka Gboyega Oyetola made promises to the people of the State. He emphasised that his administration would key into the principle of inclusive governance. After inauguration, the expectation was that communicating the government's policy thrust to the people of Osun should have been enhanced through the available communication infrastructure. However, one year has lapsed and public analysts, professionals and scholars are asking many questions regarding civic engagement of the government over the past year. Has there been a robust, citizen-focussed communication process/engagement between the government and the citizens of Osun in the last one year? What is the implication of civic engagement on governance and democracy? Communication scholars[1] attempt answers for the last poser. One of them argues that civic engagement, through technologies, promotes democratic ideals and affords the citizens the opportunity to communicate with public office holders[2]. Further, civic engagement "strengthens citizen's voices, facilitates social cohesion and supports direct citizen participation in democratic processes"[3].

In addition, another one establishes that citizen engagement offers both the citizens and development agents a better understanding of problems and needs, opinions and priorities as well as promotes community representation in decision making[4]. When citizens are involved in decision making through effective government-citizen engagement, there will be open and more accountable leadership that builds citizens' trust in government. From our analysis and insights that emerged, it is clear that the government's communication engagement with the public has not been properly planned and coordinated by the media team in the last one year. In view of this, there is a need for redesigning of the team structure alongside training of the members on content production, content dissemination strategies and monitoring of the government and governor's public image in the next year.

1. Introduction

Before Mr Gboyega Oyetola became the present Governor of Osun State, he had served as the state's Chief of Staff for 8 years under the administration of Former Governor Rauf Aregbesola. Prior to his emergence as the governor, little was known about him, though reports had it that he was one of those individuals who founded the Alliance for Democracy (AD) in 1998[5]. Many contenders had raised a furore over the decision of the APC's National Working Committee to select the state's standard bearer through a direct primary election held on July 20, 2018. That was the first of its kind in the APC[6]. Hence, twelve out of seventeen contenders registered their grievances against the party's choice of primary election. Among them was the former Secretary to the State Government, Alhaji Moshood Adeoti[7] who later defected to another party, the Action Democratic Party[8]. The main contentions of the dissenters were that the party had no comprehensive data of party members throughout the nooks and crannies of Osun, and that Alhaji Oyetola was anointed by the party bigwigs[9]. Consequently, with direct primary election, only the card-carrying members of the party could vote.

On July 20, 2018, the primary election of the APC took place in 332 wards in Osun State. At the end of the election, Alhaji Oyetola polled 127,017 votes and declared winner in over thirteen local governments[10]. The two main contenders to Alhaji Oyetola, former Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Honourable Lasun Yusuf as well as the former Speaker of the Osun State House of Assembly, Honourable Najeem Salam scored 21,975 and 17,958 votes respectively.

After the party's primary, different political figures including President Muhammadu Buhari[11] and the then governor, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola, campaigned for Alhaji Gboyega Oyetola[12]. Also, among these political figures were the wife of the former governor in the state, Alhaja Shereefat Aregbesola and a member of the House of Representatives, representing Ayedade/Irewole/Isokan Federal Constituency, Ayo Omidiran who visited markets [in Osogbo, Olorunda, Irepodun and Orolu Federal Constituency] with a view to canvassing votes for Alhaji Oyetola. They "assured traders that Oyetola would run an inclusive administration that would ensure equity and fair play, and would give women appointment"[13]. Later, Alhaji Oyetola's contender at the primary, Honourable Lasun Yusuf campaigned for him at the grand rally of the

APC organised for its candidate in the September 22 governorship election in Osun[14].

During the campaign periods, Alhaji Oyetola promised to embark on infrastructural renewal, inclusive government, rejuvenation of the state's economy through tax, mineral resources exploration and tourism if Osun citizens were to elect him as the next governor of the state. He also promised economic empowerment through agriculture and employment. Moreover, Alhaji Oyetola told the populace that rural development as well as community-based, consultative and inclusive governance would be taken care of by his administration[15].

The election was held on September 22. At the end of polling, the Independent National Electoral Commission declared the election inconclusive because the cancelled votes (3,498) outweighed the gap between Alhaji Oyetola of the APC and Senator Ademola Adeleke of the PDP (354 votes)[16]. This led to the declaration of a supplementary election in seven polling units[17] in "pursuant to Section 153 of the Electoral Act." After the re-run election held on September 27, 2018, Alhaji Oyetola's votes increased to 255,505 votes from 254,345 against 255,023 votes for Senator Ademola Adeleke from the earlier 254,698 votes. Consequently, the APC's candidate was declared winner of the governorship election. This declaration generated legal battles that reached the Supreme Court.

In line with the relevant provisions of the 1999 constitution, as amended, and the 2010 Electoral Act, as amended, on election petition, the PDP candidate in the governorship election approached the Tribunal to challenge Mr Oyetola's victory. On March 22, 2018, the Tribunal declared Senator Ademola Adeleke of the People's Democratic Party as the winner of the September 2018 election[18]after majority judgment[19]. Mr Oyetola and the APC however approached the Appeal court, and the appellants court overturned the verdict of the Tribunal. However, Senator Adeleke had to take the case to the Nigeria's highest court, the Supreme Court with the prayer that "the apex court set aside the ruling of the appeal court and uphold the decision of the Osun election petition tribunal"[20]. On July 5, 2019, the Supreme Court affirmed the verdict of the Appeal Court that recognised Alhaji Oyetola as the duly elected governor of Osun State. Earlier on November 28, 2018 when Mr Oyetola was inaugurated as the fifth governor of the state, he emphasized his campaign promises:

To reposition the economy of our great state, we shall organise the Osun Economic Summit within the first quarter of our first year in office. The multi-stage, multi-stakeholders' summit will dissect and recommend strategies which will drive meaningful youth employment, enhance food security, agricultural development, activate mining prospects and boost tourism potential of this state. We will showcase Osun as a strategic location for industrialisation. We will develop the free trade zone while strengthening Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as a way to enhance their productive capacity to generate jobs and create wealth. To further boost our local economy and increase the revenue base, we shall make Osun a cultural destination and a tourism enterprise zone in the Southwest. We shall improve on the Internally Generated Revenue of the state in ways that do not bring additional burden to the people. We will make health and education more accessible. Employment opportunities will be created through industrialisation and expansion of agricultural activities through appropriate incentives. To boost agriculture and food security, our administration will consolidate on the agricultural land expansion programme (the Land Bank), with additional target of 20,000 hectares to the Land Bank. We will establish nine new farm settlements (one each per federal constituency) while we push forward on our promise to establish agro-industrial parks and produce markets. As we promised during the campaign, the era of mono-cultural economy must end. We will do all within our capacity to explore and fully utilise our stock of solid minerals. We shall re-position the Omoluabi Minerals Company for resource mapping and exploration of minerals [21].

At this juncture, pertinent questions are: To what extent has the governor really engaged people of Osun on the direction of his administration one year after his inauguration? Has there been a robust, citizen-focussed communication process/engagement between the government and the citizens of Osun in the last one year? What is the implication of civic engagement on governance and democracy? Communication scholars[22]attempt answers for the last poser. One of them argues that civic engagement, through technologies, promotes democratic ideals and affords the citizens the opportunity to communicate with public office holders[23]. Further, civic engagement “strengthens citizen’s voices, facilitates social cohesion and supports direct citizen participation in democratic processes”[24].

In addition, another one establishes that citizen engagement offers both the citizens and development agents a better understanding of problems and needs, opinions and priorities as well as promotes community representation in decision making[25]. When citizens are involved in decision making through effective government-citizen

engagement, there will be open and more accountable leadership that builds citizens' trust in government. However, the researchers argue that online engagement might result in disconnection between citizens and politicians when citizens' attention can no longer be sustained. That is, citizens (both at home and diaspora) who are willing and ready to engage their representatives with user-generated contents (comments, videos, pictures, etc) on digital media will not be able to do so if online engagement of such political leaders is low.

Therefore, this report focuses on how Governor Gboyega Oyetola has engaged people of Osun State in the last one year using the available communication infrastructure such as radio, television, Facebook, Twitter and face-to-face communication. It also focuses on the extent to which the governor has adopted these communication infrastructure in addressing the people of the state on core governance-related issues. The report suggests the necessary and practicable strategies required to increase civic engagement for citizens and elected representatives.

2. Methodology

The study adopted qualitative and quantitative approaches to generate the needed data that enabled us to understand the patterns and the extent to which the state government communicated with the citizens between November 27, 2018 and October 31, 2019. In-depth Interview was employed under the qualitative approach. With this method, we were able to interview public analysts and communication experts in the state. Content analysis and survey methods were employed as quantitative approach. Texts, images and other illustrations posted within the period of the study on the social and professional media handles of the state governor, state government and official website of the state government were mined and analysed. In the texts, images and illustrations, our focus was on examination of the following issues –security, health, education, infrastructure, industrial development, workers' welfare, and employment opportunities- and hidden norms and values associated with them. We also investigated policies discussed with the public by the government and the governor within these contents.

The norms and values were conceptualised as the patterns of engagement driven by the national cultural dimensions. These dimensions include unequal power distribution between the government and the citizens, the fear of unknown, personal

growth and development, collective growth and development, cooperation and caring for the general public, including the need to address immediate issues and prevent future ones.

By the unequal power distribution, we studied the appearance of the governor, his entourage and other officials of the government in the contents more than the appearance of citizens or their representatives. To quantify this, we employed dichotomous options –yes and no. When we discovered the presence of the governor and other officials, we marked it as *yes*, representing the presence of unequal power which indicates that the government wants the citizens and the public to note that there is a need to respect the government hierarchy. When it is obvious that such is not present, we coded it as *no*. The fear of unknown was measured using the content that informed the citizens to prepare for the future or explained the challenges facing the government to be endured by the citizens. Personal and collective growth and development were measured using the content which establishes that citizens have to deal with the socioeconomic challenges around them with and without government interventions. When government or the governor showed interest in addressing the challenges, we counted this as collective effort. On the other hand, when the challenges were portrayed as the issues that should be solved by the citizens, we coded this as personal efforts of the citizens. When the texts, images and other illustrations established that the citizens should strive for their personal and state development, and that there are rewards after hard-work, we recorded this as masculine. When the content indicated that the citizens should be cooperative, modest and caring for the weak among them, we coded this as feminine. The two orientations (addressing immediate issues and preventing future ones) were also measured using the mined texts, images and other illustrations. Long-term orientation (addressing immediate issues) was examined using the contents that pointed out that the government or the governor was working or addressing the challenges facing the state, and that the citizens need to endure for a long period of time. Short-term orientation (preventing future ones) was the opposite of the long-term orientation. We studied short term orientation based on the contents that revealed that government or governor was following the established approaches to resolving issues or addressing challenges in the state which needs commitment. Like the coding format we employed for the unequal power distribution, we also adopted dichotomous options –yes and no for the

coding of contents that resonated with the norms. After the data collection using manual and electronic methods and an hour training session, the research team coded 10 posts from Facebook to perform an intercoder reliability analysis [*see additions for the results*].

The second part of the content analysis method was the examination of the news reported about the state government and the governor during the period of our study. We specifically focused on the online newspapers (including the print newspapers that also have online presence). Google News was our first source of data for this. We used “Osun state”, “governor Oyetola”, “Osun state government” and “Osun” as the keywords to retrieve news published about the state, governor and the government. We did this because we wanted to know the extent to which news reportage captured activities of the governor and the government during the period studied. The second source was Google Trends. This is a product that normalizes public searches about a particular interest. With this, we wanted to know the degree to which the citizens in the state and Nigerians in other states sought information about happenings and issues in the state. For better understanding of the public interest in the state and the governor, we developed indexes. From Google, we developed Google Search Index, Related Search Index, Oyetola Search Interest Index (Popularity) and Osun State Government Interest Index (Popularity). Facebook and Twitter Indexes emerged from the volume of searches recorded per keyword. The News Keyword Index equally evolved from the online newspapers using the keywords with specific reference to their frequency of appearance in the news.

We explored the indexes further by analysing them along with the search interests (Government and governor). The headlines of the news mined from Google News were first subjected to analysis using Headline Analysis tools (*Sharethrough* and *Headline Analyser*) to reveal engagement and impression scores. By these scores, we wanted to find out the extent to which the categories of headlines cast by the newspapers facilitated public searches about the state government and the governor during the period. Survey was our second method under the quantitative approach. Questionnaire was designed and administered to the citizens in the headquarters of the 9 Federal Constituencies of the state. The samples in the headquarters were selected from 4,705,600 citizens in the State using sample selection calculator. We adopted 95% confidence level, 3.27 confidence interval and 50% rule (as quota). With

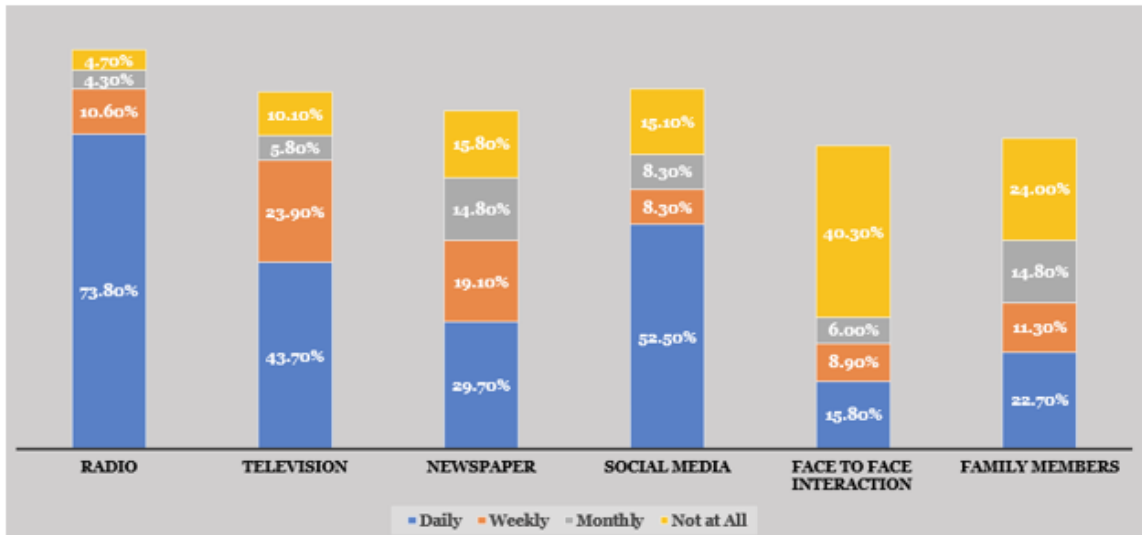
the 95% confidence level and 50% adopted, we are sure that the views of the sampled citizens would represent the views of the entire population. One hundred copies of questionnaire (after rounding up the sample size from 898) were distributed in each constituency by the Field Data Collectors after training on the procedures for the administration. The copies of the questionnaire were administered to citizens who indicated interest in the survey.

3. Results

3.1.1 Use of Existing Communication Infrastructure

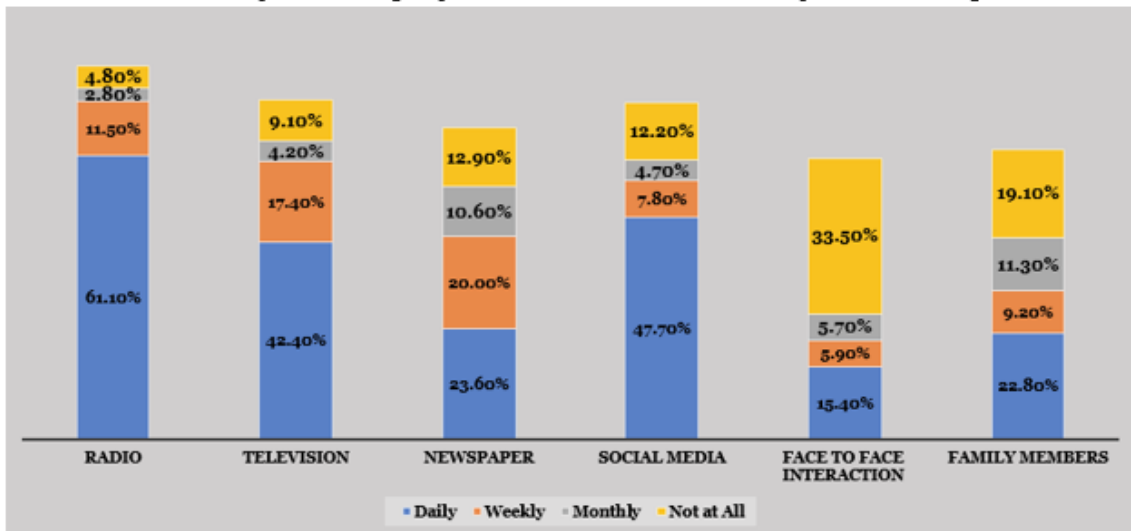
Out of the three common social and professional media being used by governments, individuals and businesses in the country, Osun State government and governor were found using Facebook and Twitter during the study period. Radio and Television were the two dominant broadcast media used for the dissemination of the government and governor's activities. We also discovered newspapers (online and offline) and government official website as the media employed during the period. Though, we did not make any contact with the governor's media team to establish the use of face-to-face interaction by the government representative(s) such as members of the ruling party and civil servants and family members, one of the questions posed to the citizens during the survey indicates that the two channels were also adopted. The data presented in Exhibit 1 show that radio, social media and television were the main media used by the media team because majority of the sampled citizens indicated that they received information about the state government through the media (radio=73.80%), (social media=52.50%) and (television=43.70%). They did not receive the needed information from the government representative(s) and family members (40.30% and 24.00% respectively). The activities of the governor were mostly received from radio, social media and television. This is similar to the patterns of sources observed for the government's activities. Over 61%, 47% and 42% said they received information about the governor through radio, social media and television respectively. Like what was obtained for the government's activities, analysis shows that 33.50% and 19.10% of the citizens did not receive information about the governor from the government's representative(s) and family members accordingly.

Exhibit 1: Sources of Receiving Information about activities of Osun State government



Source: Source: Osun Civic Engagement Survey, 2019; Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019
Number of Respondents. Radio=758, Television=678, Newspaper=644, Social Media=683, Face to Face Interaction by government representative(s)=576, Family Members=591

Exhibit 2: Sources of Receiving Information about activities of Osun State governor



Source: Source: Osun Civic Engagement Survey, 2019; Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019
Number of Respondents. Radio=651, Television=593, Newspaper=545, Social Media=587, Face to Face Interaction by government representative(s)=491, Family Members=507

In Exhibit 3, our expectation is that the media team will publish significantly on the lowest and the highest media deployed, while the newspapers will also give the state government and the governor sufficient coverage between November, 2018 and October, 2019. During the period, we found a total of 269 posts on the official Facebook page of the governor and the one used during campaign (Ileri-Oluwa Facebook Page), which has been converted into the mouthpiece of the governor after

inauguration in November, 2018. On the Official Twitter handle of the governor, a total of 121 tweets were found, while 38 and 63 stories were published on the Government Official Website and by the online newspapers respectively.

Examining the publications monthly, analysis shows that government and governor's activities were mostly communicated in April, May, July, August, September and October, 2019. There was no significant engagement between November, 2018 and March, 2019. In April, newspapers reported government and governor's activities (12.69%) more than what were communicated through Facebook (10.78%), Twitter (10.74%) and Government Official Website (7.89%). Only the social media were used mainly to engage the public in May, 2019. Analysis reveals that 13.22% of the 121 tweets found during the one-year period were posted in May, 2019 followed by Facebook, which had 10.03% out of the total 269 posts. With a little difference, two media were also mostly appropriated in July, 2019. Twitter and newspapers were the core media for engaging the public. Analysis indicates that 14.87% of the 121 tweets were posted during the month, while 14.28% of the 63 stories reported by the newspapers were published during the month. A significant drop was recorded in the use of existing communication infrastructure in August. Facebook (10.78%) was only appropriated while other media were used less. In September, the usage peaked with addition of the Government Official Website along with Facebook. Over 16% and 18% of the total posts for Facebook and the Website were done during the month. Similar to the number of existing communication infrastructure used in April 2019, a sharp increase in the number of posts was discovered in October, a month before the celebration of the first anniversary of the government. Analysis establishes that 50% of the 38 publications on the Government Official Website were done during the month. This is over 40% increase in the number of publications had in April 2019. The number of tweets also increased from 10.74% in April to 18.18% in October. The publications on Facebook declined by 0.38% from 10.78% obtained in April to 10.40% in October [see Exhibit 3].

Exhibit 3: Frequency of Publications on Social Media, Newspapers and Government Official Website

Month	Facebook	Twitter	Newspapers	Government Official Website
November, 2018	0	0	0	0
December, 2018	7.8	0	4.76	0
January, 2019	5.57	0.82	3.17	0
February, 2019	5.94	4.13	1.58	0
March, 2019	6.31	9.91	4.76	5.26
April, 2019	10.78	10.74	12.69	7.89
May, 2019	10.03	13.22	7.93	0
June, 2019	7.43	11.57	12.69	5.26
July, 2019	8.17	14.87	14.28	5.26
August, 2019	10.78	7.43	7.93	2.63
September, 2019	16.72	9.09	11.11	18.42
October, 2019	10.4	18.18	19.04	50

Source: *Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019; Government's Social Media Platforms, 2019; Online Newspapers, 2019*

Note: *Figures are in Percentage*

Various issues or programmes of the government and governor's activities were posted, tweeted and published during the peak months. During these months, security, health, workers' welfare, infrastructure, among others, were considered as worth sharing by the media team. In April, the newspapers reported that Governor Oyetola would bring prosperity, good governance to Osun State; the Deputy Governor, Benedict Alabi was reported to have made the statement at a function. In the month, the governor himself was reported to have reiterated his commitment to workers' welfare, especially after the Supreme Court confirmed him as the governor. During the month, the media also reported that the governor raised alarm over the influx of bandits from Zamfara State to the mining sites in Osun State. Few days after the report, the media also let the public understand that the State is one of the safest in the country. In what appeared as succour for the food vendors employed by the past administration, it was reported during the month that the state government was ready to recruit 2,000 food vendors for the O'Meals programme. On infrastructure, report had it that Governor Oyetola was ready to complete the Osun Hydroelectric Power Project, while the government announced financial breakthrough in forestry segment of the agriculture sector.

In May, issues and needs on education, mining, health, flooding and revenue generation were mostly reported. During the month, Governor Oyetola was reported to have insisted on the joint ownership of the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho. The tertiary institution had been in crisis before Governor Oyetola emerged as the governor. In line with the spate of insecurity across the country, which reached South West region during the month, Governor Oyetola was

reported to have vowed to ban mining activities. He was equally reported to have shown interest in ensuring equitable healthcare services during the launching of Health Fund in the State by the Federal Government. After the flooding that destroyed some houses and property in the state capital, Osogbo and some areas in Obokun Local Government, reports noted the massive dredging in the state. During this period, a life was recorded to have been lost. Like April, 2019, government also shared the information of revenue increase with the public.

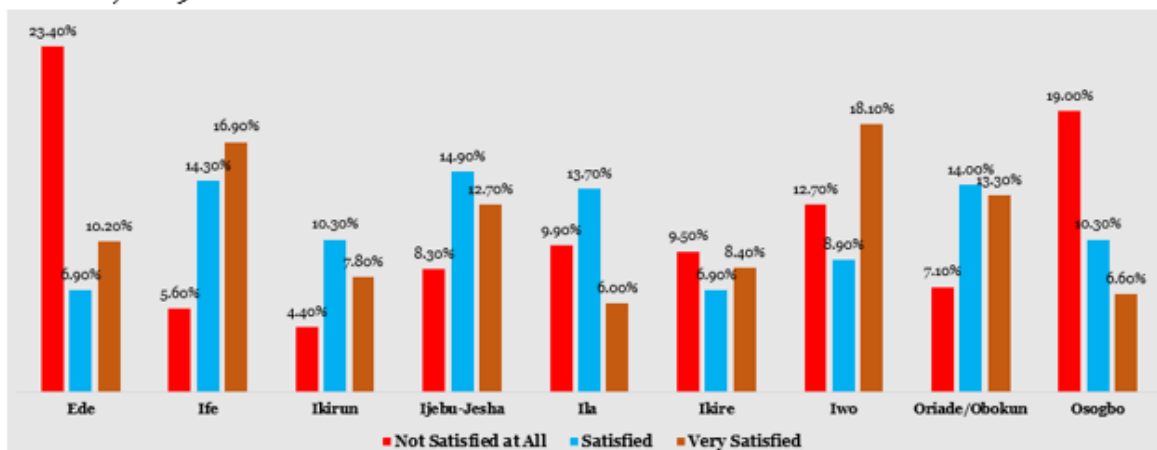
Infrastructure, security, health and financial accountability were mostly communicated with the public in April, 2019. It was during the month that Osun state government in conjunction with the Federal Government was reported to have commenced the rehabilitation of Iwo-Osogbo road and the construction/rehabilitation of 120 Bed Wards and 30 Quarters for doctors in the state. Government was also reported to have provided 20 Armoured Carriers for proposed South West Security Network. During the month, one of the aides to the governor was quoted to have said that Mr Oyetola was performing well without commissioners. As a way of exonerating itself from the allegation that state governments are contributing to the inefficiency of the local governments in the country, the government was reported to have noted its regular payment of allocations to the 31 local governments including local council development authorities regularly.

In May, 2019, governor Oyetola reiterated the state government's commitment to the development of the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho. In September, 2019, the state government replied Governor Oluwaseyi Makinde of Oyo State, advising him to stop blackmailing the state (Osun) over the management of and crisis affecting the institution. The month was equally used to assure the people of Iwo and commuters plying Iwo-Osogbo road, which was inaugurated for rehabilitation in April, 2019, of its completion in December, 2019. The delivery of FireFighter Trucks donated to the State by the Federal Government and the readiness of 100 Public Health Centers for inauguration were equally reported during the month. For October 2019, the government's intent to increase the state's economic reserve and uplift education through local and international partnerships were widely reported.

With these stories and those posted and tweeted on the identified social media, we asked the citizens in the headquarters of the 9 Federal Constituencies about their level

of satisfaction with the information received during the one-year period of our analysis. Analysis indicates that 23.40% of the citizens sampled in Ede, the headquarters of Ede South/Ede North/Egbedore/Ejigbo Federal Constituency were not satisfied, followed by those in Osogbo/Olorunda/Orolu/Irepodun Federal Constituency (12.70%). Over 9% of the samples in Ila/Odo-Otin/Boluwaduro Federal Constituency were equally not satisfied with the information received between November 2018 and October 2019. The high level of satisfaction was only recorded in Iwo (18.10%), Ife (16.90%) and Oriade/Obokun (13.30%). When we examined the satisfaction within the *satisfied option*, we found that the percentage of the citizens in Ife who indicated that they were highly satisfied (16.90%) was close to what was obtained under the *satisfied option* (14.30%) [see exhibit 4].

Exhibit 4: Satisfaction with the Level of Information received from November, 2018 to October, 2019



Source: Source: Osun Civic Engagement Survey, 2019; Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019

Number of Respondents. Ede=100, Ife=92, Ikirun=60, Ijebu-Jesha=94, Ila=83, Ikire=62, Iwo=93, Oriade/Obokun=89, Osogbo=95

Number of Respondents per Category Option. Not Satisfied at All=252, Satisfied=350, Very Satisfied=166

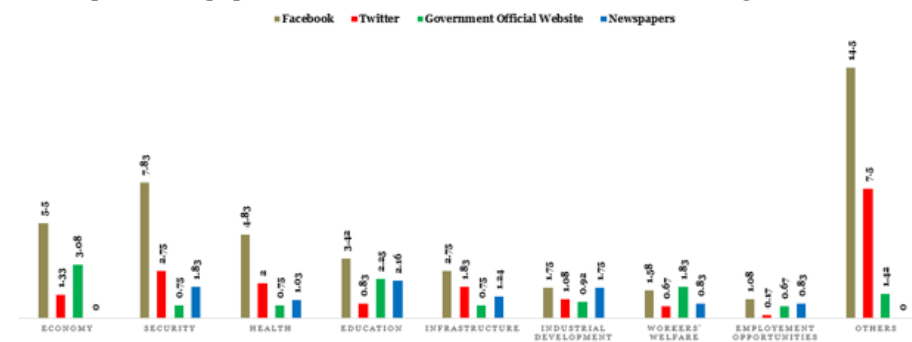
3.1.2 Engaging Policies and Issues

Based on the governor's inaugural speech where he stated what his administration would focus on during the four years, we developed economy, security, health, education, infrastructure, industrial development, workers' welfare employment opportunities, and others to understand policies and issues of engagement of the governor and the state government. Out of the four communication infrastructures, the media team of the governor discussed needs and issues that were not part of the governor or government's programmes or agenda for the people of the state on three

communication media (Facebook, Twitter and Government Official Website). Issues or needs on security, health and education were mostly discussed alongside infrastructure, workers' welfare, industrial development and employment opportunities.

On Facebook, issues and needs that were not relevant to the government and governor were discussed (*see additions*). On the same medium, analysis shows that security, economy, health and education were mostly posted for the public. Like Facebook, irrelevant information dominated the Twitter handle of the governor. A significant portion of the medium was dedicated to the posting of issues or needs on security, health, infrastructure and economy. Despite that there were posts and publications on security and health on Facebook, Twitter and Newspapers, the media team did not have any publication on the Government Official Website. Publications on economy, education, workers' welfare and irrelevant information dominated the Website. The newspapers were found to report stories on industrial development (1.83) more than the media team (0.92) [*see exhibit 5*].

Exhibit 5: Most Engaged Policies and Issues on the Communication Infrastructure

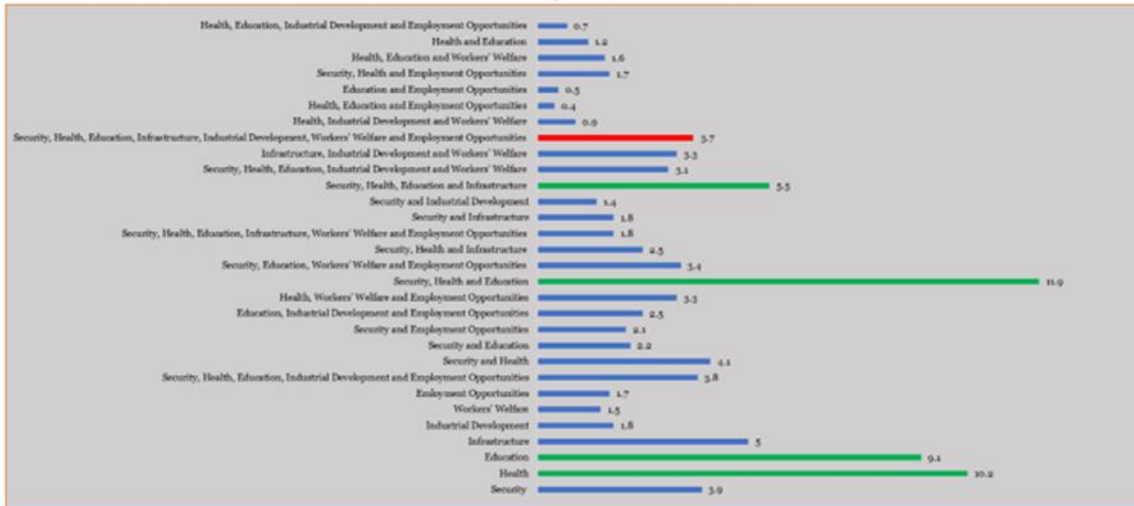


Source: *Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019; Government's Social Media Platforms, 2019; Online Newspapers, 2019*

Note: Figures are the mean score obtained for each category/issue/agenda

After the examination of the contents, we asked the citizens to indicate the focus areas (policies and programmes) of the government they mostly received information about during the one-year period of our analysis. Out of 787 citizens, 11.9% got information on security, health and education followed by health (10.2%) and education (9.1%). Analysis also shows that over 5% received information on security, health, education and infrastructure. Surprisingly, 3.7% indicated that they received information on all the focus areas (security, health, infrastructure, industrial development, workers' welfare and employment opportunities) [*see exhibit 6*].

Exhibit 6: Government’s Focus Area received Information about



Source: Osun Civic Engagement Survey, 2019; Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019

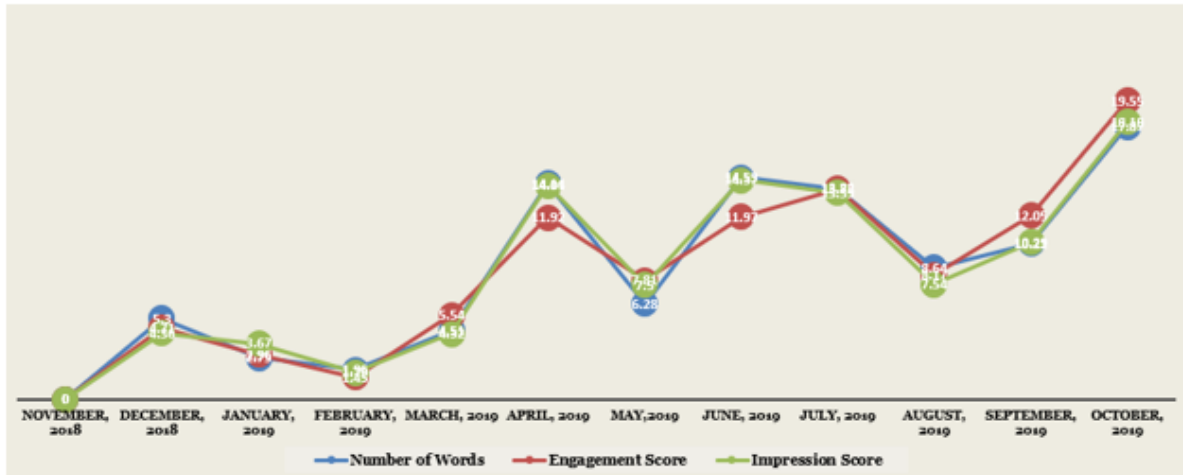
N=787, Figures are in percentages

Note: Citizens were asked to choose more than one option

Since the citizens are expected to get information from the newspapers in addition to the social media and other communication infrastructure, we were equally interested in knowing the extent to which the production of the news (earlier analysed) in terms of number of words in headlines used by the newspapers, level of engagement and impression enhanced the state’s citizens and other people’s interest [see methodology section]. In this report, the engagement is about the use of words related to the public personalities such as the governor and appropriation of Osun as a word- being the name of a state, would create curiosity and increase engagement in stories that have it. Impression would also emerge when people see words that describe and pinpoint the issues or needs they have been expecting to receive information about. Our analysis reveals that the newspapers used 509 words in the headlines of the 63 published stories. This generated 3,841 and 2,612 cumulative engagement and impression scores respectively. Analysis further shows unsteady growth in engagement and impression of the news reported by the newspapers [see exhibit 7]. This increased our interest in the engagement and impression analysis. We discovered that the engagement scores connected with the public search of Gboyega Oyetola ($r=2.372$), Osun State ($r=0.764$), Osun State Government ($r=1.275$) and Osun ($r=0.387$). We only discovered positive linkage of Gboyega Oyetola with the public search within the impression analysis ($r=2.25$). The negative connection of the searches (Osun State, Osun and Osun State Government) and impression score indicates that the words as used in the headlines

of the news were not sufficient enough to facilitate the reading of the stories [see exhibit 8 and 9].

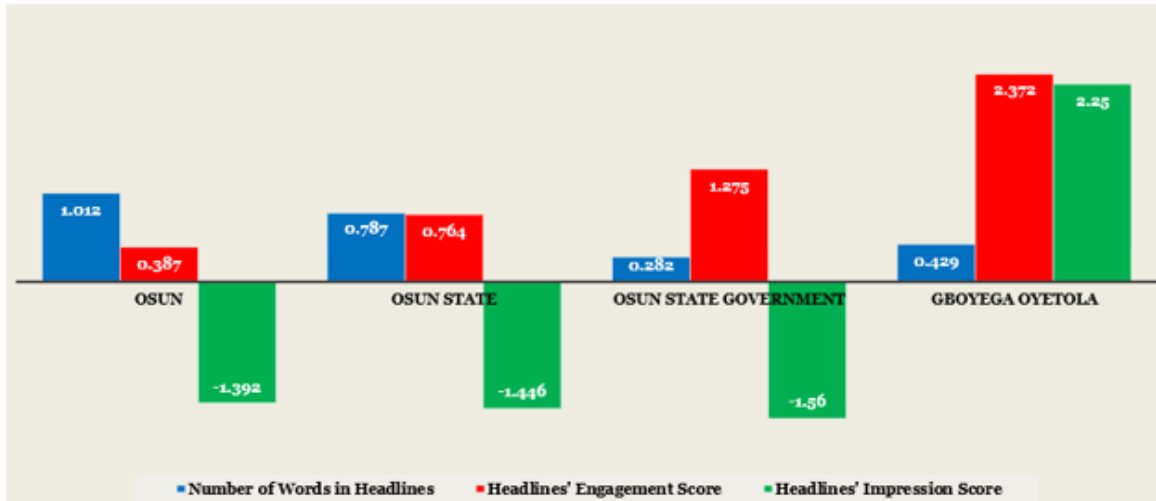
Exhibit 7: News Production Techniques



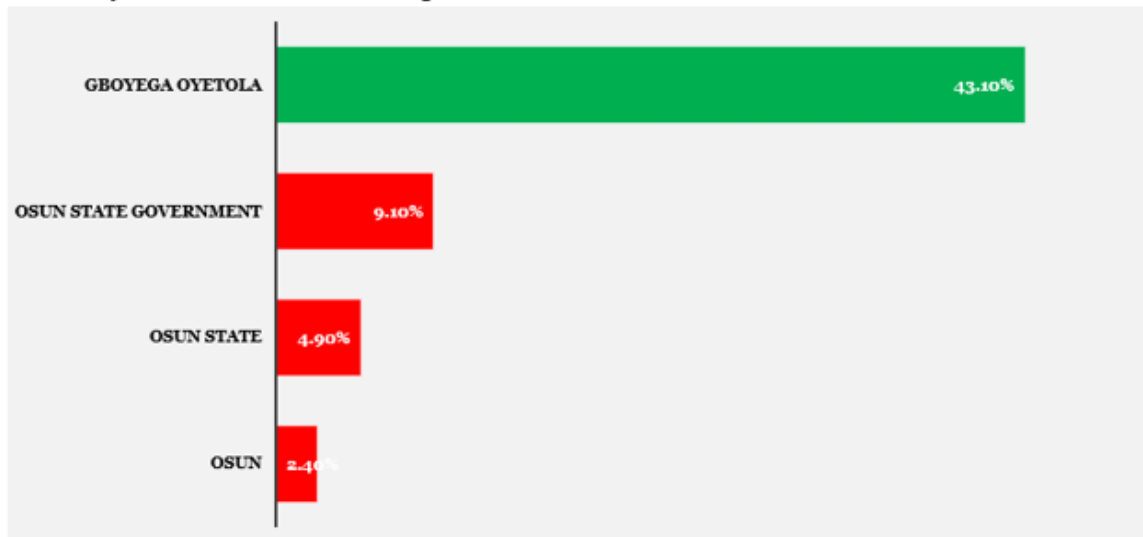
Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019; Government's Social Media Platforms, 2019; Online Newspapers, 2019

Note: Figures are in Percentage

Exhibit 8: Correlations between News Production Techniques and Keyword Searches



Source: Google Trends, 2019; Online Newspapers, 2019; Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019

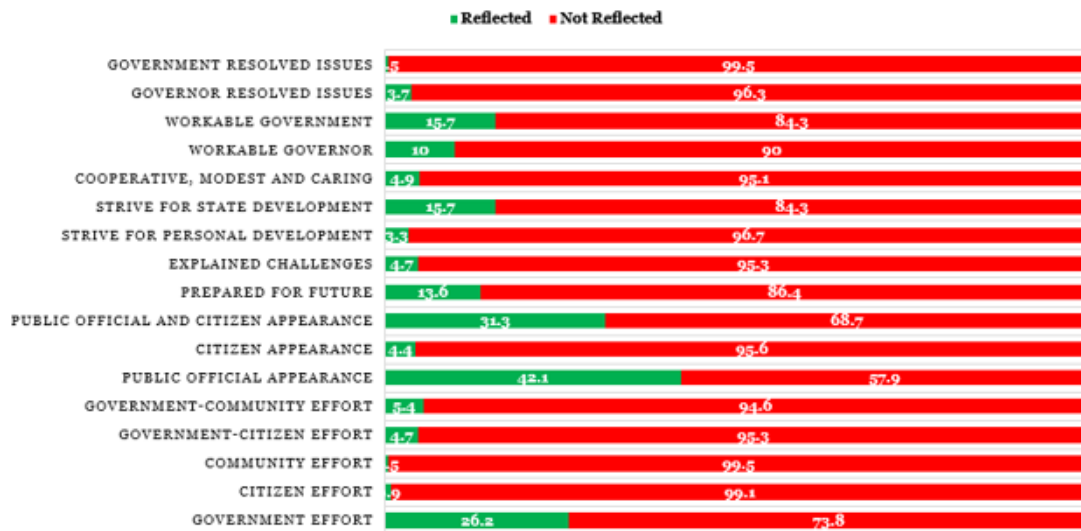
Exhibit 9: Facilitation Percentage

Source: Google Trends, 2019; Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019

3.1.3 Open or Close Culture of Interaction

Across all the communication infrastructures, we studied two categories of interaction culture. Since governments are expected to engage the public on their policies and programmes, we examined open and close culture of interaction from the posts and tweets including the images embedded in them. Our expectation is that the messages communicated by the media team would reflect how the government and the governor solved various issues experienced during the one-year period. We also wanted to know how the government prioritised collective efforts seeking towards the state development and encouraged citizens to be cooperative, modest, care for themselves and strive for personal development. Our analysis shows non-reflection of these in the messages that accompanied the government's focus areas and activities reported in line with the governor's personality. In terms of appearance (in images), government officials were more presented (42.1%) than the citizens (4.4%). In what appears as a disconnection with the citizens while discussing policies and issues, our analysis shows that citizens' (99.1%) and community's efforts (99.5%) towards the growth and development of the State were not emphasised in the messages. Government's efforts were more stressed (26.2%) [*see exhibit 10*].

Exhibit 10: Open or Closed Culture of Interaction

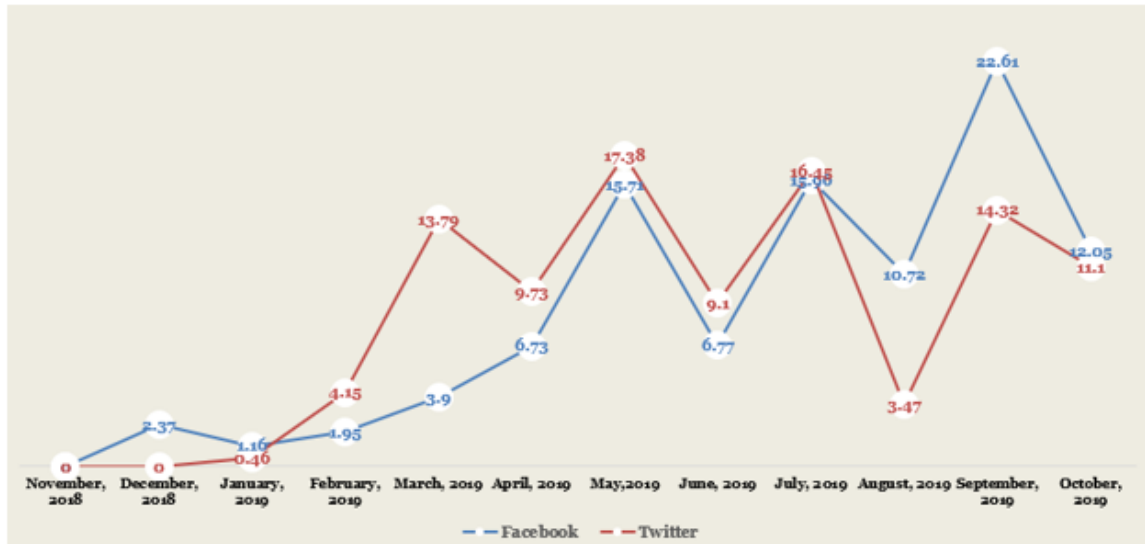


Source: *Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019; Government's Social Media Platforms, 2019; Online Newspapers, 2019*

Note: Results are in percentages

It is obvious that close culture of interaction existed throughout the one year. When there is such interaction, government and the officials give room for rumour. It also contributes to less social credibility. We investigated this further by examining the number of comments and replies the posts and tweets had. A total of 2,405 comments and 4,285 replies were found on Facebook and Twitter respectively. On a monthly basis, we discovered low social proof for the government and the governor in November, 2018. The public started having interest in commenting and replying to the posts in December, 2018 and tweets in January, 2019. Looking at *Exhibit 11*, it is clear that the proofs maintained irregular trends from May, 2019 till October, 2019.

Exhibit 11: Social Proofs



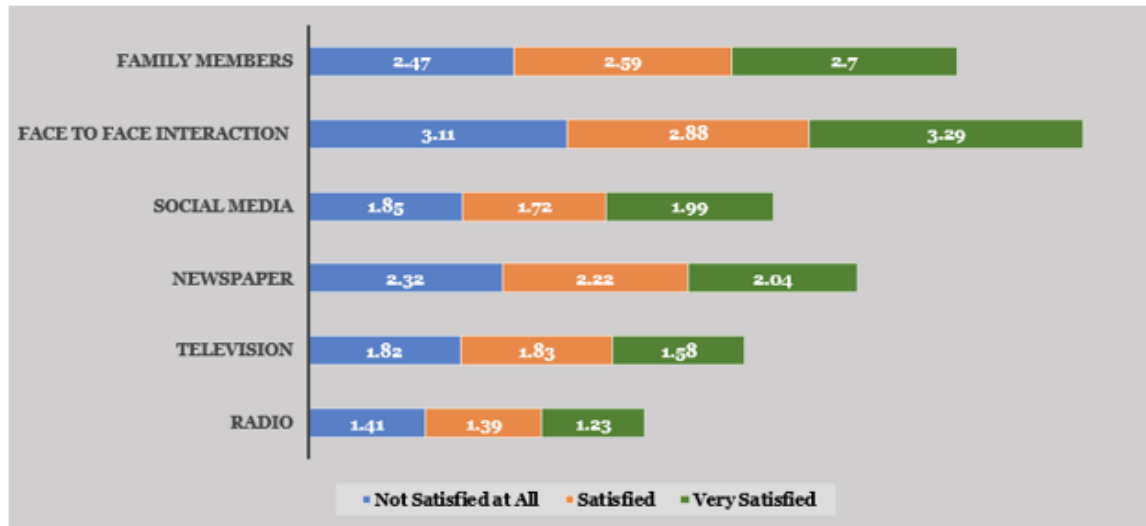
Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019; Government's Social Media Platforms, 2019

Note: Results are in percentages

3.1.4 Non-State Actors' Satisfaction with Communication Infrastructure and Level of Engagement

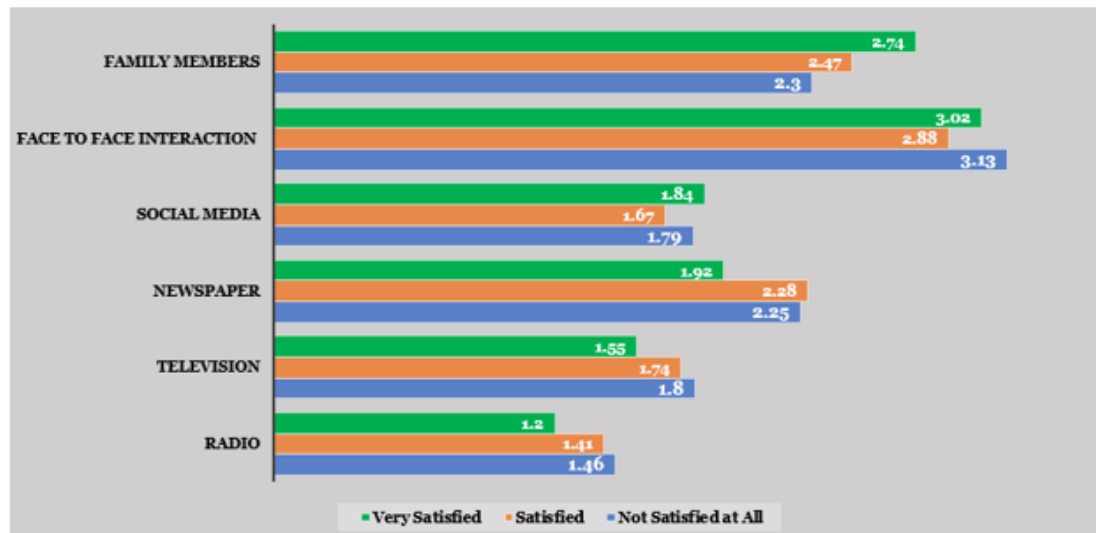
We examined this in two ways. We sought level of satisfaction from the citizens, while professionals' and public affairs analysts' views were sought on the level of engagement, governance issues and policy thrust communication. Analysis reveals that the citizens were more satisfied with the information they received about the governor through family members (2.74) than those received on the activities of the government (2.70). They were more satisfied with information received through face-to-face interaction on activities of the government (3.29) than those on the governor through the same medium (3.02). Social media (1.99), newspapers (2.04), television (1.58) and radio (1.23) were equally better for the information received by the surveyed citizens [see exhibits 12 and 13].

Exhibit 12: Citizens’ Level of Satisfaction with the Information received from the Communication Infrastructure used for Dissemination of Osun State Government’s activities



Source: Osun Civic Engagement Survey, 2019; Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019
 Note: Figures are in Mean Values

Exhibit 13: Citizens’ Level of Satisfaction with the Information received from the Communication Infrastructure used for Dissemination of Osun State Governor’s activities



Source: Source: Osun Civic Engagement Survey, 2019; Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019
 Note: Figures are in Mean Values

Government Engagement

From “indifference” to “fairly impressed” to “not impressed at all”, the impression score is low as far as government-citizen engagement is concerned. One of the respondents noted that “I am not impressed with the State Government's engagement with the people. Engagement with the people has been at best tepid, lacking in clarity

and assurance” FO (Journalist). Another posited that she is not impressed at all with the government’s efforts to engage with the people of the state because “there is nothing so spectacular that one could note as an engagement with the people” KO (PR Practitioner). The public analyst among the interviewees did not know where to lay the blame. He said:

I am indifferent on this question as there has not been too much of government engagement with the people in the last one year. I am premising my position on the fact that there has not been a serious engagement, maybe as a result of the long period of litigation arising from the election. The whole thing has been rather too cool to make me conclude that it's either the governor has not been working or his media team is incompetent.

(DA, Public Affairs Analyst)

Two of the interviewees blamed the coldness that envelopes the government-citizen engagement on the delay in the appointment of commissioners by the governor. While this is a logical reason, it still does not explain the loud silence from the government’s end with the level of communication infrastructure on ground. Despite the low impression score the government records from the experts, the interviewees were asked about their perception of the governor’s engagement with the people of Osun State in the last one year. There were different descriptions of the governor’s personality which has some influence on his communication with the citizens. Two of the interviewees agreed in their description of the governor. One said the governor is “not a vocal type” and lacks “the candor of his predecessor” while the other said he is a man of “few words”. Generally, the perception of the governor’s engagement with people is also negative. TT (Journalist) argued that “although he uses every opportunity he has to convey the mission of his government to the people, his administration has not really had an impressive outing. Hence, he has little to engage people with.” In his own view, DA (Public Analyst) opined that “on a few occasions that I have had the opportunity of watching or listening to him, his comments on issues are full of brevity, the few words type. His media team is supposed to be active, complementing his deficiencies by communicating his thoughts and programmes to the people.” This again highlights the role of the personality of the governor and the effects on his public engagement and communication.

One of the interviewees provided a background for the seeming disconnect between the governor and the people. He stated that the engagement with the people is inadequate because mediated communication dominated the governor's interaction with the people. This was obvious because Osun indigenes could compare the governor's engagement with those of his predecessors. Those were face-to-face as compared to mediated connection with the people. FO (Journalist) opined that:

The people have had to rely majorly on Press Statements issued by the Governor's Aides and sometimes prepared speeches delivered by the Governor at functions or when journalists accost the Governor or senior officials of government. This is apparently inadequate and citizens get to fill communication gaps with rumours. Previous administrations in the state had media programmes that were statewide in operation and impact. Akande had *Labeodan*, Oyinlola had *Open Forum* while Aregbesola utilized *Gbangbadekun* and *Ogbeni Till Daybreak*

Two of the interviewees who are PR practitioners agreed that the period of the tribunal sitting was a distraction for the governor and could have prevented a robust engagement with the people. The governor was unsure of his stay in office. The uncertainty that surrounded his mandate was seen as a major reason for his loud silence. They had a point of departure at a point. DO (PR Practitioner) said:

The long legal battle over who is the authentic winner of the governorship election is a distraction on one hand. Having said that, there seems to be no new development except for the present government sincerity in the continuation of Aregbesola's legacy. Governance seems to be one-man affair. The only area of departure from the previous government lies in his ability to pay workers' salaries

In his opinion, the legal battle could be an issue, but the fact that there is little or nothing to point to as programmes is another major factor. KO (PR Practitioner) joins mediated communication factor to the legitimacy issue the governor had in the last one year. These, she said could also hinder any meaningful engagement with the people.

Governance Issues Effectively Communicated

When prompted on the communication of governance issues effectively communicated by the government and governor, responses pointed to different issues captured under the period of the study. In TT's (Journalist) opinion, the governor's renovation and commissioning of selected primary healthcare centres across the state

was the attention grabber for the administration. This also captured the Osun Health Insurance Scheme (O'HIS). FO (Journalist) considered two key issues pertinent here. He pointed to the cancellation of the Local Government chairmen's tour to Dubai, the ownership tussle on Ladoke Akintola University of Technology and the rehabilitation of Primary Health Care Centres as the highlight of issues that trended well in the first year of the administration. He said:

The cancellation of the LG Chairmen Dubai Tour was surprisingly well managed and earned the administration some positives. The swiftness of the cancellation of the tour following public outcry was commendable. The publicity given to the start of rehabilitation of the 332 PHCs is also commendable. I am however not sure if to ascribe the success (LG Dubai Tour) to a well thought-out communications strategy or deft political move in giving in to public pressure. A good example of the administration's poor communications strategy is the uncoordinated response to Governor Seyi Makinde's allegation that Osun has defaulted in the payment of subventions to LAUTECH. A strongly worded response by the Supervisor for Information was embarrassingly withdrawn few hours after it was released while the SSG released the official reaction about a week later. By that time, narrative had been established and opinions formed about the issue.

DO (PR Practitioner) listed payment of full salary, filling of potholes on some roads in the state capital and the rehabilitation of the Iwo-Osogbo road as well as the establishment of the 332 PHCs as trending issues which could be said to have been well handled by the communication team. KO (PR Practitioner) believed that the government's communication efforts did not go beyond the state capital. That there were different issues cited by the different professionals is an indication that the media team did not work well to communicate either the government's programmes or the governor's policy thrust.

Communicating the Policy Thrust

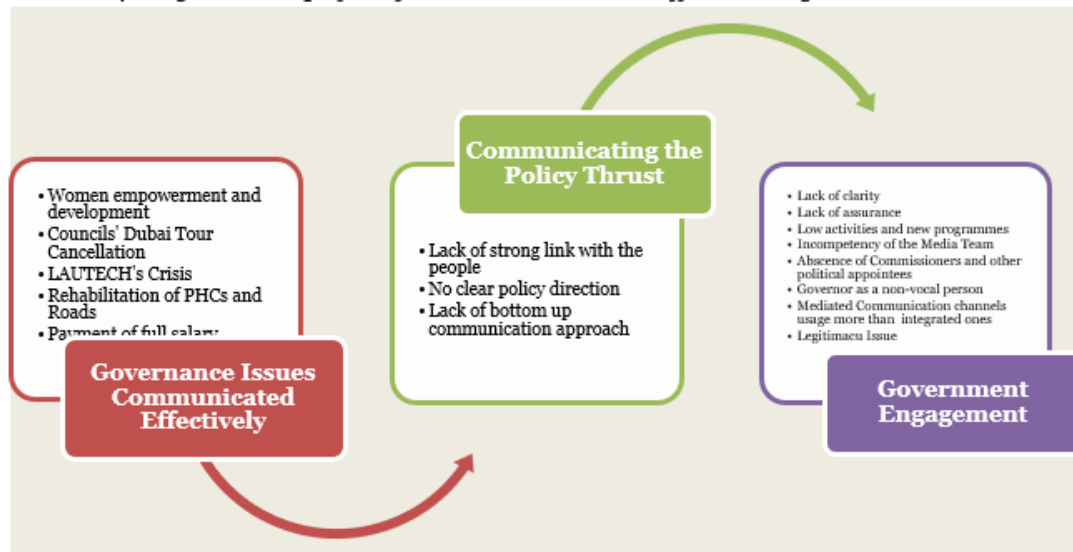
There were references to past administrations in the state, placing the governor side by side with his predecessors. DA (Public Analyst) posited that by his first year in government, Aregbesola had already established a strong link with the populace through his well-planned engagement strategies. In the same vein, TT (Journalist) also made reference to Chief Bisi Akande's and Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola's administrations and how they bonded with people through constant physical

communication with the people. FO (journalist) lamented the obvious lack of awareness of the governor’s policy thrust by the people. He declared:

Many people do not believe or better still are not aware of the Governor's policy thrust. The general perception of this administration's policy thrust or focus is that of CONTINUITY of the programmes of the previous administration with perhaps a major bias for primary/secondary health care and full payment of salary. Other than that, there isn't much difference from the previous government's policies or a clear cut one for the present administration.

In rating the governor, DO (PR Practitioner) said the governor’s performance is fair. He said further that there is no basis for comparison as the governor is yet to create a platform for the interchange of matters arising on good governance. He said the governor is disconnected from the people who voted him into office. KO (PR Practitioner) gave the governor 10 over 100 in terms of his efforts to engage people on his policy direction. She charged the governor’s media handlers to urgently key into community-based engagements so that the governor could connect with the people at the grassroots.

Exhibit 14: Cognitive Map of Professionals and Public Affairs Analysts’ Views

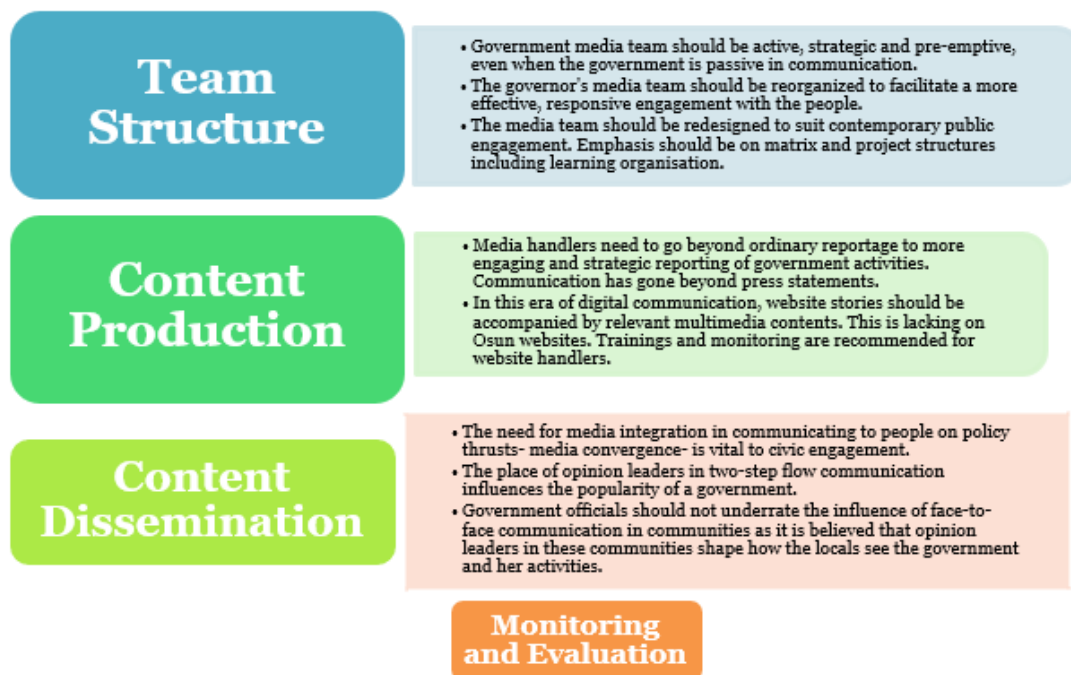


Source: *Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019*

4. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

From the analysis and the emerged insights, it is clear that the government's communication engagement with the public is not properly planned and coordinated by the media team. Consequently, there is a need for redesigning of the team structure, training of the members on content production, content dissemination strategies and monitoring of the government and governor's reputation in the next year. These have been further captured in *Exhibit 15*, where the concerned stakeholders are expected to make strategic moves in line with the identified strategic areas. Perhaps the governor could borrow a leaf from Aregbesola's *Green Book* or *My Path with Osun People* which contained, and elaborately spelt out the key policy thrusts of the administration popularly referred to as the Six Integral Action Plan. At the heart of improvement is the constant monitoring and evaluation of the strategic areas (team structure, content production and content dissemination). Monitoring and evaluation should be done using formative and summative approaches. By formative approach, we expect the media team to have weekly, monthly and quarterly key performance indicators and do the overall evaluation at the end of the year, which is the summative approach.

Exhibit 15: Strategic Areas and Options for Improved Civic Engagement



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2019

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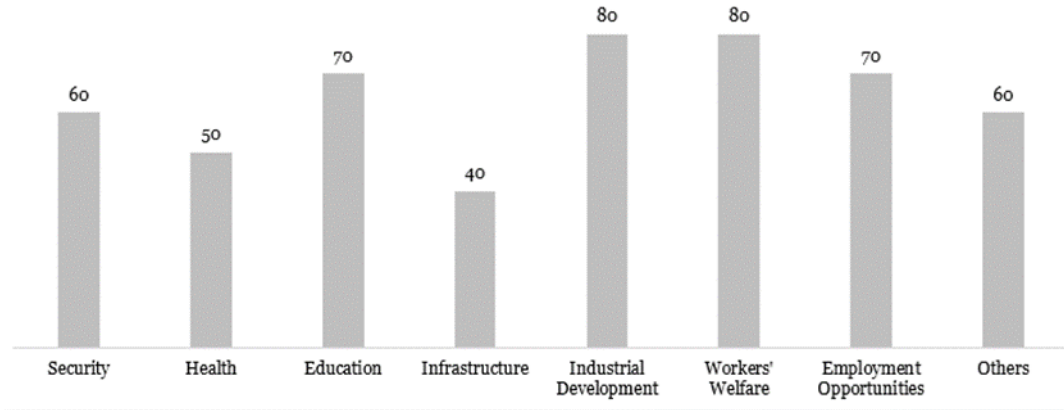
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Additions

Percent Agreement of Inter-Coders



Percent Agreement of Inter-Coders

