

X as the New Town Crier: Exploring the Influence of Twitter on Political Mobilization and Agenda Setting in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: This study explores the role of X (formerly Twitter) as a contemporary town crier and examines its influence on political mobilization and agenda setting in Nigeria's sociopolitical landscape. Drawing parallels between indigenous communication systems, in which the town crier served as a trusted channel for community information, and contemporary digital platforms, the study positions X as an important space for shaping political narratives, fostering civic engagement, and amplifying grassroots movements. Using the Obidient Movement as a case study, the paper examines how decentralized online discourse, trending hashtags, and viral tweets contributed to youth participation, challenged mainstream media narratives, and reshaped political communication during the 2023 general elections. Through discourse analysis and key informant interviews, the study identifies the mechanisms through which X influences public opinion, constructs political identities, and sets priorities for national conversation. The findings show that X supports real-time interaction and broad-based mobilization, but also presents challenges associated with misinformation, echo chambers, and digital exclusion. The paper concludes that X can influence decisions to support political candidates, although such decisions are also shaped by political ideology, social background, and personal experience. It therefore proposes a hybrid communication model that integrates traditional oral communication systems with digital technologies to promote inclusive and culturally grounded political engagement in Southeast Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: X; Twitter; town crier; political mobilization; agenda setting; Obidient Movement; digital communication; Nigeria

1. INTRODUCTION

The world has undergone, and continues to experience, major phases of technological change. New communication technologies shape human development and everyday life, sometimes displacing indigenous communication systems. Agana (2025) observes that indigenous communication practices remain relevant for rural development, but are increasingly threatened by modernization and digital transformation. Okocha, Elele, and Okujeni (2024) similarly argue that the decline of traditional communication modes has made indigenous practices less common, especially among younger generations. Although digital platforms offer new avenues for communities to share stories and engage wider audiences, the digital divide and limited internet access in rural areas continue to constrain effective participation.

From the earliest civilizations, communication has been central to social life. It enables people to share news, express needs, form relationships, negotiate conflict, and mobilize members of society for political participation. As society changes, the systems and channels of communication also evolve.

Ebeze (2002) notes that, before the introduction of modern communication channels in Africa, traditional channels enabled communities to interact and maintain social order. Information from traditional leaders was freely passed to community members through interpersonal and indigenous channels such as the town crier and Ikoro. Later came early print media introduced by missionaries, followed by radio, television, and information and communication technologies. These developments have influenced economic, educational, and political systems.

Mass communication has always been necessary for informing and educating the public, and its forms continue to change as technology advances. The emergence of digital media has transformed journalism and political communication across the world. Olujimi and Adewale (2018) note that, in Nigeria, new media technologies and social media platforms such as X, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram have altered the media environment. Beyond traditional news organizations, social media platforms now serve as tools for information dissemination, sociopolitical engagement, education, and mobilization.

During Nigeria's 2023 general election, social media platforms were used to engage and educate citizens on the electoral process (Dakuku, 2023). The Obidient Movement, in particular, became closely associated with X. Recent analyses of the 2023 elections

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indicate that social media campaigns played a significant role in persuading voters, with X serving as a major avenue for political and electioneering communication.

As a microblogging platform, X enables registered users to publish short messages, follow public conversations, and connect with family, friends, organizations, political actors, and wider audiences. Its format supports the sharing of thoughts, experiences, breaking news, and political information. Beyond entertainment and blogging, X has become a tool for organizing social movements and distributing political messages.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Throughout history, people have relied on trusted voices to receive important information, including political information. Long before the rise of social media, professional announcers known as town criers served as primary information sources in many communities. They were integral to public life and were often regarded as opinion leaders. In contemporary political communication, X has also become a powerful platform for shaping political narratives, fostering civic engagement, and amplifying grassroots movements. During Nigeria's 2023 election, X served as a rallying point for members and supporters of the Obidient Movement. Although studies have examined the influence of X on political mobilization, limited empirical attention has been given to how X performs functions similar to the traditional town crier in agenda setting and political mobilization in Southeast Nigeria. This study addresses that gap.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to:

1. ascertain the level of usage of X as a contemporary town crier in political activities in Southeast Nigeria;
2. determine the role of X in mobilizing citizens to support the Obidient Movement in Southeast Nigeria;
3. examine the challenges of X in political mobilization in Southeast Nigeria; and
4. determine the benefits of combining X with oral traditional communication for political mobilization.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the level of usage of X in political activities in Southeast Nigeria?
2. What role does the town crier play in political mobilization?
3. What challenges affect the use of X for political mobilization in Southeast Nigeria?
4. What are the benefits of combining X with oral traditional communication for political mobilization in Southeast Nigeria?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 X as a Tool for Political Mobilization

Political mobilization refers to activities intended to motivate organized or unorganized members of the public to express themselves and undertake political action in pursuit of political aims (Schlozman & Brady, 1995). Mobilization influences citizens' participation in politics. In relation to the 2023 general election, Chukwu (2023) notes that an analysis of 1,089 posts by presidential candidates showed frequent use of Facebook and X. This suggests that X is increasingly shaping the political agenda, a role previously dominated by television and other mainstream media. Dunu and Uzochukwu (2018) describe X as an information network that allows individuals, organizations, and publics to discover and share information.

On X, hashtags are used to group conversations around specific themes. Campaign-specific hashtags can rally supporters, boost engagement, and amplify political messages (Dungse, Opeyemi & Chidozie, 2018). Obia (2023) explains that the way hashtags were used by the Obidient Movement during the 2023 election illustrates how X can serve as a coordinating platform for political discourse and activist campaigns. During the campaign, X was used to coordinate activities, amplify the campaign globally, and challenge brands and public figures perceived as opposing the movement.

In coordinating campaigns, X was used to share information about venues and update the electorate on breaking events. Without a platform such as X, it would have been difficult for the Obidient Movement to spread across the country and coordinate itself in highly organized ways (Obia, 2023).

Obidient supporters on X also amplified conversations around hashtags such as #Obidient, #Obidatti, #GetYourPVC, #Rebuild, #IComeInPeace, and #GunzDownLovezUp. Users sought broad coverage of the campaign by international news outlets and celebrated clips of international media reportage. The agenda appeared to be to circulate campaign messages widely through retweets, celebrity engagement, influencer participation, and sustained visibility of the movement. This strategy of amplification was evident on the night of the presidential and National Assembly elections, when Nigerians used social media to pressure the Independent National Electoral Commission to upload polling-unit results to its server. The hashtag #UploadTheResults reportedly generated more than 26,000 tweets on X and became one of the major trends on the platform (Punch, February 26, 2023).

In some instances, Obidient supporters also criticized personalities and brands that were perceived as unsupportive of the movement. Actors such as Zack Orji, Joke Silva, and Eniola Badmus were criticized for supporting President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, while Pastor

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Adeboye of the Redeemed Christian Church of God was criticized after remarks about Tinubu’s capacity to fix Nigeria (Sahara Reporters, May 10, 2023). More generally, political activists and supporters use X to connect, plan, and coordinate grassroots activities, including volunteer organizations, door-to-door campaigns, voter-registration drives, and neighbourhood gatherings (Pérez-Martínez, Rodríguez & Tobajas, 2017).

X’s networking features help to form communities of people with shared interests who may later connect offline. In Nigeria, political candidates can engage directly with supporters and potential voters on X by responding to questions, addressing concerns, and providing real-time updates (Chinedu-Okeke & Obi, 2016). Such engagement can build trust, foster loyalty, and create a sense of inclusiveness, thereby contributing to political mobilization. Campaigners may also use X to educate voters on registration, polling dates, polling places, documentation requirements, and the electoral process.

X can strengthen political engagement and voter turnout by improving voter education and awareness (Carlos, Vargas, Estigoy, & Hail, 2022). A 2023 TechCabal report observes that, despite the relatively small share of Nigerian internet users on X, political parties frequently employ influencers on the platform because it supports real-time audiences and rapid news diffusion.

2.2 Limitations of X in Political Mobilization

X has millions of active users, and a substantial volume of posts is published daily. Among these posts are political messages directed at the electorate, some of which are characterized by rumour, insults, rage-driven communication, sweeping generalizations, distorted evidence, and single stories (Ihembuzo & Egbunike, 2018). At the same time, some messages provide factual information that can help citizens make informed voting decisions. Political commentary may come from politicians, activists, influencers, government officials, and ordinary citizens. Posts on insecurity, economic hardship, governance, and electoral choices by notable Nigerians such as Oby Ezekwesili and Aisha Yesufu have, at different times, awakened public consciousness.

However, the effectiveness of X in shaping decisions to support political candidates is complex and multifaceted. Political ideology, social background, personal experience, and group identity influence how people perceive and engage with political content. Echo chambers and filter bubbles can also limit exposure to diverse viewpoints and reinforce existing beliefs. While X can influence candidate support, it is unlikely to be the only, or even the most significant, factor in political decision-making (Pérez-Martínez et al., 2017). Reports on Nigeria’s 2023 general election also show that social media played a more pivotal role in electioneering than in previous cycles, even though the correlation between social media activity and election outcomes remained uncertain

Statistics of top presidential candidates

Monitoring period – 1 January, 2023 to 23 February, 2023

Name	 Total Tweets	Avg. Replies	Avg. Likes	Avg. Retweet	 Posts	Avg. Interaction
Atiku	223	803	1.3K	312.6	162	8.4K
Kwankwaso	114	154	1.8K	348.7	140	5.02K
Obi	457	369	12.8K	3.5K	138	21.55K
Tinubu	84	461	2.8K	616.3	47	6.81K

Source: The EU Election Observation Mission, cited in TechCabal (2023).

2.3 The Town Crier

Town criers date back to the Roman Empire, as noted by Christopher Gordon in Yuko (2023). Their main purpose throughout history was to spread news and alert people to emergencies and other public matters. Town criers were usually stationed in high-traffic locations such as town squares or markets. They were expected to be active, reliable, and respected members of the community. A town crier needed a strong voice that could project across a public space, and after the medieval era, town criers commonly rang a handbell before making announcements.

Nwosu (2013) states that traditional means of communication in rural Africa, including Nigeria, are purpose-driven and effectively structured. Oyesomi et al. (2014) note that there is often confusion about what constitutes African traditional media and modes of communication. From an African standpoint, the town crier, as part of the indigenous communication system, is commonly associated with idiophones and instrumental communication, including devices used to accompany music, song, and dance and to disseminate messages.

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Obono (2018) refers to the town crier as a community mass announcement system. He argues that African grassroots development continues to rely on indigenous sources and channels, including traditional education, folk media, and indigenous organizations. In Southeast Nigeria, Benson-Eluwa (2010) describes the town crier as a person whose duty is to move around a community disseminating news and making official announcements. The town crier often moves from village to village, beating a metal gong or other validated instrument, usually in the evening or early morning. Instruments such as the gong, wooden block, or skin drum function as attention-directing devices that alert audiences before the main announcement. This is followed by a call to attention such as “Genu ntị ooo,” meaning “pay attention.”

Town criers are often used to give directives to villagers during emergencies or matters requiring urgent attention, such as community sanitation, water-source maintenance, road work, payment of fines, or immunization campaigns. Properly harnessed, traditional media such as the town crier can contribute to sociocultural, political, economic, and environmental development. The town crier’s message can inform, educate, entertain, enlighten, and integrate members of the community (Burgeon, 1978).

2.4 The Town Crier’s Instrument

Traditional town criers use wooden or metal gongs, which are classified within indigenous communication systems as idiophones. Contemporary forms of town crying may also involve open vehicles fitted with public-address systems and music to attract public attention before announcements are made.

2.5 The Role of the Town Crier in Agenda Setting and Political Mobilization

Long before television, newspapers, or social media, professional announcers known as town criers served as primary sources of public information. Yuko (2025) suggests that town criers were real historical figures and integral parts of everyday life. As instruments of indigenous communication, town criers play important roles in mobilizing rural dwellers for political participation. In this study, political mobilization refers to local communicative practices, including language, music, idiomatic expressions, and public announcements, through which the town crier informs and equips community members with information about candidacy, electoral processes, and other political activities. Oyesomi et al. (2014) similarly argue that indigenous communication provides women with knowledge and information on political activities at the local level.

Communication tools play a crucial role in informing the electorate and encouraging active political participation. Citizens obtain political information through channels such as the town crier, while messages from opinion leaders support political decision-making and participation. Sawant (2000) argues that an effective political communication medium should provide information that guarantees a well-informed citizenry capable of participating in governance.

Political decisions depend on credible and adequate information about policies, programmes, and activities. Town criers, therefore, remain important in citizen mobilization because they inform and educate community members. The treatment of political content through communication channels can stimulate interest in the political system and influence political behaviours such as voting (Dilber, 2012, cited in Onuoha & Anyanwu, 2022).

2.6 Juxtaposing the Town Crier and X in Political Mobilization

Michelle (2011) likens social media to a public square where groups of people chat and share information, with X acting like a town crier that announces headlines and trending political topics. X provides political information to members of its online community in ways that resemble the town crier’s community function. Gibson and Oberiri (2016) found that traditional communication is a dependable and credible method of informing people about political matters and engagement. Amadi (1986) similarly argues that the town crier plays a significant role in gathering and disseminating information. The village announcer links the community leader’s messages to the people and reports the people’s reactions back to the leader, making feedback possible.

X is also regarded by many users as an effective social media platform for conveying political messages in concise form to audiences with limited attention spans (Moore, 2015). Because trends are formed around hashtags, it is easier to track public moods and conversations on selected topics. Kwak, Lee, Park, and Moon (2010) found that political hashtags and discussions were among the most persistent categories on X. At the same time, political messages on X may include rumours, insults, rage-driven communication, generalizations, distorted evidence, and single stories (Ihembuzo, 2014). Nevertheless, posts by notable Nigerians, including Oby Ezekwesili and Aisha Yesufu, have awakened citizens’ consciousness on issues such as insecurity, economic hardship, and governance. In a similar fashion, the town crier draws community members’ attention to important issues that need collective response.

Madubuko (2014) notes that communication is essential to social existence. Communities that lack electricity, smartphones, or internet connectivity cannot abandon communication; they continue to interact through signs, symbols, face-to-face communication, and indigenous agents of information dissemination. Okunna (1998) similarly argues that no society can exist without communication.

Onuora (1992) states that communities depend on the village announcer for information because they have free access to the town crier’s message and can ask questions through interpersonal interaction when they do not understand. In a similar way, citizens and

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media houses increasingly depend on X for information. Ott (2017) notes that X is now followed by television, or at least by broadcast news. Chinedu-Okeke and Obi (2016) also observe that political candidates in Nigeria can engage directly with supporters and potential voters on X by responding to questions, addressing concerns, and providing real-time updates.

Finally, Pérez-Martínez, Rodríguez, and Tobajas (2017) suggest that political activists and supporters may connect, plan, and coordinate grassroots events through X. It can be used to organize volunteers, door-to-door campaigns, voter-registration drives, and neighbourhood meetings. These functions are comparable to some traditional roles performed by town criers.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on the two-step flow theory and agenda-setting theory.

The two-step flow model of communication was introduced by Paul Lazarsfeld, Hazel Gaudet, and Bernard Berelson in their 1944 study, *The People's Choice* (Daramola, 2003). The theory emerged from a study of media influence during the 1940 presidential election campaign in Ohio, United States. The researchers expected to find evidence of direct media influence on voting intentions. Instead, they found that interpersonal contacts were mentioned more frequently than exposure to radio or newspapers as sources of influence on voting behaviour. The finding suggested that mass-media messages rarely influenced voters directly; rather, information was first absorbed by highly engaged media users, later called opinion leaders, who interpreted and passed the content to less active members of society.

In relation to this study, the two-step flow theory provides a framework for understanding opinion leadership as it appeared historically through the town crier and now appears through X. During the 2023 election, many voters did not obtain knowledge of candidates directly from mainstream media alone, even when they watched television or read newspapers. They also relied on information shared by prominent X influencers and political analysts who interpreted media information for them. This highlights the role of social influence and interpersonal communication in shaping opinions.

2.7.1 Agenda-Setting Theory

Agenda-setting theory was originally foreshadowed by Walter Lippmann's 1922 argument about the "pictures in our heads" and was later developed empirically by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972. The theory argues that the prominence given to an issue by the media affects the level of importance the public attaches to that issue. The media may not tell people what to think, but they can influence what people think about. In this sense, repeated media emphasis can attract public, governmental, corporate, and civic attention to selected social, economic, and political issues.

Madubuko (2014) notes that the first empirical test of agenda-setting theory was reported by McCombs and Shaw in their study of the 1968 American presidential election. In relation to the present study, if modern media can set the agenda for elite publics, the town crier can perform comparable functions for rural audiences. Agenda-setting theory helps explain why people exposed to similar communication channels often identify similar issues as important, even when they hold different opinions about those issues.

This theory is pertinent to the study because it supports the view that X can inform citizens, shape perception, and mobilize support for political candidates by projecting personality, political achievements, and ideology. It emphasizes X as a democratizing tool and not merely a platform for entertainment. It also provides insight into how X can meet some social, cultural, and political communication needs of people in Southeast Nigeria.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted discourse analysis and key informant interviews. Key informant interviews were used to elicit respondents' feelings, beliefs, opinions, experiences, and reactions after reading tweets or receiving information from the town crier about the Obidient Movement. The method is flexible and provides broad and in-depth views of the subject matter directly from respondents (Ihejirika & Omego, 2011).

3.1 Key Informant Interview Findings

Question 1: How often do you read political messages on X?

Response: Very often, especially during the 2023 presidential election in Nigeria.

Response: We read political messages on X to stay informed about the presidential candidates during the 2023 election.

Analysis:

The responses show that discussants needed political information about Nigeria's 2023 presidential election, and that X helped satisfy that need. Participants accessed X for information on the election and related electoral processes.

Question 2: How did X and the information circulated on it influence your attitude and behaviour toward political support for the Obidient Movement?

Response: X gave us an enabling environment to express ourselves freely without fear of the ruling class. It also allowed us to ask questions about our concerns, and the responses provided the information we needed when considering support for the Obidient Movement.

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Response: The information corrected the impression that the Obidient Movement was merely a creation of the Labour Party. It helped us understand the movement as a major support base for Mr Peter Obi, a presidential candidate from Southeast Nigeria.

Response: X provided information that helped us believe that a new and better Nigeria was possible through the political actions of the Obidient Movement. This influenced our consideration of political support for the movement.

Response: X provided information about the movement and explained what needed to be done for the dream of a better Nigeria to be achieved. It also encouraged support for the Obidient Movement because of its direct relevance to Peter Obi's presidential campaign.

Response: Messages on X showed us how to support a presidential candidate, work for his victory, and benefit from political participation. For many respondents, supporting the Obidient Movement also represented support for Southeast aspirations in Nigeria's political context. Many supported the movement because the people sharing the information were known and respected.

Analysis:

The respondents indicated that messages on X, including responses about the Obidient Movement, motivated them to support Peter Obi's candidacy. They valued the platform's openness because it allowed them to express their views and obtain clarification on issues of concern. They also trusted messages shared by known and respected people in the community. Overall, the responses show that participants gained insight into the ideology of the Obidient Movement and became more willing to participate in its activities.

Question 3: What challenges does X face in effective political mobilization?

Response: One challenge is that some people share fake news and falsehoods to damage opponents' reputations and attract comments or views on X.

Response: Echo chambers and filter bubbles on X limit people's exposure to diverse viewpoints and reinforce existing beliefs and biases.

Response: Not everyone can afford a smartphone and internet access. Even some people who have access may find it difficult to navigate X if they are not sufficiently literate or digitally skilled.

Response: Political ideology, social background, and personal experience can influence how people perceive and engage with political content on X.

Analysis: Respondents identified misinformation, echo chambers, filter bubbles, digital exclusion, and personal background as challenges affecting political mobilization on X.

Question 4: Is it beneficial to combine the traditional communication system and X in sharing political messages for political mobilization in Southeast Nigeria?

Response: Yes. Blending traditional communication media with modern media can help preserve traditional media from extinction.

Response: Yes. Combining both systems will enable those who do not understand the local language, or who are outside the immediate location where a message is delivered, to receive the information through X.

Response: It will also enable rural dwellers with limited or no access to the internet and X to receive messages through traditional channels.

Response: Respondents agreed that blending traditional communication with X can help preserve traditional media from extinction.

Response: Combining both systems can enable a wider reach and reinforce acceptance of political messages.

Analysis:

Respondents agreed that traditional communication and X can complement each other, enable wider reach, and reinforce support for a political candidate.

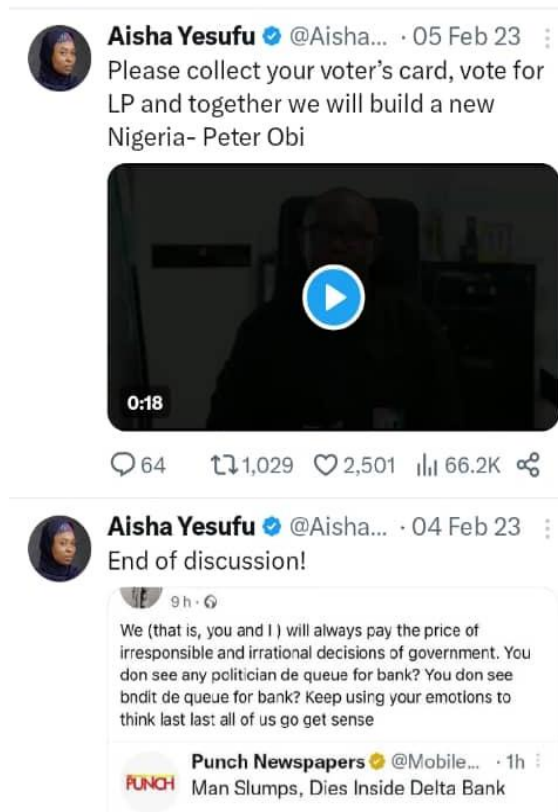
3.2 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is a qualitative research method used to examine language within its social context. Hecker and Kalpoko explain that it examines how social realities are constructed and understood through language, going beyond the words spoken or written.

3.2.1 Discussion of Selected Tweets Before the 2023 Election

The tweet by Aisha Yesufu, who stated that she was not a member of the Labour Party or a politician, was selected for analysis from a non-partisan perspective. The selected tweets are presented below.

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The tweet by Aisha Yesufu shows Punch newspaper's report of a man who slumped and died in a bank during the cashless-policy period under the former APC administration. Her comment suggests that ordinary citizens often pay the price for irresponsible and irrational government decisions. Yesufu used the comment to criticize the opposition party indirectly and encouraged voters to collect their voter cards and vote for the Labour Party to build a new Nigeria.

Another tweet was used to mobilize support for the Obidient Movement by urging followers to call ten people on their contact lists and tell them about Peter Obi and the Labour Party. The tweet also displayed the Labour Party logo to guide supporters.



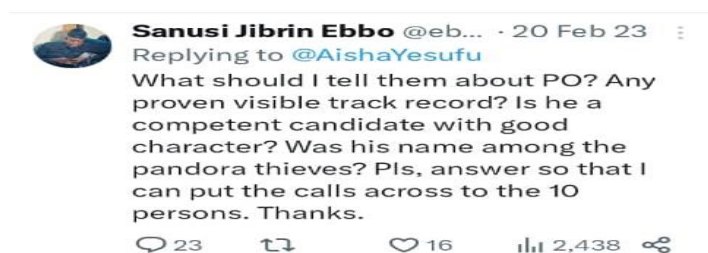
The tweet reportedly generated about 445,000 engagements, more than 15,000 likes, over 4,000 retweets, and 693 replies. Some of the replies are shown below.

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HYPERLINK "<https://qz.com/africa/1916319/how-nigerians-use-social-media-to-organize-endsars-protests/>"

While some followers agreed to call ten people and tell them about Peter Obi, others asked questions about Obi's personality and why he should be voted for.

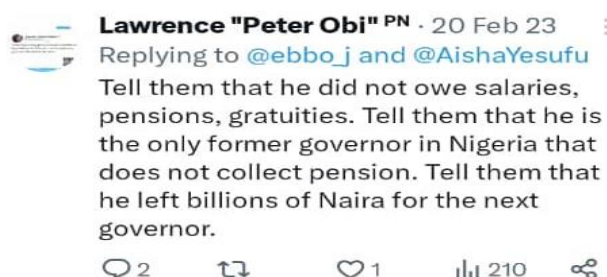


Sanusi Jibrin Ebbo, February 20, 2023:

The tweet raised issues explaining why young people should be proud to join the Obidient Movement and support Peter Obi politically. Four major points were emphasized:

1. Obi's proven track record in governance;
2. Obi's competence as a candidate;
3. Obi's character and perceived sincerity; and
4. Obi's non-involvement in corruption.

The tweet focused on competence, capability, and capacity for performance. Its testimonial tone was intended to persuade readers to support Peter Obi's political base, the Obidient Movement. The argument was that a candidate free from deception and corruption could make a new and better Nigeria possible. In this way, the tweet functioned as a persuasive communication tool for attracting political support to the movement.



Lawrence "Peter Obi," February 20, 2023:

The tweet explained to targeted young people why they should support the Obidient Movement as a vehicle for politically supporting Peter Obi. It highlighted the following issues:

1. Obi did not owe salaries, pensions, or gratuities;
2. Obi does not collect a pension as a former governor;

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3. Obi left substantial savings for the succeeding governor; and
4. Education would improve under his leadership, as it reportedly did in Anambra State.

The message emphasized credibility, accountability, and probity. These issues served as frames for generating political support for the Obidient Movement. The tweet presented Obi as an honest and credible politician and suggested that such testimony could attract support to the movement.



Edu Baba @ Inspired Ebi, February 20, 2023:

The tweet presented the following issues:

1. Other candidates could not accuse Obi of theft;
2. Obi possessed probity, and
3. Obi was accountable and valued statistics.

The tweet reinforced the claim that character and competence were central to political support for the Obidient Movement. It suggested that, if readers resonated with these issues, political support for the movement would be strengthened.

A tweet by Odugbemi Odutayo on February 20, 2023, summarized the viewpoints expressed in the other political tweets. It asserted that Obi had the capacity, competence, and character required of a national leader and that he was a doer of his words and promises. This confirmed the dominant frames used in canvassing political support for the Obidient Movement.

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The following findings emerged from the study:

1. A substantial number of respondents in Southeast Nigeria reported that they constantly read political messages on X during the 2023 election. This aligns with Obia's (2023) view that the way X was used during the 2023 election illustrates how the platform can coordinate political discourse and activist campaigns in Nigeria.
2. X played a significant role by providing an enabling environment for citizens to express themselves freely. Messages shared on the platform gave respondents information needed to consider political support for the Obidient Movement. This correlates with Chinedu-Okeke and Obi's (2016) finding that political candidates can directly engage supporters and potential voters through social media.
3. Fake news and propaganda against political opponents emerged as major challenges, alongside echo chambers and filter bubbles that limit exposure to diverse viewpoints. This finding aligns with Ihembuzo's (2014) observation that many political messages on X are characterized by rumour, insults, rage-driven communication, sweeping generalizations, distorted evidence, and single stories.
4. Respondents suggested that oral indigenous communication and X should be blended to address community-specific needs and priorities in political mobilization. Such a blend can deepen understanding and help preserve indigenous communication systems from extinction. As Ugboaja (1985) suggests, traditional communication remains central to African social life from "womb to tomb."

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5. CONCLUSION

The analysis shows that X was used to communicate with Nigerians about Peter Obi's candidacy and the Obidient Movement during the 2023 general election. X played a vital role in political mobilization across contexts and at different times. The study concludes that, while X can influence decisions to support a political candidate, it is unlikely to be the only or most significant factor in political decision-making. Political ideology, social background, personal experience, and local communication structures also shape how people receive and act on political messages. Therefore, X should be understood as a powerful but partial tool of political mobilization and agenda setting.

6. RECOMMENDATION

The study proposes a hybrid communication model that integrates traditional oral communication systems and digital technologies to promote inclusive and culturally grounded political engagement in Southeast Nigeria. Such a model should combine the credibility, accessibility, and cultural rootedness of the town crier with the speed, reach, and interactivity of X. This would enable political actors, community leaders, civil society groups, and electoral bodies to reach both digitally connected citizens and rural audiences who rely on indigenous communication channels.

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