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Influence of Facebook Users' Self-Presentation Tactics on Their Response to Persuasive Political Messages

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of self-presentation tactics of Facebook users on their response to persuasive political messages. The self-presentation tactics examined were supplication, ingratiation, self-promotion, success and basking. The responses to political persuasive messages among Facebook users were evaluated using measures like ignoring of posts, viewing posts, commenting on posts, clicking the like option as well as sharing of posts. A total of three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Survey research design was used for the study. The questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. In the analysis of data for the study, the researcher used simple percentages, mean and standard deviation, weighted mean, correlation, Chi-Square tests as well as multiple regression. The result of the study showed that self-presentation significantly predicts response to persuasive political messages. It was also found that a significant relationship exists between message elements and the response of Facebook users. Also, it was found that the source of Facebook message plays a role in influencing the responses of Facebook users. Recommendations have been made based on the results of the study.

Keywords: Facebook, response, political message, persuasion self-presentation

Introduction

Over the years, communication among people has experienced different changes. From the drawings on the walls of caves to the Gutenberg era up to the invention of TV, communication and channels of information exchange are constantly evolving. Specifically, advancements in technologies have led to newer communication platforms. Weber (2007) affirms that the communications world is dramatically shifting in a digital direction and those who understand this transformation will communicate much more effectively than those who do not. Kaul (2012) corroborates that the advent of new media of communication have significantly changed the communication world. One of the communication channels that has emerged as a result of advancements in technology is Facebook, which was created in 2004.

As part of the social media, Facebook allows users with accounts to send and receive pictures, texts and videos. It serves as a global virtual community that breaks the

boundaries of time and location. Since its creation in 2004, people from different countries of the world have adopted the Facebook as a medium of communication for different purposes (see Bayram & Aydemir, 2017; Lee, Ahn & Kim, 2014). Facebook has been found as a useful environment for self-presentation.

Self-presentation started receiving attention in literature sequel to Goffman's (1959) theories of identity and social performance. Goffman had opined that self-presentation is the voluntary and tangible component of identity. He further describes the internal process through which people try to negotiate and project the desired impression as impression management. Schlenker (1975) and Schneider (1981) in later years corroborate that social actors carry out difficult internal self-negotiations to project the desired impression and such impression is maintained through consistently performing a coherent and complementary behaviour (see also Bargh, McKenna, & Fitzsimons, 2002; Jones & Pittman, 1982; Wong, 2012). Therefore, impression management is mostly dependent on corporeal display (Schau & Gilly, 2003) which is manifestly in consonance with Mauss' (1973) postulation on body techniques, a strategy for communicating the desired identity or self. Williams and Bendelow (1998) later averred that the actions in the social world require that self-presentation are consumption-dependent and rely on persons showing brands, signs, symbols and actions to pass information on the desired impression. The art of self-presentation plays the dual role of manipulation of signs and an embodied representation and experience to impart identity (Brewer, 1998). Self-presentation is one of the two broad things that happen when people log on to the Facebook.

When people present themselves, they attempt to persuade others with a view to influencing their perception and eventually attitude. Kuzio (2013) in establishing the link between persuasion and self-presentation vis-à-vis politics notes: 'Politicians use persuasion as a tool in their activities. The product they sell is themselves (p.23).' Gass and Seiter (2014) say that persuasive communication comprises verbal, non-verbal and imagery components. O'Keefe, (2016) says persuasion has the capacity to change a person's mental condition with the use of procedures that aim to modify attitudes, which may result to a change in behaviour. The message plays an important role in persuasion.

Warren, Becken and Coghlan (2013) opine that the message is an important component of persuasion. Dewan, Humphreys and Rubenson (2010) corroborate that the message elements are essential in determining the effectiveness of persuasive communication. Dewan further lists the message elements to include the content of the message, the impact of interaction with persons who differ on features and the cue that a listener gets when receiving a message from a sender with some attributes. Stressing further, Dewan et al note: 'The first of these elements of persuasion is a property of the message.' Within the context of this study, property of Facebook message could be texts, pictures and illustrations as well as videos. These three message elements were examined in this study and linked with self-presentation via the Facebook. Hardly does one logs to Facebook without coming across one persuasive message or the other.

Such messages may be political, asking for votes. Scholars have shown that the Facebook has been utilized for politics (Ezeah & Gever, 2016). The source of any message plays an essential role in influencing the receivers. Studies (Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Fahmy, 2005; Gever, 2018) concerning traditional media have reported a

significant relationship between the source and message content. Therefore, on Facebook, message could come from different people like celebrities, experts, among others. Message could also be drafted for Facebook or users may be required to click an external link to access the message. All these could play a role concerning user response.

Facebook users have a variety of options to respond to such messages. Such options include ignoring such persuasive messages, viewing them, clicking the like button, writing a comment or clicking the share button. Each of these response options could offer insights into the views of the users about the posts as well as provide perspectives about the users' self. Such responses could also play a role in enhancing the popularity of Facebook posts.

Keskin, Akgün, Ayar and Etlioglu, (2017) argued that post popularity is one of the essential requirements of persuasive messages through the Facebook. Chang, Yu and Lu, (2015) say that post popularity refers to the number of responses a post receives, that is, the number of likes, sharing and comments. What this means is that persuasive messages via the Facebook can also be examined based on the responses to such posts. Based on the above, the study tested the following hypotheses:

H1: Self-presentation tactics significantly predict response to persuasive political messages among Facebook users in Nigeria.

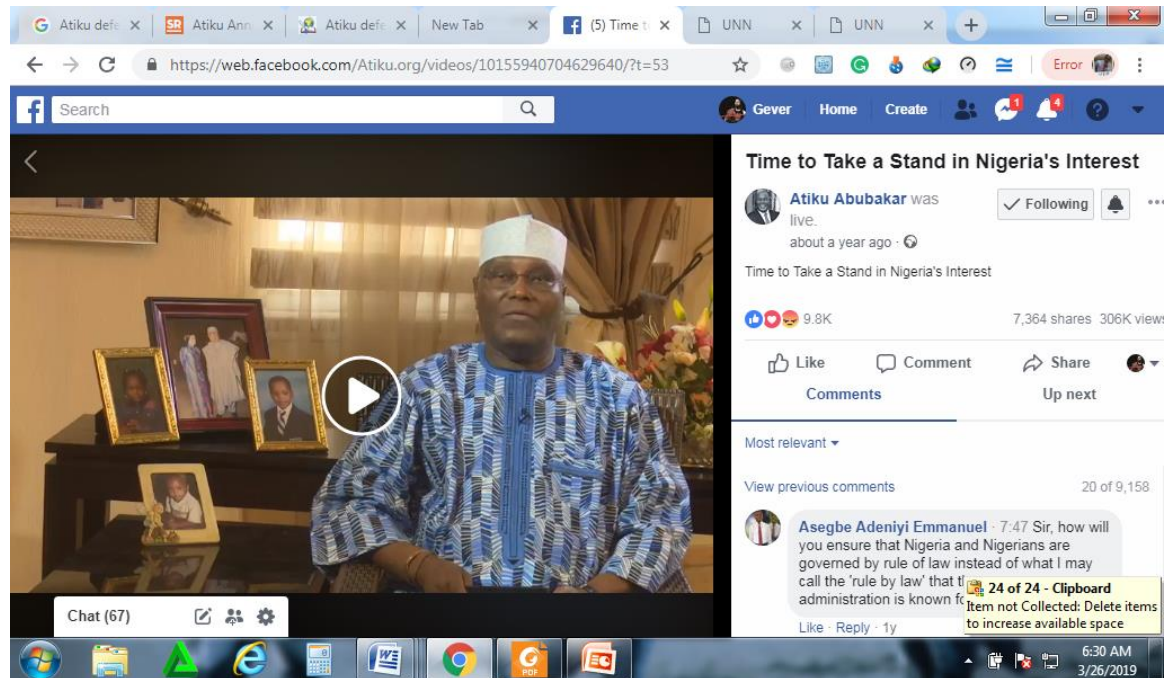
H2: There is a significant relationship between political message elements used for self-presentation and response of Facebook users.

H3: There is a significant relationship between political message source and response of Facebook users.

Literature Review and theoretical Framework

Nigeria was among the early countries to embrace the Facebook as a platform for communication. As at December 8th, 2007 there were 39,968 Facebook users in Nigeria (Bailargeon, 2007). This figure made Nigeria among the top 75 countries on Facebook as at that time (Bashir, 2009). Since that time, the number of people using the Facebook has continued to increase.

It was perhaps, the increasing popularity of the Facebook among Nigerians that it became an instrument of political mobilization when in 2010, former president Goodluck Jonathan launched his presidential campaign for the 2011 general elections on the Facebook. Since then, the Facebook has been widely used by the political class for electioneering campaigns. The Facebook equally has an option of video messages. People could record video messages and post on their Facebook profile. For example in 2017, the defeated Presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Atiku Abubakar announced his defection from the All Progressives Congress (APC) through a live broadcast on Facebook. Atiku also posted different videos canvassing for votes during the electioneering campaigns. Find below screenshots of two of his videos:



When a person watches Atiku's videos, it can be seen that he took time to persuade voters, persuading them why he was the best man for the job. As stated earlier in the background to the study, self-presentation is a persuasion strategy through which make efforts to control what others think about them. Facebook provides an environment through which users persuade others.

The Facebook has been found to be a veritable ground for self-presentation where people attempt to influence others' impressions about them. On the Facebook, users enjoy equal rights and privilege regarding what should be posted, unlike in the traditional media where a select few enjoy the privileges of making the news. Wong

(2012) argues that through the Facebook, people can present the type of image they desire others to have of them. Wong notes thus: “people can put up posts emphasizing aspects of their personalities or share photos...conveying the best images of them in order to maintain a good impression from the others (p. 185).” The submission of Wong offers insights into the role of the Facebook in the act of self-presentation. Wong emphasized that both pictures and texts can serve as self-presentation tools. When using Facebook, users are often conscious of how they are perceived by others. This assumption is supported by the study by Dhir, Chen, M. and Chen S. (2015). Evidence in literature (Gold, Pedrana, Stooove, Chang, Howard, Asselin, & Hellard; 2012) reveal that the Facebook could be effective in persuading users. The theoretical postulations that could be used to examine the influence self-presentation on response persuasive political messages is self-categorization theory.

Self-categorization theory (SCT) was proposed by Turner (1999) and differentiates between social and personal identity. Social identity depends on an individual's group memberships. In contrast, personal identity is more or less independent of group memberships. Self-categorization theory posits that, depending on the relative salience or importance of a certain situation for social or personal identity, an individual's behaviour is driven either by social or personal identity processes. Both identities can, however, be salient at the same time and trigger behaviour that is motivated by a dynamic interplay of both (Trepte & Laura, 2017).

One of the fundamental concepts in self-categorization theory is self-categorization. Turner, (1999) avers that that self-categorization is deliberate, it is assessment-based, it is dependent association and intention, is active, is based on objective, and it is knowledge dependent. The overall point is that people do not just categorize themselves, they do so based on certain assessment which they have made, they do so based on some motives which they seek to achieve, they do so based on their evaluation of certain realities. That is to say that in self-categorization, they group themselves. They want to be known with certain things. Self-categorization gives a definition of an individual. That is, it answers the question: Who are you? (Trepte & Laura, 2017). When people make use of the Facebook, they could also present themselves with regards to the type of category they wish to promote or identify with. When Facebook users are exposed to persuasive political messages, they could use the response option to categorize themselves as supportive to such messages or express their displeasure. They could categorize themselves as pro or anti the political message as well as the actors involved in such a message. Sometimes, when users do not want to associate themselves with a source, they could also use the response to categorize themselves as not supportive of such messages.

Materials and Methods

The researcher adopted survey research design for the study. Survey design was used for the study to describe, explain and explore the self-presentation tactics of Facebook users in Nigeria and how this influences their response to persuasive messages. The population of this study was made up of all the active Facebook users in Nigeria. According to the Internet World Stats (2017) the total number of Facebook users in Nigeria is 16,000,000.

Sample size

The survey sample size was 385 Facebook users in Nigeria. The sample size for Facebook was determined using Cochran formula (1963, p.75). With 95 percent level of confidence (confidence interval - + 5%), population estimate of 50% (.5) and a permitted margin of error at .05 (5 percentage points), the Cochran Equation '1' which yielded a representative sample for population that are large and it is as follows:

$$n_0 = \frac{[Z/2]^2 (p q)}{e^2}$$

$$n_0 = \frac{[Z/2]^2 (P) (1-P)}{e^2}$$

Where: n_0 = sample size, Z^2 = confidence level (the abscissa of the normal curve that cuts off an area α at the tails), p = rate of occurrence or prevalence (the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in a population), q = complement of p and e = margin of error. Therefore:

$$n = \frac{[1.96]^2 0.5 (1 - 0.5)}{0.05^2} \quad n = \frac{3.8416 (0.25)}{0.0025}$$

$$n = 384$$

Sampling Technique

A combination of purposive, quota and snowball sampling techniques were used for the study. To implement this, the researchers purposively selected three cities (religious, ethnic and political affiliations were not important considerations). The selected cities are Nsukka, in Enugu State, Anyigba in Kogi State and Makurdi in Benue State. These cities were selected because of the location of universities in the area. Literature (Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lenhart & Madden, 2015) show that youth of school age use Facebook most. Therefore, by selecting areas where universities are located, the researchers stood the chance of also including Facebook users from different parts of Nigeria in the study. Secondly, a quota sample of 128 was drawn from each of the three selected areas. It should be noted that all the three selected areas had equal quota because there of absence of exact number of Facebook users in such area in the Nigeria. In addition, the Facebook was regarded in this study as a community, hence there was no need segmenting users based on their state of origin. To sample the individual respondents, a snowball sampling technique was applied.

The choice of the snowball sampling technique was based on the suggestion of Dragan and Isaic-Maniu (2013) who revealed that the "snowball" sampling is a research technique through survey and data registration and is recommended when the population cannot be strictly delimited or detailed. The choice of snowball sampling technique is also supported by empirical evidence in literature as the outcome of previous studies (e.g., Aidoo, Aigbavboa, & Thwala, 2016; Dusek, Yurova, & Ruppel, 2015) that adopted the technique revealed greater precision and accuracy. It is important to add here that although snowball technique has been widely used in qualitative sociological research, especially in the study of deviant behaviour, recent studies as identified above suggest that it can also be useful for quantitative research, especially in the new media age.

Snowball sampling technique was considered useful because it is difficult to detail the exact number of Facebook users in each of the selected areas. Therefore, initial respondents were identified and requested to suggest other Facebook users. Only respondents with active individual accounts were included. Also, only those who reported

logging in to their accounts for at least three times each month were sampled. Finally, only those that had Facebook accounts for at least five years were sampled. It should be noted that the initial sampled respondents for the snowball were identified interaction with Facebook users within the selected areas. During the interactions, Facebook users were requested to provide information on their Facebook user and when they created their accounts.

Instruments for Data Collection

The questionnaire was used as instruments to collect data for this study. The questionnaire was made up of two parts. The first part was labelled part A. It sought the demographic information of the respondents like gender, age, employment status, among others. The second part was labelled part B, it sought information on the psychographics of the respondents vis-à-vis the Facebook and self-presentation.

Method of Data Collection

The researchers collected data for this study in two ways. The survey data were collected through the responses of the respondents to the questionnaire. The researchers collected the data by examining the responses provided by the respondents on the questionnaire. The questionnaire copies were administered to the respondents through the help of two research assistants, one from Anyigba and one from Makurdi. The research assistants were briefed on how to administer the instrument. The research assistants were told to administer the instrument in two weeks. They were also told to administer and retrieve the instrument immediately. The respondents were contacted in places like residential houses, schools, churches and motor parks. The process of data collection continued non-stop from the initial respondents up to the latter suggested ones.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by three experts, two from mass communication and one from measurement and evaluation (all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka). The researchers determined the reliability of the instrument using a test-retest approach. Therefore, initial twenty copies of the instrument were administered to selected respondents Enugu State. After a period of two weeks, the same copies of the instrument were administered to the same respondents. Pearson Correlation coefficient was the statistical procedure used to subject the two sets of observations to reliability test. The SPSS software was used to carry out the analysis and it yielded 0.86, an indication of high reliability.

Method of Data Analysis

Quantitative method of data analysis was used for this study. In doing so both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Among the descriptive statistical tools like simple percentages, mean and standard deviation were used while among the inferential statistics, multiple regression, Chi Square test of independence, coefficient of contingency were used. The simple percentages were used to present the frequency of occurrences of the various measuring units. Mean and standard deviation were used to ascertain the spread in the responses. The multiple regression and correlation were used to ascertain the relationship between the variables in the study. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The results were presented in tables and charts.

Results

A total of 385 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents but only 366 copies representing 95% were retrieved and found useful.

Table 1: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	206	56.3
Female	160	43.7
Total	366	100.0

The table above was computed to reveal the gender distribution of the study participants. The result revealed the dominance of male respondents. However, the table did not reveal the spread in the scores of the gender. This was ascertained with the use of a histogram as shown below.

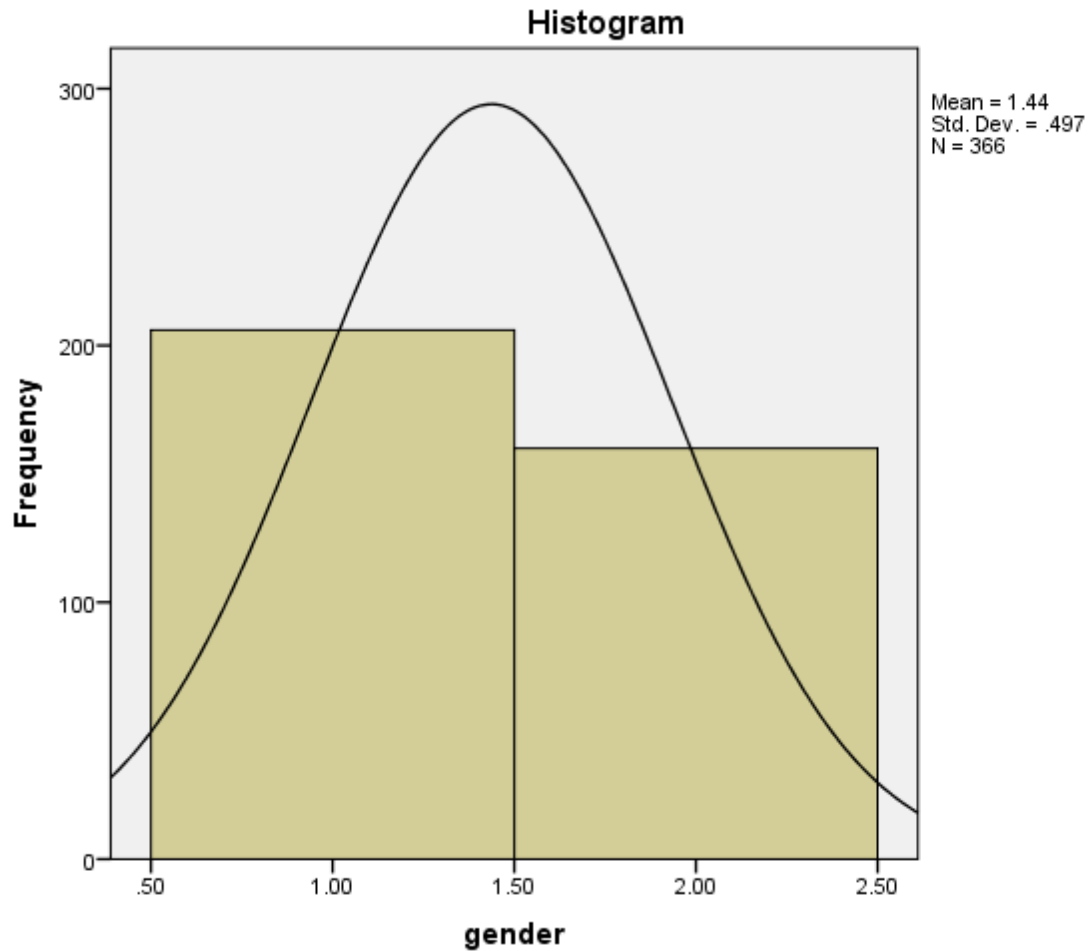


Figure 1: A histogram showing the mean and standard deviation of the gender distribution (Survey)

The histogram above was plotted to ascertain the spread in the scores of the gender of the respondents. The result showed a mean score of 1.44 and a standard deviation of 0.497. This suggests that the scores for the gender distribution were not widely spread. To ascertain the gender distribution of the profiles of Facebook users studied, the following table was computed.

Table 2: Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-22	84	23.0
23-26	219	59.8
27 and above	63	17.2
Total	366	100.0

The table above was computed to reveal the age distribution of the study participants. The result revealed the dominance of age range 23-26 who were more than 50% of the

distribution However, the table did not reveal the spread in the scores of the age. This was ascertained with the use of a histogram as shown below:

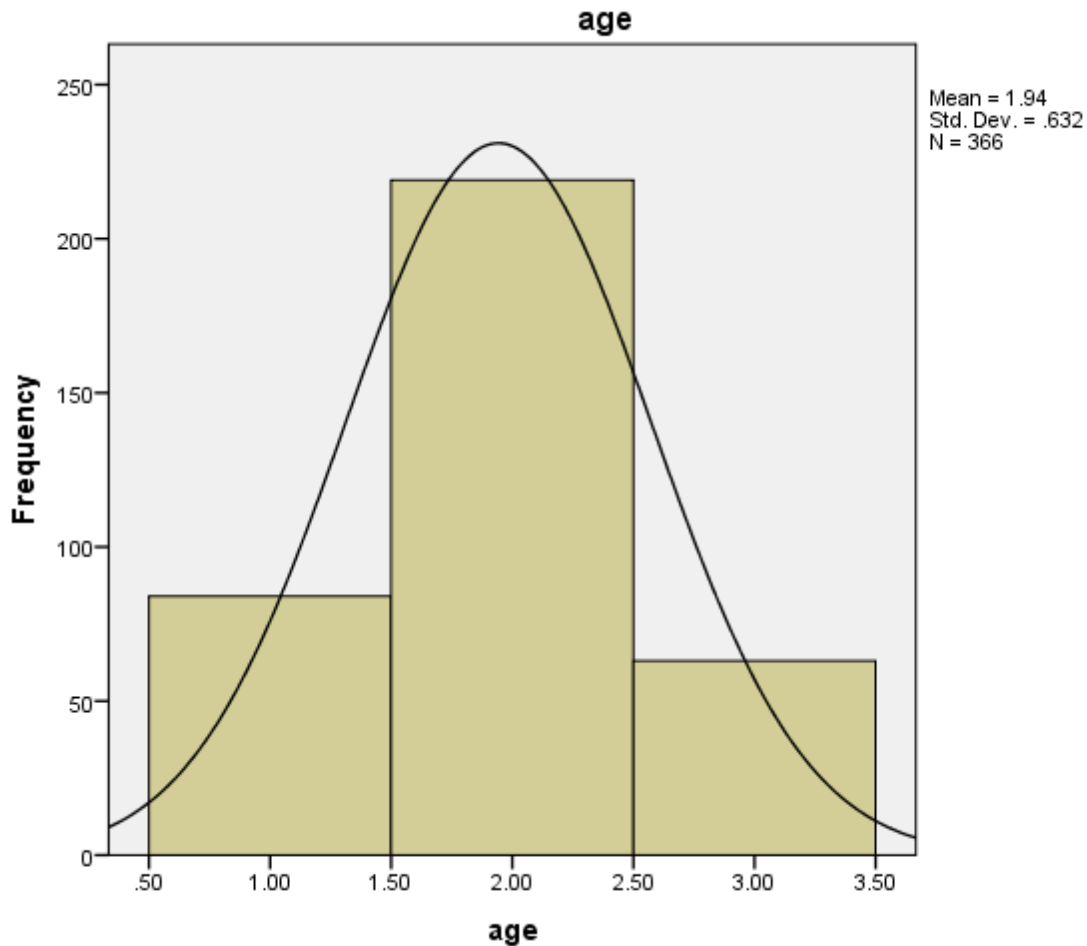


Figure 2: A histogram showing the mean and standard deviation of the age distribution of the sample (Survey)

The histogram above was plotted to ascertain the spread in the scores of the age of the respondents. The result showed a mean score of 1.92 and a standard deviation of 0.632. This suggests that the scores for the age distribution were widely spread.

Table 3: Educational level of respondents

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Primary education	56	15.3
Secondary education	126	34.4

Tertiary education	184	50.3
Total	366	100.0

The result from the table above revealed the dominance of those with tertiary education. Nonetheless, the table did not show the spread in the scores of the educational attainment of the sample. This missing link was addressed with the use of a histogram as shown below.

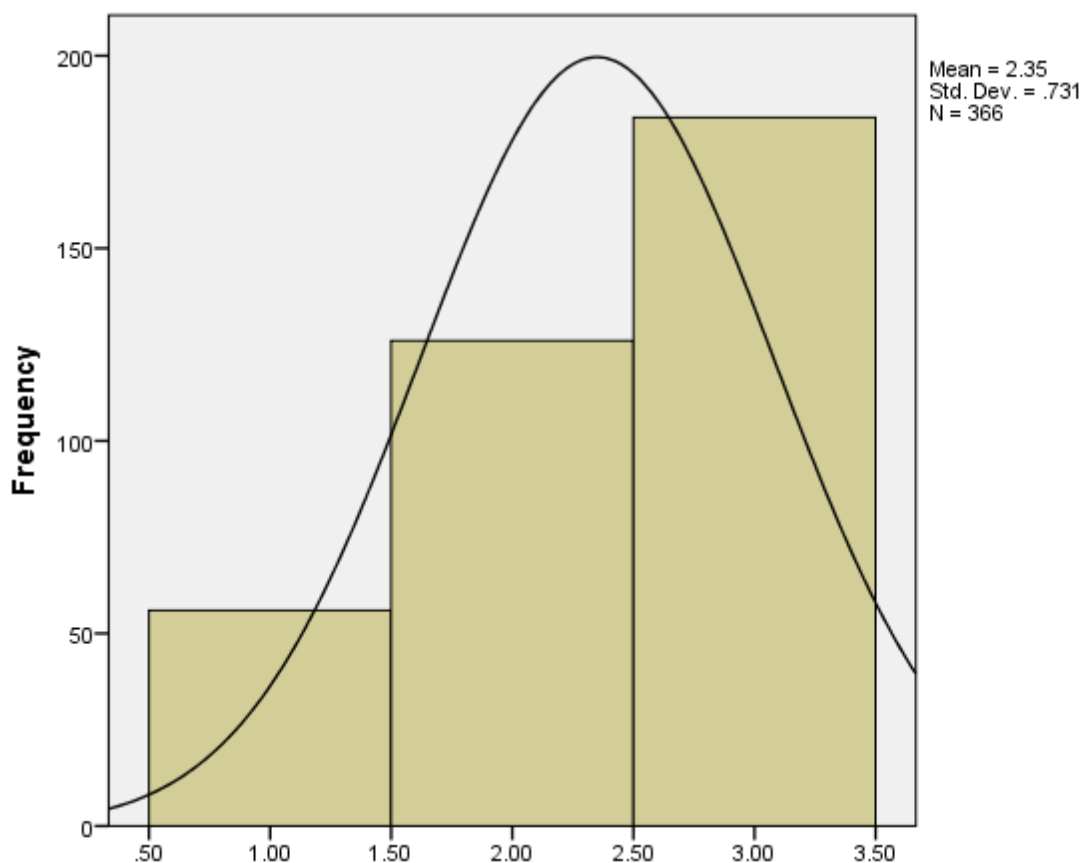


Figure 3 A histogram showing the mean and standard deviation of the educational level of the sample (Survey)

The pictorial representation of the educational attainment of the sample shows a mean score of 2.35 with a standard deviation of 0.731. The high score of the standard deviation paints a picture of the wide spread in the education level of the sample studied.

It is essential to note here that bio-date of content analysis respondents like age and education level were not presented because some of the respondents did not provide such information on their profile pages. For examples, most of the respondents only indicated the month and date of birth without indicating the year, thus making it difficult to determine their number of years. Regarding their educational level, most of them did not provide exact information on their educational level on their profile pages.

Table 4: A Correlation between self-presentation tactics and response to persuasive political messages

		Response	Ingratiation	Self-promotion	Basking	supplication	Successful
		se	n	n			
Pearson Correlation	Response	1.000	.056	.102	-.153	.061	.167
	Ingratiation	.056	1.000	.848	.558	.939	-.218
	Self-promotion	.102	.848	1.000	.460	.855	-.138
	Basking	-.153	.558	.460	1.000	.540	-.320
	supplication	.061	.939	.855	.540	1.000	-.224
Sig. (1-tailed)	Successful	.167	-.218	-.138	-.320	-.224	1.000
	Ingratiation	.	.141	.025	.002	.121	.001
	Self-promotion	.141	.242	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Basking	.025	.000	.	.000	.000	.004
	supplication	.002	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
N	Successful	.121	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	Ingratiation	.001	.000	.004	.000	.000	.
	Ingratiation	366	366	366	366	366	366
	Self-promotion	366	366	366	366	366	366
	Basking	366	366	366	366	366	366
	supplication	366	366	366	366	366	366
	Successful	366	366	366	366	366	366
	Ingratiation	366	366	366	366	366	366

A regression analysis was conducted to determine if self-presentation tactics like self-promotion, ingratiation, success basking and supplication predict response to persuasive political messages via the Facebook. The result showed a significant (P-value < 0.05). associated between both variables. To ascertain the contribution of each self-presentation tactics in predicting response to persuasive messages, table 13 was computed.

Table 5: Contribution of self-presentation tactics to Response to persuasive messages

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.692	.231		11.636	.000
	Ingratiation	.032	.137	.036	.235	.814

Self-promotion	.125	.085	.151	1.485	.138
Basking	-.133	.037	-.227	-3.599	.000
Supplication	.045	.139	.051	.325	.745
Success	.251	.100	.135	2.507	.013

a. Dependent Variable: Responses

The essence of table 5 was to ascertain the individual contribution of each self-presentation tactics in predicting response to persuasive messages of Facebook users in Nigeria. The result showed that success had the highest contribution (B=.251). This could be because no Facebook user will like to present him or herself as a failure.

Table 6: Response to Political persuasive messages

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Ignore	20	5.5
View only	27	7.4
Comment	257	70.2
Like	18	4.9
Share	44	12.0
Total	366	100.0

The researcher sought to ascertain the response to messages via the Facebook within the domain of politics. The result revealed that most of the respondents comment on political messages. This result suggests that Facebook users use the Facebook as a ground to engage in political debates.

Table 7: Relationship between message elements used for persuasion and response of Users

			Message element				Total
			Picture/illustration only	text only	Video	picture/illustration with caption	
Response	Ignore	Count	8	7	33	9	57
		% of Total	2.2%	1.9%	9.0%	2.5%	15.6%
	view only	Count	15	14	11	26	66
		% of Total	4.1%	3.8%	3.0%	7.1%	18.0%
	view and comment	Count	5	13	0	29	47
		% of Total	1.4%	3.6%	.0%	7.9%	12.8%
	view and share	Count	0	7	26	75	108
		% of Total	.0%	1.9%	7.1%	20.5%	29.5%

	click like	Count	24	21	22	21	88
		% of Total	6.6%	5.7%	6.0%	5.7%	24.0%
Total		Count	52	62	92	160	366
		% of Total	14.2%	16.9%	25.1%	43.7%	100.0%

The table above sought to ascertain the relationship between message elements used for persuasion and the response of users. The result revealed that most of the respondents view and share messages that combine pictures/illustrations with captions. What this means that Facebook messages that combine textual and pictorial elements are likely to get wider coverage because when messages are shared among users, there is a more possibility of reaching more users with a corresponding likelihood of influencing perception and attitudes.

Table 8: Influence of message source on Facebook users responses

S/N	Item	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	315	86
2	No	51	14
3	Total	366	100

In the table above, the researcher sought to ascertain the influence message source on Facebook user response. It was found that majority of the respondents reported that message sources significantly influence their response. To ascertain the source characteristics that could influence the respondents, the following table was computed.

Table 9: Mean and standard deviation on source characteristics that aid message persuasiveness

Items	Mean	SD	Decision
Source perceived popularity. E.g. celebrity	3.0	.67	Accepted
Source perceived expertise. E.g., Medical Doctor	3.1	.89	Accepted
Source perceived credibility	2.9	.78	Accepted
Personal respect for source	2.6	.66	Accepted
Previous offline experience with source	3.2	.88	Accepted
Perceived source professional accomplishments	3.1	.77	Accepted

The table above sought data on source characteristics that influence Facebook users. It found that all the six items were accepted as source characteristics that influence Facebook users. What this means is that a source that is perceived to have possessed one or more of the above attributes is likely to influence Facebook users. To test the

relationship between message and the response of Facebook users, the data from table 23 was and the results of the Chi-Square goodness of fit is presented below:

Table 10: Chi-Square goodness of fit on the influence of message source on response to Facebook posts

Chi	P-value	Level of sig	df	Decision
2.991	0.001	0.05	1	Sig

The table above was computed to derive a statistical figure for testing the relationship between message source and Facebook users response to persuasive messages. It was found that the P-value was less than the level of significance. An indication of a significant statistical relationship.

Test of hypotheses

This study tested three hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The first hypothesis ought to find out the association between self-presentation tactics and response to persuasive political messages among Facebook users in Nigeria. The result of the study as presented in table 6 yielded p-value ($p < .05$) of less than 0.05. Therefore, the first null hypothesis was rejected and the researcher ruled that response to persuasive messages via the Facebook is determined by their self-presentation tactics.

The second hypothesis sought to the relationship between message elements and the response to persuasive political message among users. The result of table 8 showed a significant relationship between both variables ($X^2=110.570$, $p=.001$, at 12 df).

The last hypothesis sought to ascertain the relationship between source of a message and the response of Facebook users. The result showed that a significant relationship exists between both variables and the source of a Facebook message determines the response of the user.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

This study examined the influence of self-presentation tactics of Facebook users on their response to political persuasive messages. The self-presentation tactics examined in the study were supplication, basking, success, ingratiation and self-promotion. Persuasive messages were assessed using five broad domains, viz politics, religion, merchandizing, counseling and health promotion. Five response categories common on Facebook platform were also used. They include ignoring such messages, viewing the messages only, clicking the like option, commenting and sharing. The study tested three hypotheses.

The first research hypothesis tested the relationship between self-presentation tactics and response to persuasive political messages among Facebook users in Nigeria. It was found that self-presentation tactics significantly predict response to persuasive political messages. Specifically, the self-presentation tactics that predict response to persuasive political messages include, ingratiation, basking, success, supplication and self-promotion. It was found that success predicts response to persuasive messages more than other self-presentation tactics. This result is contrary to that of Birnbaum (2008). The results have implications on self-categorization theory (Turner (1999), self-

presentation theory (Goffman, 1959). Regarding self-categorization theory, the results have offered insights into how Facebook users could categorize themselves through their responses to persuasive political messages.

The second research hypothesis sought to ascertain the relationship between message elements used for self-presentation and response of Facebook users in Nigeria. The outcome revealed that the message elements used play a significant role in influencing the response that Facebook posts receive from users. What this means is that it is very important for those planning communication campaigns to make sure that proper message elements are used. In particular, the combination of both pictures/illustrations with caption could best promote messages via the Facebook. The result of this study is similar to that of previous researchers (Dewan, Humphreys, & Rubenson, 2010; Kozio 2013) who reported that the message is an important consideration in communication which aim is to influence behaviour.

Finally, the researcher sought to ascertain the role that message source plays in determining the response of Facebook users. It was found that the source of a message plays an essential role in influencing Facebook users. It was also found that source characteristics like source perceived popularity, source perceived expertise, source perceived credibility, personal respect for source and Perceived source professional accomplishments. This result is similar to other scholars (Carragee, & Roefs, 2004; Fahmy, 2005; Gevers, 2018) whose studies reported that the source of a message plays an essential role on how it is received. The difference is that these researchers examined traditional media. Therefore, the current study has extended studies on the impact of the source by also including the role that the source plays in computer-mediated communication.

Conclusion

Based on the result of this study, the researcher concludes self-presentation of Facebook users predict their responses to persuasive political messages. That is the type of reaction that a persuasive message receives from Facebook users is dependent on their self-presentation tactics. This study has filled a gap in literature by linking self-presentation and response to persuasive political messages. The study has also shown the specific message elements that are effective in persuading people through mediated channels. This information could particularly prove useful because mediated channels are now critical for almost every communication efforts. Whether it is for awareness creation, behaviour change, knowledge internationalization, online channels are critical players. However, previous researchers have not significantly explored this aspect. Previous scholars have also paid less attention to the role that online message source plays in persuasion. In terms of methodology, the systematic sampling technique adopted to select the Facebook posts of users could also prove beneficial to other researchers who may be interested in examining online posts of users. This aspect is essential because there is a growing interest among scholars to examine online contents generated by users. Based on the results of this study, the researcher makes the following recommendations.

Persuasive messages in the domain of politics must be carried out with on complete knowledge of the self-presentation tactics of online users.

political parties and their supporters, should factor in consider the demographics of their target audience in crafting their messages. Behaviour change communication through online platforms should pay close attention to the source of the message. This is because source that are score low on certain characteristics like popularity, credibility, expertise bad antecedents may attract negative response and vice versa.

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