

**WELLSPRING UNIVERSITY JOURNAL OF SOCIAL AND  
MANAGEMENT SCIENCES  
(WUJSMS)**

**VOL. 2 NO. 1**

**ISSN: 2616-1296**

**JANUARY 2023**

**TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA NETIZENS RESPONSE TO THE 2023  
“OBIDIENT” CAMPAIGNS IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*This study is a textual analysis of social media netizens response to the 2023 “Obidient” Presidential campaign in Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to find out the extent to which social media was used in campaigning for Peter Obi presidency; establish the slant of social media netizens response to the 2023 Obidient campaigns; and examine the impact of social media netizens response to the 2023 Obidient campaigns. Ervin Goffman’s 1974 Framing theory was adopted while qualitative textual analysis was the research design. Using the multi-stage sampling technique, Facebook was chosen as social medium for the study and netizens response to the obedient campaigns were classified into themes and analysed. The study found that social media netizens heavily used social media to portray Peter Obi as a competent administrator with the capacity to transform Nigeria, and that their messages attracted sympathisers and supporters to join the fold, with an emphasis on his ability to unite the country, show respect for traditional culture and rulers, and bring positive change to Nigeria as his supporters have a great deal of trust in him in comparison to other contenders such as Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Atiku Abubakar. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among other things, that to achieve overall success in the campaign, there is a compelling need for the Obidients to replicate such efforts on the ground, particularly in the rural and semi-rural areas where internet penetration is low, and given the fact that the bulk of votes usually come from there.*

**Keywords:** Social Media, Obidient, Campaign, Nigerian Presidential Election, Textual Analysis.  
*JEL CODE 02-SJ*

**Introduction**

Social media has become a veritable tool for political campaigns and the Nigerian presidential election is a clear attestation to this fact (Egbulefu & Nwaoboli, 2023; Nwaoboli & Ajibulu, 2023). In this age of technological advancement, Information Communication Technology (ICT) has essentially altered how we access information, communicate and engage in political processes (Baruah, 2012). Kasirye (2021) argues that the acceptance of ICT by the

populace has allowed new forms of political engagements allowing users connect over shared interests. No doubt, the influence of social media on political campaigns around the world cannot be denied. This is why Ayeni (2022) avers that social media play an important role in the political development of any nation because of their capacity to influence our belief and activities.

The renewed vigour by politicians to deploy social media for political campaigns in this dispensation draws inspiration from 2008 US presidential election where Barack Obama was believed to have won the election on social media because of the way he aggressively used the platforms to drive his campaign. Similar scenario also played out in the case of French president, Emmanuel Macron. Since these sequence of events, a large percentage of politicians across the globe have overwhelmingly embraced social media for their campaigns, having realised that electioneering, requires more than just physical persuasion. This explains why Kasirye (2021) points out that to inform and persuade voters, candidates would have to rely on a variety of communication strategies, including advertising, print, broadcast media and the internet. The online campaigns have become very trendy because of their capacity to reach a broad audience and mold public opinion. Thus, Social media have become a critical political tool for political campaigns and mobilization (Nwaoboli, 2023).

The 2015 general elections in Nigeria marked a significant beginning in the use of social media political campaigns in Nigerian politics. We have observed in the past few years, how politicians are adopting social media to spread their campaign messages to the electorates. This is an attestation of the prominence that social media is gaining in the electoral process. Perhaps, this was the trend that Peter Obi, the Labour Party Presidential candidate and his supporters observed, that made them to massively deploy social media as platforms for campaigns. This further explains why in the build-up to the 2023 presidential election in Nigeria, the term “obidient” seemed to have dominated online platforms.

Obidient has become the wind blowing the four corners of Nigeria and the “sing-song” in virtually all inhabited areas in the country. Obidient, which started as a mere social media phenomenon, has metamorphosed into the biggest political movement in Nigerian history. Since the inception of the movement in 2022, it has continued to gain grounds while sharpening Nigerian political climate prior to the build-up and after the 2023 election. Commenting on the growing popularity of Obidient movement, Okonta (2022) maintains that the political weight of Obidient has continued to grow by the day, as it is making more reckoning and galvanizing its base in many states of the federation. The movement is driven by an army of Nigerian youth, who label themselves “Obidients.” This political movement that is sharpening the Nigerian political landscape was orchestrated on social media by a group of individuals, who identified themselves as Obidients. These people took it upon themselves to spread his campaign messages rapidly and before long, many people started joining the fold until it became ubiquitous. They intensively used the social media to influence public emotions and public opinions about the candidacy of Peter Obi. Iloegbunam (2022) cited in Okonta (2022) captures the political transition of Peter Obi, which has stirred up the political movement this way:

Peter Obi’s sudden decision in May, 2022 to leave PDP few days before its presidential primary when it became obvious that “money bag” was going to play a key role in determining who emerged the party’s flag bearer, he decided to go elsewhere, insisting that he would not be part of a process where ill-gotten wealth would be used to woo party delegates for votes. This made him leave PDP for Labour Party whose members promptly made him their presidential candidate. When the news of Obi’s unusual action filtered out to the Nigerian public, the youth began to rally round him. They appeared to have seen the kind of politician they had been waiting

for years. They took their enthusiasm to social media and started doing aggressive promotion on him. The supporters began to call themselves ‘Obi-dients.’”

The above scenario captured how the Obidient movement was birthed. The people rose with one voice, insisting that they were not just followers of Peter Obi but advocates of a better Nigeria. They see Obi’s candidacy as an instrument to actualise their political objective. In more direct terms, "Obidient" is a term that has emerged in the context of the 2023 Nigerian presidential election to refer to supporters of Peter Obi, one of the candidates that contested for the 2023 Nigerian presidency. The term is a portmanteau of "Obi" and "Obedients," and it has gained popularity on social media platforms as a way for supporters of Peter Obi to identify themselves and rally behind their candidate.

The Obidients see themselves as table-shakers, history-makers and revolutionaries. Their support is to see change in authority. They do not want to hear anyone else except Peter Obi. How Obi was able to capture the imagination and devotion of Nigerian youth to that extent still leaves so much to wonder. The way they went about spreading his message of “hope” all over the social media makes one to wonder the motivating spirit behind their actions. They portray Peter Obi as a shining star to social media netizens both in Nigeria and diaspora. The consistency of these messages appeared to have sunk into many Nigerians social media users, who in turn joined the movement and massively campaigned for Peter Obi in the presidential election. On this premise, this study textually analysed social media netizens response to the 2023 “Obidient” campaigns in Nigeria

### **Statement of the Problem**

The enthusiasm of many Nigerians towards Peter Obi’s presidential ambition is one that has defied logical reason and expectation, given the conservative political atmosphere which is allergic to radical change. The way the movement transited from social media phenomenon to physical reality in the 2023 Nigerian presidential election, raises interest. Many still wonder how the youth that used to be apathetic about Nigerian politics, have suddenly become politically active; engaging in all sorts of selfless campaigns to project Peter Obi’s Candidacy. Some of the supporters have taken it upon themselves to produce contents, which they used in influencing electorates to vote for Obi.

Some obidients had even gone to the extent of showcasing his credentials. Others went beyond that to source for prophetic clips that gave vivid descriptions of a positive revolution in the country to be spearheaded by him. These content are constantly being circulated on social media, particularly, Facebook to reach more people and win over more converts. Besides, these activities on Social media, many Obidients have equally taken it upon themselves to sponsor different events in order to advance his presidential bid. The celebrities among them have continued to mobilise their teeming fans to support the movement.

Recall that before the official commencement of the campaigns, Obidients came out in full force to demonstrate their supports in the mass rallies that swept across the country between September and October 2022. Most of the participants were not even members of Labour Party. The intriguing thing about it was that the exercise was selflessly sponsored by the people. The demonstrations of these gestures are reflective of the people’s determination to bring Peter Obi’s presidential aspiration into fruition. This has got many people thinking as to the spirit behind the movement. This study therefore, seeks to explore how social media have been used to project the obidient movement. Researches such as Egubefu & Nwaoboli (2023), Kasirye (2021) and Kumar & Natarajan (2016) on the role of social media for political campaigns exist. However, to the best

of the researchers knowledge, none has been done with respect to “Obidient” campaigns on social media using textual analysis. This study, therefore, attempts to fill this gap in knowledge.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study were to:

1. find out the extent to which social media was used in campaigning for Peter Obi;
2. find out the slant of social media netizens response to the 2023 Obidient campaigns;
2. examine the impact of social media netizens response to the 2023 Obidient campaigns.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Social Media**

The concept of "Social media" refers to the utilisation of internet-based technologies that enable interactive communication and dialogue (Nwaoboli, 2022; Nwaoboli & Asemah, 2021). According to Olise's (2014) definition, social media refers to the utilisation of web 2.0 technologies for online communication, which allows users to engage in downloading, uploading, interacting, and collaborating with each other, irrespective of their geographical location and time.

According to Nwaoboli, Ezeji & Osife-Kurex (2022), Pavlik & Melcntosh (2011) perceive social media as a means of generating or collaborating on value through the utilisation of technology and social interaction. Based on the preceding information, social media can be defined as a type of electronic communication that facilitates the creation of virtual communities for the purpose of sharing information, ideas, personal messages, and other related contents. Various types of social media exist and some including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and WhatsApp, are utilised by individuals to establish virtual communities for the purpose of exchanging information, concepts, and personal messages (Nwaoboli, Ezeji & Osife-Kurex, 2022).

The term "Obidient" refers to the fervent followers of Peter Obi. It is a collective of individuals who subscribe to the philosophical tenets espoused by Peter Obi and express a strong desire for his ascension to the presidency. The Obidient campaigns were designed with the aim of securing victory in the 2023 Nigerian presidential election and putting an end to political rascality in Nigeria. The primary objective of these campaigns is to ensure that the most competent leaders are elected to positions of power and the campaigns were an opposition to the prevalent practises of patronage and god fatherism in the Nigerian political landscape, which have persisted for a considerable period of time.

From the period preceding the 2023 presidential campaign to the present time, social media platforms, notably Facebook, have been inundated with political campaigns aimed at influencing the voting decisions of the electorate. The political engagement of numerous Nigerians who had previously abstained from partisan politics has been stimulated by repeated exposure to political campaigns on social media, resulting in a significant increase in the political influence of Peter Obi. The movement has gained increased recognition in Nigeria as well as Diaspora communities.

### **Literature Review**

The progress in computing technology has enabled significant advancements in communication tools and corresponding communication patterns. The utilisation of social media has evolved beyond casual daily interactions to encompass political discourse (Nwaoboli & Ajibulu, 2023). Although certain individuals in society utilise social media platforms for political discourse, the majority of politicians employ these platforms as campaign channels to uphold their public image and foster continued interaction with their constituents. Hence, it is unsurprising that contemporary social media platforms are replete with political campaigns and discussions. The employment of social media, specifically Facebook, as a tool for political campaigns during the

2015 and 2019 general elections in Nigeria was observed to be a prevalent and forceful strategy employed by diverse political parties in their bid to solicit for electoral support.

According to Vonderschmitt (2012), the proliferation of social media platforms has resulted in a significant increase in the number of users, thereby providing politicians with a viable means of communicating with their constituents. During the 2008 United States Presidential Election, Barack Obama utilised social media platforms to effectively engage and empower his volunteers, resulting in a substantial amount of online fund raising totaling millions of dollars. The aforementioned political campaign achieved an unprecedented level of success by employing a novel approach, which evidently translated into tangible electoral support.

Vonderschmitt (2012) emphasised that while online campaigns hold significant importance, the significance of face-to-face interaction cannot be overlooked as it contributes to the effectiveness of a campaign. Therefore, the utilisation of social media has become an essential component for any political campaign or candidate to incorporate in their electoral strategy.

Facebook is one of the predominant platforms utilised for online political discourse (Nwaoboli & Ajibulu, 2023). Egbulefu & Nwaoboli (2023) observed that a positive correlation between the utilisation of social networking platforms, such as Facebook, and engagement in civic activities exist. The utilisation of social media has prompted numerous political actors to shift their focus towards this platform as a means of garnering public support and approval. Consequently, social media platforms have become essential components in political discourse within contemporary society. Political campaigns have been enhanced in terms of efficiency and politicians have been able to establish closer connections with their electorates through consistent engagement.

One notable aspect of social media campaigns is their capacity to occur in diverse locations, at any given moment, and with varying objectives. Research has indicated that the correlation between utilisation of the internet and political involvement is contingent upon the specific manner in which the internet is employed (Egbulefu & Nwaoboli, 2023). According to the research conducted by Zuniga, Bachmann, and Brundidge (2013) as cited in Dimitova and Matthes (2018), it has been found that online and offline political participation is facilitated only through expressive usage of social media, whereas consumptive usage does not contribute to the same. This discovery is consistent with the hypothesis that the Obidient campaign movement has resulted in the conversion of a significant number of supporters who were consistently and actively involved. Dimitova and Matthes (2018) have shown through their research that engaging in active social media use has a positive impact on caucus participation, whereas passive use has a negative impact. Dimitova and Matthes (2018) identified several factors that may contribute to the likelihood of social media effects. These include the inherent characteristics of the medium, the particular characteristics and predispositions of the audience (such as age, political interest, campaign involvement, and other psychological factors), and the broader political campaign context. According to Dimitova and Matthes (2018), the impact of social media on political communication and its influence on the public is not easily discernible, despite its evident significance.

The study conducted by Okeke, Chinonye, and Obi (2016) investigated the utilisation of social media as a political platform in Nigeria, with a particular emphasis on the electorates in the southeastern region. The objective was to ascertain the degree of participation by young individuals in social media platforms for the purpose of engaging in electoral activities. The research was grounded in the theoretical underpinnings of Technological Determinism and Social Judgement Theory, which posit that individuals' exposure to political campaigns may lead them to conflate their affective responses with their attitudes towards the issues at hand. The data that was

produced underwent analysis through the utilisation of frequency distribution and basic percentage calculations. The results of the study suggest that the utilisation of new media in political campaigns had a noteworthy impact on the decision-making process and level of participation of the electorate in Nigerian elections. The research recommended that political campaigns should incorporate social media platforms to enable voters to engage in interactive communication with political candidates, thereby increasing the likelihood of successful outcomes.

Kasirye (2021) examined the utilisation of social media as a tool for political communication and its potential influence on political polarisation among the youth demographic in Uganda. The objective of the research was to investigate the utilisation of social media as a means of political communication and its influence on the political polarisation of the younger generation in Uganda. It employed the Uses and Gratifications theory as a theoretical framework to provide guidance for the study. It adopted a quantitative research design and utilised survey method with questionnaire as the primary instrument for data gathering. The study's results indicated that Ugandan youth frequently utilise social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram to acquire political information, which aids in their decision-making process regarding which candidate to endorse during elections.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Framing Theory**

Ervin Goffman introduced the concept of framing theory in 1974. Goffman posits that the theory is presented as a means for individuals to make sense of their surroundings. The concept of framing pertains to the manner in which media gate keepers structure and showcase concepts and occurrences (Ajibulu & Nwaoboli, 2023). The concept of framing, as a theoretical construct, pertains to the manner in which the media formulates and delivers information to the general populace. According to Nwaoboli & Ajibulu (2023), the framing theory posits that the manner in which information is presented to an audience has a significant impact on the decision-making process of individuals with respect to how they process such information.

The theory opined that the media selectively emphasises specific occurrences and subsequently situates them within a specific framework to either promote or discourage particular interpretations. The media exerts a discerning impact on individuals' perceptions of reality. The theory of framing involves the selective highlighting of particular events, followed by their contextualisation within a distinct framework of interpretation. Communicators employ this technique to persuade the audience to adopt a particular belief or viewpoint. The text elucidates on how the media strategically presents specific content to induce a cognitive shift in the thought processes of its viewership. The phenomenon of media manipulation, wherein a message is deliberately presented in a particular manner to elicit a predetermined response from the audience, is prevalent in contemporary society.

The present study is aligned with this theoretical perspective as it offers a conceptual framework for comprehending how the supporters of Peter Obi, commonly referred to as "Obidients," have effectively employed social media to "frame" positive messages about Peter Obi, with the aim of influencing the attitudes and actions of their target audience. The platforms were utilised to portray him as a trustworthy and competent individual, thereby establishing his credibility and worthiness in the eyes of the public for the betterment of the nation.

### **Methodology**

The researcher used qualitative textual analysis as methodology. The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted to get samples for the study. In the first stage, the purposive sampling technique was used to select Facebook as the social media platform to study because it is the social

medium with the highest users. In the second stage, a search for the term “Peter Obi supporters” on January 23, 2022, came up with about 120 stories of Peter Obi from Facebook pages and groups. From the posts, the researcher purposively selected a group titled “Obidient Support Network.” This was because the group features high volume of posts by Peter Obi’s supporters concerning his presidential ambition. In the third stage, on the group (Obidient Support Network) a search for Peter Obi was done. The search showed about 1,112 posts related to Peter Obi, out of which 405 were made between September, 2022 and January, 2023.

In the fourth stage, the researcher randomly selected 20 posts out of the 405 made between September, 2022 and January, 2023. The researcher chose to study from September to January because it was the heat of the Obidient campaign movement. In the fifth stage, the comments were thematised and analysed under three categories which are: administrative competence, optimism and trust.

Administrative competence refers to the responses that showed Peter Obi to effectively manage and coordinate resources, people, and processes to take Nigeria from a consuming nation to a producing one. It also relates to comments that resonates Peter Obi’s expertise and leadership skills with his target audience. Conversely, optimism refers to a positive and hopeful outlook on the future of Nigeria’s political landscape under Peter Obi’s administration, while trust refers to belief in the reliability and dependability of Obi if elected the president of Nigeria.

## Data Presentation

### Administrative Competence

#### Excerpt Text 1:



**Uyi Osunde**

Your capacity to deliver in all ramifications is not in doubt by Nigerian electorates.

That’s why there’s a general conscientious to vote OBIDATTI by all lovers of good among Nigerians.

#### Excerpt Text 2:

*Very composed, full of energy, ideas and above all ready to serve. It is time to give competent people chance to drive Nigeria to the promise land. (Japheth Ebute)*

#### Excerpt Text 3:



**Kc Eyisi**

You're indeed a leader and we need you seriously at this time. Ride on, God is your strength.

#### Excerpt Text 4:

*I trust your ability president in-waiting. You have the academic and intellectual proficiencies to enter any agora and survive (Jasper Tweh)*

#### Excerpt Text 5:



**Emmanuel Aleje**  
**Your mission and vision is cleared, go ahead straight to Aso Rock and perform your God sent duties and let Nigerians start feeling the impact**

**Excerpt Text 6:**

*What more can we say? Obi has really proven that he is the most qualified (OkechiIdika)*

**Excerpt Text 7**



**Shehu Gazali Sadiq**  
@Shehusky

Peter Obi is the content of the 2023 election. Remove him and the election campaign will be boring. If we elect Peter Obi as president in 2023, he will become the content of Nigeria from where citizens will draw inspiration and patriotism.

**Excerpt Text 8**

*I have travelled to more than 20 countries and I am yet to see any replica of Peter Obi both in versatility and humility(Cletus Ague)*

Excerpts 1 to 9 suggest that social media netizens hold a positive belief regarding Peter Obi's administrative competence. Excerpts 4, 6, and 8 specifically mention Peter Obi as being highly competent and qualified, while Excerpt 2 suggests the need to give competent people like him a chance to lead Nigeria.

**Optimism**

**Excerpt Text 9**



**Excerpt Text 10**





**Goodluck Assurance**  
A new Nigeria is possible for Mr Peter Obi as president of Nigeria, Nigeria must be good again, we Move

**Excerpt Text 11**

*Nigerians are tired of darkness. Obi's introduction is a hope for light and glamour to Nigerians (Cletus Ague).*

**Excerpt Text 12:**

*After going through his manifesto, I shed tears because I now believe there is still hope for Nigeria (EngrPman)*

**Excerpt Text 13:**

*Obi is the man that will unite this country! He neither belong to the left nor right. He is a product of Nigerians and Nigerians will he serve! (Harrison Madubueze)*

**Excerpt Text 14:**

*Each time I see these men (Obi and Datti), a glimpse of hope spikes up in me as a Nigeria (UcheEkenechi)*

**Excerpt Text 15:**

*Obi is a symbol of hope for new Nigeria*

**Excerpt Text 16:**

*God has remembered Nigeria by miraculously raising Mr Peter Obi and Dr Datti (Onyemaechi Odo)*

Excerpts 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 all express positive sentiments regarding Obi, describing him as a symbol of hope and a source of optimism for Nigeria's future. Excerpt 11 specifically mentions his potential to bring "light and glamour" to the country, while Excerpt 12 expresses the idea that his manifesto offers hope for the future. Excerpt 13 emphasizes Obi's ability to unite the country and serve all Nigerians, while Excerpt 14 suggests that simply seeing Obi and another individual (Datti) inspires hope in the speaker. Excerpt 15 describes Obi as a symbol of hope, and Excerpt 16 suggests that his rise to prominence is a miraculous event.

**Trust**

**Excerpt Text 17:**



Top fan  
**Chioma Opara**  
I have never voted in my life of 50 plus. But because of you, I and my family members have gotten our PVC. You are the next president of the federal republic of Naira, come 2023.

**Excerpt Text 18:**



Top fan  
**Daniels Chidi**  
You are the kind of president we want; a very resourceful and assessible president.

**Excerpt Text 19:**

*A man of culture and tradition. Genuine respect to traditional rulers. No semblance of faking or feigning respect to win the endorsement or blessing of the royal fathers (Uchegbeu Remy)*

**Excerpt Text 20:**

*The battle to salvage Nigeria from ancestors with expired brains and minds is a battle of no retreat no surrender. Enough of the retrogression and stagnation. Enough of corruption occasioned with impunity and administrative malady. Obi to the World (Godwin Oloche)*

Excerpt 17, 18 and 19 suggest that social media users view Peter Obi as a symbol of hope and optimism for Nigeria's future. They express a belief in his ability to bring positive change to the country, and some specifically mention his administrative competence and qualifications. There is also an emphasis on his ability to unite the country and show respect for traditional culture and rulers. While the concept of trust is not central to the presented data, there is an overall positive sentiment towards Peter Obi and a belief in his potential to bring positive change to Nigeria.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this exercise showed that many Peter Obi supporters (pro-obidients) massively use the social media to portray Peter Obi as a competent administrator that has the capacity to transform Nigeria. As a consequence, the messages that they spread on social media attracted a lot of sympathizers and supporters to join the fold. This finding aligns with the assumption of Framing theory which suggests that “how message is presented to the audience influences the choice they make about how to process that information.” This also aligns with the findings of Zuniga, Bachmann and Brundidge (2013) in Dimitova and Matthes (2018) expressive uses of social media ensures online and offline political participation. Also, a preponderance of the respondents showcased Peter Obi, as a capable man that Nigerians cannot afford to gamble with in the race for 2023 presidential election. They see his contestation as an opportunity to enthrone competence and sanity into the Nigerian number one position. An excerpt is captured in the post by *Japheth Ebute*, who described him as a man full of energy and ideas, capable of driving Nigeria to the promise land. Similarly, *Shehu Sadiq*, had this to say about him: “Peter Obi is the content of the 2023 election. If we elect Peter Obi as president in 2023, he will become the content of Nigeria from where citizens will draw inspiration and patriotism.” By implication, *Sadiq* did not only portray Peter Obi as a competent man but also a symbol of unity and patriotism who can restore the dignity of Nigeria. He went further to say that his emergence, which is built on the people’s strength will inspire Nigerians to become patriotic citizens.

The findings also gave a clear indication of hope to Nigerians by reason of Peter Obi. His supporters and sympathisers see his contestation as the only hope to redeem the country from those they perceived as power brokers, who had held down the country for years. To some, the sight of Obi brings a glimmer of hope for the country. Some have even attributed his emergence at this particular time as God’s providence. Hence, they are calling on all Nigerians to support him for a better country. This is captured in the words of *Onyemaechi Odo*, who said, “God has remembered Nigeria by miraculously raising Mr Peter Obi and Dr. Datti. This text and many others speak volume of their level of hope in Peter Obi.

The findings also revealed that the Obidients have a great deal of trust in Peter Obi and this, in turn; drive their campaign messages to social medianetizens, who were not part pro-obident. The findings agree with the studies of Asemah & Nwaoboli (2022), Asemah, Nwaoboli & Beli (2022) and Asemah, Nwaoboli & Nwoko (2022) which show that social media messages can lead people to trust or hate individuals and ideals and this also agrees with Ervin Goffman’s theory.

Another finding of the study is Peter Obi's credibility in comparison to other contenders such as Tinubu and Atiku, who the people have often described as "corrupt", and cannot be trusted by Nigerian people for the seat of presidency.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concludes that there is positive slant on the social media response to Obidient campaigns in the 2023 election. The study also concludes that the extent to which social media were used to campaign for Peter Obi was massive. This is evident in the way in the way the campaign was widely spread on social media and the amount of influence it commanded, considering the increasing numbers of Obidients. Thus, the usefulness of social media in the success of the campaign cannot be underplayed as evident in the multiplication of the Obidients on social media and on the ground. The Obidients were able to drive the key messages (administrative competence, trust and optimism) to influence others to join the fold. The strategic presentation of these key messages led to more "converts." Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. Since the key messages (administrative competence, trust and optimism) have proven to be the area of focus and tools of influence, the Obidients should consolidate on this to reach out to as many as possible. In other words, they should intensify efforts to replicate these "aggressive" campaigns outside social media, particularly in the rural area where there is low internet penetration, and given the fact that the bulk of votes usually come from rural and semi-rural areas.
2. Considering the positive influence of the campaign on the political consciousness of the youth, it is recommended that youth should sustain this political activism to gain political relevance and combat their age long exclusion in the political system. They should also shun every act of cyber-bully that could scare away the anti-Obidients from supporting their course.
3. Politicians should adopt social media as instrument to boost their political campaigns and public acceptance.

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