

Voting Behavior amongst South-Western States in Nigeria: A Study of Oyo and Osun States (2015-2019)

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Abstract. The high degree of mistrust in the electoral process has affected the voting behaviour of voters during election in Nigeria. It is against this backdrop, that the study investigated the voting behavior among South-western states, using Oyo and Osun states respectively from 2015-2019. The study adopted quantitative method and employed survey research design. Data was generated through the administering of questionnaire. Data from journals, articles, books (published & unpublished), internet and documentaries complemented the major sources of data. Findings revealed that there are factors negating the voting behavior of electorates in South-western Nigeria. The study concluded that voting behaviour is an essential element in democratic system. However, in Nigeria, there is low level of participation of the electorates during elections because of high degree of mistrust in the electoral system. The study recommended that government should improve in areas of electoral process and be proactive by orientating citizens during elections.

Keywords: Voting, Behaviour, Voting behaviour, South-western, States

1. Introduction

The fact that majority of the world practices democracy, Nigeria inclusive, there is a need for the conduct of election in order to enable individuals choose their preferred candidates for political office. Democracy is a form of government in which the people rule themselves either directly or indirectly through their representatives. According to Erdmann (2004), the ability of an individual to vote his preference after deliberations without having his choices forcefully restricted by eternal forces is essential for any democracy. Elections and voting are

essential part of democratic political systems and this is because it is a process through which people are elected into various offices and to represent them. Voting is a fundamental right incorporated into every constitution all over the world. For Nigeria, this right to vote can be found in section 39 of the 1999 Nigerian constitution.

Voting is a form of political participation and is regarded as the main form of political participation in liberal democratic societies. The patterns of the votes can be described as the voting behavior. The analysis of these patterns of behavior helps to explain the reasons why people vote and how they reach the decisions they make. Voting behavior is an act of aggregating individual preferences into collective decision in an election (Linberg and Morrison, 2007) When studying voting behavior, the main focus is to find out who votes and how they vote. Being able to understand voter's behavior would help to explain why electorates make their decisions the way they do and enable the prediction of the outcomes of elections. According to Bartel (2008), people vote according to their original political disposition, while some others vote because of the candidates' personal characteristics, qualities and abilities.

Nigeria at its inception was divided into two regions by the colonial masters which were the northern region the southern region .Today, Nigeria is divided six (6) geopolitical zones namely; The middle belt also known as north central (Benue, Kogi, Kwara. Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Federal Capital Territory), The North East (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Yobe), The North West (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Sokoto, Zamfara), The south East (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo), The South-South(Akwa-Ibom, Cross River, Bayelsa, Rivers,

Delta, Edo) and the South West (Ekiti, Lagos, Osun, Ogun, Oyo, Ondo). Oyo state is an inland state of the South-western region of Nigeria. It was created in 1976 and has its capital in Ibadan. It has 33 local government areas. Osun state was created out of Oyo state in 1991. Osun state has Osogbo as its capital. It has 30 local government areas with over 200 towns and is divided into three federal senatorial districts (The Punch, 2014).

Nigeria's electoral system has been seen as defective. Elections in Nigeria have been accompanied with rigging, violence, low turnout of citizens during election, vote buying just to mention a few. Elections in Nigeria since post-independence have been marked by sharp division and distrust and a zero sum attitude which manifest in electoral fraud, serious disputes and high level of violence (Odofin and Omojuwa, 2007). As a result of the political unrest, people in the South-western region have developed a non-participatory attitude when it comes to elections. It is against this backdrop that the study investigated the voting behavior in Oyo and Osun states in Nigeria from 2015-2019.

1.1 Research Objectives

The major objective of the study is to investigate the voting behavior of South-western states in Nigeria, using Oyo and Osun states. The specific ones are to:

- ascertain the major factors that influence the voting behavior in Oyo and Osun states between 2015 and 2019
- determine the political culture in Oyo and Osun states as a platform of voting behavioral pattern
- ascertain if electorates vote as a result of the political ideologies of political parties; and
- find out how voting behavior of electorates in Nigeria can be improved upon

1.3 Research Questions

- What are the factors affecting voting behavior in Oyo and Osun states?
- What is the political culture in Oyo and Osun states?
- Do electorates know the political ideologies of political parties?
- What can be done to improve the voting behavior in Nigeria?

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Conceptualizing Voting Behaviour

Voting has virtually become a universal means of collective decision making by individuals in order to elect their political representatives. Flannigan and Zingale (1998) admitted that the most common form of political participation is exercise of the right to vote. It is an essential act which a citizen is supposed to perform in order to ensure that government operates in the way that it is expected to.

Voting behaviour gives an inside looks into the minds of individuals who participate in politics through voting. The study of voting behaviour has been able to bring out the major differences in the political decisions of various age groups, religious groups, and ethnic groups and even among the sexes. The ability of political parties and pressure groups to summon religious and communal factors, influence of money or charismatic nature of a leader and other illogical forces have their influence on the minds of the voters. Voting behaviour is significant in political systems where the voter possesses some sort of choice, no matter how limited. The level in which voting decision is affected by internal processes and external influences changes the value of democratic decisions making.

2.1.1 Factors affecting Voting Behaviour

Various factors which include political and non-political have an effect on voting behaviour. The analysis of voting behaviour done by Bartel's (2008) focuses on the dynamic forces that influence people to vote as they do and how they make the decisions they make. This implies that the behaviour of a voter is influenced by several factors. The determinants of voting behaviour are vast and wide-ranging, and differ from one person to another to a substantial level. Several factors that can affect voter's behaviour have been highlighted by various scholars. They could be internal or external, short-term or long-term, sociological or political factors (Antunes, 2010). Below are some of the factors affecting voting behaviour:

Age of Electorate / Candidate: The age of an individual determines to an extent the direction in which an individual may decide to vote. (Gills 2003, Sanbonmatsu, 2002) have shown that there is a higher rate of older voter turnout than younger age groups, and that voter turnout is lowest among young adults. There are also certain electorates who would not vote for a female candidate as a result of the ideology that electorate have.

Educational Status of Electorate: Education is an important determinant of voting behaviour. This is because education opens up people's minds to

political processes and may also change an individual's perspective about the political process and spark an interest in the political process in such an individual

Gender of Electorate: There is a noticeable gender gap in electoral behaviour globally as well as in Nigeria (Ogbogu, 2012). There is usually low level of involvement by women in politics and to exercise their legal right to vote (Ogbogu, 2012). Gender provides a base for diversity. Women voters tend to be more indecisive about their purpose to vote than men are and are more easily influenced than their male counterparts.

Others are kinship ties of individuals, charisma of candidate, and interest of individual in political affairs, public opinion, and party loyalty. When an electorate is dedicated to or in support of a political party, he is more likely to come out to vote to ensure that the candidate that such an individual is rooting for is able to win. A party which is able to continually achieve its goals is more likely to retain its supporters as a result that such an individual would have developed confidence in the party.

2.2 Conceptualising political culture

Political culture is viewed by J.J Rousseau in terms of the morality, customs and public opinion of a particular people Hiping (2004). It basically describes the learned rules and communal opinion of a society. According to Heywood (1999), political culture is a pattern of orientations to political Objects such as parties, government, and the constitution expressed in beliefs, symbols and value. Silver and Dowley (2000) viewed political culture as a subjective mass phenomenon that entails orientations toward the main objects of the political system and to the role of it. It refers to distinguishing attitudes beliefs, behaviour patterns of a community.

According to (Almond and Verba, 1963); (Anifowoshe and Enemu: 1999:217), the key elements of what constitutes a nation's political culture include among other things:

- the degree of social trust or mistrust which prevails in the society;
- the general attitude of tolerance and inter-personal cooperation permeating political relations among people;
- attachment and loyalty of citizens to the national political system;
- people's attitudes towards authority- degree of public recognition of what constitutes the legitimate authority; and
- People's sense of their right, powers and obligations. Do they feel that they can

influence and participate in the decision making processes or is there widespread apathy and political alienation in the political system?

Political culture is not stagnant but may change overtime due to importation of new ideas, change in population density and various other factors. According to Olanrewaju (2015) the political culture of Nigeria is still embryonic and undeveloped. The political culture pattern of Nigeria can be said to be one characterised by political corruption, electioneering hooliganisms, ethnic bias and elite aloofness

2.3 Voting behaviour in South-Western States

The south-western part of Nigeria consists of six states namely; Oyo state, Osun state, Ondo state, Ogun state, Ekiti state, Lagos state all these states are categorised as Yoruba states. Gubernatorial elections were conducted in Ekiti and Osun state in 2014 and Lagos Ogun, Oyo and Ondo state in 2015. Given the history of political crisis in the former Western Region, the South-west geopolitical zone is seen as prone to the use of thugs and criminals employed by godfathers to win elections. For instance, according to Human Rights Watch, Chief Lamidi Adedibu has been involved in Oyo politics since the 1950s. His many critics alleged that he started as an organizer of political thugs for the Action Group Party of Chief Obafemi Awolowo. By the late 1980s, however, he arose as an influential political force through a combination of populist politics, patronage, violence and extortion'' (Albin-Lackey, 2007).

Prior to elections, voters usually given incentives in form of food stuff or money by candidates either directly or through agents in order to garner support from the populace. The term incentive here refers to the exchange of goods for political support. Many governorship candidates provided food stuffs and many other items to the people of the state during Christmas and New Year celebrations and in exchange for their votes (The Punch, 2014). In a country like Nigeria where the standard of living is low, it is not far-fetched that individuals would be willing to sell their votes to candidates who are willing to give them incentives (Adeleke, 2016).

2.3.1 Voting Behaviour in Oyo and Osun States

Oyo state is located in the South-western part of Nigeria. It is occupied by Yoruba's whose primary occupation is farming. The last gubernatorial election in Oyo state was held in 2015 where Senator Abiola Ajimobi emerged as the winner under the banner of

the All Progressive Congress (APC). Politics in Oyo state is characterised by godfatherism. Certain individuals in the state are seen as the king makers and their support is usually sort after. Example of a godfather in Oyo state is Late Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu who controlled the outcome of elections in Oyo state. These godfathers usually serve as sponsors of candidates and if a godfather does not give approval of a candidate, such candidate may have slim chances of winning an election.

Post-election in Osun state witnessed a high presence of security agencies such as the military. This was claimed to have been a ploy by the People's Democratic Party to use in ensuring that their candidate obtained the post of governor in the state rather than the incumbent who was an All Progressive Congress candidate. The election was characterised by vote buying, stomach infrastructure gains such as food, money and what have you. Rather than vote for a responsible candidate that will provide a long term development for the country, people prefer the one who will offer material goods to electorates in order to garner support from them and Osun state was not excluded from this activity.

2.3.2 Rational Choice Theory

This is the theory employed to explain voting behaviour in this study. The theory uses the economic theory to explain voting behaviour. The theoretical background for the economic explanation of voting behaviour was given by Anthony Downs (1957) in his work "An Economic Theory of Democracy. The main theory of Downs work is that parties in democratic politics are equivalent to entrepreneurs in a profit-seeking economy. As a result, to attain their private ends they come up with policies which they believe can get them the most votes, as entrepreneurs produce whatsoever products they believe will gain the most profits.

The theory states that voters are rational when making their decisions and that they would want to achieve full utilisation of their votes. This theory also assumes that voters and political parties are presented with options which they can arrange in order of preference and those voters and political parties make their decisions in the direction which is likely to benefit them the most. This is evident in the fact that voters are able to be persuaded to vote in certain directions through the use of incentives which to them at that point is at the top of their list of needs. The operation of the model is based on three fundamental principles: that,

(1) All decisions voters and political parties make are rational, which means that the decisions are guided by self-interest and enforced in accordance with the principle of maximization of action's utility.

(2) The democratic political system implies a level of consistency that supports predictions about the consequences of decisions made by voters and political parties

(3) The democratic system assumes despite the consistency stated in the previous point a level of uncertainty, sufficiently important to allow different options.

This theory can be used to explain why people make the decisions they make because it states that people want to use their votes to its full utility for their own benefit. A large number of Nigerians refrain from voting and other political engagements as a result of the undemocratic practices such as election rigging, electoral violence, intimidation and, manipulation. These factors have decreased the level of trust of the citizenry in the government and its institutions.

3. Methodology

The study is on voting behaviour in South-western region in Nigeria, using specifically, Oyo and Osun states. The study adopted quantitative method and employed survey research design. Data was generated through the administering of questionnaire. Data from journals, articles, books (published & unpublished), internet and documentaries complemented the major sources of data. The population of this study was both male and female individuals within the voting age in Ibadan North in Oyo state and Ife Central in Osun state. The random sampling technique was used in this study. Sample size determination was based on Taro Yamane's framework. The estimation of the sample size will be made through the formula, Yamane $n = \frac{N}{[1 + N(e)^2]}$

Where;

n is the sample size,
N is the population,

I (1) is a constant, and
e is the error limit (0.05).

For Osun state N=68,464

For Oyo state N=95,471

Total population= 163,935

$$n = \frac{N}{[1 + N(e)^2]}$$

$$n = \frac{163,935}{[1 + 163,935(0.05)^2]}$$

$$n = \frac{163,935}{410.8375}$$

$$n = 399.02 \text{ approximately } 399$$

n = 399.02 approximately 399

Therefore, 399 questionnaires would be distributed.

To find out the proportion of the questionnaire, Bowlers proportional allocation method would be used.

$$n_1 = \frac{n(N_1)}{N}$$

Where n is overall sample size

N_1 is population of each state

N is the total population

For Osun state

$$n_1 = \frac{399(68,464)}{163,935} = \frac{27,385,600}{163,935} = 166.6 \text{ approximately } 167$$

For Oyo state

$$n_1 = \frac{399(95,471)}{163,935} = \frac{38,188,400}{163,935} = 232.36 \text{ approximately } 232$$

4. Presentation of Data and Analysis

4.1 Data Analysis

Table 1: Voting is an act of formal indication of one’s choice of political candidate or political party at an election

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	274	74.9	74.9	74.9
Agree	87	23.8	23.8	98.6
Disagree	4	1.1	1.1	99.7
Strongly Disagree	1	.3	.3	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020).

The opinion of the respondent on whether voting is an act of formal indication of one’s choice of political candidate or political party at an election or not. From the population under study, 361 respondents representing 98.7% strongly agreed and agreed while the remaining 5 respondents representing 1.4% strongly disagreed with the statement. Thus, the statement voting is an act of formal indication of one’s choice of political candidate or political party at an election is upheld.

Table 2: Voting behavior is an aggregate of the decision made by a group of people during an election

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	112	30.6	30.6	30.6
Agree	239	65.3	65.3	95.9
Disagree	14	3.8	3.8	99.7
Strongly Disagree	1	.3	.3	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Respondent’s opinions were considered on whether voting behavior is an aggregate of the decision made by a group of people during an election or not. From the population under study in table above, 351 respondents representing 95.9% strongly agreed and agreed that voting behavior is an aggregate of the decision made by a group of people during an election while the remaining 15 respondents representing 4.1% strongly disagreed with the statement. Therefore, the statement that states that voting behavior is an aggregate of the decision made by a group of people during an election is accepted.

Table 3: Voting is an integral part of political participation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	221	60.4	60.4	60.4
Agree	112	30.6	30.6	91.0
Disagree	29	7.9	7.9	98.9
Strongly Disagree	4	1.1	1.1	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Table 3 shows the distribution of the respondent’s opinion on whether voting is an integral part of political participation or not. Analysis above shows that 333 respondents representing 91% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that voting is an integral part of political participation while another 33 representing 9.0% strongly disagreed and disagreed with the statement that voting is an integral part of political participation. The statistical analysis shown above upheld the opinion of the respondent that stated that voting is an integral part of political participation.

Table 4: I am aware of my right to vote and the implications of my voting decision

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	248	67.8	67.8	67.8
Valid Agree	100	27.3	27.3	95.1
Valid Disagree	13	3.6	3.6	98.6
Valid Strongly Disagree	5	1.4	1.4	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

With the analysis from table 4 above, respondent’s opinion were made known on whether individual and eligible voters were aware of their right to vote and the implications of their voting decision. 348 respondents representing 95.1% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that they were aware of their right to vote and the implications of their voting decision. Another 18 respondents representing 5.0% were strongly disagreed and disagreed about the statement. The result shows that every eligible voter is aware of his voting rights or right to vote and the impending implications of their voting decision thereafter.

Table 5: I vote during elections

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	96	26.2	26.2	26.2
Valid Agree	153	41.8	41.8	68
Valid Disagree	107	29.2	29.2	97.2
Valid Strongly Disagree	10	2.7	2.7	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

249 respondents representing 68% of the population under study strongly agreed that they vote during elections while the remaining 117 respondents representing 31.9% strongly disagreed and disagreed about the statement. The result shows that majority of the respondents participated in performing their civic responsibility to vote and be voted for.

Table 6: The Nigerian voting system is a credible one

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	124	38.3	33.9	33.9
Valid Agree	62	16.9	16.9	50.8
Valid Disagree	122	29.0	33.3	84.1
Valid Strongly Disagree	58	15.8	15.8	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

The opinions of the respondents in table 6 were made known on whether the Nigerian voting system is a credible one or not. Out of the total population under study, 186 respondents representing 50.8% strongly agreed and agreed while another 180 respondents representing 49.1% strongly disagreed with the statement. Therefore, the percentage of those that agreed that Nigerian voting system is a credible one supersedes the former and thus it is upheld.

Table 7: Enticement is a normal practice during election

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	106	29.0	29.0	29.0
Valid Agree	143	39.1	39.1	68.0
Valid Disagree	88	24.0	24.0	92.1
Valid Strongly Disagree	29	7.9	7.9	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Table 7 shows the distribution of the respondents’ opinion on whether enticement is a normal practice during election or not. From the above analysis 249 respondents representing 68.1% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that enticement is a normal practice during election while another 117 respondent representing 31.9% strongly disagreed and disagreed about the statement. The analysis shows that the percentage of those that strongly agreed and agreed surpasses that of their counterpart that disagreed with the above statement.

Table 8: Credibility of voting results would encourage voting

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	207	56.6	56.6	56.6
Valid Agree	116	31.7	31.7	88.3
Valid Disagree	34	9.3	9.3	97.6
Valid Strongly Disagree	9	2.4	2.4	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

The opinions of the respondents in table 8 were sought on whether credibility of voting results would encourage voting or not. Out of the total population under study, 323 respondents representing 88.3% strongly agreed and agreed while remaining 43 respondents representing 11.7% strongly disagreed with the statement that the credibility of voting would encourage voting. Therefore, from the analysis done, the credibility of voting results would encourage voting in the nearest future and that statement is accepted.

Table 9: Religious background is a determinant of my voting behavior

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	129	35.2	35.2	35.2
Valid Agree	67	18.3	18.3	53.6
Valid Disagree	93	25.4	25.4	79.0
Valid Strongly Disagree	77	21.0	21.0	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Table 9 shows the distribution of the respondent’s take on whether religious background is a determinant of voters voting behavior or not. From the analysis stated above, 196 respondents representing 53.5% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that religious background is a determinant factor of their voting behavior while another 170 respondents representing 46.4% strongly disagreed and disagreed with the statement. The analysis shows that the percentage of those that strongly agreed and agreed based on the fact that religious background is a determinant of voters voting behavior surpasses those that do not support the statement. Hence, the former statement with higher percentage 53.5% is upheld.

Table 10: I am an adherent of a particular party and vote based on preference for that particular party.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	83	22.7	22.7	22.7
Valid Agree	96	26.2	26.2	48.9
Valid Disagree	119	32.5	32.5	81.4
Valid Strongly Disagree	68	18.6	18.6	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

179 respondents representing 48.9% of the population under study strongly agree and agree that they are adherents of a particular party and vote based on preference for that particular party while the remaining 187 respondents representing 51.1% strongly disagreed and disagreed about the statement. The result shows that majority of the respondents are unaware of the political ideologies of political parties.

Table 11: The charisma of a candidate affects my voting Decision

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	175	47.8	47.8	47.8
Agree	127	34.7	34.7	82.5
Disagree	40	10.9	10.9	93.4
Strongly Disagree	24	6.6	6.6	100.0
Total	366	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Analysis from table 11 shows the respondent’s opinion on whether the charisma of a candidate affects individuals voting decision or not. 302 respondents representing 82.5% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that they were persuaded by the charisma of the candidate which affected their voting decision while another 64 respondents representing 17.5% strongly disagreed and disagreed that they were not affected by the charisma of the candidate. The result shows that most of the eligible voters were affected by the charisma of the candidates which in turn affected their decision making on voting exercise.

5. Discussion of Findings

The first research question which is “What are the factors affecting voting behavior of electorates?” this question was answered by the question Religious background is a determinant of my voting behavior where we have 53.5% of respondents strongly agreeing and agreeing and 46.4 % disagreeing and strongly disagreeing. There is also the question the charisma of a candidate affects my voting decision where 82.5% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed and 17.5% strongly disagreed and disagreed. This confirms that religion and charisma among other factors affect the voting behavior of electorates in South-Western Nigeria.

The second research question stated ‘What is the political culture in Osun and Oyo States?’ this is addressed by the question I vote during elections which has 68% of respondents agreeing and strongly agreeing and 31.9 % of respondents disagreeing and strongly disagreeing. It is also addressed by the question Enticement is a normal practice during elections which 68.1 % of respondents agree and strongly agree with and 31.9% disagree and strongly disagree with. Another question which addresses this is The Nigerian voting system is a credible one which 50.8 % of respondents agree and strongly agree with and 49.1% disagree and strongly disagree. Also, the question I am aware of my right to vote and the implications of my voting decision where we have

95.1% of respondents agreeing and strongly agreeing and 5.0% disagreeing and strongly disagreeing addresses the research question. This confirms that there is relatively low level of participation during elections and also a high level of mistrust of electorates in the electoral system.

The third research question which says “do electorates know the political ideologies of political parties?” which 48.9% of respondents agree and strongly agree with and 51.1% of respondents disagree and strongly disagree with. This confirms that a majority of electorates are unaware of the political ideologies which political parties have.

The fourth research question which says “What can be done to improve voting behavior of electorates in Osun and Oyo states?” is addressed by the question Credibility of voting results would encourage voting where 88.3% agree and strongly agree and 11.7% disagree and strongly disagree. This shows that electorates would be more likely to vote during elections if there is result credibility. The following observations were also made that:

- a majority of people in Oyo state and Osun state have their voting decision being influenced by the charisma and religious affiliation and background of candidates
- both Oyo state and Osun state have a majority of people voting but still have a high percentage of individuals who do not vote for a state that claims to be operating a participatory democratic system
- a majority of individuals are not aware of the political ideologies of political party’s which is what these political party’s stand for and to an extent can help electorates to be able to know the standing of candidates on various issues based on the party ideology and;
- a political system which is credible and trusted by members of the society would encourage other individuals to participate in the election process

6. Conclusion

Political participation and voting behaviour are crucial elements in any democratic system. However, in Nigeria, there is low level of participation of the electorates during elections because of high degree of mistrust in the electoral system. The issue of religion and charisma among other factors have also affected the voting behavior of electorates in Nigeria. The electorates come out in their numbers and are still biased to vote for the right candidate during election. Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are considered that:

- The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should improve in the area of electoral process during elections.
- Government should create more awareness and be proactive in making citizens to be more conscious about their voting behaviour during election.
- There should be more proactive move to educate citizens of their right and obligation to participate and claim their one vote during election.
- Political parties should be encouraged to improve on their public images through the entrenchment of internal democracy when their candidates are elected into power.
- Political parties should make know to the public their ideologies. This will help the electorates know what political candidates actually represent and stand for.

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