

Networked Framing And Model Of A President On Social Networking Sites: An Analysis Of Selected Comments Of President Goodluck Jonathan's Facebook Friends

Bisallah Hashim Ibrahim

Computer Department, University of Abuja, Nigeria
hbisallah@gmail.com

Abstract: Apart from the usefulness of social media in social and economic development, its essence has also been observed in political development, especially in the area of online deliberative and participatory democracy. The media has been used for various political purposes ranging from the mobilization of citizens for election purposes to individual politician's personality management. In the developed and developing nations, social media, most importantly facebook, has been embraced as a medium for managing an aspirant into elective offices. It is on this background that this paper investigates the model of President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria apropos his three selected programmes: Subsidy Reinvestment Programme (SURE-P), Sovereign Wealth Fund and Deregulation of the Downstream Sector of Oil Industry on facebook, having used the same medium as a platform for announcing his intention of ruling the country. Content analysis was employed as the main research design. The generated data were analysed through descriptive and inferential statistics. The study revealed that the President's friends set up his personality within the context of the programmes he inaugurated as part of his transformation agenda, promised during electioneering campaigns. However, the study established that there is no absolute consensus on a politician's personality deliberation in consonance with his programmes in a social networking site. This was established through the attitudinal dispositions of the president's friends towards the initiated programmes. The study therefore has important implications for the employment of social media in politics, the citizens and other stakeholders in the Nigeria-state.

[Bisallah Hashim Ibrahim. **Networked Framing And Model Of A President On Social Networking Sites: An Analysis Of Selected Comments Of President Goodluck Jonathan's Facebook Friends.** *Rep Opinion* 2018;10(7):18-27]. ISSN 1553-9873 (print); ISSN 2375-7205 (online). <http://www.sciencepub.net/report>. 4. doi:[10.7537/marsroj100718.04](https://doi.org/10.7537/marsroj100718.04).

Key Words: President Goodluck Jonathan, Facebook, Friends, Nigeria, Networked Framing, Model of a President

1.0 Introduction

Since it is impossible for all the citizens in a country to occupy the position of Presidency, the post that allows a person to direct the affairs of the entire citizens in terms of social, political and economic ones in line with the agreed set of rules and regulations contained in such nation's constitution, there is always a tendency for having an election, in which registered political parties present candidates for the position. Out of the candidates presented by the recognized political parties, every eligible individual citizen is expected to choose by voting who, he or she believes is competent and possessing the required attributes for piloting the affairs of the state through available human and material resources. Before the scheduled voting day by the national electoral body in the nation, the presidential candidates are expected to present their various programmes through campaigns to the entire citizenry. Commenting on the patterns of voting during presidential election, Barber (1985) observes that when a citizen votes for a presidential candidate, he makes, in effect, a prediction. He chooses from among the contenders the one he thinks (or feels or guesses) would be the best president. He operates in a situation of immense uncertainty. If he has a long

voting history, he can recall time and time again when he guessed wrong. One can argue that the specific strategies and rhetoric of presidential candidates have propensity for influencing voting behaviour of a citizen. It can also be added that in a nation where the electoral system has been monetized and ethnicity has become a criterion in determining who is supposed to govern the state, there is tendency that the citizenry could make wrong decisions by voting for incompetent candidates.

However, the emergence of new media has helped politicians such as presidential candidates in shaping the views of the electorates towards them, using various media platforms such Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and so on. Through these media, presidential aspirants have realized that they can aptly capture the voting groups, especially the youths who are heavy users of the media, rather than relying on conventional media alone. In Nigeria for example, politicians have been quick to learn that the combination of demographics and access to ICTs required new strategies for communicating with their electorate. President Goodluck Jonathan declared his intention to run for the presidency on Facebook and other politicians have also adopted the medium as a

campaigning tool. What is clear, however, is that it constitutes a fundamental change to the nature of democracy and political campaign in Nigeria. "Nigerians learn new campaigning skills". On 29th June 2010, President Jonathan became the first-serving Nigerian President to launch a Facebook page in accordance with his promise to interact more with Nigerians. On September 15th 2010, Jonathan announced on Facebook that he had decided to run for public office as president of Nigeria in the general elections of 2011 (The E-Learning, 2013). Since then, President Jonathan has continued in exploring the medium for disseminating information regarding his programmes, policies and actions to more than 3 million Nigerians that established friendship with him on the social site.

Based on this background, this study aims at analyzing the facebook comments of President Good luck Jonathan's friends concerning his selected programmes. In order to capture the socio-economic and political atmosphere of the country, the President's posts or messages on Subsidy Reinvestment Programme (SURE-P), Sovereign Wealth Fund and Deregulation of the Downstream Petroleum Sector were selected for the analysis. These programmes are in line with the President's transformation agenda promised Nigerians, while launching his presidential campaign in 2010. Basically, they are in the critical sectors of the nation that need proactive solutions, that is, employment generation, infrastructural development and security. Specifically, the study seeks to investigate the factors that influenced the way friends of President Goodluck Jonathan framed his personality apropos the selected programmes and action or decision; the extent to which the friends considered various socio-economic and political problems of the country while commenting on his wall's posts regarding the programmes and executive decisions, and representation in relation to the chosen projects and decisions. With these, the study hopes to establish President Jonathan's model on the social site (Facebook) in consonance with the selected programmes.

1.1 Statement Of The Problem

Different studies have been conducted with the adoption of propositions and assumptions of framing as a theory of media effects and other theories, within the context of political communication, rhetoric, speech communication through conventional and new media (Anderson, 2010; Andersson, 2012; Rafiu, 2012; Moody, 2012; Tucker, 2013). In his attempt at investigating how personality affects preference change based on framing, Anderson (2010), adopting Big Five Inventory and Prospect Theory from the Minnesota Twin Study, found that agreeableness is the

only factor that affects preference changes between prospect theory's loss or negative and gain or positive frames. The researcher also discovered that personality traits do not affect the choice of a risky or sure option in gain and loss frames. The scholar concluded that the possibility of personality causing variation in preference changes due to framing effects, once political rhetoric is entered into the equation. Working on different influential frames in a typical political communication campaign cum public issue analysis, Anderson (2012) analysed campaigns' strategic frames and resonance frame in the media using Proposition 23 Ballot Election Campaigns in California. He found that the Yes-campaign framed Proposition 23 as an economic issue, where the economy must be prioritized and the climate can wait. The No-campaign emphasized that Proposition 23 would derail the progressive clean energy economy and that the interests behind Proposition 23 are Texas Oil Companies protecting their profits. The researcher combined propositions of discourse and framing theories for testing the research questions formulated for the study.

Rafiu (2012) tested propositions of agenda-setting theory and framing, a second-level agenda-setting theory, while investigating the role of African media, using Nigerian media as example, within the context of crisis of democratization in Africa. The scholar used Ivorian 2010 political impasse as the basis of his investigation. Through the formulated research questions, the study found that selected newspapers framed the Ivorian political crisis through economic, political, ethnicity or religion and international conspiracy; the calls of the international community and other countries on President Gbagbo to relinquish power. The study also revealed that the chosen newspapers deployed their journalistic resources towards negative disposition to President Laurent Gbagbo's sit-tight syndrome, identifying sit-tight syndrome, power sharing, political illegitimacy and, ethnicity and religious divisions as the banes of political crisis in African nations. Shifting from the previous scholars' (Anderson, 2010; Andersson, 2012; Rafiu, 2012) research agenda towards new media, by extension social media, Moody (2012), using feminist and critical race theory, investigated Facebook photos and pages targeting President Barack and Michelle Obama in 2011-2012. The study established that the Facebook fans of the two individuals build on historical stereotypes and cultural narratives to frame them negatively. Representations often depict them as evil, animalistic and socially deviant. It also demonstrated that historical representations of blacks are strong and have an impact on modern portrayal.

Tucker (2013), in his study of the genetic engineering resistance movement in New Zealand,

utilized social network and framing analyses to demonstrate how meaning-making occurs among a network of core activists. This theoretical and methodological framework encouraged the scholar to explore the contours of collective identity within the movement, given in particular the diversity of actor grievances, relationships and strategies. The study revealed that there is a shared collective identity in the movement. However, the gap in knowledge that the current study seeks to feel in line with the reviewed studies are individual's patterns of framing a president on a social site (Facebook), in the context of his programmes and decisions as a way of delivering campaign promises or programmes. In a nutshell, the study aims at revealing factors that influenced the way friends of President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria framed his personality apropos SURE- Programme, Sovereign Wealth Fund and Deregulation of the Downstream sector of the nation's oil industry; the extent to which they considered various socio-economic and political problems of the country while commenting on his wall's posts regarding the selected programmes; and his representation in relation to the programmes.

1.2 Research Questions

In line with the problem of the study discussed above, the following research questions are asked and answered through research instrument adopted for the research:

1. What factors influenced the way friends of President Goodluck Jonathan framed his personality apropos SURE-P Programme, Sovereign Wealth Fund and Deregulation of Downstream sector of Oil Industry?
2. To what extent do the friends of the President consider various socio-economic and political problems of the country while commenting on his wall's posts regarding the selected programmes and decisions?
3. What is the representation of the president in relation to his programmes?

Hypothesis

H₀: There is no correlation between the factors that influenced President Goodluck Jonathan's personality and his representation.

H₁: There is correlation between the factors that influenced President Goodluck Jonathan's personality and his representation.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Social Media As Tools For Political Campaign: The Jonathan Example

The emergence of facebook in 2004 and its subsequent usage for presidential campaigns in 2008 by two major presidential aspirants in the United States; Barack Obama and John McCain, brought new trends into political marketing and campaigns of most

nations in the world. The two American presidential candidates, especially Barack Obama, explored various social networking sites such Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and so on in connecting with their teeming supporters, most importantly the youths. Having realized that the youths constituted his (Barack Obama) main supporters and that they accessed the sites than other categories of voters, Barack Obama did not only use social media merely as a mechanism to get people to vote for him. Rather, he also understood that social media could inspire people, give them a voice, and connect them with like minds to channel their support (Salaam, 2013).

Commenting on the effectiveness of the social media in political campaigns, Bugalo (2013) observes that as the advent of social media transforms communication patterns, political campaigns have seen an open opportunity. Having witnessed the revolution of 'coffee houses' and 'public sphere' through radio and television, political figures cannot but attach significance to the power of social media in reaching the masses during a campaign. Social media has become a 21st century innovation for political parties and politicians seeking elective positions. The scholar adds that candidates are using social media to share information, and politics is almost taking over the cyberspace making campaign messages to break territorial boundaries. The new media landscape has become a place of discourse and a public sphere to share ideas, goals, accomplishments, footage on milestones and for engaging users and adding a human touch to campaigns (Bugalo, 2013). With politics, popularity means everything. A single post by a political leader or an opinion leader has the power to influence the electorate to vote for or against a candidate.

Following the successes recorded by President Barack Obama from the usage of social media for his campaigns, President Goodluck Jonathan was the first aspirant in Nigeria then to declare his intention of contesting the post of presidency in 2010 on Facebook. His announcement established a new trend in political campaigns in Nigeria since the country got her independence in 1960. It could be said that the use of social media by President Goodluck Jonathan was premised on the successful usage of various social networking sites by Barack Obama in 2008, which assisted him in winning the hearts of millions of American youths who are adherents of the new technologies. It should be noted that the Goodluck Jonathan account on Facebook is politically driven and set to portray him in good light.

It should be noted that in the past, politicians were distant from the masses who were also not entirely involved. However, social media have provided a platform to question leaders such that the

electorate are no longer a passive audience waiting to vote. Supporting this view, Sauter and Bruns (2013) note that social media are mainly used by the politicians to demonstrate their ability to move with the time. Today, social media have become normalized: they are no longer new. The media are also used by the citizens as a means of demanding and achieving change and improvement on major issues that affect them. They also use social media to support, criticize or gossip about politicians. Politicians can truly gauge where their strengths and weaknesses exist in the eyes of the public, and through this analysis, they can determine where exactly they need to focus most of their attention. Social media serve as a tool that allows a candidate to advertise and promote his or her main attributes to the entirety of his or her supporters (Salaam, 2013).

2.2 Presidential Rhetoric In The Context Of Nigerian Politics

It has become a necessity for media minders and speech writers of any president that wants to connect with his or her citizens to employ various speech communication strategies for the effective persuasion on certain policies or decisions of such president. It remains practically impossible to separate persuasion or rhetoric from presidential speech, since the citizenry would find it difficult to accept government's decisions without government providing cogent reasons for such decisions. "Politics without communication is like having blood without veins and arteries: it's not really going anywhere. A communicator who targets a mass audience does so in a calculative – and potentially manipulative– manner" (Romarheim, 2005:2). In this respect, it could be said that whenever a president is addressing citizens on his programmes of action, tendencies are there that a coordinated rhetorical elements and audience winning strategies would be employed in calculative and manipulative ways.

In a contemporary society, the term 'rhetoric' often has negative connotations not necessarily implied by its original meaning (Romarheim, 2005). However, rhetoric has three dimensions: logos, ethos and pathos. Ethos deals with the speaker's capability to display a personal character which makes his speech credible and trustworthy. Pathos is concerned with the speaker's power of stirring and arousing the emotions of the audience; and in logos lies the power to provide truth by means of persuasive and rational argument (Beer and De Landtsheer 2004) cited in Alo, (2012). It has been observed that political leaders do employ various means in convincing their followers based on their ideological underpinnings and orientation. They do this through the selection of some rhetorical tools that directly appeal to the emotions of their audience (Kennan, 2001 in Alo, 2012). Alo

(2012) concludes that in democratic political contexts, the intention of aspirant-leaders is to attract the potential followers to themselves through their policies. In other words, Presidential rhetoric entails presidential communication and persuasion strategies of winning the hearts of the citizenry, especially political opponents and policy makers.

2.3 Understanding Public Trust And Online Deliberation

Whenever an elected public official fails to perform to the expectations of the citizenry, the issue of trust becomes a thorny discussion. The citizenry would perceive such official as a betrayal, who is using the state resources to his advantages at the detriment of the masses. In developing democracies, especially in Africa, public trust remains debatable given the recourse to leadership failure whenever the problems of the nations are being discussed. According to Iroghama (2012), trust is the ingredients through which the citizens evaluate government policies, programmes, promises, honesty and justices, as well as politicians. Trust enhances confidence in institutions and consequently attracts cooperation of citizens to the agreed policies and programmes of the governments. When this is lacking, there would be a room for public distrust, which will lead to nonchalant attitude among the citizens towards government programmes and policies. However, the citizens' perceived distrust on the part of the government usually leads to a lot of discussions both in real public and networked spheres. In the real public sphere, conventional media and public protests are usually employed for the effective deliberation of various issues that resulted to the perceived public distrust, while social media and new technologies are use on the networked sphere. Birdwell (2013), referring to Benkler, is however of the view that the Internet gives voice to more people, providing them with more information, and allowing the expression of more views, which may eventually encourage citizens to become more critically engaged in debating and choosing opinions on the basis of myriad factors. Deliberation is more than a mere exchange of words; it should be reciprocal, reasonable, and open-minded (Price, 2006). Arguing along with Price, Gwrodimos () notes that the existence and evolution of democracy requires a finite space within which issues are discussed and decisions are made.

Situating his delineation of political trust within Nigerian politics, Iroghama (2012) observes that political trust or trust in governments in Nigeria stems from a number of factors. These are economic performance, media campaign, interest in public affairs, religious membership, political participation, interpersonal trust, lack of basic needs, and management of corruption. Iroghama (2012), making

reference to Bourne, adds that the decline in trust for government that was witnessed immediately after 2007 general elections in Nigeria led voters and indeed majority of Nigerians to demand electoral reform. Trust can be defined as the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest, and cooperative behaviour, based on shared norms on the part of other members of that community. Political trust is based on an individual's evaluation of the political sphere.

Internet technologies have considerable appeal to users because they permit group interactions among geographically dispersed and diverse participants, potentially bringing far greater reach, reduced cost, and increased representation to exercises in deliberative democracy (Price, 2006). However, effective deliberation on issues of national importance depends on the nature of political atmosphere that is in existence in a country. For instance, deliberation between citizens and government leaders or policy formulators would be difficult if not practically impossible in a country where there are autocratic leaders or where participatory democracy is not embraced in its real sense. Citizens in most African nations have witnessed many challenging discussions on certain national issues in public sphere that have direct effects on them rather than 'the elites' or 'the rich class'. Since it was the intention of President Jonathan to establish a two-way conversation between him and Nigerians (especially those on facebook), one can argue that comments of his friends should be inclusive in term of providing useful tips on how to approach varied socio-economic and political problems being addressed through his transformation agenda, rather than rebuking or blaming.

3.0 Theory/Calculation

3.1 Framing Theory

Framing as a theory of mass media effect stems from agenda-setting theory which proposes that media select certain public issues and prioritize such in the minds of the public so that the public could attach necessary importance to by placing the issues on their front pages, if print media, and as main highlights on electronic media. The media draws the public attention to certain topics, it indirectly decides what people think about, and the journalists select the topics. This is the original agenda setting 'thought'. In news items, the way in which the news is brought, and the frame in which the news is presented, is also a choice made by journalists. Thus, a frame refers to the way media and media gatekeepers organize and present the events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided (University of Twente, 2013 and Folarin, 2005). Suffice to say that journalists' selection of topics or issues to be framed for the audience is consequent upon the journalists'

perception of the issues and their organisation's philosophy towards such issues. Thus, individuals can also discuss or comment on an issue or someone's personality in a networked sphere, based on their different orientations towards the issue and affinity with the person. Citing Gamson, while establishing individual frame within real public sphere, D'Angelo (2002) notes that individuals converse about political issues using their mental frames about those issues. Therefore, the frames of individuals or groups are generally believed to mediate the power of textual frames.

Expanding D'Angelo's view, The Frame Works Institute (2002) points out that people use mental shortcuts to make sense of the world. These mental shortcuts rely on "frames," or a small set of internalized concepts and values that allow individuals to accord meaning to unfolding events and new information. These frames can be triggered by various elements, such as language choices and different messengers or images. These communications elements, therefore, have a profound influence on decision outcomes. Examining different types of frame among individuals, Patrick and Meirick (2007) explain that episodic frames reduce life to a series of disconnected episodes, random events or case studies. In contrast, thematic frames provide details about trends, not just individuals; they identify shortcomings at the community or systems level that have contributed to the problem. The more episodically social issues are framed, the less likely it is that citizens will hold government accountable for solving the problem. The more thematic and contextual the coverage, the more likely it is that citizens will see the issue as one appropriate to government resolution (Patrick and Meirick, 2007). It should be emphasized that the scholars examined in this section only focused on media and individuals frames within the context of real public sphere rather than networked public sphere, which has become more debatable in line with the recent political development across the world, and most especially in nations where democracy is still at its developing stage. However, the current study sought to investigate individual frames as independent and dependent variables through the research questions formulated in relation to the specific propositions of the theory within the background of networked sphere, using a president's personality as a case since previous studies have exclusively focused on framing theory's propositions application within the real public sphere.

4 Methods And Materials

Based on the study's purpose, content analysis was employed as the main research design with purposive sampling technique and content categories as sampling technique and research instrument

respectively. The first 50 comments of President Jonathan's friends on each of the selected programmes: SURE-P, Sovereign Wealth Fund and Deregulation of the Downstream Sector of Oil Industry were purposively selected based on the criterion that the comments contained information peculiar to the chosen programmes. Therefore, 150 comments were purposively selected and analysed in consonance with the formulated research questions and hypothesis of the study. Suffice to note that the comments were posts from the fans of President Goodluck Jonathan on his facebook page.

Content Categorization

In this section, the researcher deemed it fit to explain what each category that facilitated collection of relevant data entails.

1. Factors Considered:

This entails the qualities that motivated friends of the president to comment on the selected programmes. Basically, the category comprised the following sub-categories: Party affiliation, Leadership competence, Inept leadership, Ethnicity, Corrupt individual.

2. Socio-economic and Political Issues that frame President's personality:

This category comprised various socio-economic and political problems being faced by the citizenry and considered by the friends of the president that commented on the chosen programmes. These problems comprised infrastructural decay, lack of adequate electricity, insecurity, corruption, lack of truly independent electoral body and so on.

3. Model of the President:

This entails attitudinal disposition of the friends of the president towards him within the context of the selected programmes. Positive Representation, Negative Representation and Neutral Representation were devised as sub-categories for the collection of necessary data.

Results And Discussion

This section contains the findings of the study generated through the adopted research instrument and discussed with specific conceptual and theoretical frameworks reviewed through identified variables. One hundred and fifty comments were analysed. Specifically, research question one had 84 friends of the president that commented on the selected programmes; question two had 91 while question three had 148. However, the difference did not constitute any significant error, but only established individual difference of the president's friends towards him and his chosen programmes. In all, the study had a total of 323 thoughts that contained model of the president in connection with his programmes studied in this study.

Research Question One: What factors influenced the way friends of President Goodluck Jonathan

framed his personality apropos SURE-P Programme, Sovereign Wealth Fund and Deregulation of Downstream sector of the Oil Industry?

This question sought to reveal different reasons given by the president's friends while framing his personality based on the programmes he initiated in line with his transformation agenda. The findings are presented below with appropriate interpretation:

Table 1: Factors that influenced the framing of President Jonathan's Personality apropos His Chosen Programmes

Factors	No	%
Party Affiliation	3	3.6
Leadership Competence	20	23.8
Inept Leadership	41	48.8
Ethnicity	1	1.2
Corrupt Individual	7	8.3
Inept Leadership and Corrupt Individual	10	11.9
Party Affiliation and Corrupt Individual	2	2.4
Total	84	100

According to the data presented in table 1 above, it is clearly established that majority of the president's friends (48.8%) considered inept leadership followed by leadership competence (23.8%), while framing his personality in relation with the programmes: SURE-P, Sovereign Wealth Fund and Deregulation of Downstream sector of Oil Industry in the country. The table also established that 10 friends, representing 11.9%, believed that the president cannot deliver his electoral promises based on the three programmes. His assumed inept leadership style and corrupt tendency are adduced for this. The following excerpts from the analysed comments are germane:

Comment 1: *Yong man u really disapoint us as u fail 2 meet up our expectation mr president am sorry bcos we can't vote 4u again bcos u are a disapointment 2 nigerian (sic).*

Comment 2: *Mr president u are d best leader since d (sic) inception of our democracy man God lead u aright tnx (sic).*

Comment 1 establishes failure of the president in performing to the expectations of the citizenry, while comment 2 is in support of the president's leadership style thus far. The researcher can keenly notes that there is no much difference in those friends that considered inept leadership and leadership competence in setting up President's Jonathan personality apropos the selected programmes. This finding corroborates the observation of The FrameWorks Institute (2002) on individual frames. The organization points out that people use mental shortcuts to make sense of the world. These mental shortcuts rely on "frames," or a

small set of internalized concepts and values that allow individuals to accord meaning to unfolding events and new information. These frames can be triggered by various elements, such as language choices and different messengers or images. These communications elements, therefore, have a profound influence on decision outcomes. The finding is also in consonance with the classification of frames within individual prism, provided by Patrick and Meirick (2007). The scholars hold that the more episodically social issues are framed, the less likely it is that citizens will hold government accountable for solving the problem. The more thematic and contextual the

coverage, the more likely it is that citizens will see the issue as one appropriate for government resolution.

Research Question Two: To what extent do the friends of the President consider various socio-economic and political problems of the country while commenting on his wall’s posts regarding the selected programmes?

This question was formulated to examine the extent to which the president’s friends considered various socio-economic and political problems affecting the country as part of motivating elements while commenting on the page. The data found were illustrated and discussed below:

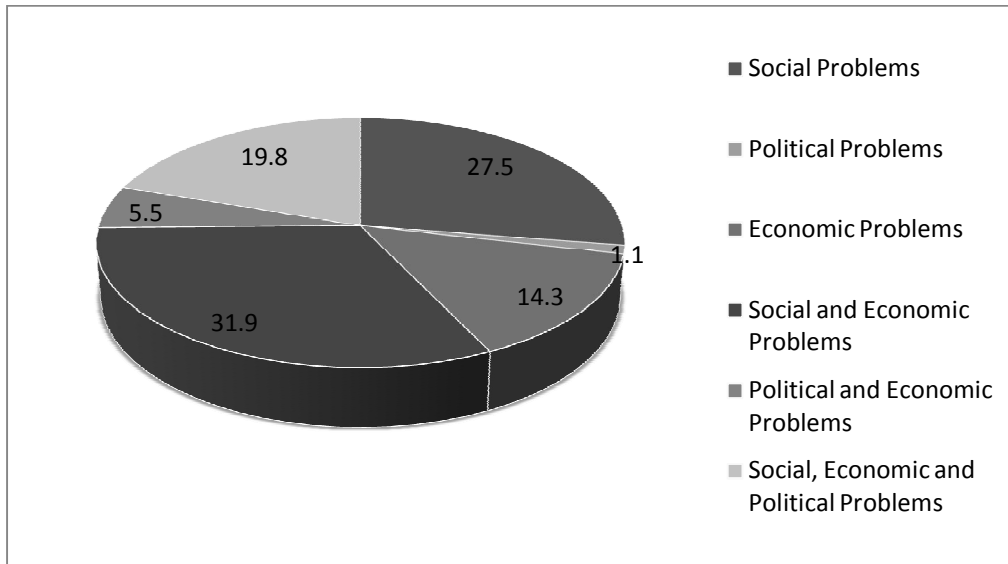


Figure 1: National Problems that Motivate President Jonathan’s Friends while commenting

The figure 1 above reveals that majority of the president’s friends that commented on the studied programmes annotated social and economic problems (31.9%) being experience by Nigerians in their comments. They specifically pointed out social problems such as infrastructural decay, poor power supply and unemployment as economic problem that should be addressed by the president; if truly he wanted to transform the country as he promised during his electioneering campaigns. It should be noted that twenty-five friends (27.5%) considered social problems alone in the course of commenting on the programmes. Thus, the president was considered as the only person that can solve the social and economic problems facing the country based on the power vested in him by the country’s constitution. Below are some of the extracted comments which give more clarification to the findings:

Comment 1: *Pl's (sic) Mr President we need economy transformation. Transformation in power sector and job creation for the timing Nigeria youth*

(sic). pl's (sic) transparency and accountability in all govt (sic) ramification. GOD BLESS Nigeria.

Comment 2: *Mr Jonathan is always smiling while we the mases (sic) are always sad. Personaly (sic) i think he is happy at his achivement (sic) of being the president of Nigeria and not what good Nigeria as a country has achived. (sic) if you must name Nigeria's achievements they are corruption,6 trillion naira debt, bad roads, bad governance, darkness, police brutality, armed robberies, sharing of money.....*

It could be deduced that the writer of the first comment was referring the president to his transformation agenda which encompassed provision of social amenities and job generation for the Nigerian youths, while the second writer specifically highlighted the varied socio-economic problems in the country. These findings support the ideas of Price (2006), Birdwell (2013) and Gwrodimos (). The scholars note that deliberation is more than a mere exchange of words. It should be reciprocal, reasonable, and open-minded, the Internet, according

to these scholars, gives voice to more people, provide them with more information, and allow the expression of more views, which may eventually encourage citizens to become more critically engaged in debating and choosing opinions on the basis of myriad of factors; and that the existence and evolution of democracy requires a finite space within which issues are discussed and decisions are made.

Research Question Three: What is the representation of the president in relation to the chosen programmes?

This question was drafted purposely to reveal the president's model or image among his friends in consonance with the three selected programmes he initiated as part of his transformation agenda. Three basic categories were devised for this question. These include positive, negative and neutral representations, and by extension, the president's model in the networked public sphere.

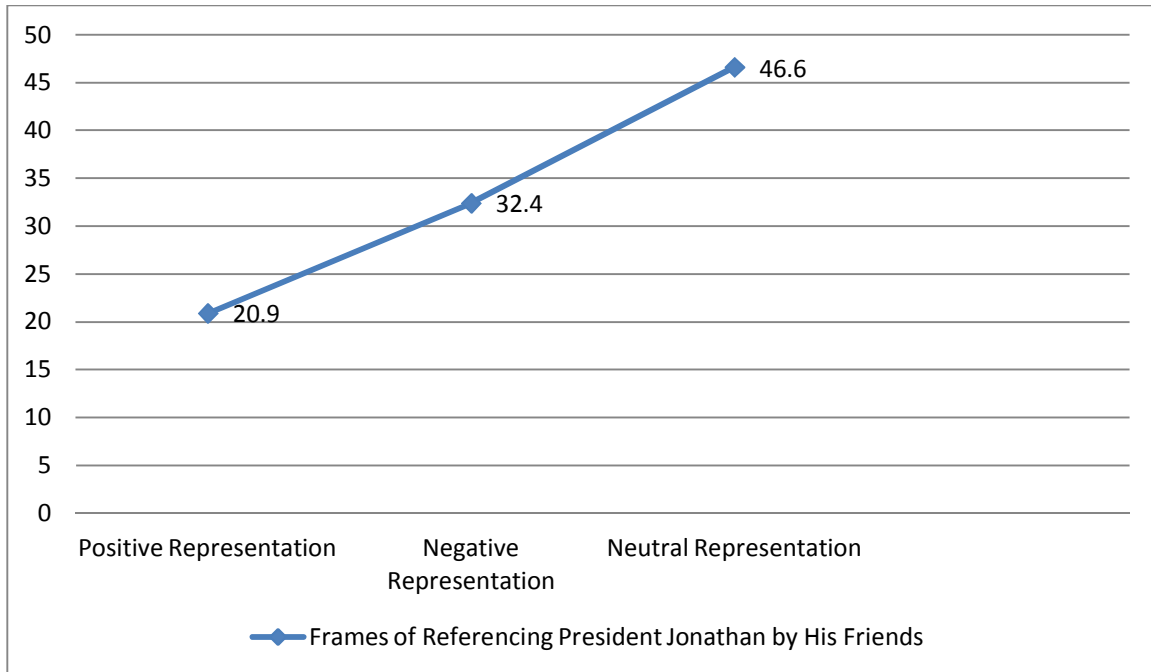


Figure 2: Representation of President Jonathan by His Friends

Figure 2 above establishes the representations of President Jonathan on the premises of the chosen programmes. According to the data presented in the figure, majority of the president's friends (46.6%) deployed their messages towards neutral position, that is, they were neither in support nor against the programmes and the President, while 32.4% indicated their unfavourable disposition towards the President and his programmes. The excerpt below expatiates the finding further:

Comment 1: *Mr president, i didn't see any positive effect of subsidy removal on the masses rather it brought hardship on dem, uhve failed (sic).*

Comment 2: *What is sure-p? What has happened to the other subsidy fund? Voice mail. Lawless society. (sic) Mr. Jonathan if you can stand tall and challenge corrupt politicians, you too should keep a clean closet.*

Comments 1 and 2 clearly show the writers' unfavourable disposition towards the president and his

programmes and neutrality respectively. It could also be said that the writers employed indirect statement. The findings are in consonance with the position of Alo (2012) on presidential rhetoric. He concludes that in democratic political contexts, the intention of aspirant-leaders is to attract the potential followers to themselves through their policies. In other words, Presidential rhetoric entails presidential communication and persuasive strategies of winning the hearts of the citizenry, especially political opponents and policy makers.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀: There is no correlation between the factors that influenced President Goodluck Jonathan's framing personality and his representation.

H₁: There is correlation between the factors that influenced President Goodluck Jonathan's personality framing and his representation.

Table 2: Correlation between the factors that influenced President Goodluck Jonathan's personality framing and his representation**Correlations**

		Factors that influenced framing of President Jonathan's personality?	What is the representation of the president apropos his selected programmes and decision?
Factors that influenced framing of President Jonathan's personality?	Pearson Correlation	1	.221*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.044
	N	84	83
What is the representation of the president apropos his selected programmes and decision?	Pearson Correlation	.221*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.044	
	N	83	148

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Data in the table 2 above clearly showed that there was significant correlation between the factors that influenced President Goodluck Jonathan's personality framing and his representation in relation with the programmes he initiated. This is established by Pearson Correlation of 0.221 and 2-tailed significant level of 0.044. Thus, it could be said that the factors considered by the president's friends had significant effect on his representation apropos the chosen programmes.

Conclusion And Recommendations

The president under study had the conviction of establishing a two-way political driven communication with his supporters and the entire citizens through facebook. Basically, he intended to inform and seek fora feedback on his programmes and decisions. Based on this premise, the data gathered and analysed revealed that friends of the president on the identified social medium were of the view that the president lacked adequate knowledge or skills of governing the state and delivering the programmes he initiated. They also set up his personality through various socio-economic problems within the context of the programmes he inaugurated as part of his transformation agenda promised during his electioneering campaigns. However, the study has established that there is no absolute consensus on a politician's personality deliberation in consonance with his programmes in a social networking site. The study therefore has important implications for the president under study, the citizens and other stakeholders in the Nigeria-state. Thus, the following specific recommendations are made for them:

1. The president should always consider it necessary to read through comments of his friends so as to gain full insight of the various socio-economic challenges highlighted for better policy formulation and collective decision making.

2. The media minders, especially social media strategists of the president should always analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the messages they intend to post on the president's wall page. This will help in knowing the appropriateness of such messages in relation with specific characteristics of the president's friends. In other words, online audience analysis should be conducted, and by extension, facebook users' psychology.

3. Since the president intends to identify with the citizens through the medium (facebook), it would augur well if intending programmes or decisions can be posted on his wall page for collective deliberation. This will serve as a platform for the citizens to have inputs in the administration of both human and materials resources available at the president disposal.

4. The citizens, especially those on the president's friends list, should see the transformation of the country as a collective responsibility. There is need for every citizen to contribute to the transformation agenda through constructive criticisms. Where it is necessary, strategic documents should be put forth for the presidency so as to get appropriate solutions to the identified varied socio-economic problems.

5. Assessment of the initiated programmes should be done by the concerned stakeholders, most importantly the country's citizens on networked sphere. This should be explored sufficiently in the area of analyzing the pros and cons of the resource persons selected for the implementation of the programmes by the presidency, rather than blaming the president alone.

References

1. Alo, M.A., (2012) "A Rhetorical Analysis of Selected Political Speeches of Prominent African Leaders", British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, Vol. 10 No. 1 Pp 87-100.

2. Anderson, K.D., (2010) "*Framing Traits: The Role of Personality in Framing Effects*". A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska. Accessed on www.digitalcommons.unl.edu
3. Andersson, A., (2012) "*Framing Climate Policy: A Study of the Proposition 23 Ballot Election Campaigns in California 2010*". A Thesis submitted to Department of Government, Uppsala University. Accessed on www.uppsala.edu
5. Barber, J. D., (1985) *The Presidential Character* (3rd edition). New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc. Accessed on www.acad.fcps.org
6. Birdwell, J., (2013) "A New Agora? The Internet and Everyday Deliberative Democracy", Accessed on www.bertelsmannChapter.pdf
7. Bugalo, A., (2013) "The Use of Social Media in Political Campaigns Bridgette", Accessed on www.journalism.co.za
8. D'Angelo, P. (2002) "News framing as a Multiparadigmatic research program: A response to Entman", *Journal of Communication*, 52, Pp 870–888.
9. Folarin, B. (2005) *Theories of Mass Communication: An Introductory Text* (Revised Edition) Abeokuta: Link Publications.
10. Gwrodimos, A., (2013) *The Evolution of Democracy*. New York: Prentice-Hall.
11. Irohama P. I., (2012) "Trust in Government: A Note from Nigeria", *International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Sciences* Vol. 2 No. 1 (2012) pp 2226-3624.
12. Moody, M., (2012) "New Media-Same Stereotypes: An Analysis of Social Media Depictions of President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama", *NMEDIAC Journal* Accessed on www.ibiblio.org
13. Patrick, J.A., and Meirick, P.C., (2007) "Wanted, Dead or Alive: Media Frames, Frame Adoption and Support for the War in Afghanistan", *Journal of Communication*, Vol.57, Pp 119-141.
14. Price, V., (2006) "Citizens Deliberating Online: Theory and Some Evidence" in *Online Deliberation: Design, Research, and Practice*. Todd Davies and Beth Simone Noveck (eds.). CSLI Publications.
15. Rafiu, D.A., (2012) "Media and Democratization Crisis in Africa: Nigerian Newspapers' Coverage of Ivorian 2010 Political Crisis", A Long Essay submitted to the Department of Communication and Language Arts, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
16. Romarheim, A.G., (2005) *Definitions of Strategic Political Communication*. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs. Accessed on www.nupi.no
17. Sauter, T. and Bruns, A., (2013) "Moving Politics Online: How Australian Mainstream Media Portray Social Media as Political Tools", Accessed on www.mappingonlinepublics.net
18. Tucker, C., (2013) "Using Social Network Analysis and Framing to Assess Collective Identity in the Generic Engineering Resistance Movement of Aotearoa New Zealand", *Social Movement Studies* Vol 12, Number 1 pp 81-95 (15).
19. The E-Learning (2013) "ICTs and Political Deliberation" Accessed on www.elearning-africa.com
20. The Frameworks Institute (2002) *Framing Public Issues: A Toolkit* Accessed on www.frameworksinstitute.com Accessed
21. University of Twente (2013) *Framing Theory: History and Orientation*. Accessed on www.utwente.nl

7/25/2018