



# Positive Agenda Nigeria

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

### **Osun 2022 Governorship Election Campaign Monitoring Report**

**Issue 7, June 25, 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 expires<sup>1</sup>. 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 2022<sup>2</sup>. 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 communities<sup>3</sup>. 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 are 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,

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

<sup>2</sup> 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/>.

<sup>3</sup> 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-electorates-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 the 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 seventh output and the third 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 22, 2022. On a surprising note, between June 9 and June 15 (the 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. 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 competences 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 competences 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 defending what were considered as negatives and/or not true about the personality traits, leadership styles and competences 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 of a particular policy or programme, citing 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 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 lack of competence of a candidate,

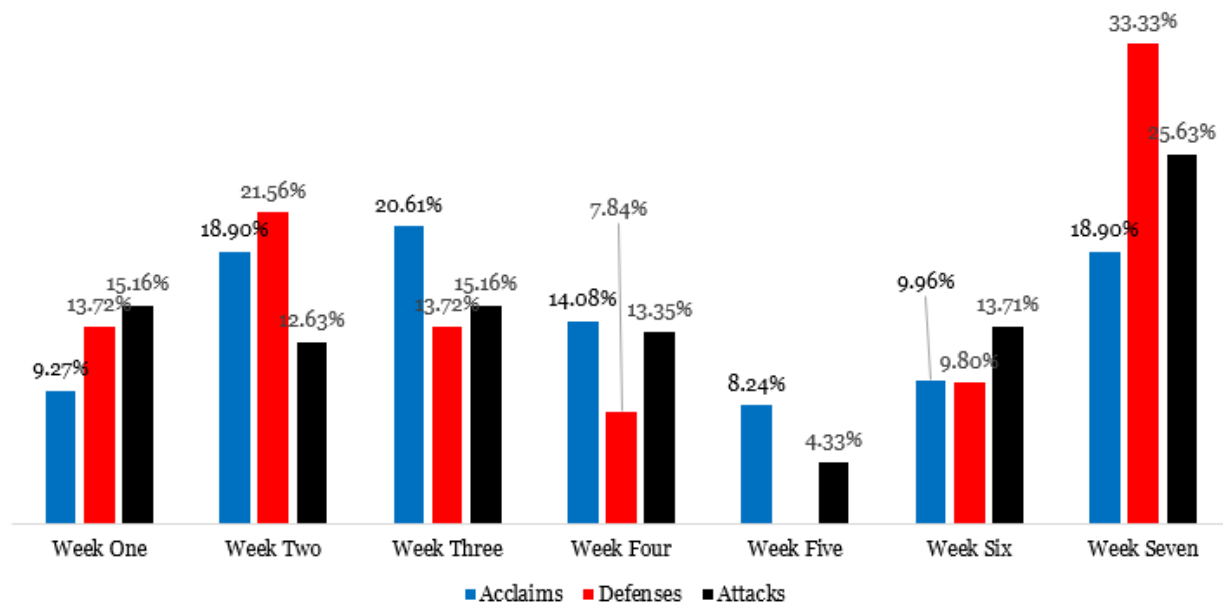
incomplete educational qualifications, and previous history of poor management of resources either in a private or public establishment. *Moderately intensive personality disparagement* was measured with the consideration of two of the three elements of *highly intensive personality disparagement* metric, 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 a main metric with a focus on vote buying, rigging through political thugs, rigging through collusion with 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 informed decision on July 16th, 2022.

Apart from 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 volume of searches normalised by the 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 seven-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 same messages across the media types we examined. This is mostly 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 polices 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

In week one, a total of 60 messages were found relevant for analysis. This represents 10.80% of the total messages collected from week one to week seven (n=589). Out of the total (n=589), 14.43% were found during week two while 15.61% and 13.75% were discovered for week three and four accordingly. The number of collected messages dropped significantly from 13.75% in week four to 7.80% in week five while it picked in week six based on the recorded 13.58%, which is relatively close to the number of messages gathered for week four. Our analysts note that the dwindling in the number of messages was as a result of presidential primary elections of the main political parties (APC and PDP) during the weeks. Meanwhile, analysis indicates that the conclusion of the primary elections ignited rapid increase in the number of relevant messages for week seven. A total of 145 messages were gathered for the week. This signifies 24.61% of 589 messages gathered between week one and week seven (see Exhibit 1). In terms of campaign strategy, a total of 619 traces of acclaims, defenses and attacks were found in the messages (n=589). Out of this number, 47.01% were acclaims while 44.74% and 8.23% were attacks and defenses respectively.

**Exhibit 1: Campaign strategies by week<sup>4</sup>**



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

<sup>4</sup> **Key:** Acclaims=291; Defenses =51; Attacks=277

Week-by-week analysis shows that defenses and attacks grew significantly while acclaims maintained irregular trend. From week one to week seven, defenses grew by 19.61%, while attacks increased by 10.47% during the same period. Between week one and two, acclaims increased by 9.63% and reduced during week three and four by 6.53%. It declined further between week five and six by 1.72% before picking between week six and seven by 9.10%.

### **Campaign issues and/or policies engagement**

From week one to week six, personality issues of the candidates, competence or lack of it of the candidates, assassination attempts or threats to life, vote buying among others were significantly discussed at the expense of informing potential voters the need to vote 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”. For this week, vote buying was also discussed but mainly in relation to possible electoral violence during the poll. On a surprising note, actors, especially those from the media teams of the political parties seriously sought votes for their candidates.

**Exhibit 2: Dominant Issues in the Other Category**



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

A number of them, under the other category, claimed victory prior to the election and discussed why actors should embrace violence free election. Our analysts also discovered that good governance, continuity of the incumbent and competence of the candidates as issues discussed under *other category* metric. Exhibit 3 contains link that exists among vote, buying and victory with each of the dominant issues. For instance, analysis shows that when collection of permanent voter card was discussed, it was done in connection with the reason people should vote their choice candidate as well as telling electorate not to sell their votes or political actors are trying to buy PVC from the electorate. Mainly, to the two main parties, according to the linkage in Exhibit 3, victory is certain on July 16, 2022.

**Exhibit 3: Interconnectivity of Dominant Issues in the Other Category**



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

Despite clamouring for victory using derogatory statements, actors believed that resisting violence is a must for all stakeholders (see Exhibit 3). This is clearly established with the data presented in Exhibit 4, where there was a high connection between discussing *resist violence and vote*. The Exhibit further establishes that actors from the ruling party within the other category metric predominantly expect electorate to vote their candidate (Alhaji Gboyega Oyetola) during the poll. It was also discovered that the actors believed that the



incumbent deserved to be reelected because of developmental programmes and activities he did in more than three years.

**Exhibit 4: Level of Variation of Dominant Themes**

<b>Theme 1</b>	<b>Theme 2</b>	<b>Level of Theme I in Theme 2</b>
Continuity	Election	93.72%
Resist Violence	Vote	71.09%
Development	Victory	65.41%
Leadership	Vote	63.40%
Billboard	Thuggery	58.33%
Inducement	Thuggery	58.33%
Election	Victory	56.81%
Death	Thuggery	56.25%
Buying	Vote	54.30%
Continuity	Victory	54.23%

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

According to the data presented in Exhibit 5, 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 76 and 199 messages gathered between week six and seven were mainly on unrelated topics. Nevertheless, our analysis reveals that between week six and week seven, workers' salary, welfare and employment, and infrastructure were discussed mostly. However, the actors were inconsistent in discussing them. In week six, 10.52% of 76 messages focused on discussing issues and needs within workers' salary, welfare and employment. It reduced to 7.03% in week seven. Alternative trend was noticed for the discussion of infrastructure. From 6.57% to 10.55%, the discussion of infrastructure grew relatively. This is also observed for economic issues and needs exploration by the actors. Like workers' salary, welfare and employment, the discussion of education by the actors dipped from 6.57% in week six to 6.53% in week seven. The discussion of health increased relatively from week six to week seven, our analysis reveals.

**Exhibit 5: Campaign and/or Policy Issues by week**

	Workers' Salary, Welfare and										Total
	Health	Education	Security	Infrastructure	Employment	Agriculture	Economy	Social Programmes	Others		
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	

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

Similar to the data presented in Exhibit 5, data in Exhibit 6 reveal the volume of information Osun residents sought about the campaign issues/and or needs. Across the weeks, analysis shows that Osun public sought information about road, education, salary, economy, employment, security and health. Week-by-week analysis reveals that in week one, the public had significant interest in road-- which is within the infrastructure category--, education and salary. The same week was used by the actors to discuss unrelated issues and/or needs, social programmes, agriculture and workers' salary, welfare and employment. This indicates a great mismatch between public interest and what the actors debated during the week because the actors only aligned with one of the issues that occupied the public minds. While security, employment and agriculture occupied public minds in week two, analysis shows that actors discussed unrelated issues, economy and infrastructure. With this outcome, our analysts note that the actors equally approached campaign issues engagement wrongly. Health, salary and economy were the areas in which the public sought information about in week three predominantly. During the same week, actors discussed others issues and/or needs, infrastructure and health. This result establishes that actors only aligned with one out of the three dominant areas that interested the public the most, indicating a significant point of divergence between the public and the actors. In week four, actors believed that unrelated issues and/or needs were important than social programmes, and workers' salary, welfare and employment. Whereas, the public preferred seeking information about agriculture, education and health. In this regard, our analysts concluded that the actors failed to key into the public line of interest during the week. Comparing week five of the actors with the week five of the public, our analysis reveals significant discussion of unrelated issues and/or needs by the actors, while the public actually had interest mostly in road (that is in one of the

infrastructure components), security and agriculture. While actors devoted their resources to communicating unrelated campaign and/or policy issues in week six, the public deployed their resource (Internet data and device) to knowing employment issues as well as salary in the state. In week seven, the Osun public developed significant interest in knowing employment issues, security and agriculture while actors engaged them (the public) on unrelated issues and/or needs and infrastructure.

**Exhibit 6: Issues and/or needs searched by Osun Public based on weeks<sup>5</sup>**

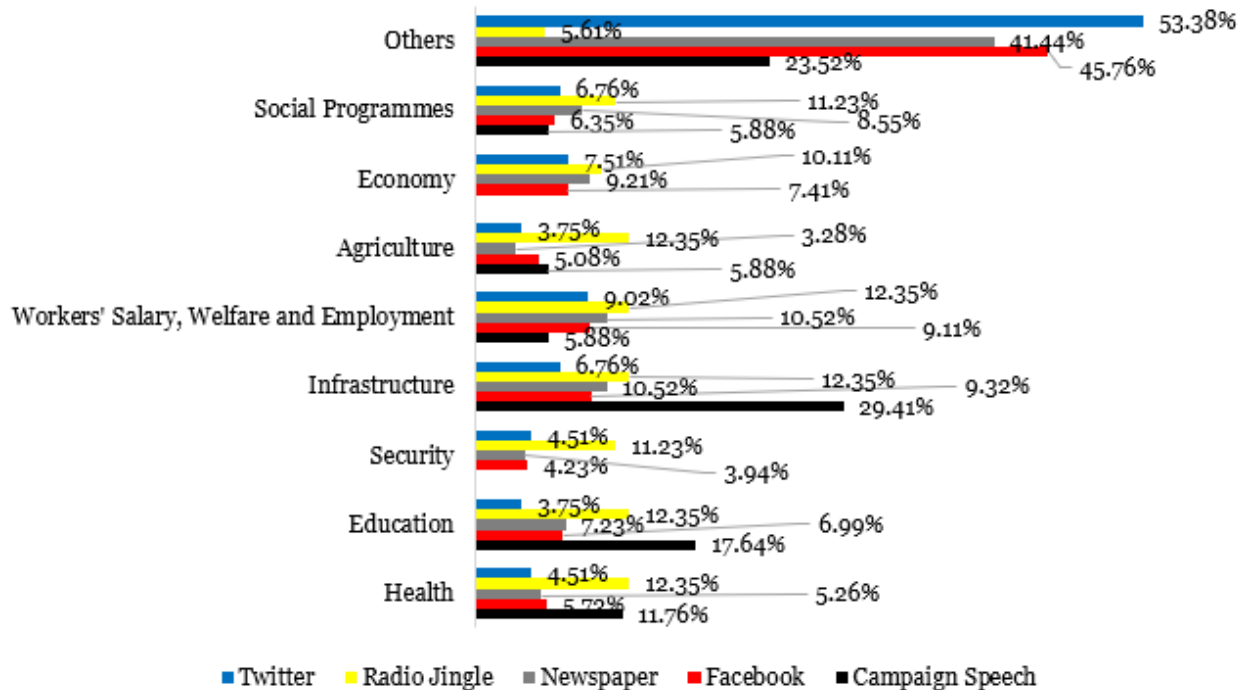
	Economy	Health	Security	Education	Road	Employment	Agriculture	Salary
Week One	28.97%	23.28%	25.19%	33.46%	39.45%	21.59%	25.72%	30.02%
Week Two	14.20%	17.53%	22.58%	13.46%	16.21%	21.59%	17.51%	11.57%
Week Three	14.20%	22.56%	0.00%	11.41%	0.00%	0.00%	12.75%	19.63%
Week Four	0.00%	7.24%	0.00%	10.49%	0.00%	0.00%	10.81%	0.00%
Week Five	14.20%	10.28%	16.71%	11.15%	20.50%	0.00%	15.56%	11.54%
Week Six	14.20%	11.22%	13.05%	9.57%	11.92%	21.59%	0.00%	15.70%
Week Seven	14.20%	7.85%	22.45%	10.42%	11.92%	35.20%	17.62%	11.54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>1808</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>1515</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>866</b>

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

The seven-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 campaign rallies. Actors mostly deployed Twitter for discussing issues/needs that were not directly related with 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, security, economy, infrastructure, workers' welfare, salary and employment.

<sup>5</sup> Volume of issues and/or needs search (Economy=604, Health=1666, Security=594, Education=1357, Road=739, Employment=300, Agriculture=762, Salary=766)

**Exhibit 7: Campaign and/or Policy Issues by Media Types<sup>6</sup>**



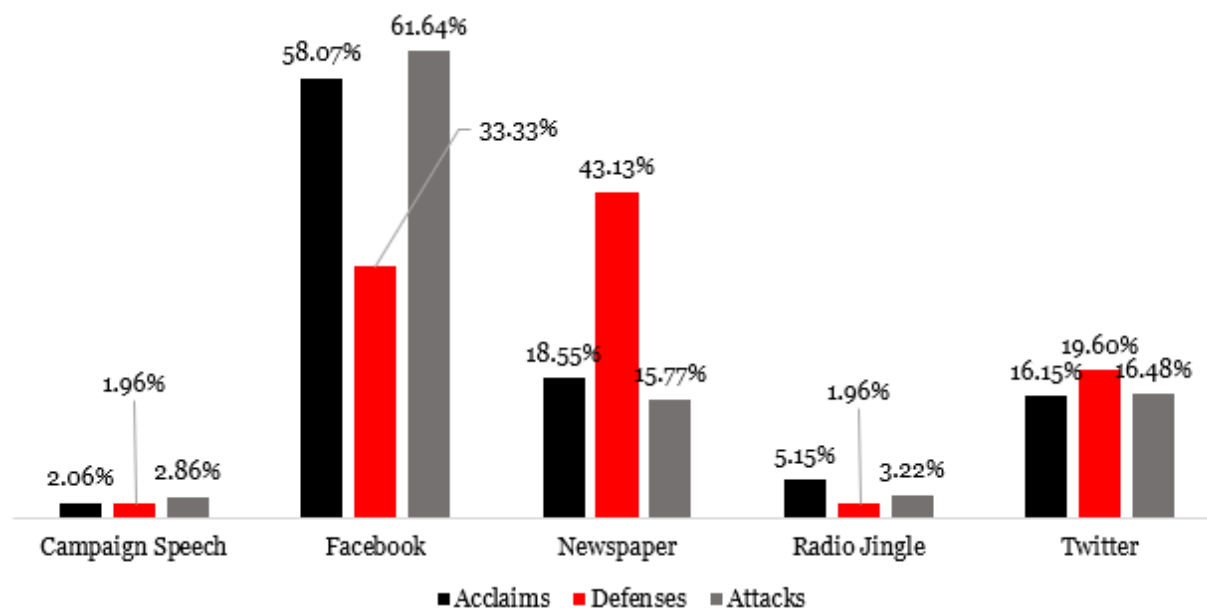
Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

From the cumulative report of week six to the current cumulative report (week seven), there are some levels of changes in the deployment of media categories we have been monitoring since April, 2022. In the cumulative six-week report, it was reported that the actors deployed attacks strategy by 64.07% on Facebook. In the current report, the use of the strategy was found at 61.64% of the total messages that established attacks strategy. This indicates relative reduction in the use of the strategy. On this medium, defenses were also found to reduce from 38.23% recorded in the week six report to 33.33% in the current report. Acclaims strategy reduced from 60.59% in week six to 58.07% in week seven. In the newspapers, defenses strategy reduced relatively between week six and week seven. In week six, it was used by 44.11% while it was found at 43.13% in week seven. Meanwhile, defenses and attacks strategy significantly and relatively increased accordingly on Twitter. In the previous cumulative report, 14.70% of the campaign strategy traces found across the media types were traced to defenses strategy. In the current report, it was

<sup>6</sup> **Key:** Campaign Speech=17, Facebook=472, Newspaper=152, Radio Jingle=89, Twitter=133

19.60%. This pattern was also found for attacks strategy deployment. The use of the strategy increased from 15.53% recorded in the previous report to 16.48% in the current week report.

**Exhibit 8: Campaign Strategies across Media Types<sup>7</sup>**

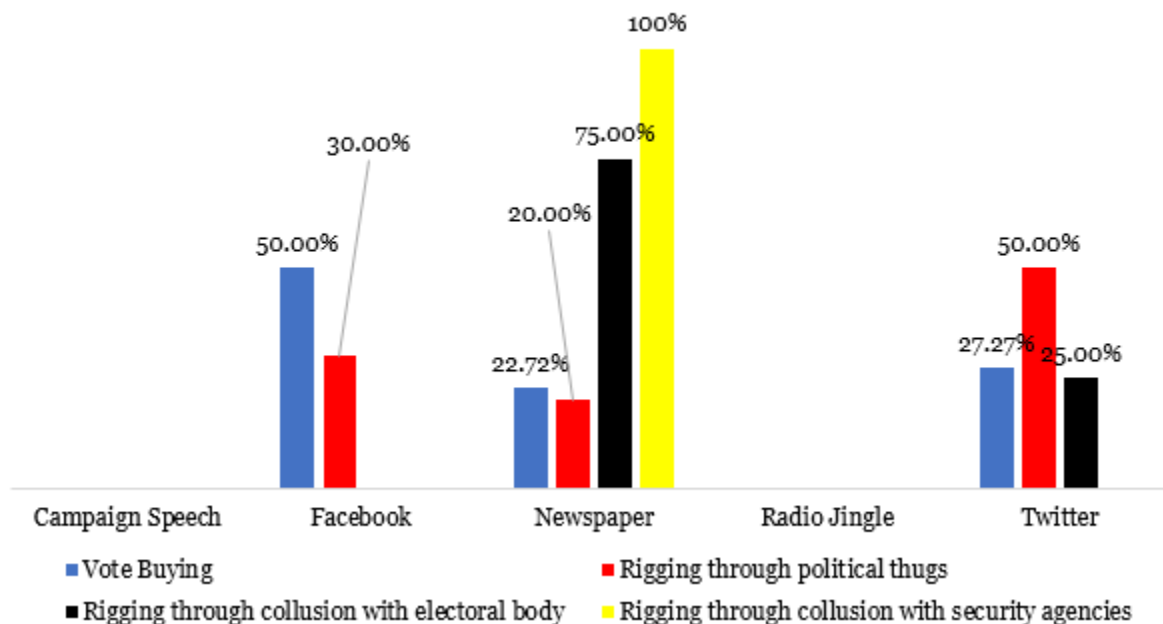


Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

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 on Exhibit 9, where it was revealed that rigging through collusion with security agencies and electoral body have been mainly communicated through newspapers while Twitter as well as Facebook have been used for communicating vote buying and rigging through political thugs.

<sup>7</sup> **Key:** Attacks=279, Acclaims=291, Defenses=51

**Exhibit 9: Threats to Credible Poll across Media Types<sup>8</sup>**



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 seven weeks. The party has discussed what he has done in the areas of workers’ salary, welfare and employment, health and social programmes 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 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)

<sup>8</sup> Vote buying=22, Rigging through political thugs=10, Rigging through collusion with electoral body=4, Rigging through collusion with security agencies=1

has relatively engaged the public by discussing issues and needs within agriculture, security and infrastructure more 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).

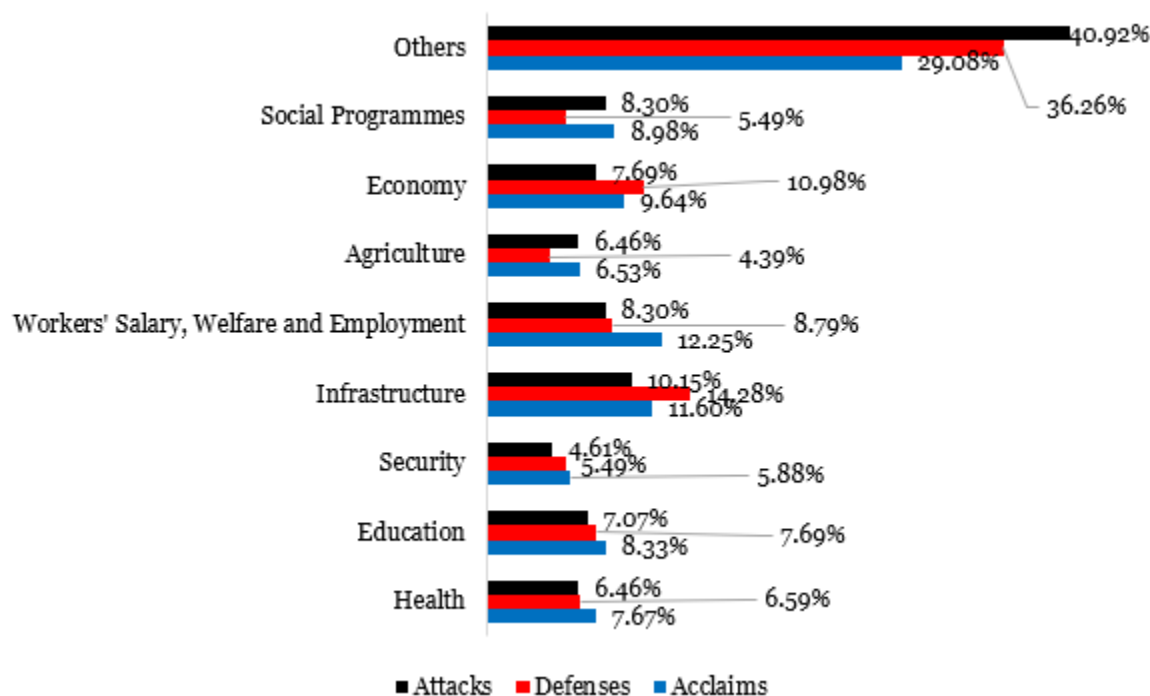
#### Exhibit 10: Campaign and/or Policy Issues by Political Parties

	Workers' Salary, Welfare and Employment								
	Health	Education	Security	Infrastructure	Agriculture	Economy	Social Programmes	Others	
APC	68.51%	61.90%	59.52%	64.70%	68.67%	52.17%	55.88%	65.07%	45.40%
APM	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.20%	2.17%	1.47%	1.58%	0.27%
PDP	25.92%	30.15%	30.95%	30.58%	24.09%	34.78%	27.94%	28.57%	41.50%
Labour Party	1.85%	1.58%	2.38%	1.17%	0.00%	4.34%	5.88%	1.58%	3.62%
Accord	1.85%	4.76%	4.76%	2.35%	4.81%	2.17%	5.88%	1.58%	7.52%
ADP	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.27%
ZLP	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.17%	1.47%	0.00%	0.27%
PRP	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.27%
AAC	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.27%
YPP	1.85%	1.58%	2.38%	1.17%	1.20%	2.17%	1.47%	1.58%	0.27%
SDP	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.27%
APC-Faction	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>359</b>

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

A total of 1,028 traces of campaign strategy were found across campaign issues against 682 traces recorded in the previous cumulative report. From 1,028 traces, 31.61% associated with attacks, while 59.53% and 8.85% resonated with our definitions of acclaims and defenses. 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 where necessary in order to significantly secure relative level of public share of minds ahead of the election.

**Exhibit 11: Campaign Strategies across Campaign and/or Policy Issues<sup>9</sup>**



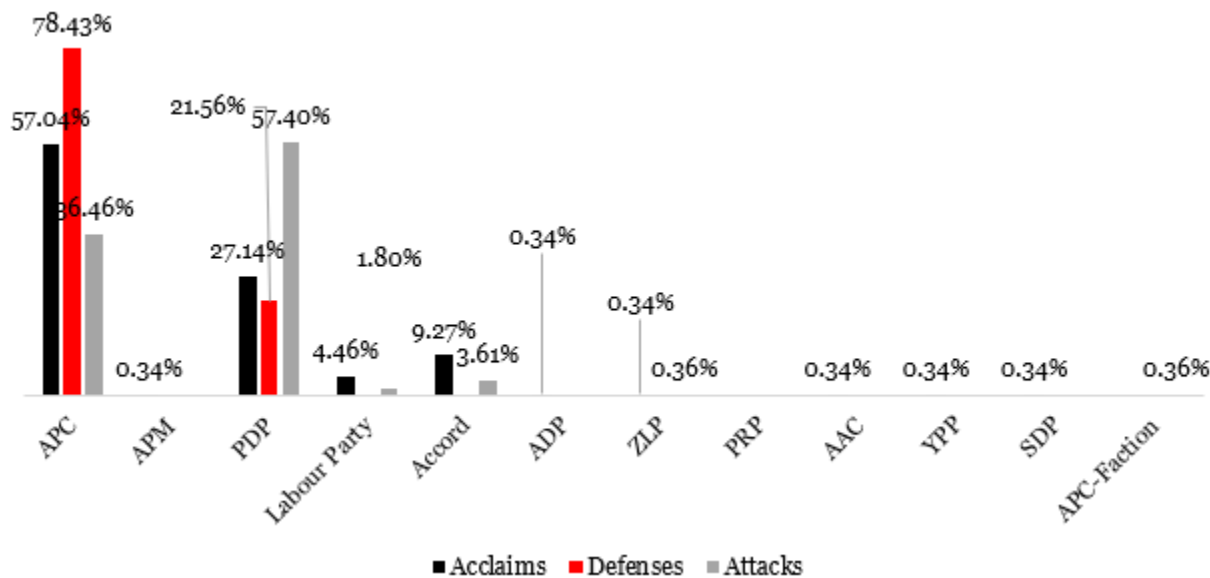
Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

We were equally interested in knowing which of the political parties employed the strategies significantly in the last seven 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 seven data, the ruling party’s use of defenses strategy reduced from 79.41% to 78.43% (see Exhibit 12). However, acclaims strategy of the party increased from 55.93% to 57.04%. The same pattern was also found for attack strategy deployment, where the level of utilizing it increased from 32.09% to 36.46%. 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 60.67% to 57.40%, attacks strategy deployment of the party reduced. With slight increase (27.11% to 27.14%), the party was also found to appropriate acclaims strategy better in week seven as well as in the use of defenses strategy, increasing from 20.58% of using it in six weeks to 21.56% of employing it in seven weeks.

<sup>9</sup> **Key:** Acclaims= 612, Defenses=91, Attacks=325



**Exhibit 12: Campaign Strategies across Political Parties<sup>10</sup>**



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 seven weeks. The use of acclaims strategy has increased from more than 7 times in the latest six weeks to 9.3 times in the seven-week of monitoring, it is obvious that the strategy is being prioritised by the actors. The strategy was also deployed more than 19 times for debating workers’ salary, welfare and employment in the previous cumulative report, while it increased to 24.3 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 8.4 times to 5.9 times as well as for agriculture (from 4.8 times to 2.1 times). It improved significantly from 1.1 times to 3.7 times for economy. For the discussion of workers’ salary, welfare and employment, the use of attacks strategy increased from 9.4 times to 14.6 times. Likewise

<sup>10</sup> Key: Attacks=277, Acclaims=291, Defenses=51

for agriculture, from 4.8 times to 6 times as well as “other category” (from 38.6 times to 46.6 times).

**Exhibit 13: Number of times parties deployed campaign strategies across campaign issues/policies during the three weeks**

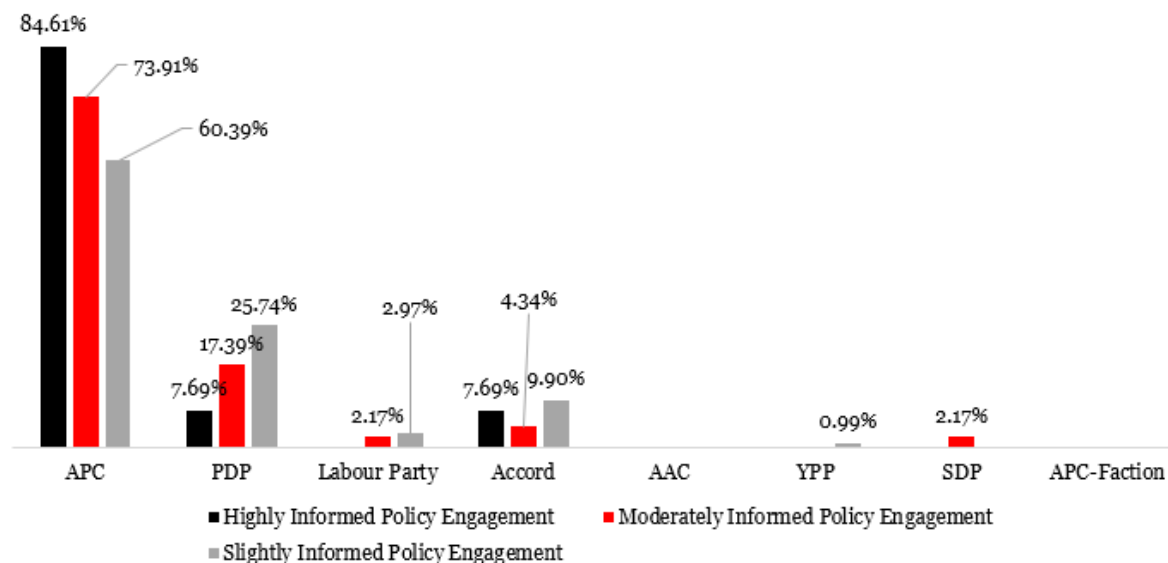
	Acclaims	Defenses	Attacks
Health	0.2	0.0	0.0
Education	1.3	0.1	0.0
Security	0.3	0.3	1.6
Infrastructure	9.3	5.9	1.6
Workers’ Salary, Welfare and Employment	24.3	0.0	14.6
Agriculture	0.6	2.1	6.0
Economy	7.2	3.7	1.7
Social programmes	2.2	1.6	1.8
Others	6.0	0.4	46.6

Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

**Policy Engagement or Personality Disparagement**

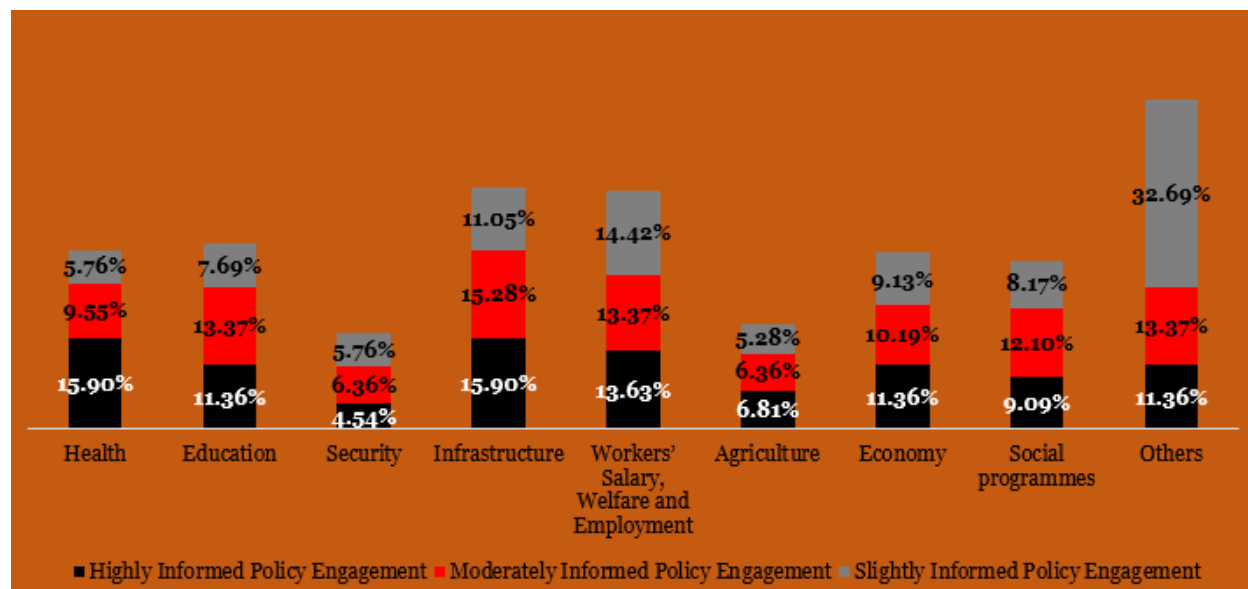
We discovered that the ruling party is better on informed policy engagement and less intensive in disparaging the personality of the opponents. The leading opposition party (PDP) slightly engaged the policies or programmes of the current administration while it moderately disparaged the personality of the ruling party’s candidate and the party itself (see Exhibit 14 and 15). A 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 100% in the previous report to 84.61% in the current report while its moderately informed policy engagement increased from 72.22%%, had in the six-week cumulative report, to 73.91% in the current report. The People’s Democratic Party’s level of moderately informed policy engagement increased from 16.66% to 17.39%. 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 party<sup>11</sup>**



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

**Exhibit 15: Levels of policy engagement by campaign issues and/or policies<sup>12</sup>**



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

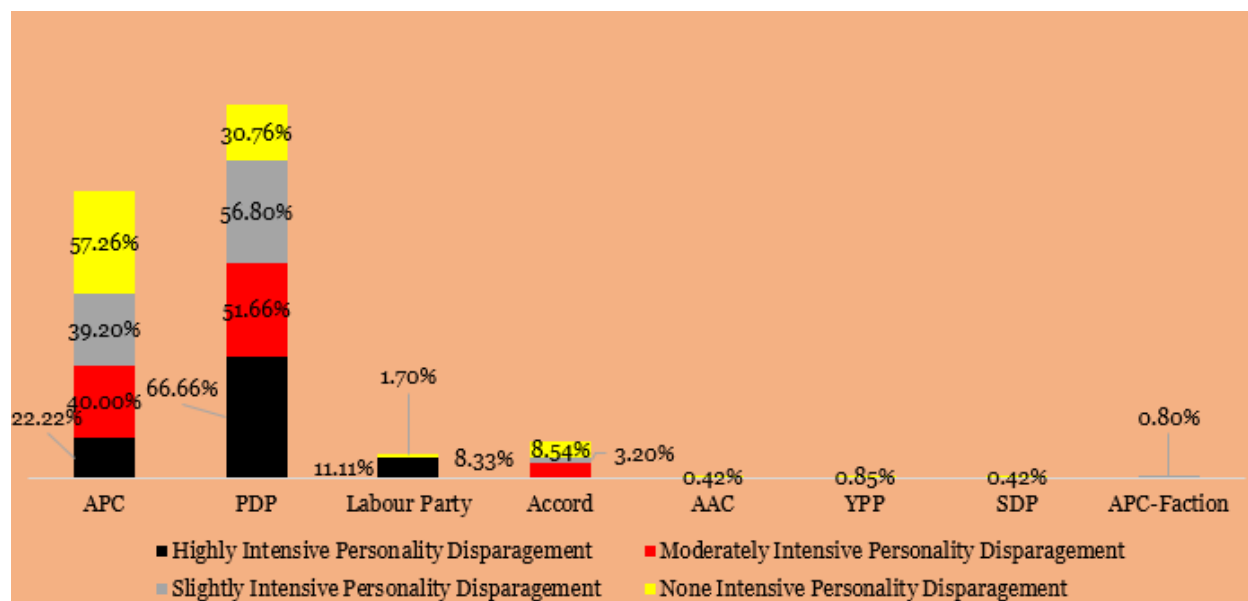
From the data in Exhibit 15, it is clear that actors have only succeeded in engaging the public better while discussing infrastructure, health and workers' salary, welfare and

<sup>11</sup> **Key:** Highly Informed Policy Engagement=13, Moderately Informed Policy Engagement=46, Slightly Informed Policy Engagement=101

<sup>12</sup> **Key:** Highly Informed Policy Engagement=44, Moderately Informed Policy Engagement=157, Slightly Informed Policy Engagement=208

employment. 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 unrelated issues and/or needs. Meanwhile, the examination of highly informed policy engagement across the campaign and/or policy issues reveals that actors remain unchanged while discussing infrastructure, health, education, economy and other issues of the other category metric.

**Exhibit 16: Levels of personality disparagement by party<sup>13</sup>**



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

From highly informed policy engagement to intensive personality disparagement, our analysis suggests that the ruling party seems to be better than the opposition parties based on comparison of week-six cumulative report with the week-seven cumulative report. The level at which the ruling party disparaged personality reduced from 25.00% to 22.22% while the main opposition party’ position increased from 62.50% to 66.66%. Labour party reduced its adoption of highly intensive personality disparagement metric by 1.39% (from 12.50% to 11.11%). In terms of moderately intensive personality disparagement, the ruling party stepped up its usage from 30.30% to 40.00% while the PDP reduced its application from 62.19% to 51.66%. Accord equally dipped on its use from 12.12% had in the previous cumulative report to 8.33% in the current report. The level of increase recorded by the

<sup>13</sup> **Key:** Highly Intensive Personality Disparagement=9, Moderately Intensive Personality Disparagement=60, Slightly Intensive Personality Disparagement=125, None Intensive Personality Disparagement=234

ruling party while employing moderately and slightly intensive personality disparagement was a result of its lack of significant regard for non-intensive personality disparagement in week five. According to our analysis, the party's deployment of non-intensive personality disparagement reduced from 59.60%, had during the last week cumulative report, to 57.26% attained in the current report. However, 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 27.21% of its appropriation in the previous report and 30.76% for the current report (see Exhibit 16). This change is better appreciated in the context of the increase in the use of highly intensive personality disparagement by the party. Analysis suggests that the party prioritised highly intensive personality disparagement more than none intensive personality disparagement.

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

	Highly Informed Policy Engagement	Highly Intensive Personality Disparagement
Health	5.2	0.3
Education	0.2	0.2
Security	4.1	0.5
Infrastructure	1.8	0.3
Workers' Salary and Welfare and Employment	0.3	2.0
Agriculture	0.1	5.6
Economy	3.7	0.1
Social programmes	0.3	5.3
Others	2.2	0.0

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 increased from 2.9 times (in the previous week cumulative report) to 5.2 times (in the current report). An increase was also discovered for its acceptance while issues and needs around economy (1.5 times to 3.7 times) were communicated and discussed. The use of highly intensive personality disparagement while discussing agricultural issues and needs increased from 4.5 times to 5.6 times. This was also discovered for the discussion of workers' salary, welfare and employment, where its deployment dipped from 2.2 times to 2.0 time.

### Threats to credible poll

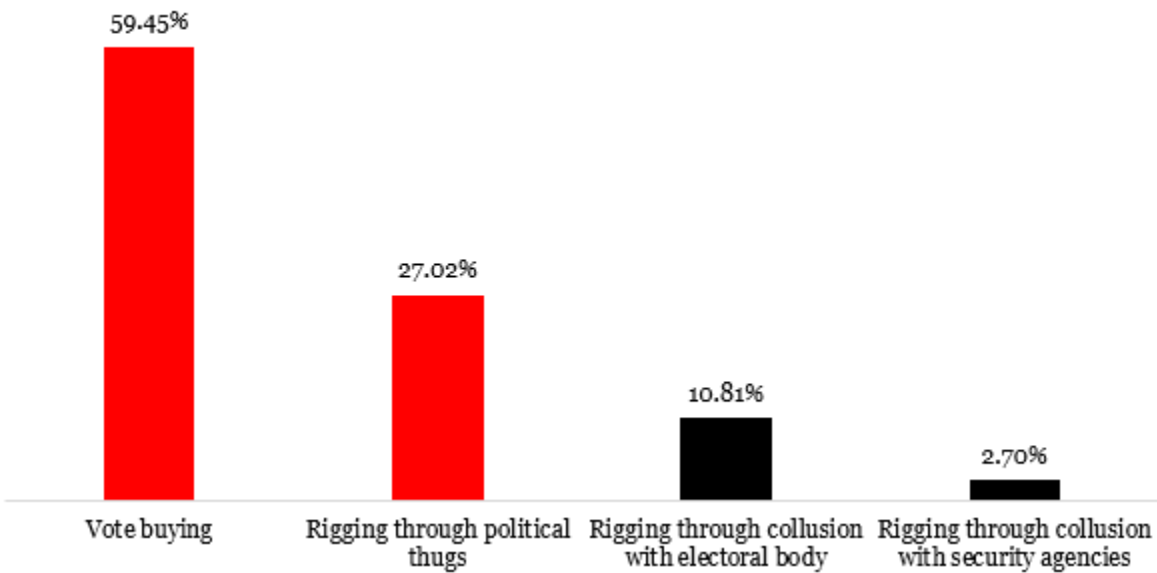
The APC and PDP frequently addressed vote buying and manipulation, citing political thugs, among the four sub-metrics our analysts investigated under threats to credible poll as the main metric (see Exhibit 17). The APC maintained the necessity for a fair election, but the PDP's comments implied vote 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. While vote buying and rigging through political thugs were addressed at the same rate of 41.66% in the six-week cumulative report, the supplementary data shows that these topics were discussed differently in the current report. Analysis reveals 59.45% of discussing vote buying and 27.02% of deliberating on rigging through political thugs. With this, our analysts observed that the sudden increase in the discussion of the two issues is connected with the possible victory claim of parties and their supporters ahead of the election. However, our observational analysis captures some food items that suggest alleged voter inducement, and these items carry the imprints of the two main political parties' candidates (see the image below).







**Exhibit 18: Threats to credible poll<sup>14</sup>**



Source: Positive Agenda Nigeria, 2022

### Conclusion and Our Verdict

Our findings for Week 7 indicate that the two main political parties adopted attacking and defensive strategies for their campaign messages more strongly than messages promoting

<sup>14</sup> **Key:** Vote buying=22, Rigging through political thugs=10, Rigging through electoral body=4, Rigging through security agencies=1

their candidates. This implies that when one party accused the other, the other issues rejoinders (e.g., press statement, press conference) to debunk the allegations, and vice-versa. Dominant among such allegations that led to verbal attacks and defenses included thug-related violence, killing and voter inducements. Essentially, vote-buying was discussed mainly in relation to possible electoral violence during the poll. Then, rigging through collusion with security agencies, the INEC and political thugs were communicated by the main opposition party as part of their attacking strategies.

Despite that the two main political parties advocated violence-free election, they accused each other of sponsoring some political thugs to harm each other's strong supporters. Then, despite that the two parties admonished their supporters and the general people of Osun to collect the PVCs, and desist from selling their votes, some pictures (e.g., packaged rice and white beans) that suggested alleged inducement of potential voters by the two parties surfaced on Facebook and Twitter. If these were really inducements as alleged by digital natives, it means stomach infrastructure is still much an active tool politicians use to woo potential voters with a view to influencing their voting pattern. This is dangerous for the true representation of people's choices.

In spite of the accusations and counter-accusations, supporters and members of the two parties seriously sought votes for their candidates through the communication infrastructure— Facebook, Twitter, campaign grounds, jingles and newspapers. As they canvassed votes, discussions on education dropped while issues related to economy and infrastructure picked. Moreover, the fact that the potential voters in Osun were more interested in knowing more about employment, security and agriculture in week 7 is insightful. The political parties, had they had factored in the search interest of Osun citizens in planning their campaign messages, would have discussed the issues that would interest the citizens in convincing detail. Instead, the political actors engaged them (the public) on unrelated issues and infrastructure as observed in the parties' campaign speeches.

In addition, the ruling party remains the only political party that had significantly engaged the public across the campaign issues in the last seven weeks while the People's Democratic Party remains the only opposition party that trailed the ruling party in



engaging the public. The smaller opposition parties (SDP, Labour, and Accord) also had some slight changes in engaging the public on their campaign promises.

Finally, we reiterate the recommendations we made in week 6. That is, we urge the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to partner with security agents in the state with a view to ensuring lives and property of voters are protected on the election day. Political thuggery and life-threatening vandalism should not return to the political atmosphere in Osun. We also urge the INEC to convene meetings of political stakeholders in the state where issues relating to vote buying, voter inducements and violence alongside the legal penalties for offenders will be discussed. In addition, as election draws nearer, we specifically suggest that the two main political parties convene meetings among their media teams and handlers, and enlighten them on the need for decorum and strategic issue-based campaigns across their online platforms. This, we believe, will reduce the toxic political atmosphere being observed in Osun online-sphere. Importantly, political parties in the state should desist from unnecessary heating of the polity with their unsubstantiated allegations and counter-allegations— If they have evidence of committed violence by a party or its supporters, they should report to the appropriate authorities. All political parties should understand that elections are seasonal; they will come and go, but the state remains.

## **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**

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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.

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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

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