

A Study of Hate Language Use in Nigeria's 2015 Presidential Elections Campaigns

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Abstract

This study adopted content analytical research method to assess the use of hate speeches by Dr. Goodluck Jonathan and General Muhammadu Buhari campaign organizations and political parties (All Progressives Congress, APC, and Peoples Democratic Party, PDP) during the 2015 presidential elections. The objectives of study were to find out the volume of stories reflecting hate language use by APC and PDP during the 2015 presidential elections, as reported by the national dailies, and to find out the party that used more hate language than the other. The November to March issues of three national dailies – *Vanguard*, *Daily Sun* and *The*

Guardian – were purposively selected for the study. This gave a sample size of 192 issues studied. The findings showed that a high number of hate language was used by the APC and PDP during the 2015 electioneering campaigns, as published in the selected newspapers. It was also found that the PDP used more hate language than the APC during the period of study. The researchers recommended among others that newspaper establishments should adhere to their social responsibility functions to the society by ensuring that hate and dangerous speeches capable of sparking off rancour and violence in the society are not published. The media should avoid being used by politicians to achieve selfish gains through hate speeches.

KEYWORDS: Hate language, Nigerian politics, 2015 Presidential Election, election violence, hate speech