



*Research Article*

## **Billboard Political Advertisements and Voters' Behaviour During the February 25, 2023, Presidential Election in Nigeria**

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### **About Article**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Political advertising is an integral part of the political process in every democracy. In this, the political actors employ various media to reach and influence the voters. One of the methods they use is billboards which announce their participation in the electoral process. In doing this, the electorate remains the target. This work sets out to ascertain if the electorate in Anambra state were exposed to billboard advertisements during the 2023 presidential election in Nigeria; if billboard advertisements have significant effect on their voting pattern and if there are other factors that influence their voting behaviour. The study was anchored on the Agenda Setting theory and adopted the survey research design. Out of a population of 2.5 million registered voters in Anambra State, a sample of 400 was selected using the Taro Yamani formulae for sample size selection. The area of study is the three major towns in Anambra state (Awka, Onitsha and Nnewi) purposively selected to represent each of the three senatorial zones in the state. The finding showed that the electorate was exposed to billboard advertisements during the presidential election and the billboards played a major part in influencing their behaviour during the election since it introduces the candidates to the electorate. The respondents however stated that apart from billboards, there are other factors that influenced voting behaviour. These include political affiliation, campaign promises and ethnic or religious affiliations. Based on these findings, the researcher recommends an admixture of different campaign methods to address other issues which billboards cannot handle. The use of different media genres should also be adopted to appeal to different segments of the society.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Politics has its root from the Greek word, 'politika', which means "affairs of many", or "affairs of the city" (Nnoli, 1980 p. 25). In its modern-day usage, politics has been defined differently by different authors. Wayne (1980, p. 68) defines politics as "social relations involving intrigues to gain authority or power".

Politics involves relationships and contestation for power, which cannot be achieved without communication. The centrality of communication in politics informs the advertising (or commercial) deluge that now defines modern day political campaigns across the globe. Thus, Moemeka (1992, p. viii) states that: "modern politics is incomplete without advertising". Corroborating the above statement, Oyorbaire (1992, p. iii) said advertising and public relations have found an amiable and symbolic host in politics. According to them, modern political campaigns are marketing, advertising and public relations all rolled out in one just to get the attention of the electorate and influence their voting decision.

According to McNair (2011), cited in Agbanu (2013),

Political advertising is a form of political communication where the political actors use mass media to differentiate political products (parties and candidates) and give them meaning for the consumers  
...in a crowded marketplace.

Political advertising has become part of the political culture of modern democracies. The avalanche of political advertising during political campaigns are targeted at buyers (the electorate) with a view to persuading them (buyers) to accept their products (parties and candidates) over the competing brands - opposing political parties and candidates. In line with this allusion, Kenski, Hardy and Jamieson (2010, p. 267), after a study of Obama's political campaign said that:

The Obama victory confirms that Obama's ability to greatly outspend McCain for television political advertising in battleground states, as well as nationally was significant.

We find that weeks in which Obama outspent McCain on national ads are significantly related to an Obama's vote if the election were held today. Specifically, in battleground states, the research determined Obama's ability to put far more advertising on the air all but destroyed McCain's hope for victory.

Confessing to the potency of Obama's political advertising deluge, Brookes (2011, p. 175) notes that Obama's advertising did not necessarily win him the election, but, at the least, it may well have been decisive in traditionally Republican leading states like Indiana, North Carolina, Florida and Virginia where the spending advantage was large and the vote tally was close.

Importantly, the above research has shown that political advertising is even more effective in political campaigns. In electioneering campaigns, voters may be influenced by advertising and other Integrated Marketing Communication strategies (IMC). McKinnon (the man who made advertisements for George W. Bush in 2000 and 2004 and worked for McCain in the 2008 primaries), in Steinhom (2010, p. 154) says:

If candidates have the money to advertise in a contest, it can be a very powerful force for electoral success... it (adverts) is necessary for political survival as much as it is for commercial advertisers like Coca-Cola.

In politics, as in advertising, Nigeria seems to have adopted the United States of America, as a model. Significantly, the American admiration for the marriage of advertising and politics is now evident in Nigeria. The promises of advertising and marketing communications in the management of political campaigns are enormous: Voters need to be properly educated; politicians, on their part, need to be tutored to carry on properly before they can be packaged to meet the expectations of their salient publics. The key to all this is effective communication through advertising.

Evidently, political campaigns connote as much communication as marketing. In the final analysis, the campaign manager's objective is to "sell" the subject (politicians) as the best solution to some felt deficiencies and problems. The logical conclusion following from this thought process is that a political party, if it is to be effective and successful, should operate like a business or a company. Thus, with every successive electioneering campaign in Nigeria, more and improved use of political advertising are witnessed. Umar (2000) explains that politicians engage the service of different advertising agencies, reiterating that, as a matter of fact, people champion the need for better leadership and express these needs in form of advertising and manifestoes, conferences, rallies from ward to ward, billboard, writings, granting and publishing interviews among others. The essence of political advertising is not for the buyers - the electorates- to just come and buy the product, but to appeal to their emotions, to win their votes. However, unlike commercial products, they do not have to buy the candidates, but come out to cast their votes for them, to top in the election and this is only done by eligible voters within the constituency as political advertising is not targeted at everyone, but those eligible to vote. Koga (2006, p. 37) notes that:

In politics, the market is likewise a group of people who share a common interest, need or desire, which may be satisfied by the election of political candidate. However, unlike commercial products, they do not have to afford them. A political market is composed of those in the candidate's district of influence, who are eligible to vote, those people are called constituency voters.

Nigeria witnessed an unprecedented increase in the number and style of political advertising in the last national and state elections held in 2023. Most of the political parties in the country mounted one form of political advertising or the other, to bring to the attention of the voters, the parties' political philosophy (manifesto) as well as the parties' contestants for the various elective offices in the country. Many political office seekers also used political advertising to market themselves to

prospective voters. Several media of political advertising were employed during the electioneering campaigns. Most notable of these media include radio, television, internet, newspapers, magazines, billboards, posters and others. Political parties and their flag bearers used these media, particularly billboards, to their advantage in a bid to outwit one another in elections.

Looking at the huge sums of money involved in advertising, especially billboard advertising, and the way politicians engage in such practice, people are bound to ask the following questions: Does advertising truly influence the electorates to vote for the advertised candidate? Is advertising part of the success story of those who win elective positions in elections? Are the huge sums of money voted into advertising justifiable? Can we truly ascribe electoral victory to effective or intensive advertising campaign? Is advertising a sole factor in determining electoral victory? Or is it a contributory factor to electoral success? To find answers to some of these questions, this study aims at evaluating the influence of billboard political advertising in electioneering campaigns with a special reference to the "February 25, 2023 presidential election in Nigeria.

### **1.0 Statement of Research Problem**

Politics in different parts of the world is business, and the players employ different strategies to outwit their opponents and gain the endorsement of the people. Like marketers, they advertise both themselves (the candidates) and the political parties on which platform they seek elective positions. This, they do through different media of Mass Communication including billboards. In Nigeria for instance, billboard political advertisement has gained a pride of place during elections that at times, it is what announces the interest of a candidate in a particular election. Then, the question is: were the voters exposed to billboard political advertisements during the February 25, 2023, presidential election in Nigeria? If they did, how was it able to influence their behaviour during the election? And, what are the other factors that influenced their voting decision during the election?

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The primary objective of the study is to ascertain the uses of Billboard political advertisement in electioneering campaigns during the February 25,

2023, presidential election in Nigeria. The specific objectives are as follows: to find out if the electorate (respondents) were exposed to billboard political advertisement, to ascertain the difference in the perception of male and female respondents on the influence of billboard political advertisement on voter's decision, to ascertain whether billboard political advertising had significant influence on voter's turn out during elections, to ascertain if billboard political advertisement influenced respondents' voting decision and to ascertain if there are other factors that influence voters apart from billboard political advertisements. Corresponding research questions were formulated to guide the study. And, based on the objectives and research question, the following null hypotheses were formulated for testing.

$H_{01}$ : Billboard political advertisement did not significantly influence voters' turnout during February 25, 2023, presidential election.

$H_{02}$ : Billboard Political advertisement did not significantly influence respondents' voting decision during the February 25, 2023, presidential election.

## 2.1 Scope of the Study

There are so many media of political advertising. Among them are fliers, radio, television, newspapers, magazines, rallies etc. This study is limited to billboards as one of the media of political advertising. Also, the study is limited to the electorates (voters) registered with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Anambra State. The study was also limited to February 25, 2023, presidential election in the state. The reason for the choice of the state is to have small but sufficient data that can be suitable and effectively managed within the time frame for the study. Another reason for the choice of the state is convenience. The researcher is from the state and familiar with the environment. The researcher also focused on three of the major political parties that contested the election. These are the All Progressive Congress; represented by Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu; the People's Democratic Party represented by Alhaji Atiku Abubakar and the Labour Party represented by Mr Peter Obi.

## 3.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the Agenda-setting theory. Agbanu (2013, p. 56) writes that the history of Agenda-Setting theory is traced back to McCombs and Shaw who while proposing the theory in 1976 argued that:

Audience not only learn about public issues and other matters through the media, but they also learn how much importance to attach to an issue or topic from the emphasis the mass media place upon it. ... this ability to affect cognitive change among individuals is one of the most important aspects of the power of mass communication.

Also, Ikachoi (2012, p.260) further states that McCombs and Shaw argue that:

They studied agenda-setting and hypothesized that the mass media set the agenda for each political campaign, influencing the salience of attitudes towards the political issues. They conducted their study by focusing on undecided votes in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, because "undecided" should be the most susceptible to agenda-setting effects.

The study above proved that the media primarily shape the way the public votes during elections. The agenda setting theory is therefore one of the theories of mass media effects or influence. The theory is concerned with the ability of the media to select and emphasize certain issues or topics such that the issues or topics, so emphasized are enabled to assume some form of importance to the public. The basic premise of the theory, according to Ugande (2009), is that increased salience of the topic or issue among the public implies that there is correlation between the importance journalists or the news media give to their stories and the importance the public attaches to such stories.

McCombs and Shaw (1972 in McQuail & Windahl, 1986, p. 62) aver that the audience not only learns



about public issues and other matters through the media but also learn importance to issue or topic from the emphasis the mass media place on it. By the use of billboard advertising the media introduce the candidates to the people thereby setting agenda. Agendasetting theory has, therefore, clearly demonstrated the media influence on the audience. The press tells people what they should think about and what issues are important enough to require attention.

In fact, the press is supposed to set the agenda for public discourse on public office seekers, as well as educate the electorates on the available political options. By so-doing, their expected role in achieving the goals of voters' empowerment and adequate political participation is achieved. In all democracy politicians use the billboard to set agenda, to announce the entrance of a candidate not the political ring. By so doing, they place such participation in the front burner for public discussion which will later determine how people will vote after the campaign period.

#### 4.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the survey research design for the primary reason that "survey attempts to describe and explain why situations exist; it examines the interrelationships among variables and develops explanatory inferences" (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011, p. 185). Again, survey research method was adopted because, according to Keyton (2001, p. 169), it is probably the most used methodological tool and can be used in gathering information about almost any communication concept or topic. Problems can be investigated in realistic settings with survey, as observed by Wimmer and Dominick (2011, p. 185).

The area of study is Anambra State of Nigeria. The state is one of the five states in the Southeast geopolitical zones in Nigeria. It is bounded by Kogi

and Enugu State on the Northern axis; Delta in the Western axis; and Imo State on the Southern axis. Furthermore, it has twenty-one (21) Local Government Areas, which are in three senatorial districts. Only the registered voters (electorates) in the state were studied. The population of this study comprised 2,536,156 registered voters in Anambra State (INEC, 2023).

A sample size of 400 voters was drawn for the study. This sample was arrived at, using the Taro Yameni's formula. The proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to draw up the sample of 400. This type of sampling technique has the population divided into strata according to the variables of interest in the study. Elements are then drawn randomly from each stratum in such a way that the relative populations of the strata in the resultant sample are the same as exist in the parent population. The relative contribution of each stratum in the population is exactly its relative contribution in the sample. The purposive sampling technique was used to identify only registered voters who participated in the study.

However, in this study, the population was stratified from three local government areas- one from each of the three senatorial districts -Onitsha town for Onitsha North local government, Awka town for Awka South local government and Nnewi town for Nnewi North local government. The three local governments represent the three senatorial zones in the state.

The reasons for the choice of the three Local Government Area are that they are the three major urban centres in the state, they have more concentration of economic and political activities than any other Local Government area in the state. The three local governments purposively (judgmentally) selected are Onitsha North, Nnewi North and Awka South. Population of the LGA's and their corresponding sample size

Local Govt. Areas	Population	Sample size
Onitsha	121,332	140
Awka	113,322	130
Nnewi	113,111	130
<b>Total</b>	<b>347,765</b>	<b>400</b>

The sample sizes are approximated to obtain round numbers since one cannot have fragmented human beings. To obtain a representative sample among the different types of voters available in the area of study, the same proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used in each LGA. The instrument used for data collection for this study is the questionnaire. The questionnaire drafted and presented in this work has Nineteen (19) items, constructed in multi-choice, closed-ended, and open-ended formats.

The questionnaire was administered in the three LGA simultaneously with the help of a research assistant, who was trained for this purpose. The researcher made sure the respondents completed the questionnaire and returns it on the spot. But where this was not possible, the researcher and the research assistant administered the questionnaire and returned to collect the completed questionnaire the following day. The data generated for the study are presented in frequency tables. That is, descriptive statistical methods were used in presenting the data. In that case, the frequency of occurrence as well as the percentages of each finding is presented using tables. The chi-square goodness of fit was used as an inferential statistical method for testing the research hypotheses.

#### 4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

The data generated from the study are hereby presented and analyzed. As stated earlier, the descriptive statistical tools were used in presenting the data, while inferential statistical tool (chi-square) was used in testing the formulated hypothesis. This is with a view to substantiating or otherwise disproving the research assumptions.

The research instrument (questionnaire) was distributed to 400 respondents in the three major cities of Onitsha, Awka and Nnewi. The table below shows the questionnaire distribution and retrieval pattern. Out of the 400 questionnaires distributed, a total of 368, representing 92%, was retrieved, while 32 questionnaires (8%) were not returned. Therefore, the subsequent analysis was based on the 368 questionnaires returned.

The responses relating to the research objectives/questions and hypotheses are presented and analyzed.

*Were you exposed to political billboards in Anambra state during the Feb. 25, 2023 presidential Election?*

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	368	100
No	00	00
Neutral	00	00
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100</b>

In the table above, all the respondents (100%) affirmed they were exposed to billboard advertising during the Feb. 25, 2023 presidential election. Another question, which sought to know if the respondents were able to identify three (3) leading political parties that participated in the election, received unanimous answer. All the respondents identified the All Progressive Congress (APC), The People's

Democratic Party (PDP) and The Labour Party (LP) as the three principal political parties that participated in the said election. Again, the respondents were able to recall the names of the flag bearers of the above political parties in the said election. The candidates identified by the respondents were: Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Atiku Abubakar and Peter Obi

*Did you cast your vote during the said election?*

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	368	100
No	00	00
Don't Know	00	00
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100</b>

Data in the table above indicates that 368 of the respondents representing 100% cast their votes during the said election. This shows that all the respondents who earlier said they were exposed to billboard advertising actively participated in the election.

Variable	Variable	Percentage
Yes	348	95
No	00	00
Don't Know	20	05
Total	368	100

Data in the table above indicates that 95% of the respondents (348) affirmed the APC, PDP and LP parties organized political rallies in Anambra state during the said election. Twenty of the respondents, representing five percent, said they did not know.

*Did APC, PDP, LP and their candidates organize political rallies in your state?*

*Were the billboards of the parties and their candidates available in the state during the presidential election?*

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	348	100
No	00	00
Not Aware	20	00
Total	368	100

As seen in the table above, 368 of the respondents representing 100 percent said the billboard of the candidates and the parties were visible in the state.

*Were the manifestoes of the candidates unveiled during the political rallies organized by the parties?*

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	220	60
No	66	18
Not Aware	82	22
Total	368	100

In the table above, 220 represents (60%) affirmed that the manifestos of the candidates were unveiled during their political rallies, while 66 respondents (18%) did not affirm. Eighty two respondents (22%) were not aware. Political rallies are one of the avenues through which political parties/candidates canvas for votes.

Often times, the parties/candidates unveil their manifestoes to tell the people the programmes they have for them if they are voted in.

*Were the Billboards of the Candidates visibly positioned during the electioneering campaign.*

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	326	89
No	12	3
Not Aware	30	8
Total	368	100

Data in the table indicates that 326 respondents representing 89 percent affirmed that the billboards of the candidates were visibly positioned during the February 25, 2023 presidential election in the state. A very insignificant proportion of the respondents

(3.26%) said "No" while eight per cent said they were not aware.

*Were the campaign themes and slogans in the billboards influence your voting decision?*

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	268	73
No	48	13
Don't Know	52	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100</b>

Data in the table reveal that 73% of the respondents; that is 268 agreed that the campaign themes and slogan in the billboards of the candidates influenced their voting decision, while 13% of the respondents, that is 48 of them, did not agree. Fifty-two respondents (14%) said they did not know. What this showed is that

billboard political advertisements influence voters' behaviour.

*Were you adequately educated and informed about the political parties and their candidates through the billboards?*

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	326	88
No	14	4
Don't Know	28	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100</b>

As represented in the table above, 326 of the respondents representing 88% said they were adequately educated and informed about the political parties and their candidates through billboards. Fourteen respondents representing 4% did not affirm

while 28 respondents representing 8% feigned ignorant.

*Did the campaign message in the billboards motivated you to come out and cast your votes?*

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	246	67
No	82	22
Don't know	40	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100</b>

In the table above, 246 respondents (67%) affirmed that they were significantly motivated to come out and cast their vote as a result of the appeals in the campaign billboards. Eighty two respondents (28%) did not affirm while 40 respondents (11%) said they

could not say.

*Was your decision to cast your vote to a candidate of your choice solely based on the campaign message of the candidate or on party affiliation*



Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Campaign Message	250	67.93
Party Affiliation	115	31.25
Don't know	03	00.81
Total	368	100

Data in table above reveal that 250 of the respondents representing 67.93 percent said their voting decision was as a result of the campaign messages. However, 115 of the respondents representing 31.25 percent said they did not anchor their voting decision based only on the campaign messages on the billboards but on party affiliation. Also, three of the respondents representing 00.81 percent could not decide.

#### 4.1.1 Test of Hypotheses

The two hypotheses formulated are hereby subjected to empirical test, using the chi-square statistical

method. This is done with a view to validating or otherwise disproving the research assumptions.

#### Test of Hypothesis One

$H_0$ : Billboard Political advertisement did not influence voter's turn out during the Feb.25, 2023, presidential election.

$H_1$ : Billboard political advertisement influenced voter's turn out during the Feb. 25, 2023 presidential election.

To test the above hypothesis, the researcher constructs a 3(3) contingency table as shown below:

**Contingency Table for  $H_1$**

Variables	CLUSTER OF RESPONDENTS			Row
	Onitsha North	Awka South	Nnewi North	Total
Yes	90	76	80	246
No	25	30	27	82
Don't know	15	12	13	40
Column Total	130	118	120	368

#### Operative Assumption:

iii. A level of significance ( $\alpha$ ) = 0.05

iv. Degree of freedom (df) = (C-1)(R-1)  
= (3-1)(3-1) = 4

**Conclusion:**

Since the calculated value (1.529) is greater than the critical value (0.711), the researcher therefore, reject  $H_0$  and conclude that billboard political advertisement influenced voter's turn out in the Feb. 25, 2023 election.

**Test of Hypothesis Two**

$H_0$ : Billboard Political advertisement did not

influence respondents' decision during the Feb. 25, 2023 presidential election.

$H_1$ : Billboard Political advertisement did influence respondents' decision during the Feb. 25, 2023 presidential election.

To test the above hypothesis, the researcher constructed a 3(3) contingency table as shown below:

*Contingency Table for  $H_2$*

Variables	CLUSTER OF RESPONDENTS			Row Total
	Onitsha	Awka	Nnewi	
Campaign Themes	90	76	80	246
Party Affiliation	25	30	27	82
Don't know	15	12	13	40
<b>Column Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>368</b>

**Operative Assumptions:**

- i. A level of significance ( $\alpha$ ) = 0.05
- ii. A degree of freedom (df) = 4

Since Chi square calculated (4.219) is greater than chi square critical value (0.711), the researcher therefore, reject  $H_0$  and conclude that billboard political advertisements influenced respondents' voting decision during the February 25, 2023 presidential election.

**5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Results obtained from this study reveal that billboards advertisement influenced voters' behaviour during the Feb. 25, 2023 presidential election. However, there are other factors that contribute to such behaviours. Again, these factors were optimally utilized by the All Progressives Congress (APC) and their candidate, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the Labour Party and its candidate, Mr Peter Obi and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and its candidate Alhaji Atiku Abubakar.

The two hypotheses formulated for this study gained empirical support. The research hypothesis, which states that billboard political advertising has a

significant influence on voting decision during election received empirical support ( $X^2_{cal} = 4.219 > X^2_{crt} = 0.711$ ). The issue of voting decision is in tandem with the concepts of "Framing" and primary (Ngoa, 2012, p. 12-14). According to Iyenga (1991) issues highlighted in political communication become the standard by which voters take decision about politicians and elective office seekers. The findings of the research hypothesis two, also corroborate study carried out by Edegoh Ezebuonyi and Asemah (2013, p. 383) on "Television as a medium of political advertising during elections in Anambra State, Nigeria", which finds as follows. "Political campaigns via television could influence respondents' preference for advertised candidates".

Second, the research hypothesis two, political advertising has a significant influence in political mobilization and sensitization, received empirical support. Our calculated  $X^2_{cal} = 2.244 > X^2_{crt} = 0.711$  at 0.05 level of significance and at 4 degree of

freedom. As a result, we accepted the alternate hypothesis and rejected the null. This finding is in agreement with the study by McCherney and Nicholas (2012) on the Bull Market: Political Advertising, which concludes that political advertising is a remarkable tool of political mobilization.

### Summary

This is a survey research study, which appraised the uses of billboard political advertising in electioneering campaigns - focusing on three political parties and their candidates. These are the All Progressive Congress (APC), the Labour Party(LP) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) during the 2023 presidential election. The study is premised on the background that electioneering campaigns, being period of interplay among political parties, candidates seeking elective posts and the electorates, orchestrated and integrated communication tools that will inextricably connect the key players, stimulate harmony and understanding among them. Further background to the study was an analogy drawn between core marketing and marketing in political scene, positioning that political candidates seeking elective posts are the "products", while the electorates are the prospective "buyers" in political marketing parlance. It is based on the foregoing that the study x-rayed the uses of billboard political advertising in electioneering campaign. Anchored on the Agenda-setting theory, the study aimed at ascertaining if billboard political advertising has a significant influence on voters turn-out; if it has a significant influence on voting decision; and if billboard political advertising has a significant influence in voters mobilization/sensitization during campaigns.

A sample of 400 respondents was drawn from a population of 2,5 million registered voters in Anambra State. A 19-item research questionnaire was administered to respondents in Onitsha, Awka and Nnewi. Results obtained were presented in simple frequency distribution tables, while the two hypotheses formulated were tested for significance, using the Chisquare goodness of fit method.

The findings reveal that billboard political advertising has a significant influence in voters' turn-out during elections. The findings further revealed that billboard political advertising has a significant influence in voting decisions during elections. Further still, the

findings reveal that billboard political advertising has a significant influence in political mobilization and sensitization.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

In democratic society, like Nigeria, integrated communication tools play indispensable role in the public sphere. In electioneering campaign, the role of communication in the public sphere is obviously much more spelt out. Perhaps, this could be as a result of the theory of social contract - the electorate on whose mandate the elected assume and maintains public office is expected to be provided with full, fair, balanced information that would affect their (electorate) decisions. The era of competitive marketing forces has provided further impetus for the need of information and/or communication in electioneering campaigns. There are many political parties as much as there are self-professing good candidates with wonderful ideologies in their manifestoes. Billboard political advertising tools are therefore the sure ways of creating a synergy among the political parties, the candidates, and the electorates.

## 6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the crucial role billboard political advertising play in electioneering campaigns, it is recommended as follows:

- Since billboard political advertising creates quick recall and persuasively generate in the electorate preference for the advertised candidates, political parties in Nigeria are advised to give due attention to the use of billboard political advertising in electioneering campaigns.
- There is also the need to do a follow up in the manner of advocacy to complement the messages in the billboard political advertising campaigns.
- Since billboards mainly introduce the candidates and create awareness, the candidates should follow this up by adding other advertising strategies that would help to influence the people.

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