

# Political Parties Manifestoes as Predictor of Voting Pattern among Educated Elites in Nigeria Political Process

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## Abstract

*This study examined party manifestoes as predictors of voting pattern in Nigeria political system. The survey research design was adopted and the instrument used was a questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using frequency count and percentage, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) method was used in testing the formulated hypotheses. The results showed that people voted based on other considerations such as ethnic, religion and money consideration rather than through party manifestoes. It was recommended among others that the Independent National Electoral Commission should intensify political education among electorates on the need for the electorates to always consider party manifestoes in chosen party to be voted for, so that their performance can be measured at the end of their tenure.*

**Keywords:** Manifestoes, political parties, Electorates, Electioneering

## Introduction

The quality of any democracy is determined by the vibrancy of its political parties. Political parties are in constant competition for influence and power as prerequisites for resolving society's political problems. One age-old mechanism through which political parties educate the electorate on the plans of governments to come and sway votes in their favor is the party manifesto. The manifesto is the benchmark for evaluating pre-election appeal as well as post-election performance (Galadima, 2014). Aghara, Nwaizugbo, Chukwuemeka and Onyeizugbe, (2015) capture this as political marketing. This marketing captured in Point three (3) of the People Democratic Party (PDP) manifesto reads that pursuant to its belief in the perpetual unity of Nigeria under the federal system of government, it shall continuously promote political tolerance, accommodation and compromise, religious harmony, as well as inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic accommodation and co-operation. Similarly, the All Progressives Congress (APC) manifesto upholds the belief in Nigeria's political success as achievable when cultures of impunity are abolished, the rights of her citizens are upheld and the rule of law is entrenched.

Opeibi (2006) cited in Aghara, Nwaizugbo, Chukwuemeka and Onyeizugbe. (2015) argued that political advertisement in the past two decades in Nigeria has assumed a new dimension with an increase in the use of negative political advertisement during electioneering campaigns. He noted that prior to this period in Nigeria; political candidates concentrated more on selling themselves to the people with very few instances of negative advertisements. The resuscitation of democratic activities in 1998 leading to elections in 1999, meant

that the electioneering campaigns took on a more competitive posture, affected by the 'winner-takes-all-syndrome' eventually characterizing that election and subsequently, the 2003 elections.

The 2019 general elections as the most recent case in point, was heralded by a deluge of hate speeches used by politicians against their opponents (individuals and groups). Many political candidates abandoned their party manifestoes and attack their opponents through hate speeches rather than selling and presenting their party manifestoes to the electorates. The only time politician refer to the party manifestos is when campaigning on the pages of newspapers or online publications. How many electorates decide to vote or a particular party based on the contents of the party manifestoes? This is the question this paper sought to answer

The party manifestoes of the two major political parties (APC and PDP) in Nigeria that have been having political powers since the onset of the fourth republic will be a point of discuss in other to reflect if the electorates voting pattern is in line with the party manifestoes. The two major political parties itemize their plans across all sectors such as: Education, Health, Economy, Security, Agricultural and infrastructural development.

## Manifestoes of People's Democratic Party

The objective and manifestoes of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on education is to ensure and sustain unfettered access to education for the total development of the individual. The party also tends to use it as means of accelerated national development by using it as a tool for improving the quality of life by stating to Nigerian to give free and compulsory basic education. The overall objective of party in the health

sector will be to improve the health status of Nigerians in order to increase productivity, Job creation, wealth creation & poverty reduction. While on economy, the party tend create a market-based economy driven by small and medium scale businesses and regulated by a reformed public sector. At the very foundation of the above objectives of the party is the pursuit of a strong, virile and diversified economy built to stem rural urban migration through investment in modern agricultural methods.

The agricultural objective shall aim at: food security, making agriculture profitable by various measures, the promotion of agriculture as major source of industrial raw materials, foreign exchange earnings; employment creation and achieving a diversified economy

The PDP envisages for Nigeria a society where peace reigns, a society where there is security of life and property. A society devoid of ethnic militia and inter-ethnic/inter-religious feuds, a society where the security outfits are disciplined, professional, effective, responsive, people-friendly and pro community (INEC Website).

#### **The All Progressive Party (APC) Manifestoes**

The All Progressive Party (APC) political manifestoes focus on jobs Creations. The party promise to Create 3 million new jobs a year through public works programmes and shifting the economy towards value-added production. On security APC tend to employ at least an extra 100,000 police officers and establish a properly trained and equipped Federal Anti-Terrorism Multi-Agency Task Force to destroy Boko Haram and any form of insurgency. The party also promised to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to corruption-rooting out dishonest public servants and imposing tough sanctions including jail sentences. On education, the APC introduced a free daily school meal for all children attending primary school. While on health the create a network of local health centers providing free services and drugs such that no one lives more than 5km from help (INEC Website).

Since the onset of the fourth republic, the two dominant parties who have been controlling federal or national government has not fulfilled the stated objectives of their manifestoes but rather shift the mind of the electorates from the knowledge and important of party manifestoes to money politics.

Elections in Nigeria are marred with a political behaviour of rigging, the manipulation of religion, ethnicity, regionalism and nepotism as observed by Olayode (2015), Metumara (2010), and

Rufa'i (2011). Voters are voting during elections based on their affinity with leaders that belong to the same religious groups, ethnic cleavages, region and other sentiments and not the party manifestoes. Elections were marred with the culture of rigging, malpractices, intimidation of both voters and opposition, use of violence, money politics, and political thuggery most especially by the ruling party using the power of incumbency (Adamu, & Abubakar 2017). This at times invited military to overthrow the civilian regimes. This process leads to many Republics in the country emerging and disappearing constantly.

A manifesto is a publication issued by a political party before a General Election. It contains the set of policies that the party stands for and would wish to implement if elected to govern. A manifesto usually accepts a previously published opinion or public consensus or promotes a new idea with prescriptive notions for carrying out changes the author believes should be made. It often is political or artistic in nature, but may present an individual's life stance. Manifestoes should be a determinant electoral system of today but was quite common during the pre-independence.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

*The main objectives of the study are:*

1. To find out whether the electorates have knowledge of the contents of the manifestoes of the political parties in Nigeria.
2. To examine the conditions which influence electorate to vote in a particular election.
3. To examine the relationship between parties manifestoes and voting pattern of the electorates.

#### **Research Questions**

1. Do the electorates have knowledge of the contents of the political parties' manifestoes before voting?
2. What are the conditions which influence electorates to vote in a particular election?

#### **Hypothesis**

H<sub>1</sub>: Is there any relationship between parties manifestoes and voting pattern of the electorates?

#### **Scope of the Study**

The study examined the political parties manifestoes as predictor of voting pattern among educated elite in Nigeria political process. It covered

150 respondents from Akoko South-West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria.

### Methodology

The method adopted for the collection of data for the study was through distribution of

questionnaire( $r=0.78$ ). Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) method was used in testing the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

### Results

#### Personal Information of the Respondent

**Table 1:** Personal Information

Item		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	79	53.0
	Female	71	47.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Level of Education	O'level and Equivalent	42	28.0
	Other Higher Qualification	108	72.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2021

Table 1, present the demographic data of the respondents, the result revealed that 53% of the respondents were male, while larger percentage of the respondents were female (47%). This implies that the male respondents were more than their female counterpart. Also, Table 1 present the level of

education of the respondents, 28% of the respondents had O'level and equivalent while the remaining 72% of the respondents have other higher qualifications. This result shows that larger percentage of the respondents are educated and have knowledge of the subject of discussion.

**Research Question One:** Are the electorates having knowledge of the contents of the political parties' manifestos before voting?

To answer this question data collected on the Knowledge of the electorates on parties' manifestos were collated and presented on Table 2.

**Table 2:** Knowledge of the electorates on parties' manifestos.

S/N	Items	SA		A		D		SD		X <sup>-</sup>
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1.	I have no knowledge of party manifestoes of political parties in an election	72	48.0	65	43.0	15	10.0	-	-	2.91
2.	Electorates are concern with money politics instead of party manifestoes	46	31.0	100	67.0	4	2.7	-	-	3.28
3.	Knowledge of party manifestoes doesn't determine whom I vote for in an election	38	25.0	75	50.0	33	22.0	4	2.7	2.98
4.	I vote without knowing the party's manifestoes awareness	34	22.7	79	52.7	37	24.6	-	-	2.98
5.	I vote based on personality of the candidate and not the party manifestoes	42	28.0	65	43.3	4	2.7	39	26.0	2.73
<b>Weighted Mean</b>								<b>2.99</b>		

**Source:** Field Survey, 2021

Table 2 present analysis on the knowledge of electorate on parties' manifestoes. The result shows that respondents do not have knowledge of party's manifestoes with a weighted mean score of 2.99 which is highly than the standard mean score of 2.50. The result revealed that respondents have no knowledge of party's manifestoes of political parties in an election (x = 2.91), electorates are concern with

money politics (x = 3.28), knowledge of parties manifestoes does not determines whom to vote for (x = 2.98), voting without knowing the party's manifestoes (x = 2.98) and respondents vote base on personality of the candidate and not party's manifestoes (x = 2.73). This result implies that respondents do not have knowledge of the content of political party's manifestoes before voting.

**Research Question Two:** What is the conditions which influence electorates to vote in a particular election? To answer this question data collected on the condition that influence electorate vote collated and presented on Table 3.

**Table 3:** Condition that Influence Electorate Vote

S/N	Items	SA		A		D		SD		X̄
		F	%	F	%	X	%	F	%	
1.	Ethnicity factor determines electorate voting behavior	58	38.7	60	40.0	7	4.7	25	16.7	3.0
2.	Religious factor influence my voting pattern	31	20.7	64	42.7	29	19.3	26	17.3	2.67
3.	Party manifestoes influence electorate voting behavior	31	20.7	52	34.7	59	39.3	8	5.3	2.71
4.	Family political background influence electorate voting behavior	42	28.0	69	46.0	16	10.7	23	15.3	2.87
5.	Personality of the candidate determine electorate voting behavior	58	38.7	69	46.0	19	12.7	4	2.7	3.21
<b>Weighted Mean</b>								<b>2.89</b>		

**Source:** Field Survey, 2021

Table 3, present analysis on conditions that influence electorate vote. The result shows that there are factors/conditions that influence electorates' voters with a weighted mean score of 2.89. The result revealed that ethnicity factor determines electorate voting behavior (x = 3.0), religious factors influences voting pattern (x = 2.67), parties manifestoes influences voting behavior (x = 2.71), family political background influences voting (x = 2.87) and

also personality of the candidate is another factor that influences voting behavior (x = 3.21). This result implies that there are factors and conditions that influences electorates to vote in a particular election.

**Research Question Three:** Is there any relationship between party's manifestoes and voting pattern of the electorates?

**Table 4:** Relationship between Party's manifestoes and voting patterns

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Sig.	p.value	Decision
Party's Manifestoes	150	1.8533	.708	.000	.362	Highly significant
Voting Pattern		1.5867	.677			

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Testing the correlation between Parties' manifestoes and Voting patterns at  $\alpha = 0.05$ , from the result a significant of .000 was obtained at p.value of .362. Correction is significant at 0.05 level between the

two variable. The significance level is .000, which is lower than 0.05 which means the relationship is highly significant. This means there is a relationship between the two variables. The result implies that

there is a relationship between party's manifestoes and the voting pattern.

### Discussion of Findings

Findings from the first research question shows that larger number of the electorates have no knowledge of the parties manifestoes in an election but they are more concern in other consideration.

Findings from the second research question revealed that ethnicity and religious factors determine electorates voting behavior instead of voting base on party manifestoes. This is in line with the findings of Onuora (2015), who is of the opinion that Nigerian are more loyal to religion that State and also in line with the opinion of Ukiwo (2003), that ethnicity is one of the major causes of political turmoil in our society.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, when going through the research questions the data analysis revealed that the conditions which influenced people decision to vote in election is not competence of contestants or party manifestoes but ethnic, religion, money politics and personality of the candidate contesting for any political offices. Therefore, lack of voting in an election does not reflect incompetence or poor qualification of candidates. Having noted the perception of the voting pattern in an election by the electorates in Akoko South Local Government Area of Ondo State.

### Recommendations

Based on findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made

- The INEC saddled with the responsibility of organizing elections should intensify political education with emphasis on importance of party manifestoes in elections.
- There should be a judicial body to monitor electioneering campaign and any party using hate speech should be sanction
- There should be legislation against the use of money during election with sanction such as disqualification be penalty for such
- Government should discourage using ethnicity as a basis for campaign during electioneering process

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