

Television Coverage of 2015 Presidential Campaigns and Organisational Behaviours of Bank Employees in Nigeria

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Abstract

Banks in Nigeria have of recent been procuring television sets to ensure availability of TV programmes to staff members. That development is founded on the conviction that television has consistently impacted on the lives of audience members. This study investigated how TV coverage of the 2015 electioneering campaigns influenced the behaviours of bank employees in Nigeria. Using the survey and observation methods, the study took place in three commercial banks at Abuja, the Federal Capital. Findings revealed that television coverage of the political campaigns of the top two contending political parties – the Peoples Democratic Party and All Progressives Congress within January – March, 2015 influenced bankers' behaviours such that interpersonal communication, staff relationships and work performance were adversely affected. The paper encourages continued provision of television for bankers at work but cautions against unhealthy actions capable of breaching supportive organisational climate.

Keywords: Influence, coverage, political campaigns, organisational behaviour, employees, banks.

1. Background to the Study

There was an era when television viewing in Nigeria was mainly an evening affair. That period, which could be termed as the infant and teen age of television in the country, stretched from the 60s to 90s. Stations used to open at 4.00pm and shut down at midnight. Then the audience, dominated by family members, made time to watch TV programmes after work. The available TV set positioned in a corner of the family sitting room of those who afforded it served the household. But the story has since altered for several positive reasons such as 24-hour transmission of rich and diverse menu, increased financial capacity, growing interest in domestic and foreign affairs, need for information for the adult and entertainment for the children whose interest in watching children programmes that are educational and entertaining by design has motivated parents to provide more than a TV set for the family.

That is not all. The recent initiatives whereby organisations now provide television sets for employees at work have added an encouraging dimension. Today there is an explosion in the number of television sets in the country, even as the audience keeps expanding. The presence of television in offices seems to affirm the elitist belief in the mass media of communication as conveyors of knowledge by which they have upturned the globe. Television in particular has in diverse ways influenced the world due to the combined audio and video impact on its audience particularly, the workplace sub-audience which has been growing, showing more devotion of time and attention to its contents. Interestingly, observation holds that employees do sacrifice an unspecified but huge portion of official innings attending to televised signals amidst each day's basic job engagements.

Unlike the smaller home setting, the workplace audience composition in Nigeria is characterised by persons of different political discernment, cultural language, spiritual influences and social orientations that bear on their perceptions and interpretation of programme contents. Beyond the differences, persuasion is strong among corporate communicators that television could benefit workers through its information, education and entertainment substance. Information in particular can build or collapse people, relationships, dreams or goals. Such realisation has, however, come with a frame of inference that the quality of employee's organisational life is basically essential to the individual's productivity and team performance.

Every employee's life, critical and paramount to the management, is distinguished by certain peculiarities such as habits, attitudes, and behaviours, which can be natural or learned via exposure to television and other social and environmental elements, and developed through contacts with other people. It is however pertinent to voice that where corporate life is pleasant, TV can stimulate healthy interactions, debate or discussion on immediate or remote issues of topical concern. Reason advanced by Goldharber (1993) for such inclinations is that "As employees interact with their peers, subordinates and supervisors, they gain insights and knowledge about the background, experiences, attitudes and behavior of the other people". The capacity of television to daily chat up the path for interactions among workers in fulfilment of the agenda-setting role lies in its strength to convey meaning easier and better than other mass media. Akpan (1987) argues that, television can communicate better than most other media because it has the capacity to motivate learning. It communicates simultaneously with sound and visual symbols in motion. This argument was something of monumental reality

during the 2015 general elections when various television houses brought into Nigerian homes and offices political activities across the nation.

1.1 Televised 2015 Presidential Campaigns

The 2015 Presidential Campaigns in Nigeria were heavily reported by all arms of the media but television towered above the rest on account of the presentations that yanked the emotions of Nigerians. By showing and telling the rich and sensitive national audience some of the campaign proceedings which took the forms of advertisements, media briefings, campaign tours, courtesy visits to prominent citizens, musical concerts, and so on, the medium justified to a great point, its value as one with the greatest potential to fulfill the core functions of the media. Its service to the nation in this direction was superb as the medium's ability to serve Nigerians with consistency the fresh menu of the engaging political warfare ensured to some extent an informed electorate.

Though several political parties were in the fierce race for power, the real warfare had the ruling party (Peoples Democratic Party) and the main opposition (All Progressives Congress) in the box. Both employed indiscretions, casting decorum and decency out of the way. Use of hate language by the campaigners, rioting and violent clashes by their supporters were all reported. These and many more are regarded as features of Nigerian politics (Nwokocha 2007) but, the centerpiece of this study was to determine how television reportage of the hate-ridden campaign activities between President Goodluck Jonathan of PDP and Muhammadu Buhari, the APC standard bearer were received by bank workers in Nigeria, and also to gauge the extent to which the portrayals affected them at work.

2. Conceptual definitions

As applied in this study, it is pertinent to define the following concepts. *Influence* refers to TV's power to persuade or dissuade audience members through its political programmes during the 2015 Presidential Election Campaigns in Nigeria. *Television coverage* has to do with the assignment of political reporters to campaign venues to record and report proceedings for broadcast, or sending a team for live reporting of the 2015 presidential campaigns. *Political campaigns* are those activities political parties do in efforts to market their candidates and win supporters. *Workplace behaviours* entail all forms of communicative behaviours of bank staffers as occasioned by television presentations of the presidential campaigns. *Employees* are the legitimate bank workers.

3. Theoretical framework

The Agenda-setting theory formed the framework of the study. There is a consensus amongst scholars that the mass media of communication are setters of agenda and shapers of opinion on what the public thinks and discusses in accordance with media-set agenda, which could spring from people, government, organisations; or from social, cultural, political events and so on. The intensity of time and space accorded them influences public perception and eventual participation in thinking and discussion. In part, the synopsis of the theories' propositions highlighted by DeFleur (2010) are that, the press selects a number of issues, topics and events from its continuous surveillance of the environment to process and report daily as "the news"; the press gives each of the news stories selected greater or lesser prominence in its reports by assigning it a particular position, giving it more or less time or space, in its print or broadcast news presentation, among others. These were obvious in the political event of this study. The significance of the theory to this work is robust as the selected broadcast presentations of the 2015 presidential campaigns did not only form the agenda but also guided the thoughts pattern of the bank workers, and influenced participation in the political debate.

4. Review of Literature

On the role of the media in Nigeria electoral process, Kalu (1985) observes that "the ordinary expectation is that the mass media will focus on serious matters that portend serious consequences for the people and their political choices". Akpan (1985) maintains: the media must clarify issues during campaigns, bring aspirants close to the electorate, and teach the differences between party and candidate to enable the electorate make a wise choice. In these views, the mass media are portrayed as being capable of political choices and actions. The TV in particular performs this in Nigeria to confirm Hart's (1996) assertion that "television has changed politics itself". The medium's success in changing politics arises from the fact that it has changed and converted people. The unfolding events in the politics of Nigeria today and the manner of participation in recent electoral processes and activities by Nigerian youth and women, always seen in colourful adornment, have been consistent with Hart's submission.

Interestingly however, not even reported political violence on television these days can discourage the politically conscious Nigerian youth and women who, with biased aggressiveness, stop at nothing defending the cause of their respective affiliations, even violently. Audi (1970) pictures violence a "the unjustifiable use of force" to gain advantage. Corsini (1999) considers violence to be the manifestation of hostility against persons or

property. Anifowoshe (1982) maintains that violence is “the use or threat of physical act carried out by an individual or individuals within a political system against another individual or individuals and/or property, and whose objective, choice of targets or victims, surrounding circumstances, implementation, and effects have political significance, that is, tend to modify the behaviour of other existing arrangement of power that has some consequences for the political system. The concept of violence has been expanded to include psychological, structural and physical. According to Galtung (1991), psychological violence points to generating and living in fear, terrorising people or publishing abusive material directed against people; while structural violence which is usually indirect and more destructive the other two, involves political depression, economic exploitation and deprivation of rights such as freedom of choice. In Nigeria, violence or threat of any kind is carried out on purpose: to intimidate opposition to a state of voicelessness so as to win them. The fundamental reason for violent attitudes is posted by Ake (1964) when he argues that “those who win state power can have all the wealth they want even without working, while those who lose the struggle for state power cannot have security in the wealth they have made even by hard work. The capture of state power inevitably becomes a matter of death and life”. The application of force either legally or illegally is commonplace in the politics of Nigeria and the mass media can be credited for portrayals of violence in their reportage. The implication of TV reporting of political violence in one part of the country can stir similar occurrences in other parts as well.

4.1 Television Power

What TV does in advanced democracies is being replicated in Nigeria through its agenda setting power. Standing on McCombs’s (1972) reasoning, Hughes and Kroehler (2010), Jamieson & Campbell (2001) agree the media use their set agenda on critical issues and concerns to influence what we spend our time thinking about and discussing with others. Ciroma (2004) says media focus should be to set the correct political agenda for the audience and not allowing the politicians to do so. For television, taking over the business of setting the political agenda can be very appropriate, but its practicability in Nigeria is a task that must first be subjected to the prevailing political structures and forces that could undermine the objectives of such effort. However, a persistent mindset of media professionals and the owners to influence the attitudes and political behaviours of the electorate through well-set political programmes capable of engendering true political cultivation can ensure success in that direction.

For Morgan, “the basic hypothesis guiding cultivation analysis is that the more time one spends watching television (that is, the more television dominates one’s source of information and consciousness), the more likely one is to hold conceptions of reality that can be traced to television’s most stable and recurrent portrayals of life and society”. During the 2015 Presidential campaigns in Nigeria television prevailed as a major source of political information for Nigerian Bankers, influenced their actions and attitudes thereby crediting the premise that news and information programmes are the major sources of people’s political orientations, attitudes and opinions, Morgan (ibid).

Television used commercials, documentaries, interviews, discussions and live coverage of political campaigns etc to prepare Nigerians for the 2015 presidential election. Certain of the programmes were actually inspired by the campaign nature and strategies of the combatants. The term “combatant” is used advisedly because, when candidates campaign by attacking rather than advocating, they invite the press to describe the campaign in military terms (Jamieson & Campbell 2001).

Though combativeness was detestably displayed during campaigns, Goodluck Jonathan exhibited sportsmanship, a rare spirit in Nigerian politics, when he called to congratulate Muhammadu Buhari, on his victory. Jonathan’s impressive step seemed to have derived from his perception of politics as sports as opposed to his opponent’s perception of politics as battle. Cramer (1992) cited in Jamieson and Campbell (2001) argues that, if the electoral process is viewed as a game, it has contending sides, rules and goals. Sadly, when or after watching certain TV clips, the contending sides in the banking halls appeared lawless in the pursuit of their political wish. Again, Jamieson and Campbell (2001) posit that “Reliance on television means that increasingly our political world contains memorable pictures rather than memorable words. And words increasingly have been spoken in places chosen to heighten their impact”. Nigerians have been benefiting from this goodness when television takes words with pictures from political campaign grounds to homes, recreational parks/centers, banking halls and other workplaces thereby raising the political consciousness of the people. The conclusion is that television has mainstreamed Nigerian Bank workers to the point of assuming political relevance.

5. Purpose and Significance of Political Campaigns

Political campaigns are generally considered as a means to an end – power. Those in power use it to ensure continuity in office while the power-thirsty engage in it purposefully to wrestle power out of the grip of the incumbent. Campaigns are basically communication activities intended to, through sense making, win loyalty and support from the political community. It involves the use of communication tools and media to earn effectiveness. For Aduradola & Ojukwu (2012).

Political campaigns are an organized effort which seeks to influence the decision making process within a specific group or environment. It can also be viewed as the mobilization of forces either by an organization or individual to influence others in order to effect an identified and desired political change.

This view on political campaigns is orientated toward *change* which typifies the campaign language of those gunning for power but *continuity* which defines the campaign message of the incumbent is blatantly ignored. However, the important thing as noted by Aduralola & Ojukwu is that 'political campaigns show people the political candidates' ability to sensitise the political community in relation to making the community see them as potential and better representatives of the people'. In politics, campaigns are crucial in any candidate's roadmap to power. Under fair political weather, it can determine the outcome of elections depending on the audience's bias which can be influenced by several factors such as campaign language, candidate's personality, party manifesto, track record of candidates, media influence, ethnic affiliations. In political campaigns, what is considered very crucial are the signals transmitted to the electorate. Those signals are the message. A campaign message is an important and potent tool that politicians use to express views and feelings to the public with the intention of reshaping and redirecting the electorate's opinions to align with theirs (Aduradola & Ojukwu 2012). The candidates' personages consist in their perceived or actual credibility which determines their believability. The audience everywhere still prefers people they can trust to lead them, though such trust is, in the main, relative. Candidates' pedigree counts in any political contest where the verdict rests upon the electorate. Experience, exposure, pragmatism, and the political will constitute the credentials that facilitate the marketability of candidates. Besides, party manifestos that contain the programmes of a would-be government can influence the choice of candidates when scaled against each other and the media can sell political candidates to the electorate by conferring status. Status conferral is the process of hyperbolising a person, event or thing to appreciable height through sustained packaging.

However, there is the need to identify the types of audience aimed for mobilisation and participation in the campaign processes. Oyeleye (2004) has in this connection talked about audience in three categories: the **Captive Audience**, known to be fanatically interested in a mobilization programme and therefore gives his support without any need for persuasion; the **Hostile Audience** who is an outright uninterested individual in the programme from which he/she may steer clear by not giving any support to it; and the **Monitor Audience**, noted for being indifferent and outright disinterested in the programme. This study found in existence fanaticism, hostility and nonchalance as eloquently representing the three audience categories.

6. Nature of Political Campaigns in Nigeria

The nature of political campaigns in Nigeria can best be described on the premise of known features that have become the usual and constant dots on the nation's democratic space. In any democracy, elections are the only processes by which people get voted for certain jobs. Olaitan (2005) identifies election as the only acceptable institutionalised process enabling some or all of the recognised members of a democratic society to choose office holders.

The campaign nature and tone are influenced by two forces: the force of change and the force of continuity. Political campaigns in Nigeria are usually conducted with little or no tolerance for opponents. Craving strongly for power, major opponents as witnessed between Jonathan and Buhari in the 2015 presidential race consistently smeared the body politics, using intemperate language to design the soul of nearly non-issues based campaigns that had little appeal to the electorate. The language is one of falsehood in Nigeria as it is in grown democracy. Hahn (1998) has written that: the language of politics is simply language. It can be used to tell a truth or a lie. In accordance with this, the PDP in an effort to tell some truth about Buhari flooded Nigerian homes and offices with clips of his antecedents, depicting him as one with despotic traits, unfit to lead the country. The certificate issue, hot enough to consume Buhari's reputation and mar his presidential value, became a media issue. The APC stopped at nothing attacking the Jonathan government, employing every means, platform and opportunity to expose its deficiencies so as to undermine PDP's fortunes at the polls. The 2015 presidential campaigns were more volatile and threatening, compelling all Nigerians to desire Divine intervention.

7. Statement of the Problem

The role of the mass media is generally important to the society. In election periods for instance, the electorate relies on the media for necessary information to guide their actions and possibly inactions. Given the intensity with which the 2015 presidential campaigns were reported on television and the fact that campaign clips in several ways did injure or excite the Nigerian workers, the question this study aimed to investigate was: Could the 2015 Presidential Campaign clips of the Peoples Democratic Party and All Progressives Congress affect the workplace behaviours of bank employees in Nigeria? If yes, how did the 2015 Presidential Election Campaigns

influence the behaviour of employees of some commercial banks in Nigeria? These were the concerns of this study.

8. Research Methodology

The study adopted the Survey method, complemented by observation. Therefore, the available and purposive sampling techniques were respectively employed in administering the questionnaire and observing the campaigns-based interactions among bank employees in Abuja, Nigeria's Federal Capital where all ethnic nationalities and interests are represented. Three banks – a first and two new generation banks were selected for the study. The former is one of the oldest commercial banks in the country, still growing and waxing strong in the face of several reforms in the sub-sector. The second stands out as one of the leading indigenous commercial banks that has survived various sectoral reforms and acquired in the process other banks. The third is also a new generation outfit with a mega status in terms of capitalisation and assets base. Three branches each of the banks making nine in all were used. The banks were, 1st Bank PLC, First City Monument Bank and GTB. A total of 360 copies of the instrument were administered equally to available staff in six of the branches while observations which focused on operational staff in the banking halls of those financial houses held in three branches, one representing each bank. Three days of the week were used for this exercise.

9. Purpose and Objectives of Study

This research was to examine bank workers' interests and potential involvement in the nation's partisan politics which, in accordance with its christening as *Dirty game*, is fraught with diabolism, a repellent issue which ought to dictate distance between decent professionals like bankers and any activity with hardcore political content. The objectives were to:

- (i) determine the level of involvement of bank employees in the politics of Nigeria's 2015 presidential campaigns;
- (ii) assess the bankers' perceptions of the televised presidential campaign activities on their organisational behaviours;
- (iii) establish the influence of the televised Presidential Campaigns activities on Nigerian bankers.

9.1 Research questions

Three questions were addressed viz;

- (i) To what level were bank employees involved in the 2015 Presidential Campaigns on television?
- (ii) How did Nigerian bankers perceive the 2015 Presidential Campaign clips?
- (iii) How did the televised Presidential Campaigns affect the workplace behaviours of Nigerian bank workers?

10. Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire-based data were gathered from six outlets of the banks used in the study. Retrieval posed no challenge due to concentration of respondents in fixed and accessible locations. Data were analysed in tables to show quantity and frequency of items stated in simple percentage. The process was less cumbersome as each block of the frequencies e.g. 216 in Table 1 is the aggregate of responses from the three banks under study.

Table 1: Level of Nigerian bank workers partisan involvement in the 2015 Presidential Campaigns discourse

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	216	60
No	99	27.5
Somehow	45	12.5
Total	360	100

The figures in Table 1 show that 216 (60%) of respondents were involved in the 2015 Presidential Campaigns discourse, 99 (27.5%) were mere well wishers. However, 45 (12.5%) claimed to be apolitical and therefore, nondiscriminatory.

Table 2: Nigerian Bank employees' perceptions of the 2015 televised Presidential Campaigns activities

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Pleasant	117	32.5
Unpleasant	189	52.5
Can't tell	54	15
Total	360	100

Table 2 presents 117 (32.5%) and 189 (52.5%) of respondents to have perceived the 2015 Presidential Campaigns between the Peoples Democratic Party and All Progressives Congress to have been pleasant and unpleasant. However, 54 (15%) could not place their opinions on the issue. This reflects their state of political apathy.

Table 3: How the televised 2015 Presidential Campaigns clips affected bank workers in Nigeria

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Communication	171	47.5%
Performance	81	22.5%
Relationships	108	30 %
Total	360	100

Data in Table 3 shows that the 2015 Presidential Campaigns clips affected staff interpersonal communication as 171(47.5%) respondents attested. Work performance and interpersonal relationships as reflected on the positions of 81(22.5%) and 108 (30%) of respondents were also touched.

11. Discussing Findings

Discussion is based on the study research questions.

Question one: To what level were bank employees involved in the 2015 Presidential Campaigns?

The findings indicate high level of proven involvement as respondents claimed strong affiliations with political parties. Three categories of workers were identified: (i) the influential and highly discriminatory political staff, (ii) the ordinary well-wishers with very low interest in politics and, (iii) the totally apolitical. During argumentations between the highly partisan blocks, backed sometimes by their sympathetic well-wishers, it is the politically laissez-faire, regarded as political minors but acting the arbiter, that pulls them together, especially when loss of temperament or its decline is obvious. Such moments, fit in description as stones-throwing, were usually characterised by cacophony of noise, name callings, babbles and castigation. Such verbal arsenals daily crisscrossed the banking halls.

Several reasons such as leaders' influence, association, love for preferred party/candidate, and peer influence, account for the high involvement of bank employees in secular politics. A leading factor is traced to their leaders' embroilment in politics. Many bank proprietors, directors and managers are sponsors of political candidates and financiers of political parties. Aware of this, the employees follow suit by either supporting the boss's interests or working against them, identifying with the opposition. Some bank employees are so enmeshed in politics to the extent of financing local politics by way of supporting candidates in councilorship, local government chairmanship, houses of assembly elections. Still, others go to the point of installing ward executives of the Party they belong. The motivation for this political showmanship and father-christmasism is the passion for relevance in the community and in the government of the area.

Another strong reason points to association which stretches from religious to ethnic, tribal and biological affinity. Bankers, like other politically engulfed members of the society, have different connections and ties that influence their attitudes, preferences and actions in the game. Across board, its players devise a language with passion "to tell a truth or a lie" (Hahn1998). In another expression, politics is a commixture of good and evil forces to achieve some predetermined goal of capturing and sustaining power.

Also identified is the issue of love. Added to the first two points, sheer love or a liking for a preferred political party or its standard bearer is another important element responsible for many bankers' tendenciousness in secular political engagement, discourse and programmes such as observed in the 2015 presidential campaigns period. Those who favoured Buhari, and those who fancied Jonathan commonly spoke in defence of them.

There also exists a very sublime factor that prompted high bankers' participation in the 2015 political discourse: the peer influence. It was evident that certain individuals endowed with oratory power more easily influenced their partners, particularly the feeble-hearted within the same work level or below. By persuasion such individuals soon apostatized and in conformity, adapted the language of the converter. The converts simply spiraled into silence, being influenced by the new political partnership with no defined interest.

Such individuals were found to be victims of social influence, a concept that explains the ways in which people are affected by the real or imagined pressures of others (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Kiesler & Kiesler, 1969). Real pressures coaxing certain colleagues into private conformity were observed. Allen (1965), Kelman (1961) used Private Conformity to depict a person's true acceptance of or conversion to a new position, idea or belief. This involves not just the change of one's covert behaviour but the mind as well as experienced in this work.

Question two: How did Nigerian bankers perceive the 2015 Presidential Campaigns on television?

Excepting the 15% of respondents who maintained neutrality, the study found two perception divides: the pleasant, who formed 32.5% and the unpleasant who consisted 52.5%.

Generally, the perceptions of Nigerian bank workers may not be different from what obtains in the larger Nigerian society. Bankers in this study expressed how they saw the 2015 presidential campaigns. The perceptions were swayed by the various political alliances they had formed on the basis of the four influences previously mentioned; the boss factor, associations, the love factor and peer influence. Television reports were adjudged pleasant so long as they were favourable to either of the top two contending political parties and their followers. Conversely, reports were counted unpleasant as much as such clips tended to negate and attenuate the

parties' fortunes at the polls. What the figures throw up in summation about the 2015 presidential campaigns is the collective judgement of bankers that: it was more of uncongeniality, being adversarial in acts and contents.

Question three: How did the televised 2015 Presidential Campaigns clips affect the workplace behaviours of Nigerian bank workers?

The findings also reveal three elements of organisational life to have been affected in varying degrees with communication topping. That communication between and among bank workers was rated as the most affected, authenticates its centrality in the organisational network. Oberg (2003) asserts that, Communication is key to success in almost every trade, occupation, and profession. This can best be achieved if communication fosters relationships because, if interpersonal communication runs smoothly, interpersonal relationships will grow to promote individuals as well as team performance which corporate leaders are desirous of.

One of the attributes of connections-building communication between and among organisational members is persuasion. In this circumstance, persuasion was at near zero point among the bank workers who were mostly combative. Persuasion entails some effort to win over someone by influencing his position, opinions, attitudes and or actions while combative is a fighting position taken in communication to scare, demoralise and belittle some other person by making the person psychologically a loser. The purpose is not to convert but to rubbish the fellow(s). The 2015 presidential campaigns with all the unpleasantness were preponderated by such issues, triggering bad feelings when party loyalists in banking halls took the issues personal, plunging into aggression, bad communication and hostility. Unethical, these tendencies unsettled the work atmosphere, disaffected the workers and interrupted performance.

On the whole, the findings brandish bank workers in Nigeria as being very politically biased individuals whose interests in politics, deep and strong, inflamed their involvement in the discussion of the televised 2015 presidential campaigns. Through the questionnaire and observation, evidence woven together demonstrates the prevalence of vested political keenness among the bankers that compelled identification with political candidates of their choice. It is this belongingness to a particular camp to which loyalty was offered and interest defended by the bankers that encouraged debates and discussion of macro politics which the media and, in this case the television, routinely set the agenda.

11.1 Observed Behavioural Patterns among Bank employees

In the context of this study, the 2015 presidential campaigns did elicit good and bad, peaceful and aggressive acts. The shades of observed behaviours by those workers engrossed in the politics of the season did, in various ways, depress the work atmosphere. Good to hint that each of the behavioural patterns occurred in direct response to external stimuli springing from the television directly or from interactions among colleagues. Even the least involved persons were seen in some form of conduct reflective of the mood of the moment. To guide discussion on the basis of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2007) definition of *Behaviour* as the thing that a person or animal does, the question is: What did the bankers do politically each day after closing to customers? Many are the answers: they argued among themselves, abused each other, disrupted and suspended work, feigned ill, acted unethically and showed disrespect to colleagues regarded as opposition.

Argumentations: This behaviour was found outstanding among bank employees during the study. Efforts by PDP and APC members to aver supremacy over one another, to convince that one's political party was better, and to malign others in the opposition necessitated the bellicosity, which remains a living strand in Nigerian politics. Its reverberation in the banks is a confirmation that the mannerism is not limited to street politicians but applies also to the putatively cultured Nigerian bankers. The major and only distinction between the bank and the professional politicians is that for the latter, the end point of polemics most times is brawl. This, the politicians in the banking halls cannot do, not for the lack of energy but for the presence of work ethics.

There was great use of testimonial evidence at all times to buttress their positions. Testimonial evidence is written or oral statements of others' experience used by a speaker to substantiate or clarify a point (Pearson, Nelson, Titsworth & Harter 2003). Statements by President Jonathan, his archrival, Muhammadu Buhari, former presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Ibrahim Babangida, Shehu Shakari, Abdul Salam and other prominent Nigerians like Atiku Abubarka, Wole Soyinka and so on were commonly employed by their followers in the banks as supporting materials. Reliance on such materials is predicated on the assumption that "the statements of others should help the audience accept your point of view".

Abuses: Politics in Nigeria is a game of abuses. That is one of several reasons decent persons infirmed to withstand the melodramatics of politics shun politics and place whosoever goes by the tag politician at the bottom of esteem. Time to time, an average political actor finds himself abusing or being abused. Abuse is the wrong use of words intentionally employed to hurt someone. Sometimes it is planned. Sometimes it occurs at the spur of the moment. Either way, the politically inspired abuse involves the release of invectives, revilement and vituperations so as to cow individuals and eliminate perceived threat. The risk in the plotted one where an individual is first attacked by a sponsored and armed thug is the culmination into death of the overwhelmed victim after a melee against which he did not budget. Where the clash involves two prepared sides, casualty is

greater in number. In this study several plots took place not to kill but to rattle and intimidate those external to a particular political fold. More agitating and tumultuous in this respect were the APC crusaders.

Work disruption: Disruption and suspension of work were twin critical behaviours observed during political discussions in banks. On certain occasions, someone walked up to another with a challenge to a debate on the outcome of the election to come. This could be demonstrated by holding the person's hand, tapping the shoulder, smiting the table or even seizing the pen just to lure into the fables. The period was very challenging to some workers. Some would temporarily abandon their beat, take a stroll to another department, step outside to spend time with the security personnel or saunter into the canteen for a necessitated relaxation. These and allied steps were adopted to escape the pressure of politics at work and, the implications of these behaviors are diverse: intermittent disruption of work, longer time spent in office, late closure of work, miserable work atmosphere of hate and resentment.

Aggression: Aggression in different forms was a threatening behaviour found among the bankers in this study. Brehm, Kassin & Fein (2005) have pointed out this when they declared that 'Aggressive behaviors come in many forms. Words as well as deeds can be aggressive'. Aggressiveness jeopardised the banks' ménage such that uncooperative attitudes, promoting disharmony began to swell. Pearson *et al* (2003) have argued that people who engage in aggressive behaviour do so because of negative self concepts or because they have learnt this pattern of behaviour in their original homes. They conclude that aggressiveness might help you get your way a few times, but ultimately others will avoid you and let show their resentment.

The conclusion evidently played out in this study when certain members resented their colleagues for overbearing partiality. Aggression is an organisational behaviour used to intimidate in communication situations. Its derivative, aggressiveness, is one of four business communication styles (Business Essential 2009). The purpose is that you win and every one's else loses. Beyond the negative self-concepts, those who used aggression in this study did so to mainly overshadow their colleagues' political persuasions. Politically motivated behaviours of this nature can be appropriate in dismantling the structures, opinions and actions inimical to the electoral victory of their respective candidates. The use of instrumental aggression to 'harm someone for personal gain, attention, or even self-defense' was noticed.

Feigning ill: Illness is a omen that people would ordinarily wish not but it was seen as a behaviour indulged in by certain individuals in order to avoid the wearying argumentations, abuses, aggressions and sentiments of colleagues. Some simply lowered their heads on the table, showing signs of exhaustion. Yet, others just withdrew from unofficial interactions, maintaining calmness. The withdrawal allowed concentration, coordination as well as conservation of energy and strength. Moreover it reduced tension and emotional outbursts. Continued recoil marked by absolute silence on the part of a principal opponent most times terminated each session of the interactions.

Unethical acts: Strange behaviours noticed in village settings where politics is conducted in unspeakable manners replicated in the places of the study. A practical case involved a driver and a bank teller. The driver was of the APC stock whereas the female teller belonged to the PDP. The APC's mantra was **Change** while that of PDP remained **Power to the People**. The political atmosphere indicated that the Power still belonged to the people but the people desired change of leadership. So, on a good day the driver holding a bundle of broom, (the APC emblem), positioned against the other staff and swept her steps as she was leaving, having closed for the day. The actor was busy sweeping and chanting, "Change, don't come back here." "Change, you are changed from this branch", and so on. It was the immediate intervention of the branch manager that resolved what was set to become a major conflict because the female staff had vowed to harness all within her power for a fight she and those in her then political valley had discerned beyond politics. Even the "sweeper's" allies rebuked him. To the actor, that was politics but to many other staff the action was suspiciously counted as one with sinister intent.

12. Conclusion

There is a large room for political discussions in Nigerian banks. Television plays a tremendous role in setting the agenda for each day. In handling secular politics, bank workers are not too different in their approaches from the professional foot soldiers and their principals. Apart from bloodshed, free-for-all fights, murder, kidnap of opponents and such other cruel acts, political discourse in banks as in the secular is attained by argumentations, abuses, confrontations, debates, plots and attacks. The ways and manners political deliberations flow in this system confirm that man is a political animal but, unlike other animals, operate an organised system that depends on legal structures of rules and orders. It is interesting to observe how television could influence a systemic people to behave against rules and organisational order. Gone are the days of servility when bank employees were politically disinterested: the days of returning home late in the evenings without the electricity to watch television let alone participate in politics. Today's television has exposed politics to bankers and bankers to politics. Without contradictions the TV politics has influenced most Nigerian workers.

Television operators in Nigeria have always been alive to their responsibility in political campaigns and election coverage. Their efforts before, during and after each election exercise are influential to a very critical

degree. By reporting, analysing and commenting on electioneering campaign activities and the controversies associated therewith, political awareness is usually created, leading to formation of attitudes that underscore certain behaviours among party supporters some of whom are bank employees.

Also affecting workers' attitudes and behaviours are televised violence. Nigerians are generally emotional. So, clips of political violence that will harmfully tell on the poll performance of their Party or candidates do touch more easily on their psychology and provokes undesirable workplace animosity, hostility all of which can be considered as behavioural imbalance.

13. Recommendations

It is clear that television can make serious impressions on the organisational life of bank employees as revealed in this study. For instance, its contribution to the formation of attitudes that masterminded their participation in political discourse and the actions springing therefrom has been confirmed. The observed shades of misdemeanor therefore warrant the recommendations that:

- (i) Bank employees should exercise restraints in the use of words when discussing politics or any social issues in the workplace. Words are powerful and subject to several interpretations. Wrong words application can be injurious and diversionary. Misuse of words is able to cause inexplicable pains and divert a staff concentration from purpose. In secular politics there is much indiscretion in this regard and should be disallowed in the banks where interactions should proceed as in the family setting.
- ii) Bank employees should respect the right and emotions of others when discussing political issues so as not to disrupt individual's psychological balance. Much as it takes sound state of the mind to ensure work flow and quality job delivery, this is significant. A worker's stable mind enhances steady, progressive and impressive output.
- iii) They should guard against issues that can strain interpersonal relationships which is a major determinant of performance. When political interactions heat up, some fanatics become nuisance with glaring insensitivity to hitherto interpersonal bonds upon which team efforts and individual's performances are based.
- iv) Management should devise ways of tackling staff excesses by putting punitive measures in place against unethical behaviour intended to hurt fellow employees, holding in mind that the office is for business and not a political ground where indecency, disorderliness, and misconduct of all sorts reign.
- v) Bankers should display balance and objectivity in condemning the evil of their party leaders. When the leaders who seem to be in perpetual covenants with lies and falsehood consistently murder the truth for selfish reasons, bankers in their professional engagements ought to distance themselves from such and stand up with courage for the truth because, as it appears, there seems to be no defenders of truth in Nigeria anymore because of politics.
- vi) Because the television is meant to promote literacy and knowledge by presenting adequate as well as balanced information on issues of personal and social significance, bankers should utilise the television for self equipment and upgrade for social fitting rather than degenerate and plunge into organisational misconduct.
- vii) Bank managers should do more in their supervisory roles in order to stem the negative or unproductive interactions among their employees.

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