

## “O’ TOGE” Programme on Sobi F.M, and Influence on Kwara State Electorates Voting Behavior

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### Abstract

This research study assessed the influence of Sobi F.M’s ‘O to ge’ programme on voting behavior of electorates during the 2019 and 2023 Governorship elections in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study was anchored on the Agenda-Setting and Multi-step Flow Theories as theoretical justification, and survey research design was adopted as its methodology. From the result of the data gathered, findings indicate that the ‘O to ge’ programme is a very effective political campaign strategy during the 2019 governorship election in Kwara State, and that authority of Sobi F.M did not give other political parties avenue to air their own campaign programmes. Based on these findings, it was however recommended that, organizer of the programme should look at better ways of sustaining it, even after election, as well as review its contents in order not to violate the provisions in NBC broadcasting codes.

**Keywords:** Influence; Elections; Political Mobilisation; Programme; *O toge*

### 1. Introduction

The nomination and election of candidates into various political offices are important in party politics and representative democracy. In every political party, such nominations are made at national and state conventions preceding the presidential, gubernatorial and other local election (Cyprus, 2015). Prior to the 2018 gubernatorial election in Kwara State, political parties through keenly contested or stage-managed primaries produced candidates who vied for governorship office that was about to be left vacant by the incumbent governor of the state, Alhaji Abdulfatah Ahmed. Securing the party ticket is a hurdle that must be passed using intra-party connection, personal influence, and aspirant’s credentials or achievements. After securing a party’s candidacy, the candidate and the political party have an uphill task to winning the scheduled election (Oriola & Ogbemi, 2016). “Irrespective of the level of political campaign, the electorates (voters) are always the target. They buy the political product if the products meet their needs; they are also recipients of political messages and campaigns that are aired through the broadcast media (radio or television) which is aimed towards soliciting for support by voting the candidates (Nwankwo, Ojo & Apeh, 2015, p. 121)”. The voters may vary in their expectations which could range from desire for total change from “politics as usual”, vibrant and visionary political leadership, to detribalized leader with holistic electorate focused programmes (Dauda, Abdu-Raheem and Oluwaseun, 2021).

As targets in political campaign, i.e. electioneering influenced through various political marketing strategies and programmes on the media. The array of political marketing strategies provides information which voters need to assess candidates’ objectives for seeking votes from the electorates (Onwuamalam, 2014). Prior to 2018 governorship election in Kwara State, the two prominent gubernatorial candidates (Alhaji Abdulrahman Abdulrazak and Hon. Rasaq Olatunde Atunwa) massively employed various political campaign strategies on radio, television and other media platforms. These campaign strategies were employed to woo voters or persuade them to vote candidates of their choice or political

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party. One prominent campaign slogan that was used by the All Progressives Congress (APC) then is '*O to ge*' which literally means *it's enough*. This slogan was also made popular through Sobi F.M (a private-owned radio station in Kwara State), as a one-hour programme titled with the slogan were frequently aired on the station. This programme was specifically directed to the electorate to persuade them to vote for their own candidate (APC) as against the candidate of the rival party.

Modern day politics demand that political parties serve as a platform through which politicians contest for different elective positions. And in order for these electorates to participate, Olaleye and Ayobade (2018, p. 14) observed that "they (electorates) are mobilized to vote candidates into various offices. These mobilizations are done through production and airing or publishing of political campaign messages that aimed to educate and influence voters to act during the elections". Supporting this position, Adamu (2018) observed that, as Nigerians conducted their 2015 general elections, such political communication in the form of various campaign messages were witnessed. He asserts, that "Radio, which is one of the most frequent medium used by campaign organizers and political parties, witnessed such presence of political campaign messages even higher".

Today, voters in Nigeria come across various political campaign messages through listening to radio. Aghamelu (2014, p. 79) opines that "a nationwide study carried out by the National Bureau of Statistics in 2011 showed that Nigerians are heavily dependent on radio as major source of public information". It is important to note that, according to the cultural settings of Nigerian culture, rural dwellers believe more in interpersonal communication as means of receiving information. Agencies like the National Orientation Agency (NOA); civil societies like the European Union (EU) and African Union (AU) that serves as election observers, among others; electoral bodies like the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), in Nigeria were all aware of the pervasiveness of the radio. These bodies, among others, involved radio in enlightening citizens about the political system. With this development, Dada (2023) showed that audience members got to know about aspirants and candidates for various elective posts as well as the manifestoes of political parties mostly through the medium of the radio. Additionally, Familusi and Owoeye (2014, p. 165) stressed that broadcasting media like radio used in Nigeria's political process had witnessed development in producing knowledge as regards to choice and voting of the electorates. In the same vein, Irabor (2015, p. 123) offers a piece of advice that anybody including the government who ignore the role of radio in their life is courting some danger because radio reportage on the political life alone is crucial to its survival and growth. Nigeria is a country that can be described as a nation, where people are mostly guided by their ethnic affiliation and identity. This identity led to the proliferation of local media outfits especially local radio stations. These local radio stations give all the various community leaders in the locality advantages by allowing them to speak to their ethnic community members or tribal members. This is one reason that makes local radio stations more patronized by the various community members. And this also allows community leaders to speak to their co-community members directly.

The preparation for the conduct of the Nigeria's 2015 general elections has witnessed a rise in the use of radio as a means of airing political campaign messages. Even, before then, a proliferation of radio stations in the entire country was witnessed. The radio stations that were mainly local stations otherwise known as F.M stations were used to air political campaign messages by the government, political parties and candidates

However, since there is no known cutting-edge strategy that can win elections at all times, given the political terrain in Nigeria and particularly in Kwara State where competition is stiff. It can be recalled that the political atmosphere in Kwara State prior to the governorship election was tense as a result of the power of incumbency and the political value of the opposition candidates, most especially, the candidate of People Democratic Party (PDP), Rasaq Atunwa and his rival from the All Progressives Congress (APC), Abdulrahman Abdurazak who was eventually declared the winner. Although, Nwankwo, et al. (2015) opines that political campaign is important during electioneering, but there seems to be no agreement on the effect of political campaigns on electoral outcomes or choice of candidates for election. Based on the above issues raised or scenarios, this study aimed at examining the influence of Sobi F.M's '*O to ge*' programme on voting behavior of electorates during the 2019 and 2023 governorship elections in Kwara State.

### **1.1. Statement of the Problem**

For the past two decades, there has been increase use of radio for political campaigns in Nigeria, which is seen by many as a tool of mobilizing the electorates for support during electioneering process (Nwankwo et al., 2015). Prior to the 2019 governorship election in Kwara State, opposition political parties have employed various campaign messages on the media to tackle their main rival (the ruling party), given the heated political atmosphere that pervaded Kwara State during electoral process. It was not quite clear whether the crafted '*O to ge*' campaign slogan and its programme version on Sobi F.M significantly influenced the electorates towards the huge voting figure got at the end of the historical governorship election.

Similarly, "radio as a medium of communication influences how people experience their political life by its regular broadcast of news material in current affairs, politics and other areas" (Dauda et al., 2021). Radio is still the best way for political parties and candidates to influence people, (Adibe 2015). In Nigeria, the political institutions were in the past employed the use of traditional means of communication to share their political campaign messages to potential voters. However, in recent times, there is a shift from depending much on use of direct or face-to-face meetings, and instead embark on the use of mostly radio stations to send political campaign messages to the populace, especially potential voters, thereby persuading them to vote for a particular candidate. Kwara state which is the main focus state of this research has several radio stations both government-owned and private-owned stations.

No doubt that government at all levels struggles to control the political sphere in the state using radio as a means of disseminating their messages during and after elections (Abdollahyan & Machika, 2017). This development saw the establishment of many radio stations in comparison to other forms of media, both in Kwara and across Nigerian state. The issue is the influence of '*O to ge*' programme on voting behavior of the electorates during 2019 governorship election in Kwara State. Furthermore, it is a question for determination whether or not there is a relationship between radio political campaign programmes; interference of the opinion leaders on the voters' behavior leading to turn out into participating during the elections; and the outcome of the elections result.

It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the influence of Sobi F.M's '*O to ge*' programme on voting behavior of electorates during the 2019 governorship election in Kwara State, with a view to ascertain how radio was successfully used for the electioneering process.

## **1.2. Research Questions**

- What is the frequency of Kwara state electorates' exposure to "*O to ge*" programme on Sobi F.M?
- To what extent does '*O to ge*' programme on Sobi F.M influenced electorates voting behavior during the 2019 and 2023 elections in Kwara state?
- What are the voting patterns among Kwara state electorates during the 2019 and 2023 elections?

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## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Concept of Election**

Election is the process of reaching a consensus on the representation of the citizen of a particular state in public offices. As averred by Nwankwo, et al. (2015), an election is a procedure that allows member of an organization or community to choose representative who will hold position of authority within it. Also, Familusi and Owoeye (2015) see election as a system of choosing a person or group of people for positions in the society by a legal way of voting. However, in a healthy democratic society, election represents the starting point of good governance (Gu, 2023). In their various forms and sizes (whether in secular world, religious organizations, or in families) election serves as participatory tool for individuals or groups in the decisions that must affect their lives. As Gu (2023) further noted that elections are the primary means by which citizens control their government, select capable leaders, and eliminate ineffective ones. He further stressed that election is an essential element in a democratic myth which the masses or the led use to choose their leaders and give the chosen the right to rule them with the approval and that this approval can also be withdrawn and when this approval is withdrawn, the rulers or leaders are likely to face defeat in election and accept it in a good faith.

Moreover, elections are more than a simple ritual or solidarity which allows the translation of at least the majority interest into public policy. Similarly, Adamu (2018) opines that election is the act of choosing or selecting one or more persons from a greater number of people to serve as representatives in the taking of decisions that affect public interest and the allocation of national power and resources in acceptable manner.

### **2.2. Politics, Electorates and Electioneering Process in Nigeria**

Electioneering process represents a formal procedure whereby a person is elected into a political office. Previous elections, in the political history of Nigeria, have recorded a high level of political apathy. Lack of interest, with reference to voters' participation, has been a common political culture of the country (Aghamelu, 2014). The massive rigging recorded in previous elections, has led to the characterization of electioneering process by many Nigerians as selection instead of election (Adamu, 2018). This ugly phenomenon has so far informed growing voters' political apathy recorded in previous elections.

However, successive elections in Nigeria since the colonial period lacked the essential ingredients of democratic electoral process, which include transparency, fairness and freeness (Madueke & Enyiazu, 2025). This failure according to him, is due to several factors, which include manipulation of the decisions and activities at the various stages of electoral process by the governments and politicians; corruption of officials and electorate; violence, during campaigns, polling and collation; rigging, stuffing, snatching and destruction of ballot boxes, among others.

On the other hand, understanding voting is necessary, in order to fully appreciate the concept of election. Voting is understood from the perspective of a formal indication of a choice between two or more candidates expressed typically through a ballot (Prasetyadi et al., 2020). Thus, it is the right to indicate a choice in an election. The understanding of political consciousness also needs to be taken into cognizance. A philosophical view of consciousness describes it as the gamut of man's subjective experience and, indeed, the subjective experience of all beings capable of similar experiences.

Similarly, (Andrew, 2024) defines it as the purposeful awareness of objective reality, including the logic of its existence. Also, Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (6th ed.) views it "as the state of being conscious – the fact of awareness by the mind of itself and the world." It then means that consciousness is the state of awareness or perception of something. Based on the above explanation, political consciousness, therefore, means the political awareness, as well as participation in the public affairs of one's country. This means that it is the awareness and involvement of oneself in the activities associated with the governance of one's country or area.

Over the years, many Nigerians have expressed growing concerns about the level of political ignorance, which the country has long experienced. This often embodies itself in the form of political apathy, which, for (Nweke & Etido-Inyang, 2018), manifests itself in "the lack of psychological involvement in public affairs, emotional detachment from civic obligations, and abstention from political activity" (as cited in Independent National Electoral Commission & Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2011, p. 15). Voter's apathy, a subset of political apathy, has, thus, emerged as a major problem in mature and emerging democracies, settled and volatile societies, large and thriving economies, as well as small and troubled ones, among youth, women and other marginalized groups, as much as among mainstream dominant interests (INEC & FES, 2011).

However, the media have been accused of aiding and abating hate campaign during the election, it did not derail from its primary role of voters' enlightenment and education. The primary functions of the media in electioneering campaign include reporting and interpreting events, defining issues, portraying personalities and investigating report (Norris, 2000). To a greater extent, the media shared in the responsibility of channeling the electoral process towards the desirable goal of integrity and transparency. For instance, the media focused on serious matters that portended serious consequences for the people and their political choices (Aghamelu, 2014). It clarifies issues during campaigns, portrayed the personalities of the contestants, thereby, bringing aspirants close to the electorate, and teaching the differences between party and candidate, which enabled the electorate to make a wise choice. Furthermore, the media helps in enabling the electorate to analyze campaign messages of politicians and setting the correct political agenda for the audience.

### **2.3. Radio and Political Mobilisation**

Radio is one of the mass media instruments which play the role of transmitting information to the public as events unfold. It involves the process in which messages are sent through electrical waves (McGraw-Hill Education, n.d.). In other words, sounds in form of signals would be sent and received through the waves. However, mass media refers collectively to all media technologies that are intended to reach a large media which comprises billboards, signs, placards placed inside and outside of commercial buildings/objects like shops/buses, flying billboards (signs in tow of airplanes), blimps, and skywriting (Thibault, 2020).

Concomitantly, the preparation towards the conduct of elections in Nigeria in the past one decade has witnessed a rise in the use of radio as a means of airing political campaign messages. Even before the present proliferation of radio stations in the country (International IDEA, 2024). There are various instances where radio stations are seen airing political campaign messages by the government, political parties and candidates. Modern day politics demand that political parties serve as a platform through which politicians contest for different elective positions. And in order for these electorates to participate, Adibe (2015) opined that "they (electorates) are mobilized to vote candidates into various offices. These mobilizations are done through production and airing of political campaign messages aimed to educate and influence voters to act during elections. Supporting this position, International IDEA, (2024), observed that, as Nigerians conducted their 2015 general elections, such political communication in the form of various campaign messages were witnessed. He asserts, that "Radio, which is one of the most frequent medium used by campaign organizers and political parties, witnessed such presence of political campaign messages even higher."

The media much more than any institution in society are one of the best instruments for mobilizing the people during election as well as informing them on the latest development as regard electoral activities in the country. Mass media and elections in Nigeria can be clearly seen under the following aspect; uses of propaganda during elections, the press and political mobilization during elections, the press at the scene of elections, and the press after elections, (Ariyo, 2019; & International IDEA, 2024). It was through the mass media that the electorates got to know the mind of candidates and also narrow down the voters' wide range of choice before the voting. The mass media, according to Andrew, (2024) therefore, provides avenue for letting the people know what trends are, in terms of election periods, and what it means to exercise their franchise, civic rights, to vote and voted for. He emphasized on how political parties, candidates and stakeholders used the mass media (radio, television and others) heavily for political mobilization during the 2015 and 2019 general elections, and how the electorates were further enlightened with the same mass media to believe in the power of their thumb.

#### **2.4. Overview of Sobi F.M and O toge's Programme**

Sobi F.M is a private radio station in Nigeria transmitting from the top of Sobi Hill in the ancient city of Ilorin, Kwara state. The station operates on frequency 101.9 and was established in the year 2016. It commenced full-fledged transmission shortly after its commission on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2017. With a core value of social rebirth and cultural rejuvenation, the station is poised to provide educative, enlightening, entertaining, reformative and invigorating programmes that will cater for the needs of all audience groups (Sobi, 2023). At present, Sobi F.M operates on 24-hours broadcasting, and its signal covers other parts of Kwara state and neighbouring states. The station won the award of best radio station in Kwara state for the year 2018, 2019 and 2020.

On the other hand, '*O toge*' is a 1 hour political programme aired on Sobi F.M during the build-up to the 2019 and 2023 elections in Kwara state. The programme was sponsored by the All Progressives Congress (APC) in order to sell the candidature of the incumbent, Abdulrahman Abdulrasaq. Furthermore, '*O toge*' as a political programme, exposed the ills in governance and misdeeds of previous administrations, with a view to prevail upon the electorates to vote out bad governance and support the aspirations of the APC.

#### **2.5. Empirical Review**

After the conduct of 2011 general elections in Nigeria, Utor, (2011) assessed the impact of mass media on the voting pattern of electorates during the election. The study was to ascertain the reason for voters' apathy and lack of full participation by the electorates. Survey research method was used, and findings showed that voters in Nigeria have low levels of political knowledge and information, as well as the perceived fear of malpractices by electoral officials, it was recommended from the findings that radio as a mass medium should be used heavily for disseminating political campaign messages, awareness and reorientation of the electorates.

In the same vein, Kolawole (2015) studied the influence of opinion leaders on the voting decision of rural voters; with evidence from Ayetoro, Ogun-State of Nigeria. The study aimed to find out how opinion leaders in the rural populace influence their people in the society, the mixed method of research was employed by the researcher. The researcher found that the respondents did not search for information on who to vote, as most of them voted on the advice or instruction of their leaders. It was further found that community and religious leaders are often times believed more than other sources of political information. However, it was recommended that political parties and their candidates should carry along leaders of various groups among the rural populace in their political campaigns, so that they can help in influencing the electorates in voting for them.

Similarly, Familusi (2014) carried out a study titled "assessment of radio as development tool". The study was conducted to assess the power of radio in the developmental process, and how radio can further aids in spreading messages and awareness amidst developmental challenges. The methods used to obtain data for analysis in the study were documentary survey and intensive interview. Findings showed that radio is the most important instrument and tool for communication development. It ranked as the most popular means of disseminating information, regardless of the continent, as illiteracy is no barrier to radio messages since such messages can be passed in the audience' own language. The research recommended among others that radio programmes and messages should be localized into the language of the host environment, and that developmental issues affecting the immediate environment should be prioritize during programmes.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

#### 3.1. Agenda-Setting Theory

The agenda-setting theory was propounded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1973. The theory among others rests on the core assumptions that;

The mass media sets agenda for public opinion by highlighting certain issues.

The media also tells the audience not so much on what to think as what to think about. It holds that most of the picture we think or worried about, most of the issues we discuss, are based on what we have read, listened to or watched in different mass media.

The mass media do not reflect social reality because news is filtered, chosen and shaped by newsroom staff, few media agenda which were chosen by professional gatekeepers lead people to perceive given issues as important, (Entman, 1993).

The media make us to think about certain issues, they make us to think or feel that certain issues are more important than others in our society.

Among major criticisms of the theory as posits by Davis (2012) cited in Asemah, Nwammuo and Nkwam-Uwaoma (2017), media users may not be as ideal as the theory assumes. People may not be well-informed, deeply engaged in public affairs, thoughtful and skeptical; instead, they may pay only casual attention to public affairs and remain ignorant of the details. The critics further opine that news media cannot create or conceal problems; they may only alter the awareness, priorities and salience people attach to a set of problems. Also, Caesar (2010) cited in Asemah *et al* maintains that the news media do not create or set agenda for the public to follow, rather the real world events set agenda for people to follow. Thus, research on the agenda setting concept is largely inconclusive because it does not establish a causal relationship between public salience and media coverage.

The relevance of this theory to the study under review makes '*O to ge*' as a political programme on Sobi F.M a subject of public discussion. The persistent broadcast and dissemination of the programme has successfully make it an issue of public debate, therefore raising it to the level of public discussions and acceptance. The frequent dissemination of '*O to ge*' programmes has made it too important to be ignored. This in tandem with McCombs & Shaw, (1972), which posits that the media prioritizes issues by setting agenda, while such priorities become public agenda.

#### 3.2. Multi-Step Flow Theory

On the other hand, the multi-step flow theory was first introduced by a sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet in 1944, and was elaborated by Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld in 1955. The theory according to them was hinged on the following basic assumptions;

The mass media affect its audiences indirectly and immediately, as well as indirectly from the opinion. That is; ideas flow from mass media to opinion leaders before being disseminated to a wider population.

Information is affected by the social norms of each new community group that it enters, and is also shaped by conflicting views surrounding it.

Opinion leaders are affected more by 'elite media' than 'run-of-the-mill' mass media.

Information actually tends to travel in multi-step flow processes with many different flow directions and iterations.

Opinion leaders intervene between the "media's direct message and the audience's reaction to that message". Thus, they tend to have great effect on those they are most similar to, based on personality, interests, demographics, or socio-economic factors.

These leaders tend to influence others to change their attitudes and behaviors more quickly than conventional media, because the audience is able to better identify or relate with them than an article in a newspaper or a news programme.

However, critics of the multi-step flow theory were of the belief that the theory does not give power to the media, but few elites who are well-informed on issues discussed in the media. Eberl et al., (2022) criticized the step-flow theories for placing much power in the hand of opinion leaders, thus giving the media little power to influence the audience through its programmes. Similarly, Asemah *et al* (2017) was of the view that multi-step flow theory places audience willingness to know and be informed in the hands of the minority few known as 'opinion leaders', thereby negating the power of the media to influence and inform the audience.

The relevance of this theory to the study being reviewed can be dissected from the fact that '*O to ge*' programme is not directly targeted at the audience of Sobi F.M, rather, it was targeted at informed political leaders and stakeholders who are then assigned to relay the core objectives of the programme to members of the public; particularly electorates, in stages. This is however in line with the views of Katz & Lazarsfeld (1955) that ideas flow from mass media to opinion leaders before being disseminated to a wider population, as they do intervene between the media's direct messages and the audience's reactions to such messages.

#### 4. Methodology

The research design that was adopted for this study is quantitative in approach, this entails the use of survey method to select respondents who are active and eligible voters in Kwara state, Nigeria. The population of this study is registered voters in Ilorin metropolis (Asa, Ilorin East, Ilorin West and Ilorin South) which according to the (2023) INEC register was 703,642. Moreover, the Taro Yarmane formula was used to arrive at a sample of 400. Also, the study used multistage/cluster sampling technique to ensure the entire population is given equal chance of representation. The questionnaire was used to obtain data from the respondents. The data obtained were further analyzed descriptively, using simple and percentage distribution tables.

#### 5. Data presentation and analysis

A total of 400 copies of questionnaire were distributed to respondents who are eligible voters in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara state. Out of the administered copies of questionnaire, 352 copies were correctly filled and returned. Therefore, the data analysis was based on the 352 copies of questionnaire that were returned.

**Table 1** Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	224	64%
Female	128	36%
Total	352	100%
	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
18 – 25yrs	27	7.7%
26 - 35yrs	93	26.4%
36 - 45yrs	106	30%
46 and Above	124	35.2%
Total	352	100%
	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	117	33.1%
Married	232	65.9%
Divorced	3	1%
Total	352	100%

Source; Field Survey, 2024

**Analysis:** The tables indicate majority of the respondents (64%) are males. Also, majority of the respondents are of age 46 and above (35.2%), other age brackets have lesser percentage. Also, the respondents that are married (65.9%) dominated the study.

### 5.1. Frequency of Exposure to 'O toge' Programme

**Table 2** Listenership to the programme

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very Often	136	38.6%
Often	123	34.9%
Rarely	67	19.0%
Not at all	26	7.5%
Total	352	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

**Analysis:** As seen in the above table, 38.6% of the respondents listen to 'O to ge' programme very often, while 7.5% do not. Therefore, it is obvious that majority of the respondents listen to the programme at very often times.

**Table 3** Rate/level of contributions on the programme

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	119	33.8%
High	69	19.6%
Average	76	21.6%
Low	73	20.7%
Very Low	15	4.3%
Total	352	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

**Analysis:** The table shows 33.8% of the respondents' level of contributions on the programme is very high, while 4.3% of them contribute at a very low rate. This implies that the level/rate of contribution to the programme on Sobi F.M is very high.

### 5.2. Influence of 'O to ge' Programme on Electorates Voting Behaviour

**Table 4** Influence of the programme on choice of candidate

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	110	31.3%
Agree	103	29.3%
Neutral	51	14.5%
Disagree	52	14.8%
Strongly Disagree	36	10.1%
Total	352	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

**Analysis:** The table above shows that 31.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that 'O to ge' programme influenced their choice of candidate during election, while 10.1% strongly disagreed. This shows that the programme influenced respondents' choice of candidate during election.

**Table 5** Influence of the programme on voting

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	118	33.5%
Agree	86	24.4%
Neutral	53	15.1%
Disagree	63	17.9%
Strongly Disagree	32	9.1%
Total	352	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

**Analysis:** From the table above, 33.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that 'O to ge' programme influenced their choice of voting, while 17.9% strongly disagreed. This indicates that the programme influenced majority of the respondents in their choice of voting.

### 5.3. Voting Patterns of Electorates during the 2019 and 2023 Elections

**Table 6** 'O to ge' programme and voting behaviour

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	141	40.1%
Agree	76	21.6%
Neutral	70	19.9%
Disagree	48	13.6%
Strongly Disagree	17	4.8%
Total	352	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

**Analysis:** From the table above, 40.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that airing of 'O to ge' programme influenced their voting behaviour, while 4.8% strongly disagreed. This indicates that airing of 'O to ge' programme influenced respondents voting behaviour during the 2019 and 2023 elections.

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## 6. Discussion

Data on respondents' demographic details, frequency of exposure to 'O to ge' programme, influence of the programme on voting behavior and voting pattern were obtained. Results were further discussed below:

### 6.1. Research Question 1: What is the frequency of Kwara state electorates' exposure to "O to ge" programme on Sobi F.M?

In discussing the frequency of exposure to "O to ge" programme on Sobi F.M, tables 2 and 3 answered this research question, as the responses from the respondents indicates that 38.6% of the respondents listen to 'O to ge' programme very often, while 33.8% of the respondents' level of contributions on the programme is very high. This implies that majority of the respondents listen to the programme at very often times, and their level/rate of contribution to the programme on is very high.

This finding is in accordance with Olorede, Oyewole and Azeez (2013) study on "press reportage of President Yar'Adua's Ill-health". The researchers found that though the majority of news stories were hidden in the inside pages, a sizeable

amount appeared on the front pages and a few on the back pages. Also, Abimbola (2017), in a study of comparative analysis of the prominence Nigerian newspapers accorded selected political crisis situations found that late President Yar'Adua's illness and absence in office was more prominently reported, with 8.5% of the coverage placed on the front page of the newspapers as major stories, 74.9% of the newspaper items was on the inside pages and only 16.6% of the coverage was on the back page.

#### **6.2. Research Question 2: To what extent does 'O to ge' programme on Sobi F.M influenced electorates voting behavior during the 2019 and 2023 elections in Kwara state?**

Tables 4 and 5 discussed this question, as 31.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that 'O to ge' programme influenced their choice of candidate during election, while 33.5% strongly agreed that 'O to ge' programme influenced their choice of voting. This indicates that the programme influenced majority of the respondents in their choice of voting, and their choice of candidate during the elections.

#### **6.3. Research Question 3: What are the voting patterns among Kwara state electorates during the 2019 and 2023 elections?**

Table 5 gave answer to this research question as 40.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that airing of 'O to ge' programme influenced their voting behaviour. This indicates that airing of 'O to ge' programme influenced respondents voting behaviour during the 2019 and 2023 elections.

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### **7. Conclusion and recommendations**

The study examined the influence of 'O to ge' programme of Sobi F.M on voting behavior of electorates during the 2019 and 2023 governorship elections in Kwara State. As targets in political campaigns, i.e. electioneering influenced through various political marketing strategies and programmes on the media. The array of political marketing strategies provides information which voters need to assess candidates' objectives for seeking votes from the electorates. Winning an election nowadays requires massive political campaign strategies on radio, television and other media platforms. These campaign strategies are needed in order to woo voters or persuade them to vote candidates of their choice or political party, of which the 'O to ge' slogan was used during the 2019 and 2023 governorship elections in Kwara State.

This slogan was also made popular through Sobi F.M (a private-owned radio station in Kwara State), as a one-hour programme titled with the slogan were frequently aired on the station. It was specifically directed to the electorate to persuade them to vote for a particular candidate. Thus, the findings from this study pointed to the fact that the the 'O to ge' slogan actually did a good job in deciding the winner of the two governorship elections in the state (both in 2019 and 2023). The study concludes, based on the findings that, 'O to ge' programme should continuously be aired, so as to put government on her toes, while the following recommendations were proffered:

- Organizers of the 'O to ge' programme should look at better ways of sustaining it, even after elections. This will assist to put government on her toes in delivering campaign promises.
- Sobi F.M should review the contents of the 'O to ge' programme, so that it will not violate the provisions of NBC codes on broadcasting.
- Other political parties should be encouraged to come up with their own programmes as well, so as to ensure healthy political rivalry. As such, Sobi F.M as a media platform should ensure the principles of fairness, balance and objectivity are strictly adhered to.
- Sobi F.M authorities should distant themselves from any form of bias towards a particular political party, rather the station should be fair to all.

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### **Compliance with ethical standards**

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#### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

There is no conflict of interest

### Statement of ethical approval

Ethical informed consent was sought and obtained from the participants of this study before the survey was administered. They were made to understand that the exercise and data collected were solely for academic purposes, and their participation was voluntary.

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