



Positive Agenda Nigeria

...making environment conducive for everyone to thrive positively

Informed Policy Engagement or Intensive Personality Disparagement in Osun 2022 Governorship Election Campaign?

Osun 2022 Governorship Election Campaign Monitoring Report

Issue 8, July 2, 2022

Introduction

By July 16th, 2022, registered voters in Osun State will elect a new governor to lead the state from November 2022, when the tenure of Alhaji Gboyega Oyetola expires¹. Governor Oyetola was elected in 2018 to succeed Engineer Rauf Aregbesola. Since the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) declared the official date for electorate to be at the poll, and hinted that primary election would commence in February and end in March 2022, political parties and candidates have been campaigning, informing the electorate why they should be voted for. Though INEC approved April 2022 as the month for official campaign, our observations of various campaign platforms in the state revealed that concerned stakeholders started internal campaigns before the month. The All Progressives Congress (APC) officially inaugurated its Campaign Council in May 2022, while the People's Democratic Party (PDP) initiated its committee in April 2022². There have been a number of mixed results since the incumbent governor took office in 2018, employing the state's human and material resources to generate and preserve public goods. In terms of socioeconomic growth, the governor has adamantly maintained that he fulfilled nearly all of his pledges in 2018 and that voters should re-elect him to continue working for the good of all citizens and communities³. His opponents, both within and outside his political party (APC), say he has accomplished little and hence should not be re-elected. Since the national electoral body lifted the ban on campaign activities, these two lines of thought have been part of the campaign. Similar to what characterized previous electoral campaigns held since 1999, political actors have started raising various concerns ahead of the July election. There have been allegations of vote buying, use of thugs to disrupt campaign venues and harm attendees, as well as threat to life.

Although all these issues can affect the credibility of the July 16th, 2022 poll, our analysts believe that the issue of vote buying requires specific attention of concerned stakeholders,

¹ INEC (2022). Osun State Governorship 2022 Timetable and Schedule of Activities. <https://inecnigeria.org/osun-state-governorship-2022-timetable-and-schedule-of-activities/>.

² Dada, L., (2022). Osun Guber: Senate spokesperson named DG Oyetola's campaign council. *The Sun*, May 5, 2022. <https://www.sunnewsonline.com/osun-guber-senate-spokesperson-named-dg-oyetolas-campaign-council/>;
Ezedinuo, F. (2022). Osun 2022: PDP inaugurates campaign, anti-rigging committees. *Daily Post*, April 26, 2022. <https://dailypost.ng/2022/04/26/osun-2022-pdp-inaugurates-campaign-anti-rigging-committees/>.

³ Amata, D., (2022). Osun 2022: 6 Key Socio-Economic Indicators Candidates and Electorates Should Know, available from: <https://www.dataphyte.com/latest-reports/elections/osun-2022-6-key-socio-economic-indicators-candidates-and-electoralates-should-know/>

most importantly the electoral body and citizens. Vote buying is one of the strategies usually deployed by political actors such as candidates, their representatives, direct and indirect supporters; throughout the previous governorship elections in the state, it was employed by the stakeholders using different approaches. Events that characterised the elections of 2014 and 2018 attest to this fact. During the 2014 gubernatorial election, the two leading parties in the election, the ruling APC and the opposition PDP, engaged in unethical electoral practice. Popular mechanisms of vote-buying before and during the previous elections include pre-election hand-outs such as food and money; infrastructural projects in targeted electoral districts; as well as provision of incentives to voters/supporters to attend polling. In line with this background, this report, which is the eighth output and the fourth-week report of the second month of the 2022 governorship election campaign monitoring in the state, specifically considers campaign strategies employed by candidates, parties and their supporters, most importantly members of the media team of the parties and the candidates, for communicating these issues and engaging the potential electorate ahead of the July election. The strategies were examined within the context of the intended and unintended outcomes of the messages spread on social networking sites (Facebook and Twitter) and political actors' interactions with the conventional media (newspapers and presentation of party as well as candidate's agenda through radio jingles in the state). The incumbent government's policy issues or programmes were also looked at, with the idea that opposition parties should use them to engage the public by offering alternatives or discussing recognized flaws.

Our Approach

Messages posted on Facebook and Twitter by the political parties through their official pages, candidates' pages and supporters' personal accounts, radio jingles, as well as news stories were the primary sources of data for this report. Osun public information seeking about campaign issues or needs through various search engines, which are aggregated by Google Trends, also constituted a source of data for the report. In all, the data were sourced between April 6 and June 29, 2022. On a surprising note, between June 9 and June 15 (covering the sixth week), our analyst found a message communicated by faction members of the ruling party (APC). This singlehandedly added to our number of political parties being monitored every week, but only from the intra-party type. In addition to the

public searches of the issues and/or needs, views of the electorate in the three senatorial districts (Osun Central, Osun West and East) about the campaign activities were equally sought through questionnaire copies distributed across the districts. Like what has been monitoring, in week seven, our analysts paid specific attention to campaign-driven messages (not general messages), especially those promoting activities of the incumbent governor, and mere social engagements of the candidates that were not related to political activities. Attacks, acclaims and defenses were the three categories of campaign strategies our analysts looked for in each message extracted from Facebook, Twitter, radio jingles and national newspapers, and campaign speeches. Attacks were the messages that denigrated personality traits of candidates and leadership qualities and/or competencies of the parties and candidates to govern the state. Attacks were also examined from the perspective of the actors, demeaning the quality of programmes, and initiatives and projects of the incumbent. Acclaims were the messages that show that the parties and the candidates were better in terms of personality traits, leadership qualities as well as competencies in delivering quality public goods to the residents. Defenses were the messages that refuted negative elements pushed out by actors against other candidates and political parties. In this context, our analysts looked for traces which established that members of the opposition and the ruling camps defended what were considered negatives and/or not true about the personality traits, leadership styles and competencies of the candidates and political parties.

The focus of the weekly monitoring is to find informed policy engagement or intensive personality disparagement. In this regard, *highly informed policy engagement* which means mentioning a particular policy or programme, citing the location of the programme or when the policy was implemented, and discussing its consequences on the targeted beneficiaries or communities, were formulated. *Moderately informed policy engagement* represents a message that contains a specific policy or programme and cites the location or discusses its impacts. No message can fit this category without having at least two of the elements associated with *highly informed policy engagement* metric. *Slightly informed policy engagement* metric entails a message that has one of the three elements associated with *highly informed policy engagement* metric. For the personality assessment, we considered *highly intensive personality disparagement*, *moderately*

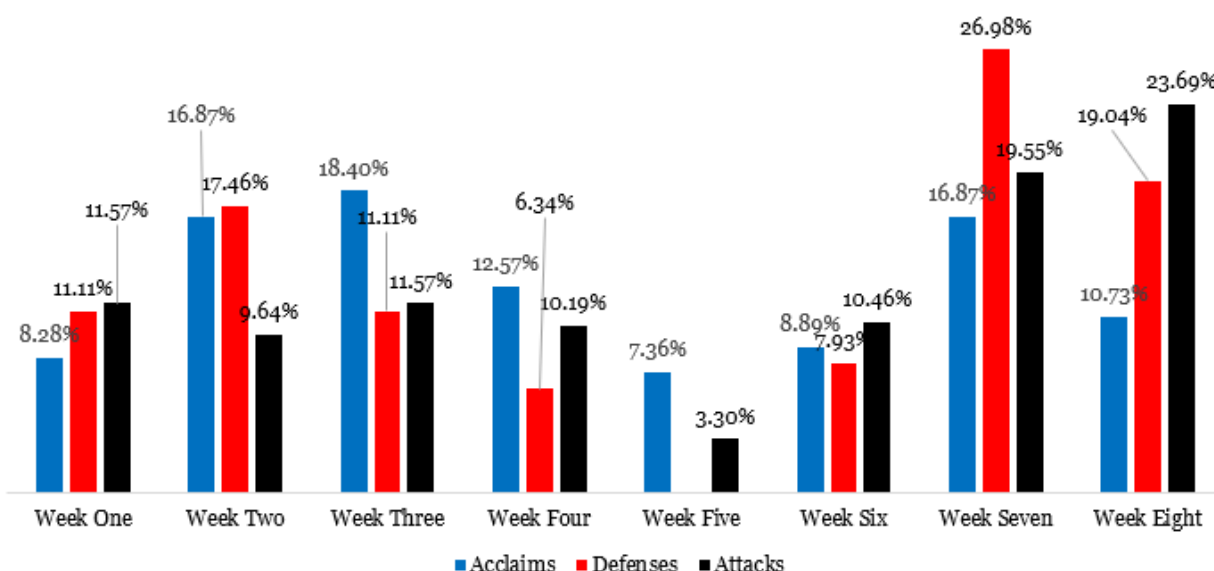
intensive personality disparagement, slightly intensive personality disparagement and none intensive personality disparagement. A message falls into highly intensive personality disparagement when it has elements that establish a lack of competence of a candidate, incomplete educational qualifications, and previous history of poor management of resources either in a private or public establishment. *Moderately intensive personality disparagement* was measured with the consideration of two of the three elements of *highly intensive personality disparagement* metric, while *slightly intensive personality disparagement* denotes a message that has only one of the three elements. *None intensive personality disparagement* specifically represents an absence of all the three elements. *Threats to credible poll* is the main metric with a focus on vote-buying, rigging through political thugs, rigging through collusion with the electoral body, and rigging through collusion with security agencies. Representations of these sub-metrics are premised on the trends discussed earlier. Apart from the campaign strategies (attacks, acclaims and defenses), infrastructure, social programmes, workers' salary, welfare and employment, agriculture, economy, education, health, security and others were created as campaign issues or policies that the parties and their supporters need to address for the electorate to make an informed decision on July 16th, 2022.

Beyond considering the issues political actors and their supporters discussed with the public weekly, we also examined public information seeking on issues and/or needs. The focus was on economy, health, security, education, road, employment, agriculture and salary. Public interest in these issues and/or needs were gathered through the volume of searches normalised by Google Trends. This tool was able to normalise information seeking of people in Ede, Iwo, Abeere, Ife, Osogbo, Ojudo, Ilesa, Edunabon, Ila-Orangun, Ipetu-Jesa, Efon-Alaaye, Ikirun and Apomu throughout the eight-week period of monitoring the campaign activities of the actors. During data collection, our analysts discovered that media teams of some political parties and candidates deliberately shared the same messages across the media types we examined. This is most evident among the new media team of the ruling party (APC). We also discerned a similar pattern among some supporters, who have dedicated Facebook pages for their candidates. The campaign strategies and issues/or policies were reliably checked using stability and reproducibility approaches. A member of the research team coded the messages several times while

another member repeated the process of coding the messages. The outcome indicated a strong level of agreement in line with what each campaign strategy and issue and/or policy represented.

Key Results

For the entire two months of monitoring, a total of 729 relevant messages were gathered from the media sources and campaign rallies used by the political actors. Analysis reveals that 8.20% of the messages were gathered in week one. It increased to 11.70% and 12.60% in week two and week three respectively. In week four, 81 messages representing 11.10% were collected while the number of relevant messages reduced further in week five (46=6.30%). A total of 80 messages which signifies 11.00% of the total messages (n=729) were gathered in week six while 19.90% (n=145) of the messages were collected in week seven. The number of collected messages reduced from 145 to 140 in week eight. This represents 19.20% of the total messages. In all, our analysts note that political parties maintained regular and irregular campaign activities throughout the eight weeks (see Exhibit 1). In terms of campaign strategy, a total of 752 traces were found for the entire eight weeks against 619 traces that were found for the last seven weeks. Of the 752 traces, 44.71% were acclaims while 8.64% and 49.79% were defenses and attacks respectively. Week-by-week analysis indicates that acclaims reduced from 12.57% in week four to 10.73% in week eight. Defenses increased from 6.34% in week four to over 19% in week eight. Attacks strategy equally increased from 10.19% that was recorded in week four to 23.69% in week eight. According to our analysts, the increase in the three strategies over the months indicates that political actors employed the strategies as the campaign got hotter with the intention of winning voters' minds through the attacks and defenses strategy more than the acclaims strategy.

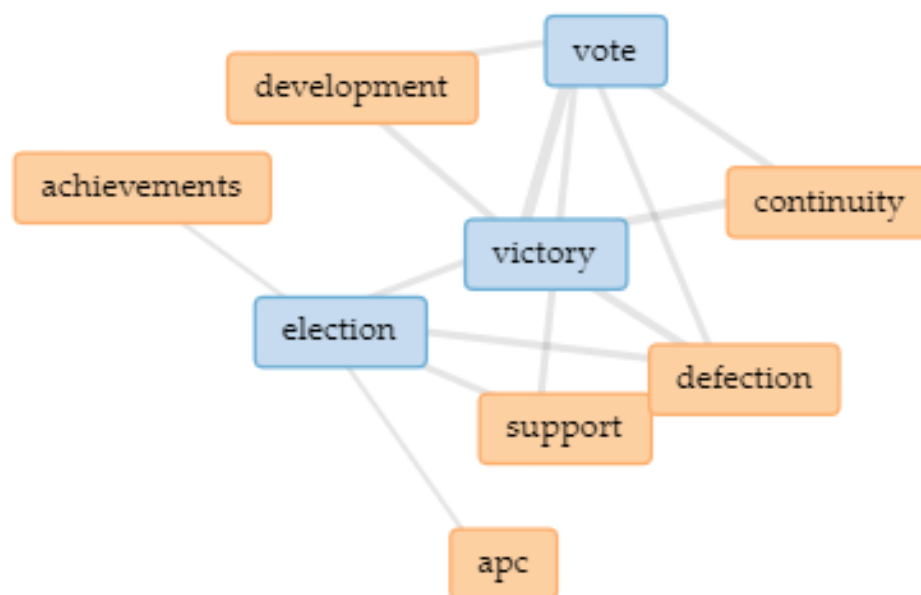
Exhibit 1: Campaign strategies by week⁴

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

Campaign issues and/or policies engagement

From week one to week seven, personality issues of the candidates, competence or lack of it of the candidates, assassination attempts or threats to life, and vote-buying among others were significantly discussed at the expense of informing potential voters of the need to vote for candidates based on their abilities and capabilities to address existing practical problems on health, education, security, agriculture, economy, social programmes, infrastructure, workers' salary, welfare and employment under our "other category metric". Like what dominated other category in week seven, for this week, actors, especially those from the media teams of the political parties seriously sought votes for their candidates in relation to the leadership style and competence of the candidates. Actors were also discovered discussing defection with the pride that large members of a party have crossed to another which would deliver significant victory for candidates. For example, when a member of the main opposition party in Ejigbo (who contested for a federal legislative position lost his party's primary election) defected to the ruling party, one of the media handlers of the APC wrote, "I strongly believe, he will not only bring value addition to the progressive fold (across levels) but also give a boost to the reelection project of our performing and cerebral Governor Adegboyega Oyetola." Both the

⁴ **Key:** Acclaims=326; Defenses =63; Attacks=363

Exhibit 3: Interconnectivity of Dominant Issues in the Other Category

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

According to the data presented in Exhibit 4, actors have continued to discuss issues and needs that are not relevant to the election. This could be gleaned from the figures in Exhibit 5 where a large percentage of 199 and 165 messages gathered between week seven and eight were mainly on unrelated topics. Nevertheless, our analysis reveals that between week seven and week eight, security and agriculture were discussed mostly. However, the actors maintained the same level of percentage of discussing them during the two weeks (see Exhibit 4). There were irregular discussions of the key issues and/or needs that dominated discourse in week seven. For instance, the discussion on economy reduced from 7.03% in week seven to 3.63% in week eight. The same pattern of reduction was observed for health and education.

Exhibit 4: Campaign and/or Policy Issues by week

	Health	Education	Security	Infrastructure	Workers' Salary, Welfare and Employment	Agriculture	Economy	Social Programmes	Others	Total
Week One	8.49%	8.49%	6.60%	11.32%	9.43%	9.43%	8.49%	10.37%	27.35%	106
Week Two	7.09%	6.38%	7.09%	9.92%	7.80%	7.09%	10.63%	7.09%	36.87%	141
Week Three	8.86%	6.32%	5.06%	8.86%	7.59%	5.06%	7.59%	6.96%	43.67%	158
Week Four	5.88%	8.40%	5.04%	9.24%	10.92%	5.88%	10.08%	10.92%	33.61%	119
Week Five	3.12%	10.93%	3.12%	12.50%	23.43%	3.12%	3.12%	4.68%	35.93%	64
Week Six	1.31%	6.57%	2.63%	6.57%	10.52%	2.63%	5.26%	6.57%	57.89%	76
Week Seven	5.52%	6.53%	3.51%	10.55%	7.03%	3.51%	7.03%	5.02%	51.25%	199
Week Eight	4.24%	2.42%	3.63%	7.87%	4.24%	3.63%	3.63%	3.03%	67.27%	165

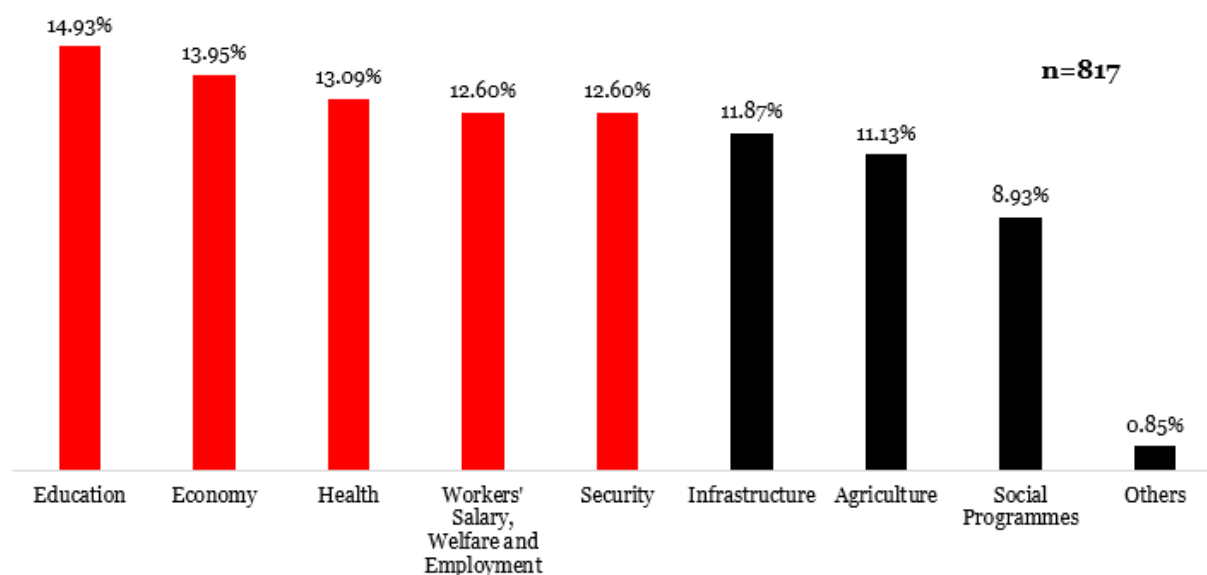
Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

Similar to the data presented in Exhibit 4, data in Exhibit 5 reveal the volume of information Osun residents sought about the campaign issues/and or needs. Across the weeks, analysis shows that in week eight, Osun public sought information about road, health, security and education. Comparing this with the data presented in Exhibit 4, it emerged that political actors aligned with the public interest in the area of security not in the areas of infrastructure, health and education. This result is further enhanced with the data presented in Exhibit 6 based on the views expressed by over 100 electorate from three senatorial districts in the state about the categories of messages they have been receiving from candidates and political parties since April, 2022. The majority of the electorate stated that they have watched, seen, read and listened to messages that focused on issues and/or needs within the education, economy, health, workers' salary, welfare and employment, and security than getting significant messages on infrastructure, agriculture and social programmes.

Exhibit 5: Issues and/or needs searched by Osun Public based by week

	Economy	Health	Security	Education	Road	Employment	Agriculture	Salary
Week One	25.37%	19.74%	21.29%	29.08%	32.68%	21.59%	23.21%	26.91%
Week Two	12.43%	14.86%	19.17%	11.70%	13.43%	21.59%	15.80%	10.35%
Week Three	12.43%	19.13%	0.00%	9.92%	0.00%	0.00%	11.51%	17.59%
Week Four	0.00%	6.14%	0.00%	9.12%	0.00%	0.00%	9.75%	0.00%
Week Five	12.43%	8.72%	14.19%	9.69%	16.98%	0.00%	14.04%	10.35%
Week Six	12.43%	9.52%	11.08%	8.31%	9.87%	21.59%	0.00%	14.07%
Week Seven	12.43%	6.66%	19.06%	9.06%	9.87%	35.20%	15.90%	10.35%
Week Eight	12.43%	15.19%	15.07%	13.08%	17.18%	0.00%	9.75%	10.35%
Total	804	2132	902	1743	1013	463	1025	966

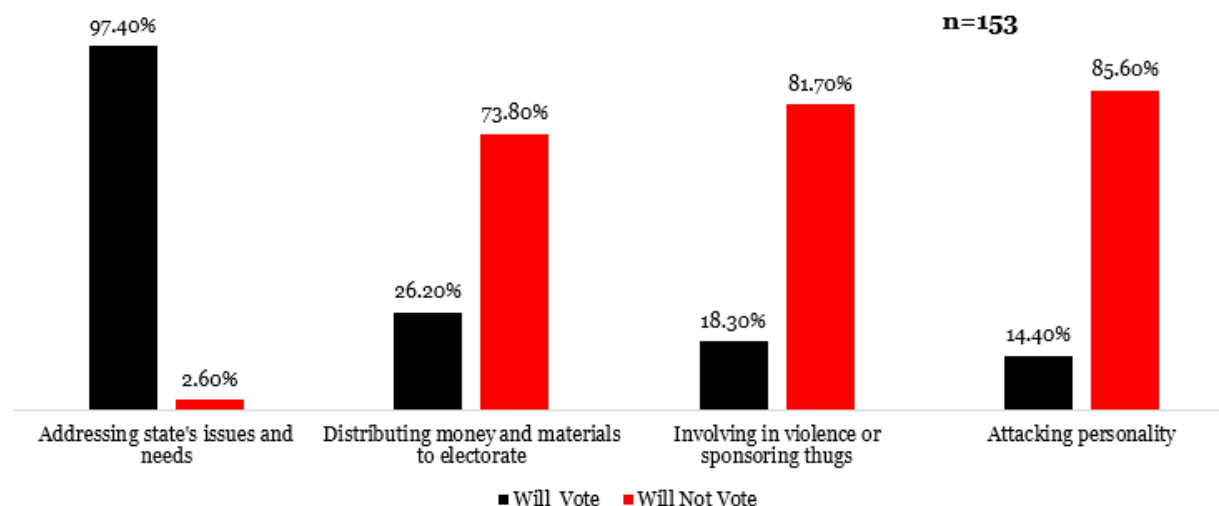
Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

Exhibit 6: Dominant areas/sectors of engagement according to electorate⁵

Source: Osun 2022 Election Survey; Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

Analysis of the electorate's views further reveals that the majority (97.40%) would not vote candidates and political parties that failed to address issues and/or needs of the people on July 16. We also found that candidates and political parties that disparage personality would not be considered during the poll. This is also applicable to political parties and candidates found to have engaged political thugs before and during the election to cause violence across the state. Though the percentage is small, some sampled electorates are likely to vote for candidates and political parties that give them money and materials. This further reinforces the need for a rigorous anti-vote selling campaign.

⁵ Sampled electorate were asked to pick more than one category

Exhibit 7: Electorate's Will Vote Versus Will Not Vote Decision

Source: Osun 2022 Election Survey; Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

The eight-week period indicates that across media types (Facebook, Twitter, radio jingles, campaign speech, and newspapers), the identified campaign issues/policies were discussed on Facebook, Twitter, in the newspapers and in the radio jingles more than during the campaign rallies. Actors mostly deployed Twitter for discussing issues/needs that were not directly related to governance. This is also observed on Facebook and in the newspapers. While social media (Facebook and Twitter) were employed for discussing unrelated issues and/or needs, analysis shows that radio jingles were less used for this. Jingles were mostly employed for communicating what have been and will be done in the areas of agriculture, economy, infrastructure, workers' welfare, salary and employment.

Exhibit 7: Campaign and/or Policy Issues by Media Types

	Health	Education	Security	Infrastructure	Workers' Salary, Welfare and Employment	Agriculture	Economy	Social Programmes	Others	Total
Campaign Speech	8.33%	10.41%	4.16%	18.75%	6.25%	8.33%	6.25%	6.25%	31.25%	48
Facebook	5.16%	6.30%	3.82%	8.98%	8.41%	4.78%	6.69%	5.92%	49.90%	523
Newspaper	6.00%	6.50%	4.00%	10.00%	9.00%	3.50%	8.50%	7.50%	45.00%	200
Radio Jingle	12.35%	12.35%	11.23%	12.35%	12.35%	12.35%	10.11%	11.23%	5.61%	89
Twitter	4.16%	2.97%	4.76%	6.54%	8.33%	2.97%	5.95%	5.35%	58.92%	168

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

From the cumulative report of week seven to the current cumulative report (week eight), there are some levels of changes in the deployment of media categories we have been monitoring since April, 2022. In the cumulative seven-week report, it was reported that the actors deployed attacks strategy by 61.64% on Facebook. In the current report, the use of the strategy was found at 59.22% of the total messages that established the attacks strategy. This indicates a relative reduction in the use of the strategy. On this medium, defenses were also found to reduce from 33.33% recorded in the week seven report to 30.15% in the current report. Acclaims strategy reduced from 58.07% in week seven to 54.60% in week eight. In the newspapers, defenses strategy increased relatively between week seven and week eight. In week seven, it was used by 43.13% while it was found at 46.03% in week eight. Meanwhile, defenses and attacks strategy significantly and relatively increased accordingly on Twitter. Instances of attacks across the communication infrastructure include:

It has come to the notice of the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the varying mechanisms, antics and orchestrated plans of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) to cause mayhem before, during and after the July 16 gubernatorial election in Osun State, simply because of the loss in popularity of the outgoing governor, Alhaji Gboyega Oyetola (*PDP/Facebook, 23 June, 2022*).

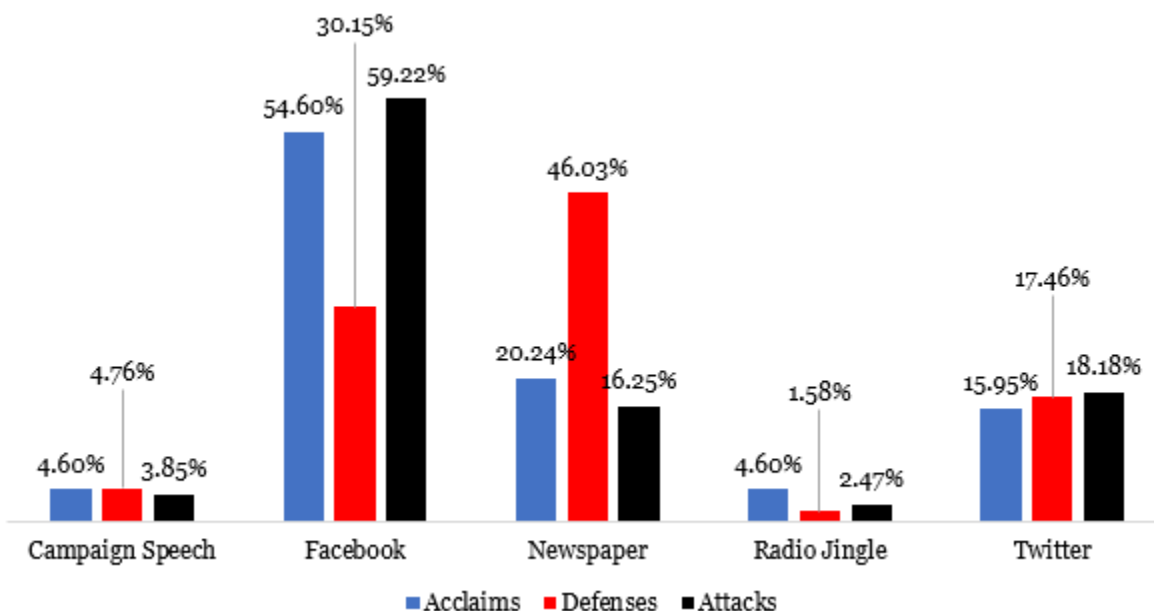
The composition of Osun PDP is a disaster, as a follow up to Senator Ademola fire for fire threat, the party Federal House of Representatives Candidate in Ijesa South, Sanya Omirin openly bragged and admitted that he had previously bear arms (Gun) during election and now he will use explosive device as an interested party in the coming election, He bragged in the presence of traditional rulers. Hope the security agents noticed this (*APC/Facebook, 25 June, 2022*).

Demola Adeleke, Osun PDP Candidate, must attend the Osun 2022 Gubernatorial debate, I *want* to *see* how he *will be* reading from the *handout prepared* by his *Campaign* Council while debating. The debate *time will* surely *be* against him and his *points* poorly marshalled uncoordinated (APC/Twitter, 24 June, 2022).

Less than a month to the July 16, the ruling party has also imported some thugs from Niger Delta with fake Police and Army uniforms to harass and intimidate genuine voters during the election process. Moreover, we have it on good authority that a Senior Special Adviser to former governor of Osun State has been commissioned to secure hotels and other means of lodging to accommodate the people who are coming into Osun State to vote for (APC), from other states of the country (PDP/Leadership Newspaper, 25 June, 2022)

Another attack strategy was credited to the Accord Party's candidate thus:

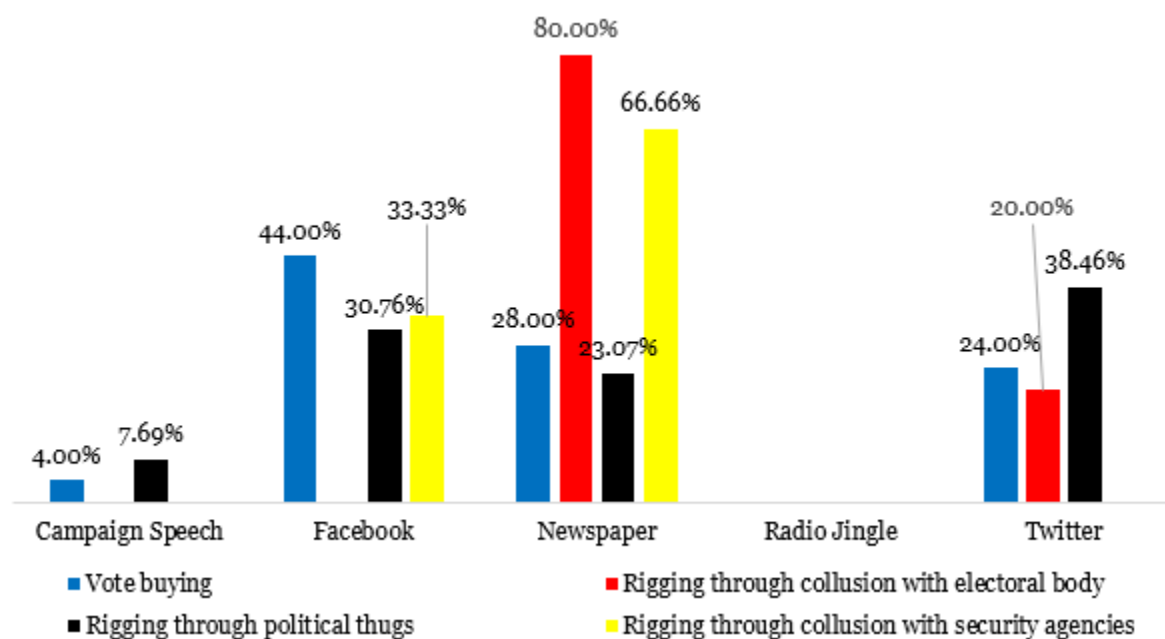
No one can give what he lacks. If we elect a governor who has not grown any business before, it will be impossible for him to grow our economy. If we elect a governor who is frivolous, he will not take matters that concern us seriously. If we elect an unimaginative person, he will leave us stranded. If we elect an illiterate as governor, he will destroy our education system. So, this election is not just about parties, it is about our future as a people. We must therefore elect a governor that represents the future that we want (Nigerian Tribune, 26 June, 2022).

Exhibit 8: Campaign Strategies across Media Types⁶

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

Apart from our interest in how the actors deployed the strategies across the media types, we were also interested in knowing which of the media had been predominantly used to create awareness or report possible threats to the July 16 poll in Osun State. The outcome of the analysis was presented in Exhibit 9, where it was revealed that rigging through collusion with security agencies and electoral body has been mainly communicated through newspapers while Twitter, as well as Facebook, have been used for communicating vote-buying and rigging through political thugs.

⁶ **Key:** Attacks=363, Acclaims=326, Defenses=63

Exhibit 9: Threats to Credible Poll across Media Types⁷

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

The ruling party remains the only political party that has significantly engaged the public across the campaign issues and/or needs in the last eight weeks. The party discussed what it had done in the areas of health, workers' salary, welfare and employment, and infrastructure more than telling the public what it intended to do differently if elected for another four years. As stated previously, the actors engaged the public on issues and/or needs that are not based on the needs of the public as well as challenges they are facing. For instance, the contextual analysis of the ruling party's engagement clearly shows a discussion of performance and asking the public to vote it again for continuation of what it is doing. The People's Democratic Party is the only opposition party, according to our dataset, that trailed the ruling party in terms of engaging the public. While the ruling party has been discussing some critical issues and needs, the main opposition party had largely deployed its resources towards debating unrelated issues and needs (see our earlier definition of "other category metric"). Despite this, the party (PDP) has relatively engaged the public by discussing issues and needs within agriculture, education and security more

⁷ Vote buying=25, Rigging through political thugs=13, Rigging through collusion with electoral body=5, Rigging through collusion with security agencies=1

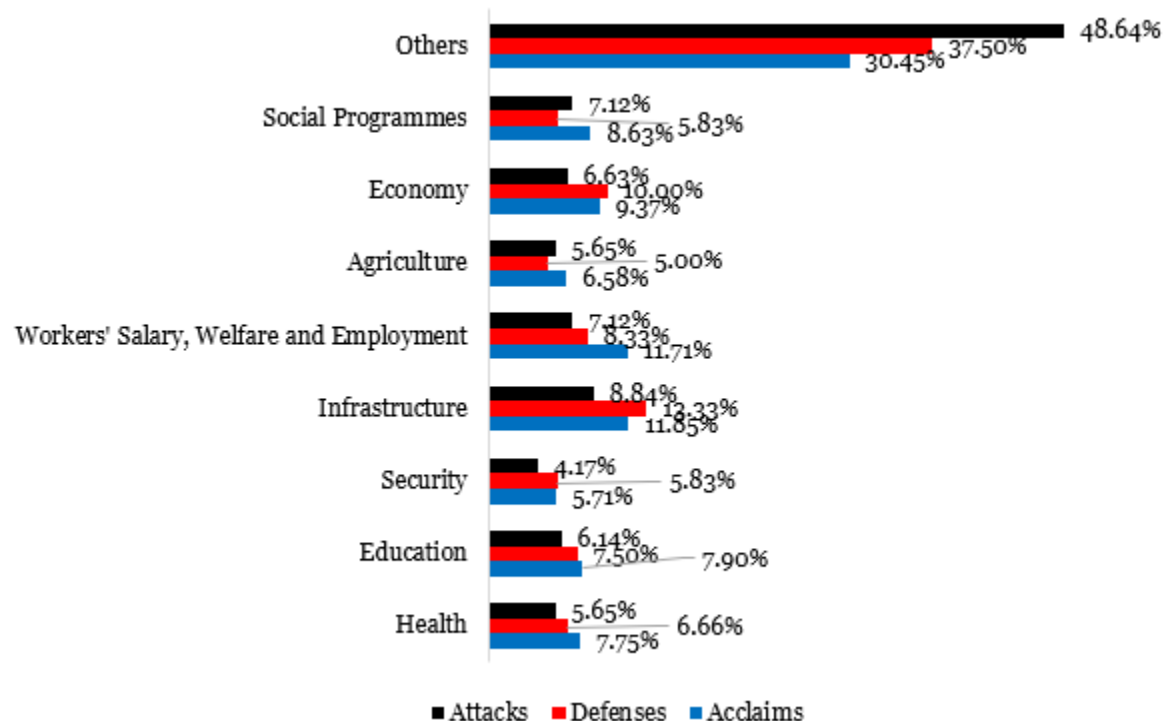
than other expectations of the public. Like the ruling party, our dataset reveals that the party and its supporters only discussed the issues and/or needs in relation to personality disparagement with less emphasis on what the candidate (Senator Nurudeen Ademola Adeleke) and the party will do differently. In some campaign or policy issues discussion, Accord and Labour Party slightly engaged the public (see Exhibit 10).

Exhibit 10: Campaign and/or Policy Issues by Political Parties

	Health	Education	Security	Infrastructure	Workers' Salary, Welfare and Employment	Agriculture	Economy	Social Programmes	Others
APC	67.21%	59.70%	58.33%	66.32%	66.66%	50.00%	54.05%	63.23%	47.45%
APM	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.11%	1.92%	1.35%	1.47%	0.21%
PDP	26.22%	31.34%	31.25%	29.59%	25.55%	36.53%	29.72%	29.41%	41.49%
Labour Party	1.63%	1.49%	2.08%	1.02%	0.00%	3.84%	5.40%	1.47%	2.97%
Accord	3.27%	5.97%	6.25%	2.04%	5.55%	3.84%	6.75%	2.94%	6.17%
ADP	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.21%
ZLP	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.92%	1.35%	0.00%	0.21%
PRP	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.21%
AAC	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.21%
YPP	1.63%	1.49%	2.08%	1.02%	1.11%	1.92%	1.35%	1.47%	0.21%
SDP	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.21%
APC-Faction	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.42%
Total	61	67	48	98	90	52	74	68	470

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

A total of 1,212 traces of campaign strategy were found across campaign issues against 1,028 traces recorded in the previous cumulative report. Of 1,212 traces, 35.58% were associated with attacks, while 56.35% and 9.90% resonated with our definitions of acclaims and defenses respectively. Further analysis establishes that the three strategies have predominantly been employed while actors discussed *others category* (see earlier definition of others for more components of the category), infrastructure, economy, workers' salary, welfare and employment. With the use of the strategies mostly in infrastructure, economy and issues/needs related to human capital development, our analysts note that both the ruling and the opposition parties believe that the areas are more connected with people than others. Hence, the need to prove, defend and attack ideas were necessary in order to significantly secure the relative level of public share of minds ahead of the election.

Exhibit 11: Campaign Strategies across Campaign and/or Policy Issues⁸

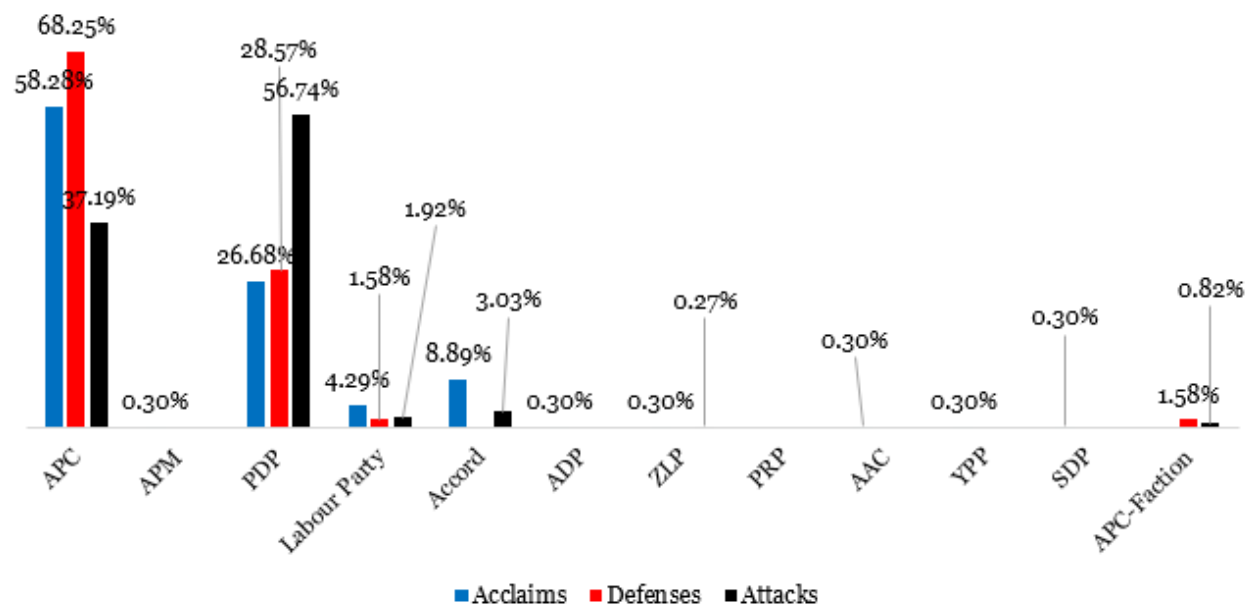
Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

We were equally interested in knowing which of the political parties employed the strategies significantly in the last eight weeks. Further analysis indicates that the People's Democratic Party attacked more than acclaimed and defended, while the Labour Party and Accord only acclaimed. With the addition of week eight data, the ruling party's use of defenses strategy reduced from 78.43% to 68.25% (see Exhibit 12). However, acclaims strategy of the party increased from 57.04% to 58.28%. The same pattern was also found for attack strategy deployment, where the level of utilizing it increased from 36.46% to 37.19%. According to our analysts, this suggests that the party is jettisoning its earlier position of running issue-based campaigns. The main opposition party reduced its deployment of attacks strategy and increased defenses strategy. From 57.40% to 56.74%, attacks strategy deployment of the party reduced. With slight reduction (27.14% to 26.68%), the party was also found to appropriate acclaims strategy less in week eight as

⁸ **Key:** Acclaims= 683, Defenses=120, Attacks=407

well as in the use of defenses strategy, increasing from 21.56% of using it in seven weeks to 28.57% of employing it in eight weeks.

Exhibit 12: Campaign Strategies across Political Parties⁹



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

From all the previous analyses, it is obvious that the actors are deploying the campaign strategies differently. The ruling party prefers defenses and acclaims to attacks while the opposition party, especially the People's Democratic Party, largely deploys attacks as a strategy. This position led our analysts to further examine the number of times all the parties have deployed the strategies in the last eight weeks. The use of acclaims strategy has increased from more than 9 times in the latest seven weeks to 14.7 times in the eight-week of monitoring when issues and/or needs related to infrastructure were discussed. The strategy was also deployed more than 24 times for debating workers' salary, welfare and employment in the previous cumulative report, while it increased to 27.4 times in the current report. Its usage also increased in the discussion of economy and other category metric. Some levels of use were also found for defenses and attacks strategy. For example, the use of defenses strategy for discussing infrastructure decreased from 5.9 times to 5.4

⁹ Key: Attacks=363, Acclaims=326, Defenses=63

times as well as for agriculture (from 2.1 times to 2.3 times). It reduced significantly from 3.7 times to 2.3 times for economy. For the discussion of workers' salary, welfare and employment, the use of attacks strategy increased from 14.6 times to 16.6 times. For agriculture, the extent of deploying the strategy remains the same for week seven and eight.

Exhibit 13: Number of times parties deployed campaign strategies across campaign issues/policies

	Acclaims	Defenses	Attacks
Health	0.8	0.0	0.0
Education	1.5	0.2	0.2
Security	2.0	1.4	1.4
Infrastructure	14.7	5.4	5.4
Workers' Salary, Welfare and Employment	27.4	16.6	16.6
Agriculture	0.3	6.0	6.0
Economy	8.9	2.3	2.3
Social programmes	2.9	2.1	2.1
Others	0.0	1.9	43.1

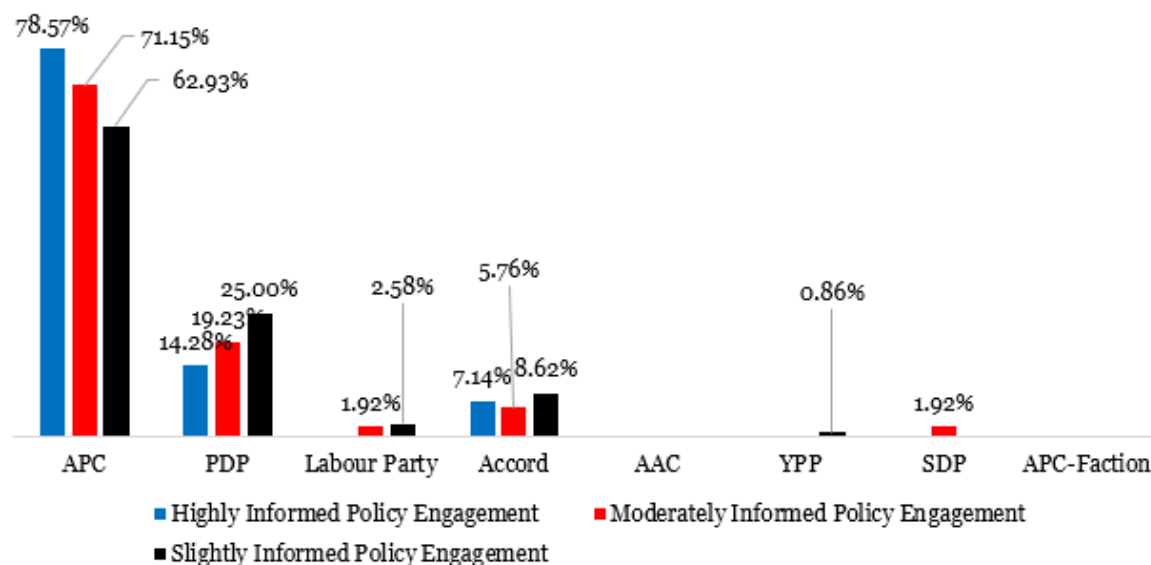
Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

Policy Engagement or Personality Disparagement

We discovered that the ruling party is better at informed policy engagement and less intensive in disparaging the personality of the opponents. The leading opposition party (PDP) slightly engaged the policies or programmes of the current administration while it moderately disparaged the personality of the ruling party's candidate and the party itself (see Exhibit 14 and 15). Further analysis of the levels of policy engagement across campaign issues and/or policies shows mixed results for *others as a category*. Parties and their supporters slightly and highly engaged potential electorate when discussing infrastructure, health, and workers' welfare, salary and employment (see Exhibit 15). Statistically, the ruling party retains its status of highly informed policy engagement from a reduction of 84.61% in the previous report to 78.57% in the current report while its moderately informed policy engagement equally reduced from 73.91%, had in the seven-week cumulative report, to 71.15% in the current report. The People's Democratic Party's level of moderately informed policy engagement increased from 17.39% to 19.23%.

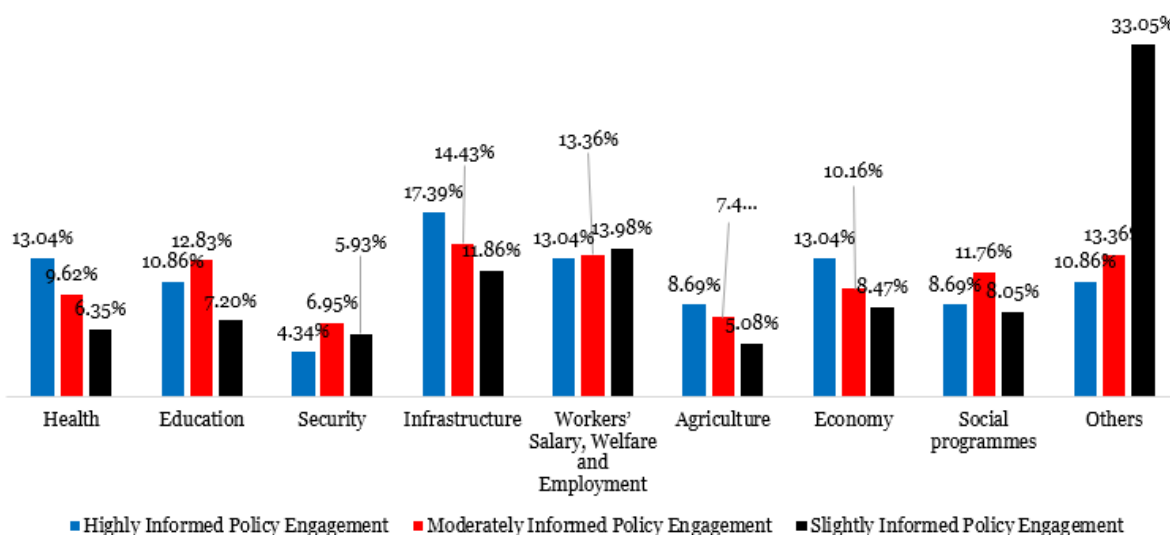
Labour party, Social Democratic Party and Accord's level dipped. The smaller opposition parties also had some changes in engaging informed discussion with the public within the context of slightly informed policy engagement (see Exhibit 14).

Exhibit 14: Levels of policy engagement by party¹⁰



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

Exhibit 15: Levels of policy engagement by campaign issues and/or policies¹¹



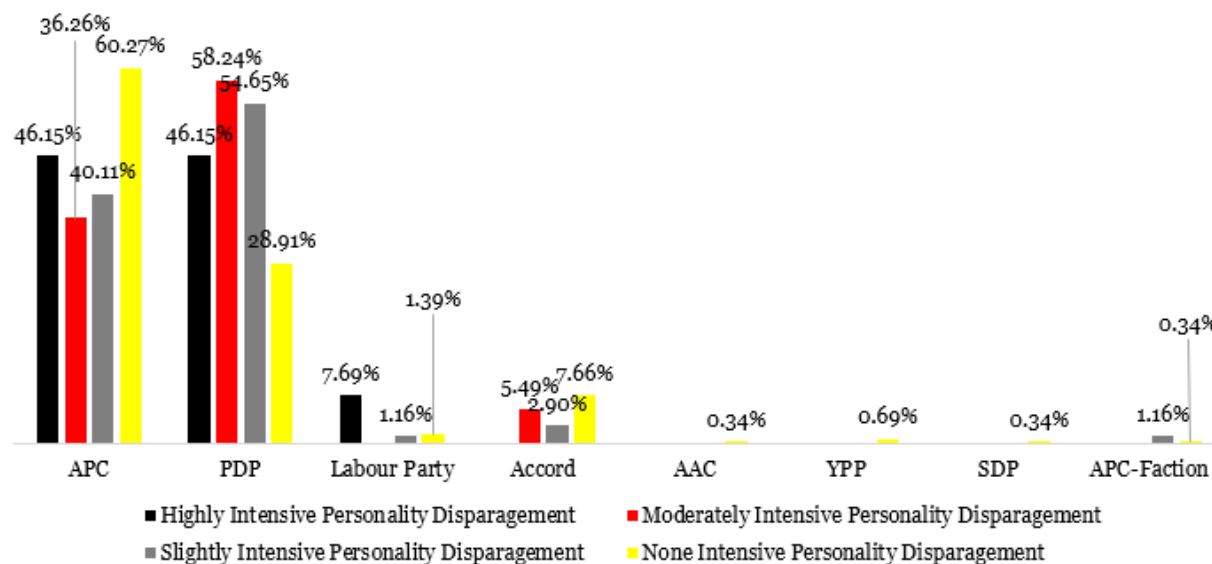
Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

¹⁰ **Key:** Highly Informed Policy Engagement=14, Moderately Informed Policy Engagement=52, Slightly Informed Policy Engagement=116

¹¹ **Key:** Highly Informed Policy Engagement=46, Moderately Informed Policy Engagement=187, Slightly Informed Policy Engagement=236

From the data in Exhibit 15, it is clear that actors have only succeeded in engaging the public better while discussing infrastructure, health and workers' salary, welfare and employment, economy and education. This is quite different from what was recorded in the last week cumulative report, where it was stated that actors significantly engaged the public while discussing infrastructure, workers' salary, welfare and employment.

Exhibit 16: Levels of personality disparagement by party¹²



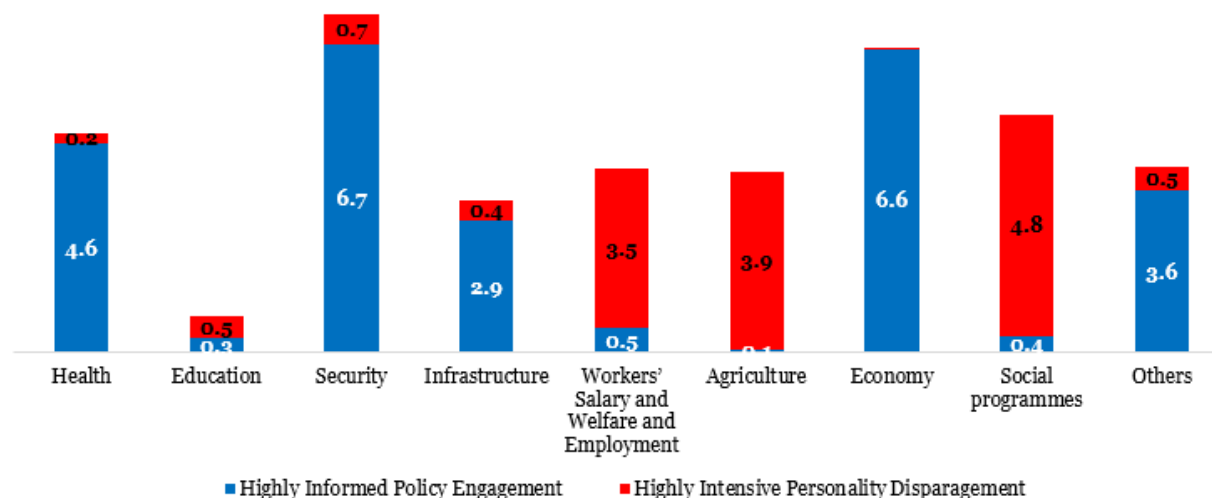
Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

For the first time of reporting the weekly activities of political parties and their supporters, the ruling and the main opposition party (PDP) closed in terms of deploying a highly intensive personality disparagement metric. Both parties had a 46.15% level of disparagement using the metric. The analysis further indicates that the ruling party seems to be better in other categories of disparagement metrics than the opposition parties based on a comparison of the week-seven cumulative report with the week-eight cumulative report. The level at which the ruling party deployed a moderately intensive personality disparagement metric reduced from 40.00% to 36.26% while the PDP increased its application from 51.66% to 58.24%. Accord equally dipped in its use from 8.33% had in the previous cumulative report to 5.49% in the current report. The level of reduction recorded by the ruling party while employing moderately and slightly intensive

¹² **Key:** Highly Intensive Personality Disparagement=9, Moderately Intensive Personality Disparagement=60, Slightly Intensive Personality Disparagement=125, None Intensive Personality Disparagement=234

personality disparagement was a result of its significant adoption of none intensive personality disparagement against its disregard for its use in week seven. According to our analysis, the party's deployment of none-intensive personality disparagement increased from 57.26%, had during the last week cumulative report, to 60.27% attained in the current report. This pattern was not observed in the main opposition party's deployment of the personality disparagement category. According to our dataset and analysis, the opposition party achieved 30.76% of its appropriation in the previous report and 28.91% for the current report (see Exhibit 16). This change is better appreciated in the context of the increase in the use of moderately intensive personality disparagement by the party. Analysis suggests that the party prioritised moderately intensive personality disparagement more than none intensive personality disparagement. Our preliminary results of ongoing electorate survey show that out of 153 electorate who responded to the question about the level of personality disparagement by political parties, candidates and their supporters since April 2022, 87.60% said the stakeholders had extensively attacked personality rather than addressing issues and/or needs of the people. Implications of their views have been previously stated when they were further asked what they would do as personality disparagement continues between the ruling and opposition parties, especially the People's Democratic Party and their failure to address important issues and needs of the people.

Exhibit 17: Number of times parties deployed highly informed policy engagement and intensive personality disparagement during the eight weeks



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

The examination of highly informed policy engagement and intensive personality disparagement within the context of frequency of deployment reveals different patterns across the campaign and/or policy issues. The use of highly informed policy engagement while discussing health reduced from 5.2 times (in the previous week's cumulative report) to 4.6 times (in the current report). Meanwhile, an increase was discovered in its acceptance while issues and needs around economy (3.7 to 6.6 times) were communicated and discussed. The use of highly intensive personality disparagement while discussing agricultural issues and needs was also reduced from 5.6 times to 3.9 times. While the metric was used for discussing workers' salary, welfare and employment in the previous seven weeks at 2.0 time, the current cumulative week indicates that it was used by the actors and their supporters more than 3 times.

Threats to credible poll

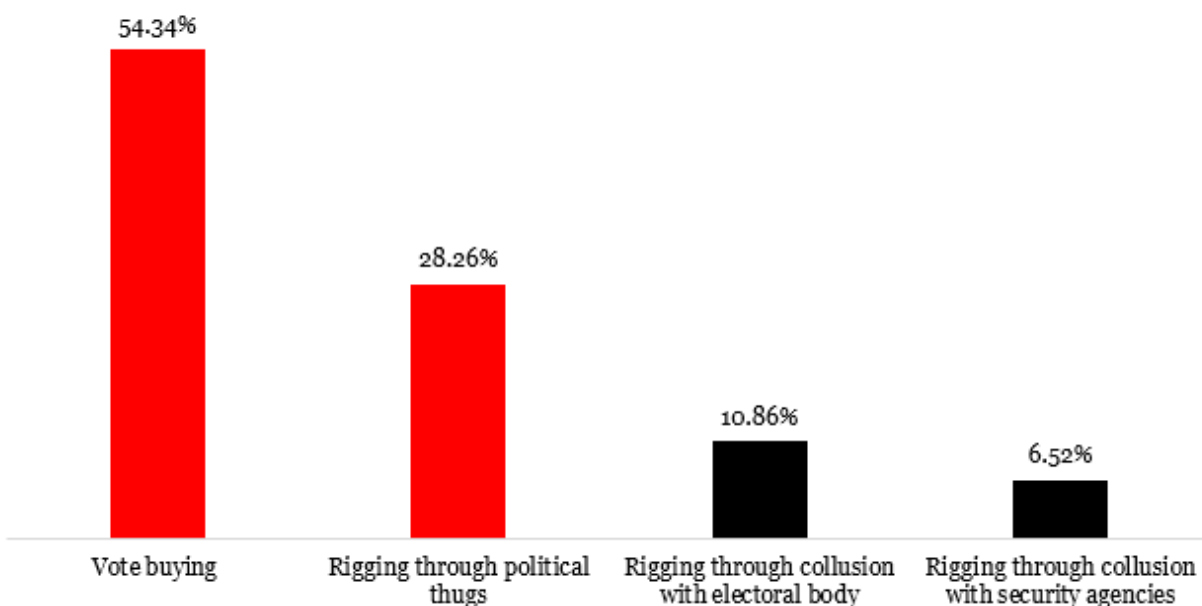
The APC and PDP frequently addressed vote-buying and manipulation, citing political thugs, among the four sub-metrics our analysts investigated under threats to credible poll as the main metric (see Exhibit 18). The APC maintained the necessity for a fair election, but the PDP's comments implied vote-buying. They attacked each other because they believed political thugs were being used to cause violence during campaigns and that they might be used during the July 16th, 2022 election. For instance, on 24 June, 2022, the ruling party accused the main opposition party of thuggery, "The Adegboyega Oyetola Campaign Council has condemned in strong terms the unprovoked attack by PDP thugs on members of our party APC and innocent bystander in Ilesa West Local Government this morning...The rampaging PDP thugs did not stop at this, they also wreak havoc at Ward 5 collation centre at LA Primary School, Isokun area where the Ward Chairman of APC, Mr. Olalekan Abiodun was injured with severe cuts on his head and hand while an innocent teacher in the school also got his wrist broken when the PDP thugs forcefully broke into a classroom." A day earlier, the PDP had accused the APC of a similar thing:

It has come to the notice of the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the varying mechanisms, antics and orchestrated plans of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) to cause mayhem before, during and after the July 16 gubernatorial election in Osun State, simply because of the loss in popularity of the outgoing governor, Alhaji Gboyega Oyetola... Also, unspecified number of buses have been booked secretly

by the APC to bring in thugs and miscreants primarily to snatch ballot boxes in the course of the forthcoming polls.

For the two months of monitoring, a total of 46 traces of threats to the poll were discovered. Analysis reveals 54.34% of discussing vote-buying. This represents a relative reduction in the 59.45% recorded in the cumulative week seven. Attention was shifted to the discussion of rigging through political thugs in the current cumulative week. The discussion of hiring or recruiting political thugs increased from 27.02% to 28.26% in the current report. With this, our analysts observed that the slight increase in the discussion of political thugs is connected with the possible victory claim of parties and their supporters ahead of the election, while a minimal reduction in pondering on vote-buying could be associated with a level of voter education being carried out by the electoral body and members of the civil society organisations across the state.

Exhibit 18: Threats to credible poll¹³



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

Conclusion and Our Verdict

The findings have validated our hypothesis that the closer the 2022 election, the more the political parties use verbal attacks as a campaign strategy. The level of attacks kept on

¹³ **Key:** Vote buying=25, Rigging through political thugs=13, Rigging through electoral body=5, Rigging through security agencies=3

increasing from week six of the monitoring, though the eighth week recorded the highest level of verbal attacks. This is an indication that the political actors in Osun State still believe in using the strategy as a campaign approach to de-market their opponents and woo potential voters to the side of their candidates.

In addition, as the election approaches, this 8th issue found out that politicians defected from one party to another. Despite their defections, each party, particularly the two main political parties, showed confidence in winning the July 16 election. Nonetheless, they kept canvassing votes and dissuading potential voters from thuggery and violence before and during the election. Although the parties preached against violence in their campaign messages, one then wonders about the level at which the two main parties accused each other of sponsoring violence and thuggery in some areas of the state.

Although policy-engaged messages in week eight were at their lowest since the monitoring periods, messages around infrastructure as well as workers' salaries, welfare and employment dominated (most of which emanated from the ruling party). However, Osun digital natives were more interested in information about road construction, security, health and education (in that order) throughout the week. When PAN asked the potential electorate about policy programmes that would determine their votes, they identified education, economy, health, workers' welfare and employment as well as security, infrastructure, agriculture and social programmes (in that order). That is, the majority of the sampled respondents (97.40%) would not vote for candidates and political parties that failed to address these issues and/or needs of the people in their campaign messages. We also found that candidates and political parties that disparage personality would not be considered during the poll. This is also applicable to political parties and candidates found to have engaged political thugs before and during the election to cause violence across the state. Though the percentage is small, some sampled electorate are likely to vote candidates and political parties that induce them with them money and materials.

This week also, vote-buying and electoral malpractice resonated. Although the two main political parties accused each other of sponsoring political thugs and planning to disrupt the election with thugs, the main opposition political party accused the INEC and security

agents of planning to rig the election in favour of the ruling party. Its accusations mostly appeared in national newspapers and on Twitter.

About Positive Agenda Nigeria

Positive Agenda Nigeria is a non-governmental organisation led by a group of academics and independent researchers dedicated to adopting evidence-based approaches to preserve a favourable climate for Nigeria's socioeconomic and political activities.

Research Team

Rasheed Ademola Adebisi, PhD -Team Lead

Rasheed Ademola ADEBIYI holds a PhD from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He is a member of the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON); Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR); International Association of Media & Communication Research (IAMCR); and African Council for Communication Education (ACCE). He teaches PR & Advertising; News Writing and Reporting as well as Development Communication at the Department of Mass Communication, Fountain University, Osogbo, Nigeria. He is a 2022 Fellow of the Solutions Journalism Africa Fellowship supported by the Solutions Journalism Network, New York and implemented by the Nigeria Health Watch, Abuja. He is a Co-Founder/Editor-in Chief of *Abitocitta*, a platform for solution-focused stories in Nigeria and Africa. He has published a number of articles in both national and international journals in his areas of research interest.

Mutiu Iyanda Lasisi, BA, mMBA -Senior Research Analyst

Mutiu Iyanda Lasisi is a Research and Communications professional with a special bias for combining academic and industrial approaches for issues and needs exploration towards personal and societal growth. His research and industry interests include entrepreneurship development, media, communication, public governance, big data analytics, computational and data journalism. He has published articles on media, journalism and communication in reputable national and international journals. He currently works with Infoprations Limited, a data-driven management consulting company, Lagos, Nigeria.

Mojeed Adekunle Animashaun -Msc -Senior Research Analyst

Mojeed Adekunle Animashaun received first and second degrees in Political Science from Nigeria's premier university, the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He is a doctoral student

at Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria. He currently teaches in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Fountain University, Osogbo, Nigeria where he has served at various times as Head of Department, Sub-Dean of the Faculty of Management and Social Sciences as well as Acting Chairman of University Consultancy Unit. He has previously taught at Nasarawa State University, Keffi and Osun State University, Osogbo. His areas of research interest include comparative democratization, governance, state-civil society relations and policy analysis. He has published in reputable local and international journals with his two latest research efforts published in an edited volume by Springer Nature; and in the Contemporary Journal of African Studies of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.

Obasanjo Joseph Oyedele, PhD -Senior Research Analyst

Dr. Obasanjo Joseph Oyedele is a Lecturer at the Department of Mass Communication, Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State. He holds a PhD in climate change communication of the Department of Communication and Language Arts, University of Ibadan, where he also bagged his M.A. and B.A. His ongoing and concluded postdoctoral fellowships with the Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism and The Civic Media Lab respectively focus on Nigeria's policies and pledges on climate change sustainability and efforts at curbing fake news, misinformation, and disinformation in the Nigerian media space respectively. He has publications on climate change, health, risk, and environmental communication and media studies in reputable national and international journals. He has also attended seminars, conferences, and summer schools both at home and abroad.

Kamoru Aremu Salaudeen, PhD -Senior Research Analyst

He is a lecturer/researcher in the department of Mass Communication, Fountain University, Osogbo, is a communication strategist, radio presenter, performing artist, voice-over artist and script writer. His media and communication experience connects both the industry and the academia spanning over two decades now. He has PhD in Strategic Communication, M.A in Applied Communication and B.A in Communication & Language Arts from University of Ibadan, as well as M. Sc. in Mass Communication (PR & Advertising option) from Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State. His broad area of specialisation and research covers Public Relations and Advertising with particular focus on Strategic Communication, communication intervention, health

communication and development communication. He has published research articles in revered local, national and international journals. Kamoru, a communication, life skill and leadership coach, is a member of International Association of Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), African Council for Communication Education (ACCE), Nigerian Chapter, Association of Media and Communication Researchers of Nigeria (AMCRON), Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON) and Society for InterDisciplinary Research (SIR).

Ridwan Abiola Kolawole, BA, MA, -Senior Research Analyst

Ridwan Abiola Kolawole teaches journalism and communication in the Department of Mass Communication, Fountain University, Osogbo, Nigeria. Kolawole holds M.A and B. A. in Communication and Language Arts from University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He also has National Diploma in Mass Communication, from The Polytechnic, Ibadan, Nigeria. His research interest focuses on Applied Communication with particular interests in Media Studies, Journalism, and Development Communication. He is a 2020-2021 Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellow of the Next Generation Social Sciences in Africa of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), New York. He has served as research assistant for Community-Based Crime Prevention and Control of the Evidence and Lessons from Latin America [and Africa] (ELLA) funded by the UKAID and Practical Action. He is a beneficiary of the University of Edinburgh-funded Catalyst Regional Early Career Workshop for early career scholars from West Africa. He is a research team member (Nigeria) on the project, Young Women and Men's Aspirations and Resilience: Prospects for Livelihoods, Employment and Accountability before, during and beyond COVID-19 project. This is a MasterCard Foundation-funded project in seven African countries including Nigeria aimed at projecting African youth's voices to the critical stakeholders in the area of empowerment/employment.

Umar Olansile Ajetunmobi, BA -Research Associate

Umar Ajetunmobi Olansile is an Applied Communication Researcher who has a special interest in development, health, media and digital communication-related issues. He is a graduate of University of Ibadan where he studied Communication and Language Arts. He is currently a postgraduate student of the same department, and co-winner of the 2021 UNESCO Silk Roads Youth Research Grant. He is equally affiliated with Infoprapations

Limited, a data-driven management consulting company based in Lagos, Nigeria. Umar has co-authored peer reviewed and published research papers on digital media, journalism (traditional and digital) and COVID-19 pandemic.

Abdulgafar Adebayo, Bsc -Communications and Research Assistant

Abdulgafar Adebayo Adekunle holds a BSc in Mass Communication from the Department of Mass Communication, Fountain University, Osogbo where he concluded his undergraduate programme in 2022. He is currently interning at Abitocitta, and works as a Research Assistant for Solutions Journalism Advocacy organised by Nigeria Health Watch in Osun State. He is skilled in graphics design, camera handling and journalistic writing.

For enquiries

Email: pci1nigeria@gmail.com