



twitter

facebook

# SOCIAL MEDIA PRE-ELECTION OPINION POLL FOR THE 2013 ANAMBRA STATE GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION

[http://  
elec  
tion  
mon  
itor  
ng.b  
logs  
pot.  
com  
/](http://electionmonitorng.blogspot.com/)

Prepared by

Abiodun Ajijola

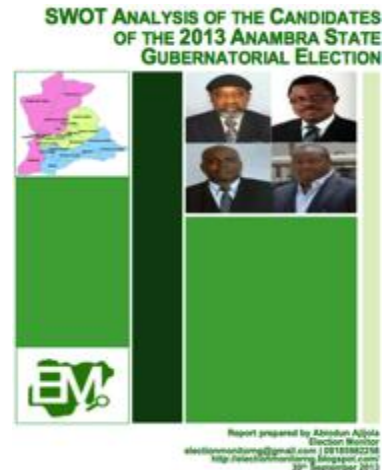
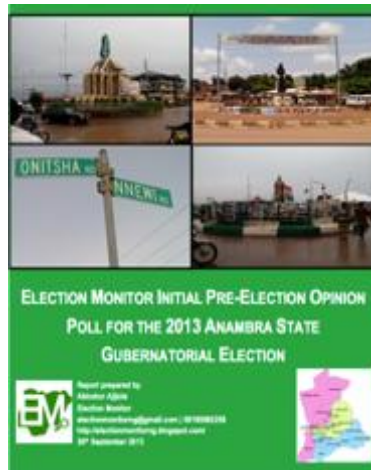
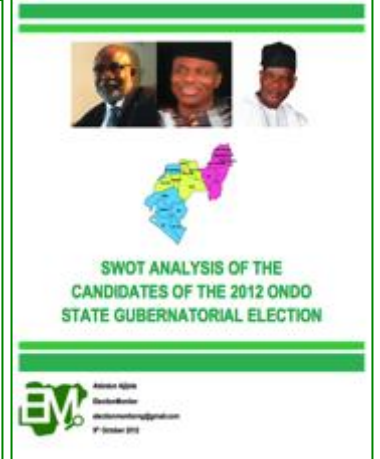
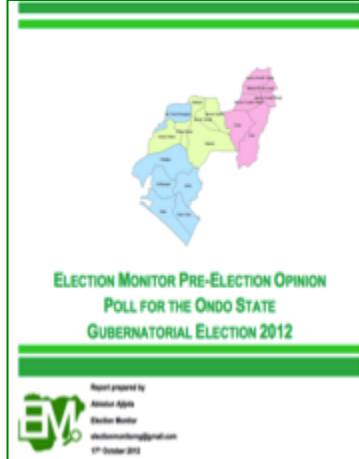
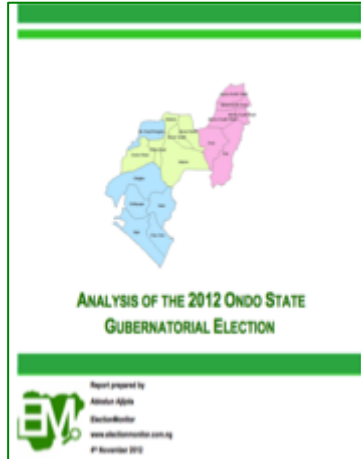
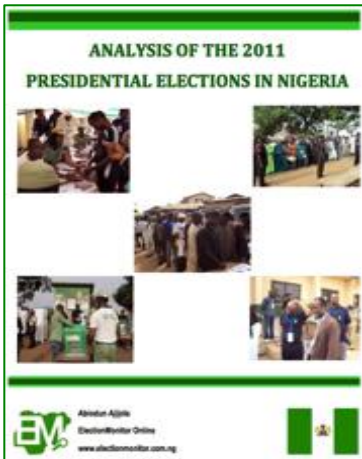
Election Monitor

[electionmonitorng@gmail.com](mailto:electionmonitorng@gmail.com) | 08185982258

<http://electionmonitorng.blogspot.com/>

11<sup>th</sup> November 2013

# PUBLICATIONS BY ELECTION MONITOR



## Observation Made Simple: A straightforward guide to observing elections in Nigeria

**GRAB YOUR COPY TODAY!!!**

Nigeria has been undergoing a lot of democratic change since 1999 and elections are conducted almost every year in Nigeria at one or more levels of government. For the electoral process in Nigeria to continue to be strengthened, the place of election observers cannot be overemphasized.

*'Observation Made Simple: A straightforward guide to observing elections in Nigeria'*, focuses on practical issues confronting election observers as they conduct themselves on the field during elections. These issues are critical to ensuring the effectiveness of an electoral observer's outing and make for a fulfilling experience. This book is prepared to be simple and applicable to educated and uneducated election observers alike. A lot of pictures are used to ensure more lucid understanding of key points made (primarily for semi-literate readers).

The book hopes to prove useful as a practical guide for election observers with the attendant result of supporting Nigeria's drive towards developing and strengthening its electoral process.

Get your copy today by contacting us through the following:



**08185982258**



**electionmonitorng@gmail.com**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	3
LIST OF TABLES .....	3
DISCLAIMER.....	4
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	5
2.0 OBJECTIVE.....	6
3.0 METHODOLOGY.....	7
4.0 OPINION POLL RESULTS.....	8
5.0 OBSERVATIONS .....	12
4.0 OPINION POLL RESULTS.....	13
6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	13
7.0 CONCLUSION .....	13
8.0 REFERENCES.....	14

## List of Figures

Figure 4.0 Pie Chart showing the percentage distribution of tweets and comments received by each candidate over a thirty-day period .....	9
Figure 4.1 Graph showing the actual number of tweets and comments received by each candidate over a 30-day period .....	10
Figure 4.2 Graph showing the total number of tweets and comments received by all candidates over a 30-day period .....	11

## List of Tables

Table 4.0 Showing the summary of the results from the opinion poll .....	8
--	---

## ACRONYMS

APC	–	All Progressives Congress
APGA	–	All Progressives Grand Alliance
CSOs	–	Civil Society Organisations
INEC	–	Independent National Electoral Commission
LGA	–	Local Government Area
LP	–	Labour Party
PDP	–	Peoples Democratic Party

### Disclaimer

Although the author has researched the material presented in this document as thoroughly as possible, he assumes no responsibility for errors, omissions or inaccuracies contained therein. No liability can be accepted for any losses or expenses incurred as a result of relying on information given.

## 1.0 Introduction

Digital democracy is here. We no longer passively watch our leaders on television and register our opinions on Election Day. Modern politics happens when somebody comments on Twitter or links to a campaign through Facebook. In our hyper-networked world, anyone can say anything, and it can be read by millions.

This new world will undermine the polling industry. For nearly a century, conventional wisdom has argued that we can only truly know what the public thinks about an issue if we survey a random sample of adults. An entire industry is built on this view. Nearly every serious political campaign in the United States spends thousands, even millions, of dollars hiring campaign consultants who conduct these polls and interpret the results.

**Digital democracy** will put these campaign professionals out of work. New research in computer science, sociology and political science shows that data extracted from social media platforms yield accurate measurements of public opinion. It turns out that **what people say on Twitter or Facebook** is a very good indicator of how they will vote.

How good? In a paper to be presented Monday, co-authors Joseph DiGrazia, Karissa McKelvey, Johan Bollen and I show that Twitter discussions are an unusually good predictor of U.S. House elections. Using a massive archive of billions of randomly sampled tweets stored at Indiana University, we extracted 542,969 tweets that mention a Democratic or Republican candidate for Congress in 2010. For each congressional district, we computed the percentage of tweets that mentioned these candidates. We found a strong correlation between a candidate's "tweet share" and the final two-party vote share, especially when we account for a district's economic, racial and gender profile. In the 2010 data, our Twitter data predicted the winner in 404 out of 435 competitive races.

Why does this happen? We believe that Twitter and other social media reflect the underlying trend in a political race that goes beyond a district's fundamental geographic and demographic composition. If people must talk about you, even in negative ways, it is a signal that a candidate is on the verge of victory. The attention given to winners creates a situation in which all publicity is good publicity.

This finding is remarkable because it doesn't depend on exactly what people say or who says it. We measured only the total discussion and estimated each candidate's share. It is this relative level of discussion that matters for tracking public opinion in electoral contests. Furthermore, social media data mimic what polls measure. For example, in Ohio's 3rd Congressional District, we found that Republican Mike Turner got 65.4 percent of his district's tweet share. In the final election, he got 68.1 percent of the two-party vote. The tweet prediction was off by 2.7 percentage points — a figure that is within the margin of error of any poll.

This finding has profound implications for the democratic process. There are many nations that remain mired in poverty and do not have the infrastructure required for extensive polling. Furthermore, these nations often have governments that are suspicious of polling and try to suppress it. For these reasons, it is very hard to monitor elections. In contrast, as long as citizens have access to the Internet, **they can talk**

**about their views** in a less-restricted manner. The **“grassroots” buzz** found in social media can be studied, and it will reveal how elections are conducted and if the state is respecting human rights. And as with U.S. elections, even if the people who use social media are not completely representative of the public, the amount of attention paid to an issue is an indicator of what is happening in society. Important events generate scrutiny that can be measured and studied.

Social media analysis is also important for elections in the United States. Polling favors the established candidates because it is relatively expensive. In contrast, social media analysis is cheap. Anyone with programming skills can write a program that will harvest tweets, sort them for content and analyze the results. This can be done with nothing more than a laptop computer.

Current polling practices also pay disproportionate attention to “big” races. Every four years, we have dozens of polls on the presidential election, but many other races for important offices will not be consistently polled. Some congressional races are never polled. Social media analysis can be used to systematically gather data on any race at any time. Thus, people in smaller states no longer need to rely on polling organizations for information. A single citizen can harvest social media data and learn about the election in his or her area.

Traditional polling will remain useful, especially for learning about voters’ beliefs and backgrounds, but polls are no longer the only tool for forecasting elections. In the future, you will not need a polling organization to understand how your elected representative will fare at the ballot box. Instead, all you will need is an app on your phone.<sup>1</sup>

## 2.0 Objective

The motivation for carrying out the Social Media opinion poll is to provide readers with an unbiased poll of voters’ choices as regards the 2013 Anambra State Gubernatorial Elections using a novel and unique approach. This is a compliment to the Election Monitor Initial and Final Pre-Election Opinion Polls, which leverages traditional methods for opinion polling.

## 3.0 Methodology

The methodology used for this opinion poll was sampling the opinions/comments of users of social media in relation to the candidates of the 2013 Anambra State Gubernatorial Election.

Tweets and Facebook Comments were extracted that mentioned the APC (Chris Ngige), APGA (Willie Obiano), LP (Ifeanyi Ubah) or PDP (Tony Nwoye) candidates for Governor in Anambra State. The percentage of the Tweets and Facebook comments that mentioned these candidates were then computed.

It must be noted that the people's comments used for this poll are not confirmed to be registered voters in Anambra State but the aim is to show the relationship between the level of discussion of a particular candidate on social media and how the candidate may likely poll in the election.

It is also worthy of note that the poll will likely be dominated by young people (because this is the primary demographic that use social media). Thus the results may not be representative of all age groups. It is also recognised that the majority of commentators may not even live in Anambra State.

It is important to state that the opinion poll was unbiased and not conducted in favour of any candidate or party. The cost of carrying out the poll was borne by Election Monitor. A total of 1,431 comments were sampled over a 30-day period (10 October to 8 November 2013).

Social Media sites used were Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/anambrastate>) and Twitter (#AnambraDecides).

It should be noted that the survey was designed to get responses relating to the four major political parties participating in the elections (i.e. APC, APGA, LP and PDP). This is because these four parties combined are expected to carry over 90% of the total votes cast and from a statistical point of view; focusing on these four parties will give a very accurate representation.



## 4.0 Opinion Poll Results

This chapter looks at the opinion poll results for all the candidates and political parties. The results of the Social Media Pre-Election Opinion Poll for the 2013 Anambra State Gubernatorial Election can be found in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.0 Showing the summary of the results from the opinion poll**

Month	APC - Chris Ngige	APGA - Willie Obiano	LP - Ifeanyi Ubah	PDP - Tony Nwoye	Total Tweets and Comments
10-Oct	0	0	0	0	0
11-Oct	0	0	0	0	0
12-Oct	0	0	0	0	0
13-Oct	0	0	0	0	0
14-Oct	0	0	0	0	0
15-Oct	0	0	0	0	0
16-Oct	1	1	0	0	2
17-Oct	0	0	0	0	0
18-Oct	0	0	0	0	0
19-Oct	0	0	0	0	0
20-Oct	10	10	0	0	20
21-Oct	61	39	7	8	115
22-Oct	26	26	7	3	62
23-Oct	24	12	4	4	44
24-Oct	22	25	11	13	71
25-Oct	91	59	14	2	166
26-Oct	40	20	2	16	78
27-Oct	55	42	4	3	104
28-Oct	34	16	5	8	63
29-Oct	31	16	2	6	55
30-Oct	3	2	0	1	6
31-Oct	54	28	3	4	89
1-Nov	24	14	11	5	54
2-Nov	52	37	5	0	94
3-Nov	40	28	3	0	71
4-Nov	34	25	1	0	60
5-Nov	27	24	2	0	53
6-Nov	19	31	5	3	58
7-Nov	21	28	21	3	73
8-Nov	42	43	5	3	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>1431</b>



Figure 4.0 Pie Chart showing the percentage distribution of tweets and comments received by each candidate over a thirty-day period

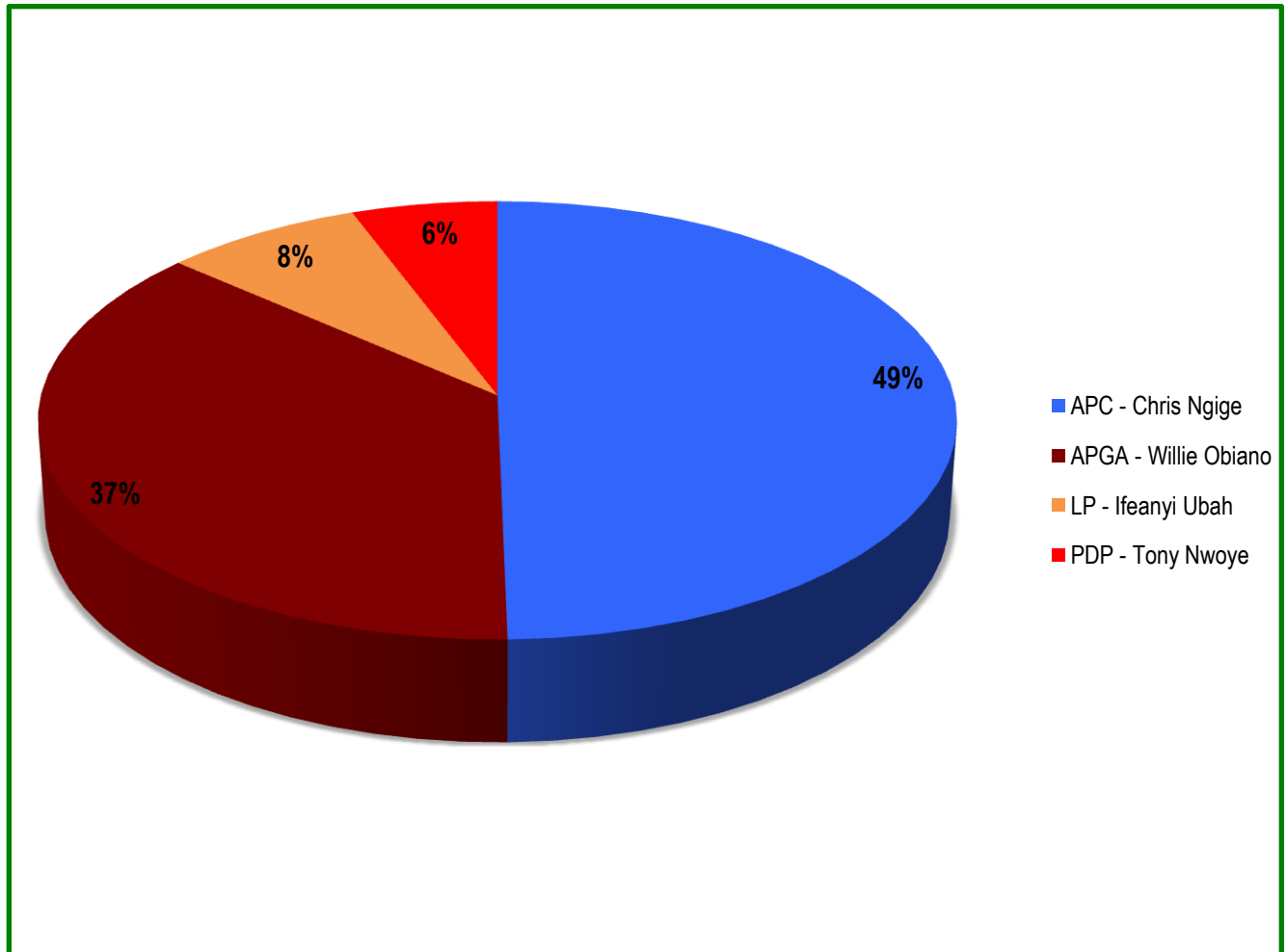


Figure 4.1 Graph showing the actual number of tweets and comments received by each candidate over a 30-day period

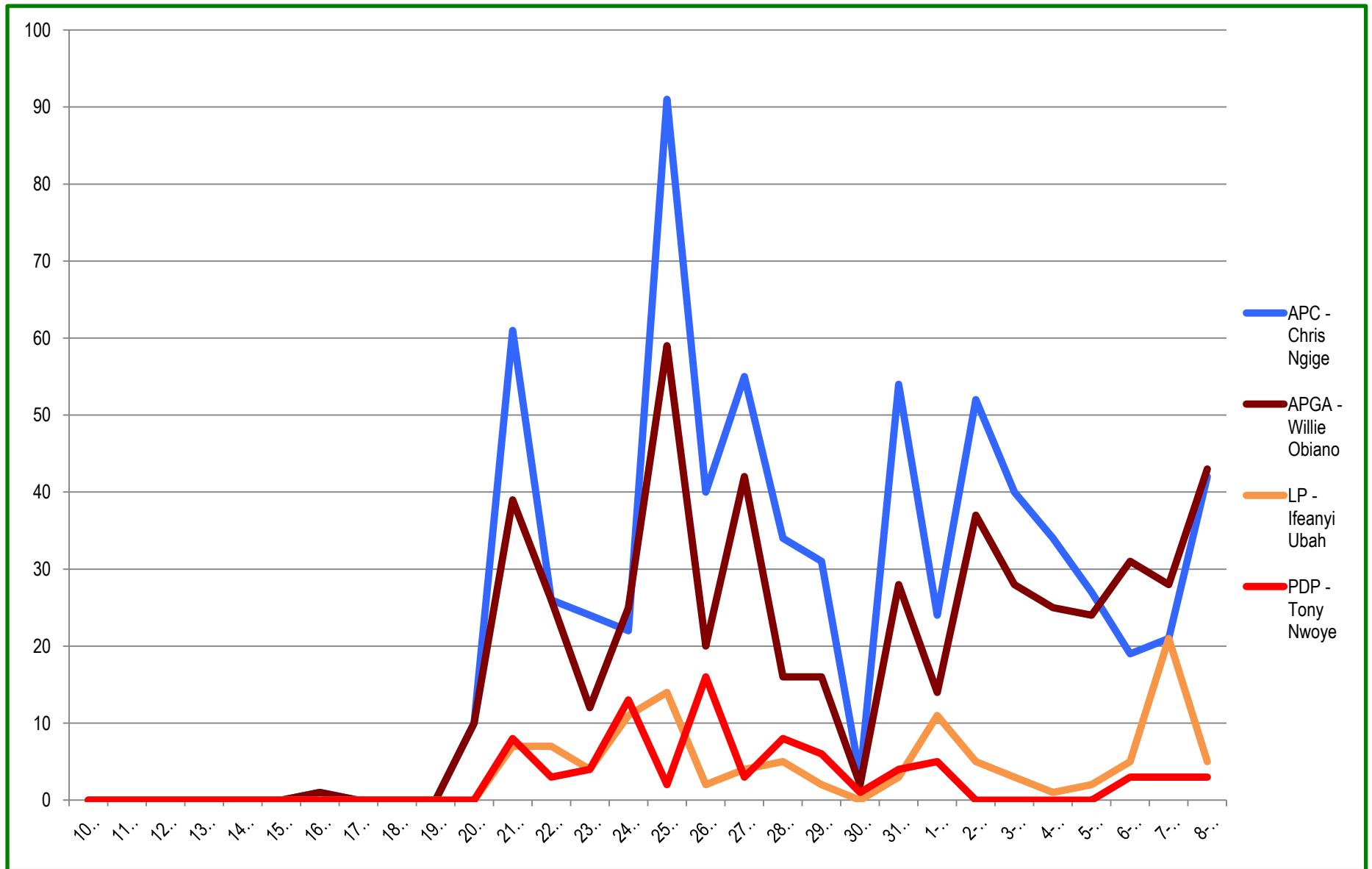
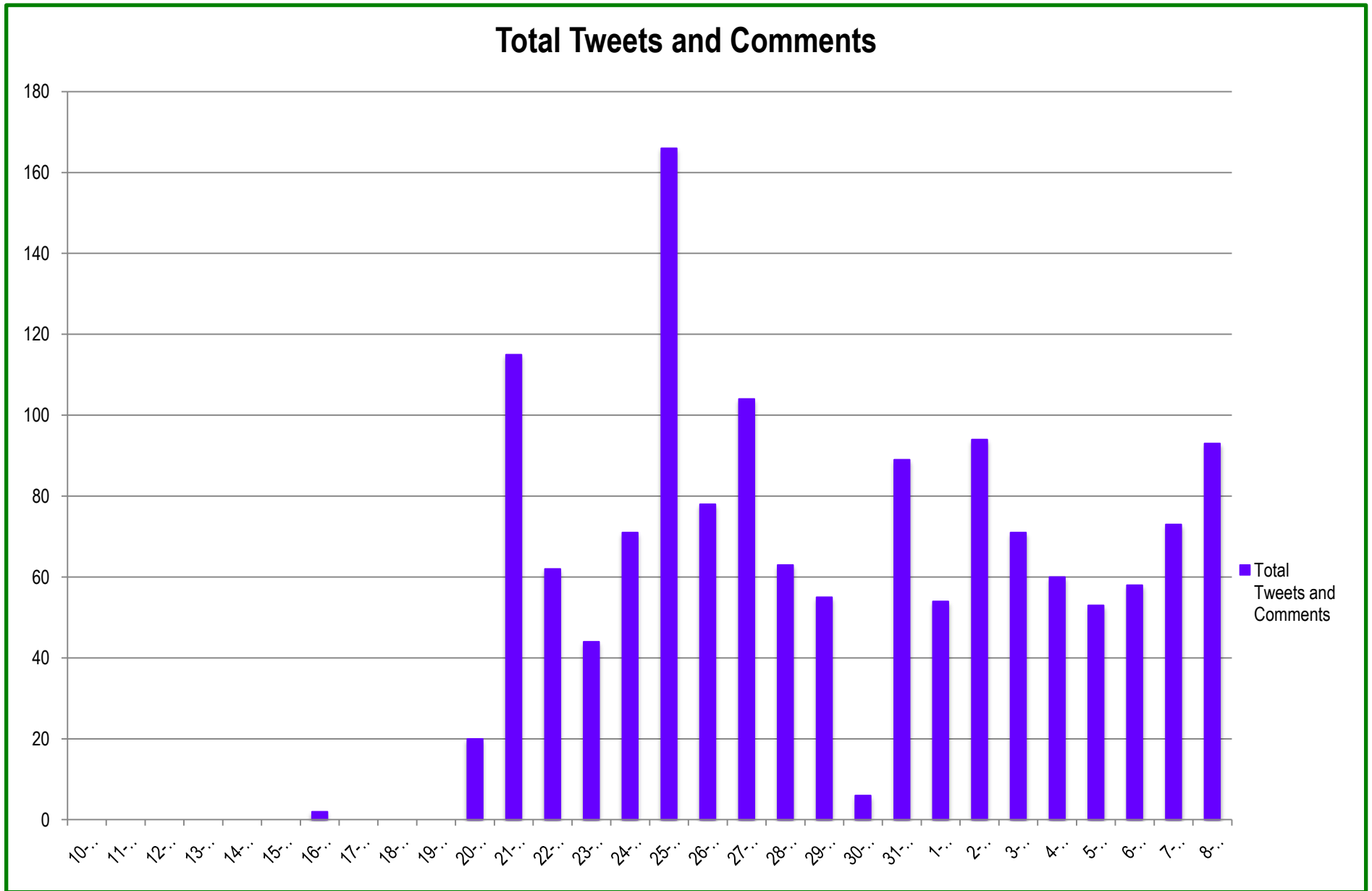


Figure 4.2 Graph showing the total number of tweets and comments received by all candidates over a 30-day period



## 5.0 Observations

The following observations were made.

- A total number of 1,431 Tweets and Facebook comments were captured over a period of 30 days. It should be noted that these were Tweets and Comments, which had the names or parties of the candidates in them. The total number of tweets and comments screened will be in excess of 3,000 however any Tweet and/or Facebook comment, which does not refer to a candidate or his party, will not be included. Also it should be noted that these are not the TOTAL tweets and comments on candidates but just a sample.
- The result shows Dr Chris Ngige of the APC carrying the largest share of social media activity (49%) followed by Chief Willie Obiano (37%), Dr Ifeanyi Ubah (8%) and Comrade Tony Nwoye (6%).
- The candidate of the PPA had the highest mentions outside the four candidates profiled.
- Governor Peter Obi was very popular in the Tweeter feeds and Facebook comments.
- The first 10 days of activity was rather low. However there was a sharp increase from the 20<sup>th</sup> October, which saw more people getting involved in online discussions about the Anambra Gubernatorial Elections.
- The APGA candidate has surged in the last few days. Since the election is 6 days away this surge may or may not continue. It is important to track the social media activity in the next 6 days.
- Clearly the PDP candidate has been affected by his late start to campaign. His mentions should increase significantly as he embarks on wide-scale campaigning in the closing days till the election.
- The Labour Party candidate probably did not do so well because youths, which are not social media friendly, could not have contributed to this poll. He has huge support amongst traders and transporters so this may have contributed to his relative poor outing.
- Since there is no way of knowing the demographics or the location of those who made comments and Tweets, the result may not be an exact representation of the actual situation on the ground. However it clearly shows the trend of opinion on a general scale of candidates in the election.

## 6.0 Recommendations

The results of a social media poll in a nation like Nigeria must be taken with a pinch of salt. This is because Nigeria is over 40% illiterate and Internet penetration is not ubiquitous. Therefore the social media poll probably shows the representation of a segment of society as opposed to the whole society. It is however interesting and important to conduct social media polls to see if they generate results in line with the actual election outcomes. If on a sustained basis they do, then Social Media Polling should become standard in all Election Polling in Nigeria.

Political parties, INEC, CSOs and International Development Partners should join hands to ensure that polling becomes a standard practice in the Nigerian governance space.

## 7.0 Conclusion

It is imperative to note that the results of this poll do not necessarily determine or align 100% with the outcome of the election on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2013. Many factors such as election rigging, last minute change of mind of voters, civil unrest etc could create unexpected results at the end of the day.

Also the inadequate ability of Social Media to accurately represent all demographics in the Nigeria society proportionately could likely result in imperfect results. However over a sustained period of time, the accuracy of Social Media Polling could be properly ascertained.

It is however interesting to note that in the overall results of the Social Media Poll actually concur with the results of the traditional polling methods employed by Election Monitor in its Initial and Final Pre-Election Opinion Polls. However the margins are quite different.

## 8.0 References

<sup>1</sup> The Washington Post, Fabio Rojas, *How Twitter can help predict an election*, [Online], Available: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/how-twitter-can-predict-an-election/2013/08/11/35ef885a-0108-11e3-96a8-d3b921c0924a\\_story.html?Post+generic=%3Ftid%3Dsm\\_twitter\\_washingtonpost](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/how-twitter-can-predict-an-election/2013/08/11/35ef885a-0108-11e3-96a8-d3b921c0924a_story.html?Post+generic=%3Ftid%3Dsm_twitter_washingtonpost) [9 November 2013]