

Effectiveness of INEC Communication Awareness Strategies on the 2023 General Election: A Study of Residents of South-South Region

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ABSTRACT

This Research Study titled effectiveness Of INEC communication awareness Strategies in the 2023 general elections. A study of the South-South residents of Nigeria. Effective communication strategy is important for the conduct and management of electoral process. Information, education and communication are effective tools for behavioural change especially in the efforts to reduce voter, apathy, violence and increase participation in the electoral process. The objectives of the study was to determine the level of INEC's communication message raised awareness on voter registration. It was also to determine the extent to which INEC's communications raised awareness regarding the identification of polling units and also to reveal the assessment or extent to which INEC's communications raised awareness on how to cast the ballots. The survey research method was adopted for the study while questionnaire was used as data collection instrument. The 8,356,603 residents of the six (6) states capitals of the South-south states were used as the population from where a sample size of 460 was drawn using the Taro Tamene formula. The purposive sampling technique was used for the study while simple percentage were employed in analyzing the collected data. Based on the analysis of data, finding revealed that INEC's communicate messages raised the awareness of the people in the area of voter registration. INEC's communication messages were not clear enough to the respondents in the area of knowledge of polling units identification. INEC's communication. Messages were not clear to the respondent in the area of how to cast ballots. Based on the findings, the study recommended that INEC should sustain the communication messages in the area of voter registration and be more consistent about it. Another recommendation is that INEC's communication messages be made more understandable increase knowledge on how to vote and reduce the trend of huge void votes during election.

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KEYWORDS: communication, Awareness, INEC, General Elections

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Communication is very fundamental to the existence of any society. A society without communication is likely to face different challenges such as stagnation and even retrogression on all aspects of life. In a bid to herald development in a given society, effective communication is critical in raising the awareness level of the intended audience on various issues of interest which amongst others include good governance and democracy.

Good governance is the making and implementation of policies that would impact positively on the citizens of the country. This is what Ake (1993) meant by "bringing public policy in alignment with social needs". The term good governance was first used by donor agencies in the 1980s by the international monetary fund (IMF) and the World Bank. It is a "Stick and Carrot Instrument" being used by the IMF for keeping in line errant developing countries that must match their request for aid with

good behaviour. This implies the Countries with satisfactory record of good governance would count on the international Monetary Fund and the World Bank for aid. On the contrary, those Countries that have performed poorly in good governance must improve to qualify for adequate support. The emphasis of good governance is on quality leadership sound management of economy, a strong Judicial system, an independent and responsible electoral process, rule of law and transparency (Bamgbose, 2003).

The task of any society is to reconstruct and revitalize itself, build its own capabilities and educate, organize democratic space is expanded; democratic culture is deepened, and democracy itself is consolidated and made to become sustainable and irreversible. Nourished by the Milk of Liberal constitutionalism ad political imperative indeed the comfort of human rights, a vibrant democratic structure enhanced by popular sovereignty, placing powers in the hands of the people men and women, and their popularly elected representatives and in doing so created the very conditions which civil society will blossom and slower (Akindele, 2003) Unfortunately, the environmental factor surrounding the Nigerian democracy makes democratic institutions to remain weak and fragile, therefore becoming susceptible to collapse when faced with a low level of political stress.

Democracy and good governance are the most successful political ideas of the 21st Century. Democracy allows people speak their minds and shape their own and their children's future. Many people in different parts of the world are prepared to risk so much for these ideas, which is a teshmony to their enduring global appeal. The idea of democracy became popular in Nigeria following the rise of nationalist movements to demand for the country's independence from British Colonial rule. Thus, parelway for the instroduction of political parties to enable Nigerians contest for elective positions. For instance, in 1992, Governor Clifford introduced elective principle in respect of the three legislative assets in Lagos and one in Calabar. This was followed by the formation of the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) by Herbert Macauley in 1923. The development continued with more political parties formed and in 1960, Nigeria gained Independence under a democratically elected government.

Democracy in Nigeria has come a long way since 1999 when the Country returned to democratically elected government after a protracted military rule that lasted for more than three decades since then, the democratic system including the structures meant to

consolidate it have experienced some stress mainly due to the hang over effect of the prolonged military rule whose common denominator was the lack of democracy, accountability and good governance. The abuse of these line honoured principle of governance was legendary and its negative impact on Nigeria's politics is better imagined than stated. Thus, after over two and half decades of a return to democratic rule in Nigeria, the Country is not anywhere near the realization of the ideals of good governance which is the natural accomplishment of democratic rule.

In Nigeria, the exhilaration generated by widespread dehumanizing poverty and under development, insecurity, corruption, mass illiteracy, unemployment, amongst others has created mixed feelings about the desirability or otherwise of democracy. Democracy in Nigeria is going through difficult times as viable democratic institutions such as credible electoral system, independent electoral body, independent Judiciary, rule of law and so on are yet to take root in the Country in the face of such flairs like massive corruption in every facet of the nation's public life. These flairs in the system have become worrisome giving rise to disillusion with politics. The ability of the democratic system to transform the lives of the people is dependent on his provisions of adequate mechanisms for the smooth conduct it elections that culminate in the transfer of power from one regime to another. This is an area where Nigeria is still not performing to expectation. The lack of credible election since 1999 and particularly the recent 2023 general election has resulted in the erosion of political legitimacy on the part of public office holders. The last 2023 election was married by barren electoral frauds. Where democracy is devoid of credible elections, good governance is negated and the sovereignty of the people is relegated to the background if not completely denied. The result is that majority of the people would become subservient to the whims and caprices of the political actors who are shielded from any legal action by the immunity clause, hence they conduct themselves based on their proclivities. Even with the noticeable improvement in the freedom of speech and respect for the rule of law, the effort of the government in establishing a peaceful democratic society has been bedeviled with problems. Some of these problems are systemic and therefore, have much to do with the way the institutions of democracy are used for expediently.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Democracy should be a celebration of an involved public. Democracy requires an active and well educated citizenry because it is through adequate sensitization, discussion, popular interest, and

participation in politics that societal goods should be defined and carried out.

With out public involvement in the process, democracy lacks both its legitimacy and its guiding force. In recent years, voter participation behavior and lack of adequate voter education has reached worrying levels world wide and especially Nigeria . though the various generations of elections, declining voter participation, especially among the youths, has steadying and increasingly become major issue of concern that has been equally affecting emerging democracy and consolidated ones over time and the decreasing voter participation trends are a cause of concern because overturn out is one of the main indicators to measure the level of democratic development and robustness of a country. Low voter turnout can be related to and originated by many different factors closely related to the democratic, economic and social development of a country.

Communication is critical to a successful democratic electoral process. This implies that effective communication strategy is important for the conduct and management of electoral process. This is the basis on which INEC endure to communicate relevant messages to the people. If people properly understand INEC'S communication such as where to register, who the contestants ate, where to vote, how to vote, when to vote e.t.c the electoral process is likely to be significantly successful.

Voters education takes place to assist the election administration in its task of deliver a free fair credible, efficient and cost effective election.it encompassed basic voter information that every voter must have in order to arrive prepared at the voting station and vote on the dedicated voting day(s). voters education sensitizes the electorate on the importance of participating in elections. It provides the background attitudes, behaviours and knowledge among citizens that stimulate and consulate democracy. During an election, this education will ensure effective organization and activities, by citizens in support of parties and/or causes, behavior by citizens that is appropriate. Indeed, an educated citizenry can even overcome inadequacies in administrative preparations for an election. (Electoral knowledge Network, 2016).

As part of the fulfillment of its constitutional mandate, INEC communicates with electoral information with the ultimate aim of making the people to be well informed about the electoral process. Important information about the particulars and procedure of voting process for election eligibility to vote, where and now to register, how electorates can check the voter list to ensure they

have been duly included; what type of elections are being held where, when and how to vote to emerge as a candidate for the election, who the candidate are and how to file complaints are communicated to the masses by the electoral body using different communication platforms. (Eze Chinyere, 2024).

In view of the above, it is imperative to find out from the masses how well INEC messages were above to raise their electoral awareness during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. Consequently, the researchers intend to ascertain the assessment of South-South residents regarding the effectiveness of INEC's communication in raising electoral awareness during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to ascertain South-South resident's assessment of the effectiveness of INEC's communications in raising electoral awareness during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

The specific Objectives of the Study are to

1. Find out the assessment of South-South residents regarding the level at which INEC's communication raised awareness on voter regulation.
2. As certain South-South residents' assessment on the effect to which INEC's communications raised awareness regarding the identification of polling units.
3. Reveal the assessment of South-South residents regarding the effect to which INEC communications raised awareness on how to cast the ballet.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In line with the research objectives of the study, the researcher shall address the following research questions.

1. What is the assessment of South-South residents regarding the level at which INEC's communications rouged awareness on voter registration.
2. What is the assessment of South-South residents regarding the effect which INEC's communications raised awareness on the identification of polling units.
3. How do South-South residents assess the effectiveness of INEC's communications in raising awareness on the casting of ballots.

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study shall be beneficial to the INEC as it shall enable the commission to know the views of the public on the effectiveness of its communication in

raising electoral awareness particularly in South-South. This implies that the study shall serve as a feedback mechanism to INEC in the quest to raise electoral awareness through well thought out messages.

Future researchers will find the study relevant as it will provide current empirical data in the area of the study. Expectedly, the study shall add to available literature. The study shall therefore serve as a valuable literature to future researchers who engage in similar studies.

Finally, institutions of higher learning (universities, polytechnics, colleges of education) shall find this study relevant in the teaching and learning of political communication.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW/CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

2.1. CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION CONCEPTUALIZED

voter education represents the action of disseminating information materials and programmes as designed to inform voters about the specifics and mechanisms of the voting process for a particular election. It's basically providing citizens with basic information about participating in elections which focus on how to vote rather than for who to vote. Voter education mostly handover citizens with the knowledge of how to register, how to complete ballot papers and the electoral system generally. Based on the electoral system in one's country, who is eligible to vote where and how to register to vote, how elections can check the voter list to ensure they have been duly included, where, when and how to vote, who the candidates are and how to file complaints are the issues that will be addressed by voter education.

The main goal of voter education is directed to ensuring all potential voters are equipped with the necessary knowledge about specific elections in other execute their right to vote to the fullest and understand the entire electoral process. An effective voter education helps potential voters understand their rights, their political system, the contests they are being asked to decide, how and where to vote and to participate meaningfully in the voting process. Voter education should reach out and be accessible to all electorate constituents equally; men and women, disadvantaged groups as well as mainstreams voters. Special factor and scenarios also should be considered during voter education, such as high rates of illiteracy or the use of different languages in a country, the inclusion of minority groups, internally displaced persons and other marginalized segments of society and consideration of young adults eligible to vote for the first time. Effective voter education

campaigns start early and continue throughout the election process. Voter education is often provided by the state itself often through the independent National Electoral Commission to strengthen the democratic values by increasing voter education. There is need for every citizen of voting age to be actively involved in governance. Civic education is not limited to participation in classrooms, neighbourhoods, groups and organizations. Civic education empowers us to be well informed, active citizens and gives us the opportunity to change the world around us. It is a vital part of any democracy and equips the ordinary people with knowledge about our democracy and our constitution.

Voters education is critical to ensuring that voters can effectively exercise their voting rights and express their political will through the electoral process. When voters are not prepared or motivate in the electoral process, then questions may begin to arise about the legitimacy, representativeness and responsiveness of elected leaders and institutions. Voter education is a very focused understanding targeted at eligible voters and addresses specific electoral events and the general electoral process. Voter education is a necessary component of the electoral process required in any given country in developing an environment within which free and fair elections may take place. It typically addresses voters' motivation and preparedness to participate fully in elections. It simplifies relatively complex types of information about voting and the electoral process such as the link between basic human rights and voting rights, role and responsibilities, relationship between elections and democracy and the conditions necessary for democratic elections, secrecy of the ballot the importance of each vote, it's impact on public accountability, and how votes translate into seats. (Katusimeh).

A key dimension that forms an integral part of securing meaningful voter participation and the promotion of a full-fledged electoral democracy is civic and voter education. Centrally, civic and voter education ensures the readiness, willingness and ability of voters in participating in electoral activities. It imparts basic voter information which enables every voter to arrive well prepared at the correct voting station and to vote on the dedicated voting day(s). as evidenced by the trend of its incorporation in most legal frameworks of African countries, such as constitutions, and legislations, the role and significance of civic and voter education in the enhancement of voter participation in the democratic electoral process have increasingly gained prominence on the continent. During the pre-election

period the preparedness and willingness of voters to participate in the democratic electoral process are contingent on the nature and level of civic and voter education that is imparted mainly by the election management bodies. This pre-election phase is crucial for encouraging full participation in elections. It consists of the provision and management of civic and voter education which helps to prevent a declining voter turnout and spoilt votes. The inadequacy of civic and voter education is both directly and indirectly associated with poor turnout and participation in voter registration, lack of understanding of voting procedures under age, voting and election violence civic engagement is an imperative building block, given that education for active citizenship is the most effective manner to encourage full participation in the democratic electoral processes.

The election management bodies are often mandated to conduct civic and voter education by constitution and legislation. When explicitly interpreted, this constitutes a legal power conferred on election management bodies in the sense that they bear the principal legal responsibility to conduct civic and voter education. As a consequence, civil rights movements or / and civil society organizations similarly conduct civic and voter education in collaboration with the election management bodies allow these principles duty bearers to take the lead. The election management bodies are obliged to ensure that their activities and operation benefit the citizens. Generally, the responsibility naturally entails conducting civic and voter education programmes and events that are geared towards empowering target groups. This groups comprises people that traditionally experienced specific and disproportionate difficulties in accessing information and knowledge about their basic democratic right and freedoms, such as the right to vote and the right to be elected. In many societies, persons with disabilities, women, rural communities, economically disadvantaged persons, rural and ethnic minorities, and elderly persons have traditionally been excluded from participation in election.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Angenoa Setting Theory:

It is widely believed that the news media have a strong influence on defining what are the most important problems facing the country during elections campaigns and electioneering process as a whole.

Agenda setting theory suggests that the communication media though their ability to identify and publicize issues, play a pivotal role in shaping the

problems that attract attention from governments and international organisations are direct public opinion towards specific issues. The theory suggests that the media can shape public opinion by determining what issues are given the attention and has been widely storied and applied to various forms of media. The way news stories and topics that impact public opinion are presented is influenced by the media it is predicated on the idea that most individuals only have access to one source of information on the most issues. The news media, since they establish the agenda, they may how important something's are seen to be.

The agenda setting theory explores how the views and thought of the public can be altered by the what they see and hear in the media. The theory is important in agenda settings because of the necessarily in agenda setting of crafting a message and communicating it to a large group of people. The agenda setting theory also outlined the basis involved in reporting events to the public. This bias in media reports is used to advance the media corporations own agenda.

The Agenda setting theory is to improve or modify the voting age audience opinions regarding voter education and to alter the beliefs and values of the democratic process through the voter education messages and get the audience actively involved in registration, recall of elected officials, registration and collection of permanent voters card, participate on election day, as well as adherence to electoral guidelines towards achieving a credible free and fair elections it shall also educate the voting audience on the level at which INEC's communications raised awareness on the candidates that contested in the elections will as the extent is which INEC communication raised awareness on the dates for the election.

The agenda setting theory is stunningly successful in telling the audience what to think about in terms of effective INEC communication messages aimed at raising the electoral awareness among residents of South-South.

METHODOLOGY

The correlation survey research method will be used to carry out the study. The choice of the research method was predicated on the nature of the study which will involve eliciting response of results of south-south, Nigeria on the subject of investigation. The population of the society will be focused on the residents south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria; However, the target population will consist of the residents of the state capitals which consist of 835, 6003 from the six (6) state capitals of the south-south region of Nigeria in the 2022 National Population

census. This is distributed as 620,000, 1,905,000, 657,000, 3,325,000, 1,329,000 and 524,400 for Asaba, Benin city, Calabar, Port-Harcourt, Uyo and Yenagoa respectively.

400 residents representing the value obtained from Taro Yemene formula analysis for minimum sample size analysis. The sample size was obtained from the residents of the six (6) states capitals of the south-south region of Nigeria in the 2022 formal census.

The sample size is selected through proportional sampling technique. The sample size of 400 residents is distributed as 30,91,31,154,64,25 for Asaba, Benin city, Calabar, Port-Harcourt, Uyo and Yenagoa respectively. In the selected state capitals, the researcher will adopt purposive sampling technique to administer the instruments on only those who were exposed to INEC's voter education awareness messages.

Table 1: Sample and distribution of sample size of sin and states

| S/No. | Name of State Capitals | Population of residents | Sample size of residents |
|-------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | Asaba | 620,003 | 30 |
| 2. | Benin city | 1,903,00 | 91 |
| 3. | Calabar | 657,000 | 31 |
| 4. | Port-Harcourt | 3,320,000 | 159 |
| 5. | Uyo | 1,329,000 | 64 |
| 6. | Yenagoa | 524,400 | 25 |
| Total | | 8,356,003 | 400 |

The data collected in the study will adopt descriptive inferential statistical tools to analyze it. The descriptive statistical tool of interest are those of simple percentage, mean and standard deviates for the analysis of the demographic details of the respondents and research questions.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data collected were analyzed and presented below:

Table 1: Questionnaire distributed

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Returned | 385 | 96.4 | 96.4 | 96.4 |
| Not returned | 15 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 400 | 100.0 | | |

The table above shows that 400 copies of the questionnaire were distributed. A total of 385 copies representing 96.4% were returned while 15 copies representing 3.6% were not returned. Consequently, the returned 385 copies were used for the study.

Table 2: Gender of respondents

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Male | 206 | 53.1 | 53.1 | 53.1 |
| Female | 179 | 46.9 | 46.9 | 100.0 |
| | 385 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 2 shows that 206 respondents representing 53.1% were male while 179 respondents 46.9% were female. The implication is that females respondents were more than the male.

Table 3: Age brackets of respondents

| | Frequency | Present | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 18-30 | 147 | 38.5 | 38.5 | 38.5 |
| 31-40 | 176 | 46.1 | 46.1 | 84.6 |
| 41-50 | 58 | 14.3 | 14.3 | 98.9 |
| 51& above | 4 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 385 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 3 shows that 147 respondents representing 38.5% were in the age bracket of 18-30. 176 respondents representing 46.1% were in the age range of 31-40. 58 respondents representing 14.3% were in the bracket of 41-50 while 4 respondents representing 1.1% were in the range of 51 and above.

Table 4: Respondents Highest Academic Qualification

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| SSCE | 76 | 19.9 | 19.9 | 19.9 |
| ND/NCE | 121 | 31.3 | 31.3 | 51.2 |
| HND/BSC | 143 | 37.2 | 37.2 | 88.4 |
| Higher Degree | 45 | 11.6 | 11.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 385 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The table 4 above shows that 76 respondents representing 19.9% had senior school certificate as the highest academic qualifications, 121 respondents representing 31.3% had either ND/NCE. 143 respondents representing 37.2% had either had HND/BSC degree while 45 respondents representing 11.6% had higher degrees.

Table 5: Respondents on INEC Communication Message on Voter Registration

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 385 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Not sure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 385 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

The table above shows that the respondents are aware of INEC communication messages on voter registration. Data in the table show that all the 385 respondents representing 100% are aware of INEC's voter registration messages.

Table 6: Frequency of INEC communication messages awareness on identification of polling units.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Everyday | 93 | 23.7 | 23.7 | 72.2 |
| Only on election Season | 278 | 72.2 | 72.7 | 96.0 |
| Not sure | 15 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 385 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 6 shows the responses on respondents on the frequency at which they are exposed to INEC's communication messages on identification of polling units. It shows that 93 respondents representing 23.7% were everyday exposed to the message. 268 respondents representing 73.2% were exposed to the messages only on election season while 15 respondents representing 4.0% were not sure of the frequency of exposure to the messages.

Table 7: Respondents Understanding of INEC's Messages on how to cast Ballot

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Very understandable | 41 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 |
| Not too clear to me | 274 | 72.5 | 72.5 | 82.5 |
| Not understandable at all | 65 | 16.4 | 16.4 | 98.4 |
| Not sure | 5 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 385 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 7 above shows the respondent understands of INEC's voter education messages on how to cast their ballot. The table shows that 41 respondents representing 10.0% indicated that the messages are very understandable to them. 274 respondents representing 72.5% said the messages are not clear to them. 65 respondents representing 16.4% said the messages were not understandable to them at all while 5 respondents representing 1.1% were not sure of their level of understanding of the messages.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The research questions were carefully addressed using relevant data presented in various tables above.

Research Question 1: What is the assessment of south-south residents regarding INEC communications messages raised awareness on voter education?

The research question was put through to find out the respondents to determine whether respondents were aware of INEC communication messages on voter registration. Data in table 5 were used to address this research question. The table shows the respondents awareness on INEC's messages on voter registration. A total of 385 respondents representing 100% are aware of the Independent National Electoral Commissions messages on voter registration. The

implication is that INEC communication messages on voter registration are knowledgeable or awareness has been created by the messages. In line with the UNDP report (2022) which emphasises increased awareness to achieve increased political participation to a well informed citizenry in the democratic process including voter registration and elections as way of influencing decision making on matters that affect their lives.

Research Question 2: Are the south-south residents aware of INEC communication messages on identification of polling units?

This research question was put forward to ascertain whether south-south residents are awareness of INEC communication messages on identification of polling units. It shows the responses of the respondents on the frequency and knowledge of INEC's communication messages on identification of polling units. It shows that 93 respondents representing 23.7% were daily exposed to the messages. 268 respondents representing 73.2% were exposed or had knowledge of the messages only on election season while 15 respondents representing 4.0% were not sure of the frequency of exposure to the messages. These finding calls for the need for election bodies to effectively conduct voter education messages such that it must take critical steps to properly are well informed about the electoral process; it makes the conduct of the elections easier for the electoral body. It is imperative that the election body must properly engage in voter education to achieve a successful electoral process and it must not be only on election seasons but a continuous education to enable the message seat on the minds and attitudes of the people.

Research Question 3: Do south-south residents understand INEC's communication message in raising awareness on the casting of ballots?

This research question was sought to determine how south-south residents assess the effectiveness of INEC communication messages on how to cast their ballots. Data in table above shows that 41 respondents representing 10.0% had very good understanding on how to cast their ballot through INEC communication messages. 274 respondents representing 82.5% were of the opinion that the INEC Voter Education messages on how to cast their ballot were not clear to them. 65 respondents that represents 16.4% said the INEC communication messages are not understandable at all while 5 respondents that represent 1.1% are not sure. This implies that the INEC communication messages of how to cast their votes have significantly impacted on the people to be able to understand how to cast their votes and this

could be a versed as the reason for high rate of voided votes during elections.

CONCLUSION

In line with the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that the independent National Electoral Commission Communication messages are yet to significantly herald the expected results which among other findings the effective dissemination of INEC communication messages that would yield the required result towards achieving a credible, free and fair elections.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. INEC should take critical steps to design their messages for adequate comprehensibility of the various groups of people in the society to be able to carry them along in the electioneering process.
2. INEC should sustain the awareness created in the area of voter registration. There is need for continues communications with the different segments of the society and also employ the services of non-governmental organizations, religious leaders and opinion leaders to sustain the awareness obtained.
3. There is need for INEC to repackage will thought out messages on how to cast ballots on Election Day to reduce the high rate of voids votes. Which invalidates the success of the electioneering process? INEC should engage in voter education early enough to sensitize the people rather than only during election season.

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