
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN NIGERIA'S DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS: AN APPRAISAL OF THE 2019 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

Political participation and elections as well as voting behavior are pivotal to democracy and democratic regimes across the globe. In Nigeria, the factors that have contributed in shaping the participation and voting behaviour of the electorate in elections are political and socioeconomic settings as well as historical background of the country. This manifested specifically in the gubernatorial elections that took place in Kwara state in 2019. It offers insight into political participation and voting behavior in the 2019 Gubernatorial Election in Kwara state, determined the outcome of the election and the winner. Using Kwara State as a case study, the paper adopted Focus Group Discussion and as well relied on anecdotal evidence on voting behavior to obtain qualitative data on voting behavior across the Senatorial Districts of the state. It is within the purview of the paper that there was a sharp variation in the usual pattern of voting in the state, which had been patrilineal since its creation, in the 2019 gubernatorial election and provided rationale for this occurrence. Findings from this research revealed that poor governance in Kwara state prior to the election averted the age long voting behavior in the state. Thus the 2019 gubernatorial election showed a radical change from inter-generational transfer of political affiliation to issue-based politics. It underscored the place of good governance in electoral behavior and recommended that for good leadership and governance, the electorate should be re-orientated to focus their choice of leaders on performance, accountability and transparency.

Keywords: Political Participation, Voting Behavior, Democracy, Election, Good governance

Introduction

The global quest for democratic governance requires participation of citizens in an election through voting. In Nigeria, the first attempt towards popular participation was in the 1959 general elections when the electorate went to the poll to perform their civic responsibilities of electing leaders of their choice. Except for the military intervention in 1983 and the aborted Third Republic, the Fourth Republic in Nigeria has witnessed representative democracy through the periodic casting of votes by the electorate. However, the inability of Nigerians to organize a credible and democratic election for its citizens to exercise their voting right in the choice of credible leaders has mitigated the positive impacts of democratic governance on the citizenry. This has equally made democratic transition a failure (Metumara, 2010 & Rufai, 2011). Election is the struggle for political power through competitive democratic means. It underpins the capacity of the electorate to make informed choices on the candidates and their programs in the context of popular sovereignty.

A competitive and participatory election is the most important institution in today's democratic framework for realizing the people's right to self-government. The achievement and fulfillment of this is contingent on people's voting behavior. If voters' decisions are based on non-evaluative rationales, representative government's goal of self-rule is defeated (Aluko, 2010). Citizens must participate in order to have an impact on government policy. Participation in decision-making processes by a large number of people is a prerequisite for good democratic government. If people wish to get rid of a system that divides the affluent and the poor, masters and slaves, they must engage in the democratic process and make rational decisions.

Political involvement is at the core of democracy. A democratic government becomes more legitimate as more people participate. Political engagement is based on the idea that there is a benefit to participating. As a result, the quantity of the reward influences whether the behavior is passive or active (Davies, 1963). People are likely to vote because the government they want to put in power has expectations for them. Ojo (2014) observed that electoral behavior and voting patterns have not changed significantly since 1959; instead, they have come too close to having common characteristics. All the elections have been influenced by primordial and ethno-regional considerations. Even in the transition elections of 1979, 1993, 1999 and 2007, when it would appear the political parties had national spread, a close look at the voting patterns would reveal that the ethno-regional divides were still manifest.

Candidates have been selected using regional identities as a criteria since the presidential election via gubernatorial, national, and state assembly elections. The presidential election was not exempt from this; Ethno-regional identification accounted for 90% of the votes cast. Most of the votes for the incumbent president came from his ethno-regional zones. In Kwara State, however, the situation was the polar opposite.

Olayode (2015) expressed that the Kwara State gubernatorial election result of 2019 manifested a clear indication of a turnaround from inter-generational transfer of political affiliation, a major determinant of voting behaviour and participation during this period.

Conceptualizing Political Participation and Voting Behavior

Participation in politics and the manner in which persons vote are two concepts that are intertwined and cannot be separated from the tenets of democracy and the fundamental human rights of the citizens. Be that as it may, political participation, according to George-Genyi (2015), is the willingness or deliberate act of engagement in the political affairs of

one's own country. It is a political engagement which is supported as a citizen's franchise that should be exercised freely. Riley, Griffin and Morey (2010), see participation in politics as making one's belief and opinion known. It emphasizes an action taken willingly in order to influence the outcome of a political process.

According to Falade, there are six types of political players (2008). Inactive political participants are persons who do not participate in political activity. Voting specialists are people who just care about voting and are uninterested in other political problems. Participate in politics on a periodic basis as a parochial participant. They will only vote or engage in other political activities if it affects their own interests. The communalist votes regularly, participates in communal events, but does not engage in political campaigning. The campaigners: they are preoccupied with political campaigns while remaining uninvolved in other elements of their societies.

Political engagement, according to Aluko (2010), refers to people's involvement in politics. Any activity with the objective of swaying actions of government, whether directly or indirectly, through influencing the selection or election of a political leader or those who develop policies on community activities and other civic engagements. This is to engage the private citizens to influence the process of selecting governmental personnel. It could be further summarized to be the ways through which voters get involved in the political process, which could be influenced by several factors

Political participation may be seen from two viewpoints, according to Dahl and Stinebrickner (2005): ceremonial and instrumental. When engagement becomes tailored or individualized, it is referred to be ceremonial participation; such actions have no bearing on the public policy process. Instrumental participation on the other hand is seen as active participation of the electorates not only in the formation of government, but as an outcome of the high level of political consciousness but having moral and legal standing to influence the government and democratic consolidation. Thus, this level of political participation is that which influences the distributions of goods and values.

Participation that is mobilized and institutionalized, on the other hand, is always mutual. Persons who participate in mobilized participations such as riots, demonstrations, strikes, and other types of vises are often considered non-participants in institutionalized modes of campaigning and voting. Institutionalized participation may be characterized as the norms, laws, and processes imposed by democratic institutions such as electoral boards, all of which operate under the rule of law. This research supports institutionalized involvement and regards riots or violent demonstrations as deviations from electoral compliance.

Voting during elections basically involves a process where voters choose their candidates for various post in politics or express their opinion on a topic through a decision-making process. Voting is recognized as an essential right of all citizens (male and female) over the legal age of voting in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ensuring that the people's will is respected (HRCP, 2008). Voting expresses one's choice for one political system over the other, as well as for a particular candidate or group of candidates (Blais et al., 2004). Voting can be defined as the act of electing and voting for representatives in elections. It is the use of voting to support or criticize government choices, policies, and programs, according to Zahida and Younis (2014). Voting demonstrates agreement with political parties' objectives and programs, as well as the attributes of candidates who have been engaged and presented as people's representatives.

Political participation and voting patterns can be understood as a set of personal electoral activities arising from basic obligations and responsibilities. Election campaign participation, voter turnout, and choosing a candidate to vote for are all examples. Voting behavior is most likely to be determined by a number of factors, which will be discussed in the following sections. Voting behavior is a sort of political behaviour, and understanding how and why public decision-makers make decisions is crucial (Goldman, 2015).

Political Participation in Nigeria, Democratic Elections

The form of political participation in Nigerian elections has mostly stayed unchanged since the First Republic, with very minimal changes since 1999. During the first Republic, the country had a functioning multiparty system, however it was geographically based, and participation was evenly distributed. The republic's major political parties originated as regional parties towards the tail end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s, with the primary purpose of controlling power in their own regions. The Northern People's Congress (NPC) and the Action Group (AG), which controlled the Northern and Western regions, respectively, arose as a result of this.

Despite having strong sponsors throughout the federation, the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC), which has ruled the Eastern and Midwestern Regions of Nigeria since 1963, began as a nationalist party but was forced to become primarily an eastern party due to regionalism's pressures. The NPC (Hausa/Fulani), AG (Yoruba), and NCNC (Nigeria) were regional parties built on the foundations of significant groupings in their respective areas (Igbo). In the north of Kano's country, Aminu Kano's radical Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), which fought the NPC, was a powerful and ideologically-based political group that never reached to prominence.

The only parties registered in the second republic were The Nigerian People's Party (NPP), the United Party of Nigeria (UPN), the Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP), and the People's Redemption Party (PRP) are all political parties in Nigeria (PRP). In 1981, the Nigeria Advance Party (NAP), a sixth political party, was created. Despite the fact that technically parties were supposed to transcend ethnic and regional lines, most of these parties looked like ethno-regional parties from before 1966. The NAP, which styled itself as a "new breed" party, and the NPN, which, despite its regional roots, was arguably Nigeria's only national party, were the only two exceptions. The UPN was a reincarnation of the AG with a Yoruba core; the NPP was a reincarnation of the NCNC with an Igbo core and strands of middle-belt support; the PRP was a rebirth of Kano's NEPU; and the GNPP, which at first appeared to be a new minority, had its strength in the Kanuri portion of the north.

Ethnic, tribal, regional, and religious affiliations have a role in political participation in the Second Republic, just as they did in the First Republic. Nigerians, on the other hand, have fully monetized politics since 1999, and money-politics has altered their political participation, they sell ballot boxes to who can pay the highest. They lack awareness of democratic processes, also the election rigging of elections has had an impact on political involvement. The emerging political trend is for people to put their expected leaders in power who can actually represent them and transform their socioeconomic and political circumstances.

Most Nigerians refused to vote in the 2015 elections due to financial, religious, regional, or tribal reasons. This was demonstrated by the fact that Nigerians, regardless of whatever factor, voted President Jonathan's government out of office and chose the opposition party (APC) led by President Muhammadu Buhari to govern the country. However, as a result of

uncertainty when it comes to security and a high level of pressure, tension and suspicion within the polity, other intervening elements have had an impact on political, non-conventional engagement. This resulted in the lowest voter turnout in general elections since 1979 (in percentage terms).

In the 2019 elections, Nigerians began to vote for money, signaling a departure from the status quo. Money politics and vote buying dominated the election, pushing religion, regional or ethnic feelings to the fringes.

Major Determinants of Political Participation

Some of the primary factors of political engagement, according to the social learning theory of participation, are: (a) dominance or supremacy, (b) community responsibility, (c) confidentiality, as it shows in the work of Gough (1951). People who possess the attributes listed above have been known to have the highest probability to engage in political activities effectively, whereas those who lack them are less likely to do so. According to research by Hennesy (1959), McClosky, and Scholar (1965), those who exhibit the aforementioned qualities interact more as opposed to those without. "Those who participate in politics compared to those who do not participate show a higher level of social concern, and affirmative views toward mankind," according to the thesis (Hennesy, 1959). As a result, some of the determinants of participation in politics are as follows:

Psychological characteristics of individual

The nature of an individual's involvement is preserved by the capacity of that individual's participation to provide for those who are involved in it. According to political scientists, man's political activities are influenced by a range of elements, including his desire for power, accomplishments, connections, hostility, money, rank, position, acknowledgements, endorsement, compassion, and accountability. In addition to the active/passive distinction, participating in politics can be classified according to its goals, i.e., instrumental political activities are primarily oriented toward concrete goals such as party victory, enrichment of one's own state, influence, or revenue, whereas consummator rather than instrumental political activities are for those who are unconcerned about election results.

Socioeconomic characteristics of individual

The concept is that the better off a man is in terms of material and social circumstances, it allows for him to be more likely to have the skills, opportunities, and incentive to actively participate in society's political process. The best-educated individuals in upper professional and income groups, the mid aged, the foremost ethnic and religious cluster, male (as opposed to females), city inhabitants, and members of charitable organizations are more likely to participate. Education generates civic pride, political capability, curiosity, and accountability, as well as the character traits of self-confidence, eloquence, and supremacy, and so has a strong and persistent link to involvement. The educational establishments themselves act as the environment in which participation aids are learned (Ikeku, 1981). Socioeconomic variables account for discrepancies in political actions based on the premise that "a social rank that is higher, is more likely to be an active participant."

The upper class is more engaged in public affairs than the middle and lower classes. Lower-class people, on the other hand, are less interested in political issues. However, this does not imply that poor individuals have different political views than wealthy people. In order to understand the various reasons social status and politics are related or intertwined there is a

need to put into consideration the various element of a person's social rank, revenue generated, literacy level, profession, and place of abode, among other things, determine traditional class rank.

In relations to these factors each one of them affects a person's ability and willingness to participate in politics. The more a person's income, for example, the more likely he is to be interested in and involved in politics. Having money, for example, usually means having more allowed time. (Ikeku, 1981)

Other determining variables such as citizens' cultural, political, religious, and educational backgrounds, as well as their level of political awareness and self-confidence in the politically aware process, impact the intensity with which citizens participate in the political system. Money, ethnicity, and religion all play a role in Nigerian politics. Religious and ethnic politics have dominated electoral campaigns in Nigeria since the country's independence in 1960. According to Albert Legogie, a former deputy Senate President, the election pattern demonstrated a significant divide, or dichotomy, between the north and the south, as well as between Christians and Muslims. (Adeyemo, 2011). Southerners and Christians were attacked and killed during the 2011 post-presidential election violence in the Muslim-dominated northern section of Nigeria, for example, and multiple churches were set on fire. Politics in Nigeria, according to Falade (2007), is seen as a sour game characterized by bitterness, wrath, rancor, and other connected evils. Nigeria is as a result trapped in a cycle of political instability and crises.

A number of Nigerians have shied away from voting and other political activities due to political leaders' lies and unmet promises. During the election campaign, according to Falade (2008), politicians make a series of pledges. The majority of these pledges were not kept when they were elected. As a result, some voters are dissatisfied with the election process.

Appraising the 2019 Gubernatorial Election in Kwara state

The 2019 Kwara State Governorship Election was the first time the opposition party had a serious prospect of 'grabbing' power from the ruling party at the state level. This demonstrates that Nigeria's democracy is not only growing and consolidating, but also taking daring moves toward higher democratic maturity (Aleyomi and Abu Bakar, 2015). For the first time in over sixteen years, the subject of one party domination and incapacity to accomplish regime change or alternative power at the state level was put to rest. The difficulties and concerns surrounding the upcoming 2019 governor elections are putting the state's unity and integrity to the test (Olowojolu & Ake, 2015).

The result presented shows, the APC candidate, Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq polled a total of 331,546 votes, with the candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party, Abdulrazaq Atunwa, coming closest with 114, 754 votes. Mr. Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq won a majority of the polling unit. According to the official results released by the Independent National Electoral Commission, he received 592 votes in his Polling Unit 004 in Idigba Ward, Ilorin West Local Government Area, compared to 80 votes for the People's Democratic Party. <https://guardian.ng/tag/abdulrahman-abdulrazaq> 18/07/2020

Below is the list of the Local Government results announced by the INEC

Oyun – APC 11,399, PDP 3,728
Offa – APC 22,874, PDP 5,172
Irepodun – APC 16,155, PDP 7,339

Isin – APC 6,624, PDP 2,588
Moro – APC 18,985, PDP 5,490
Asa – APC 16,246, PDP 8,963
Edu – APC 26,805, PDP – 6,174
Oke Ero – APC 7,423, PDP 4,891
Ilorin South – APC 26,752, PDP 9,489
Ilorin East – APC 31,521, PDP 10,888
Ifelodun – APC 23,734, PDP 7,445
Ekiti – APC 7,938, PDP 3,950
Kaiama – APC 14,829, PDP 3,386
Ilorin West – APC 55,287, PDP 25,583
Patigi – APC 18,109, PDP 2,578
Baruten – APC 26,865, PDP 7,090

INEC implemented some measures and reforms that yielded positive results (Egwu 2014; Omotola and Nyuykonge 2015), the most notable of which was the issuance of Permanent Voter's Cards (PVC) and Card Readers (CR) to further enhance the credibility and integrity of Kwara State's election in accordance with the Nigerian Constitution and Electoral Act (Aleyomi and Abu Bakar, 2015; Orji, 2014).

Kwara state elections were notoriously contentious and divided prior to this period. As a result, Kwarans have become enmeshed in a web of denigration and ethno-religious prejudice among politicians and regular residents. For the past five decades, Kwara State's politics have been unbroken. Alhaji Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq's bold ambition was firmly stifled for two of those turbulent decades, and his mission to create an alternative vision of administration for Kwara state was put on hold. After the death of his father, Olusola Saraki, the Saraki family has been at the helm of Kwara politics for some years, with Senator Bukola Saraki serving as the current leader.

Saraki's nickname, "Oloye," has become nearly synonymous with Kwara politics. This development, combined with profound differences among the elite, reawakened fears that the state would be thrown into disarray if the election was handled badly (Omotola and Nyuykonge 2015, 2-3). Dr. Olusola Saraki (Oloye), the former strongman of Kwara State politics, and his kin held the state imperiously hostage with their Kennedy-like dynastic political fire and charisma.

However, in the Governorship Election on March 9, the people of Kwara State finally broke free from the burden of political slavery and socioeconomic stagnation by voting massively for a different party. The election was hailed as a resounding triumph, marking the foremost time in Kwara history that an incumbent governor has not only lost an election, but also accepted defeat (Jonathan, 2015; Soyinka, 2015). What a national euphoria and democratic plus record. The election was contested and won by Kwarans who were adamant about affirming their status as an employer of people in positions of power, and on whose behalf and for whose advantage power should be wielded (Aleyomi 2012, 136).

Following the previous elections, it can be concluded that no form of representation or election can be considered unbiased. Any periodic election structure will drive some broad value or values, of a majority, of a particular region, of an economic or other sort of group and forces, a little further into the character of the government. Political parties are particularly important since their declared goals are to reflect ideals and interests in

government that differ from those of their opponents. This has been the trend of elections in Kwara State from time immemorial; however the 2019 gubernatorial election took a new dimension. There were some levels of positive improvement in the pattern of voting and citizen participation without deviating from the values responsible for participation in politics and the pattern in which people vote during elections, as is visible in the 2019 gubernatorial election in Kwara.

Methodology

The research is purely descriptive. The research was conducted using a survey design, but the qualitative approach was also used to acquire data from the respondents. Focus Group Discussion was used to collect qualitative data (FGD). A total of thirty (30) people took part in the focus group discussion. Ten (10) respondents were chosen from Kwara State's three senatorial districts. Gender, age, senatorial district, and education are among the criteria used to select participation. Between July and August 2019, civil servants (male and female), youths, employed and jobless, farmers, and market women participated in a focus group discussion in the town's primary schools.

SENATORIAL DISTRICTS IN KWARA STATE

Table 1:0

kwara North	Baruten, Edu, Patigi, Kaiama, Moro
kwara South	Ekiti, Oke–Ero, Ifelodun, Irepodun, Isin, Oyun
Kwara Central	Asa, Ilorin East, Ilorin West, Ilorin South, Offa

Table 1:0 above shows the breakdown of the senatorial district of Kwara State. The Table reveals that thirty (30) participants were involved in the focus group discussion, each section comprises of 10 members (Civil servants, market women and young unemployed. These ten (10) respondents were selected from the three Senatorial Districts above. The criteria for the selection of participants are: sex, age, senatorial district and education.

Table 2:0

	Frequency	Percentage
Distribution of Respondents by Gender		
Male	18	60 %
Female	12	40%
Total	30	100%
Distribution of Respondents by Age		
18 - 30	15	50%
31 - 50	10	33.3%
51 - 70	5	16.6%
	30	100%
Educational qualification		
Women	5	16.6%

Men	18	60%
Uneducated women	7	23.3%
Total	30	100%

The demographic data of the respondents is shown in Table 2:0 above. The first concern is the respondents' gender distribution. According to the findings, 40% of respondents are female and 60% are male. This indicates that males voted in greater numbers than females during the election.

Second, the table above shows the respondents' degree of education. The men that voted were 18 years old, as shown in the table above (60 %). Another group of respondents consists of 5 (16.6 %) young girls, while the third group consists of older women, who are made up of 7 (20.3 %) respondents with little or no education, most of whom have never attended school.

Furthermore, the chart reveals that the majority of youthful responders have a high school diploma 15 (50 %)

The FGD questions are described and chosen to cover general to specific inquiries, with open ended questions concentrating the participants on specific issues. The opening question, introductory questions, crucial questions, and closing questions are examples of different types of inquiries. The opening question is one that everyone in the focus group responds at the start of the conversation. It is intended to stimulate responses in order to identify common traits among the participants.

The introductory questions introduce the topic of discussion and are meant to encourage participants to talk and interact. The five key questions are generic inquiries that allow participants to think on crucial questions related to the topic and command the most attention in the analysis that follows. "All things considered" inquiries, i.e. a summary question, and a concluding inquiry, are examples of closing questions. The response to "all the questions" allows participants to express their final opinions on crucial issues, take into account all of the remarks made throughout the conversation, and explain their perspectives.

Qualitative Analysis of Focus group discussion (FGD)

The Focus group discussion (FGD) was used to provide an understanding of the voting behavior of the electorates during the 2019 gubernatorial elections that took place in the three senatorial districts of Kwara State.

The majority of the participants were registered to vote and had voter registration cards, according to the results of the researcher's three Focus Group Discussions. During the 2019 general election, however, 80 percent of those who voted cast their ballots. They came out in large numbers for the election for a variety of reasons, including their absence of trust in the incumbent government, the electoral process, which they believe is rigged in favor of the present government, and Dr. Olushola Saraki as a candidate and choice. They believe that under the Sarakis' suzerainty, the state's progress has been stifled, particularly in recent years. Findings from the FGD also revealed that male voters this time around were more politically conscious than their female counterparts, unlike in previous elections where females were more conscious. 60% males and 40% females were fairly educated and as such could clearly state some of their rights and the need for a change of government from the Saraki dynasty to another government. 16.6% aged women not educated, came out to vote for the APC candidate, however this are Women been fed by the incumbent government on daily bases.

It has been widely reported that more than 85% of voters are uninvolved in the decision-making process and do not care who wins the election, but only because they require a change of power. They showed up to vote against the current administration. Voters have been proven to be uninvolved in verdicts that influence their own life. They also pointedly claimed that, even when their opinions were canvassed, government decisions and policies did not reflect their feelings and needs. More than 80% of the voters expressed that they had no confidence in the present government, Kwarans now want to elect their leaders based on merit, not by attachment to a godfather. "Corruption and selfishness is the order of the day for these politicians; they are not honest, transparent, trustworthy and non-performer.

Economic stagnation, fear, political insecurity, expectations, and political stagnation, among other factors, were important determinants of Kwarans' voting behavior and political engagement in the 2019 gubernatorial election, according to the findings (Ibrahim, Liman & Mato, 2015; Panagopoulos, 2010; Miller, 2011). Kwara state has a diverse population with a rich history and a diverse range of cultural and traditional beliefs. These were initially implemented in order to promote unity in diversity and a strong bond among the people, as required by the federal constitution.

As a result of primordial values of culture, tribalism, area loyalty, and strong political attachments that have been entrenched in the political system, democratic processes, the civil service, institutions, and even the state's economic domain, threats to unity in diversity have been on the rise, particularly during elections (Aleyomi and Abu Bakar, 2015). These factors not only influence political participation, but also shape voting behavior in the state, because political participation is a component of political behavior that focuses on how individuals participate in politics.

In a previous election, Kwarans' voting behavior was impacted by money politics, with their ballots going to the highest bidder. Elections in the state have become characterized by poverty, a lack of democratic awareness, and rigging. Furthermore, due to uncertainty in INEC's ability to conduct free and fair elections, the comparatively low level of voter education and mobilization of human and material resources before and during elections (logistics), as well as electoral insecurity, predicted the outcome of prior elections. Other reasons driving voter turnout in the 2019 gubernatorial elections were the fact that the polls were marked by high voter turnout; these variations became apparent between the total number of registered voters and the total number of accredited voters across all elections (George-Genyi, 2015, INEC, 2015).

However, on the 2019 Kwara state gubernatorial election, the Freedom House (2015) confirmed the conduct of the elections has been free, fair, with the least violent in the history of the state, but, despite these positive remarks, Kwara state was categorized as not totally, but—partly free, using ratings of political and civil rights, enjoyed by citizens during the elections. They evaluate the electoral process, political plurality, government functioning, freedom of expression, association and organizational rights, rule of law, personal autonomy, and individual rights (Mahmud, 2015).

As previously stated, when citizens voluntarily participate in the political process of the state, in conjunction with processual and institutional pre-requisites, allied with positive political orientations to the political system, it allows citizens to elect their leaders and influence public policy, thereby enhancing the democratization process. On this basis, we would consider Kwara citizens' political involvement and voting behavior in the 2015 gubernatorial election to be of paramount importance. This level of participation and voting behavior

during the 2019 gubernatorial election could be attributed to the astounding factor that man's behavior is influenced by several irrational factors, and the need to shake off the yoke of political subjugation and socioeconomic stagnation in the state.

Many people's voting behavior is impacted by variables other than economic and social concerns, according to a study on voting behavior. Aside from economic motivation, other factors have come into play. Although we can't argue that most people vote simply for their own personal gain, there does appear to be a link between how people vote and their economic and social standing. Many people vote in ways that they believe would benefit their wallets, their religion, their community, or their racial group the most immediately.

Additionally, a lot of voters are energetic when it has to do with politics and seeking their personal interest through the political party which has most often been referred to as stomach infrastructure but this was not the case that shaped the state's voting behavior in the 2019 gubernatorial elections. Stomach Infrastructure has always been part of Kwara politics since the beginning of 1999 democratic system, it is really not a new entrant into the state's political lexicon but a renewed strategy in the state's new political dispensation - The ideal all over the world is that government should build infrastructures for the overall benefits and development of the states, and for the betterment of the generality of the citizenry but the reverse is the case, as infrastructure has previously been built in the stomach of individuals (Ajiboye, 2015).

Table 1:1

KWARA STATE GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION RESULTS RELEASED BY INEC

S/N	NAME OF CANDIDATE	GENDER	PARTY	VOTES RECEIVED	REMARK
1	AYORINDE O. ADEDOYIN	MALE	A	860	
2	ADISA ISMAIL ABAYOMI	MALE	AA	378	
3	AINA AYODEJI ADETUNJI	MALE	ABP	83	
4	TUNDE MURITALA O.	MALE	ACPN	272	
5	MANZUMA ISSA	MALE	ADC	391	
6	ONIYE SHINA HAMMED	MALE	ADP	179	
7	MOHAMMAD LIMAN ABDULLAHI	MALE	ANP	134	
8	ABDULMUMIN YINKA AJIA	MALE	ANRP	115	
9	SHARAFADEEN A. KOLAWOLE ADEREMMY	MALE	APA	1,163	
10	ABDULRAHAM ABBULRAZAQ	MALE	APC	331,546	Declared Elected
11	MOHAMMED ABUBAKAR MOHAMMED	MALE	APN	293	

12	BABATUNDE OMOTOSHO TAYO	MALE	BNPP	34	
13	ADEKUNLE KEHINDE	MALE	CAP	40	
14	ABDULLAHI MOHAMMED	MALE	DA	28	
15	OMOTOSHO BAMIDELE OLAITAN	MALE	GPN	21	
16	BELGORE AHMAD KAWU	MALE	JMPP	105	
17	ALABI MORANKINYO	MALE	KP	48	
18	ISSA AREMU OBALOWU	MALE	LP	45	
19	YAHAYA KALE SAÁDU	MALE	MAJA	57	
20	RUKAYAT TOYIN TIJANI	FEMALE	MPN	53	
21	IBRAHIM ADBULLAHI ANIFOWOSHE	MALE	MRDD	86	
22	AYINLA JOHN OLORUNTOBA	MALE	NCP	74	
23	TOSHO BABATUNDE OMOTOSHO A.	MALE	NEPP	108	
24	ABDULAZEEZ YINKA ONIYANGI	MALE	NPM	148	
25	POPOOLA KEHINDE ADEYEMI	MALE	NRM	74	
26	ARANSIOLA EZEKIEL	MALE	PDC	432	
27	RAZAK ATUNWA	MALE	PDP	114,754	
28	TIAMIYU KOLAPO KAMORU- DEEN	MALE	PPA	1,482	
29	PAUL AJIROBA	MALE	PPN	67	
30	OLAJIDE JOSEPH ADEBOLA	MALE	SDP	209	
31	OYABAMBI ADETUNJI	MALE	UDP	40	
32	SOLADOYE SAMUEL SUNDAY	MALE	UPN	61	
33	COMFORT YINKA KAYODE	MALE	UPP	24	
34	OSHIN BAYO DAVID ALABA	MALE	WTPN	15	
35	BADA ABULLAHI YEKINI	MALE	YDP	14	

Perhaps we can say from the above result, based on INEC report and life experience in the field (FGD) as it relates to the phenomenon in question. The nature of political participation during the 2019 gubernatorial election was such that the individuals one finds on the political scene seem to be motivated by a desire for a turnaround change in the political system of the state. The success and victory of Mr. Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq, as the winner of the

governorship election, was the first attempt by anybody to x-ray and break even the political principality of Kwara Politics. Previous attempt made has failed.

The nature of voting behavior and political choices in Kwara state has remained constant over the years with The Sarakis controlling the politics of Kwara from their political fortress in Ilorin and buttress their hold by using it for negotiation at the federal level. Control the resources of the state, and those accruing from Abuja, including political and public service appointments. Saraki has selected just one of the six governors elected in the state since 1979. Olusola Saraki assisted Cornelius Adebayo of the former Unity Party of Nigeria in breasting the tape in that unusual case in 1983. Kwara Central Senatorial District and a small portion of Kwara North account for around 55 % of the state's voting population. Because the Sarakis have traditionally had strong support in Ilorin, other regions of the state believe it would be politically suicide to oppose them in Nigerian politics, where 50.01 % equals 100 percent. As a result, any support the Sarakis receive from beyond their home fortress is contingent on the giver's practicality.

State of Kwara Politicians are in the business of influencing politics not just for the benefit of themselves, but also for the benefit of their constituents (Ajiboye, 2015, p.3). Using a simple measure of financial honesty, it became clear that they are commonly perceived of being greedy and buying excessive political power. Many of these politicians/campaign managers, government leaders, corporate executives, and speculative businesspeople used money to further their goals. Even though they don't want to dance the tune, some of them were persuaded to pay the piper. Interestingly, despite decades of democratic governance in Kwara State, the state's democratic credentials in many areas, including inside party democratic practices, Party philosophy, interparty discourse and collaboration, party funding and discipline, and free and fair elections free of vote buying are still in short supply (Nwozor, 2019).

The use of card readers with the newly introduced permanent voter's card by INEC is an addendum to the 2019 voting pattern in the gubernatorial elections, which was influenced and precipitated by party image, candidates, party identifications, and manifestoes, resulting in the need for a change in government and party in power, due to poor performance and high levels of corruption. It is important to highlight that the cumulative impact of these persisting divisions in the electorate influenced the voting pattern in the 2019 gubernatorial elections, rather than the strength of class, religious, or ethnic voting (George-Genyi).

The government's ability to carry out its functions in relation to factors such as safety of lives and property, education, security, basic essential services and more broadly, social welfare are the principles of the social contract that hold the state together between government and the people. Citizens, on the other hand, obey the government, uphold the constitution, pay taxes, and act responsibly in society. As evidenced by election turnout, the previous government did not achieve all of the objectives of the people of Kwara state, and where they were gratified, it was only on a tangential level. This shift in Kwaran voting behavior, particularly in the 2019 gubernatorial elections, is basically an opportunity to fortify mass participation and contribution in the democratic process by eradicating existing blockades in a way that it leads to massive improvements in registration and voting practices, principally to guarantee the voting rights of all Kwarans and ensure that the people's vote counts on merit choice that is based on government legitimacy (Ake, 2019).

Conclusion

From the foregoing analysis, evidently speaking in Kwara state the level at which the masses participate in politics and their voting behaviour has risen due to the increased awareness and involvement of people in political activities during the 2019 Gubernatorial Election. From the result, the run-up to the elections showed a paradigm shift in the voting behavior of voters in the election. Dogged commitment to the kind of change they desire to see that empowers the people while reclaiming their lost glory is what the people of Kwara has shown.

The elite is fed-up with the recycling of politicians in the state. Kwara politicians consider politics as a business, in which they need to continually make investment for personal gains. However, the elder politicians who served during the First Republic and during the military era as well as in the Second Republic transferred power to younger politicians and commanded great influence on the polity, while still staging a comeback confused and polluted the minds of the electorate. This negative impact has a positive effect on voter turnout during the 2019 Gubernatorial Election. The result of the General Elections from INEC supported this claim thus seen the APC winning the Gubernatorial Election. The electorate found and embraced the electoral value they saw in the candidacy of the APC; Alhaji Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq by overwhelmingly voted for him towards liberating Kwara state from the dictatorship of the Sarakis that had held sway over the state for over twenty years.

Recommendations

For the purpose of building voter's confidence and enhancing high political participation and positive pattern of voting, it is recommended that Kwarans should develop the culture of merit as legitimacy for results. Citizens, most especially the electorate, should strive to reject any form of political luring and intimidation, and discard the idea of money induced politics as a consideration in choosing leaders but should rather concentrate on candidate's skills, ability and performance antecedents in choosing candidates for political offices.

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