

VOTER APATHY IN 2023 ELECTION AND THE CHALLENGE OF DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN NIGERIA: IMPERATIVES OF A NEW APPROACH

BY

ADIGWE AUSTEEN NDUBUISI (PHD)

Department of International Relations. Air Force Institute of Technology AFIT, Kaduna.

Email: austeentops2014@gmail.com
(08065792160)

ABSTRACT

The democratic tradition is an all-inclusive phenomenon that draws on the collective involvement of the people in its entire process to ensure that the end products accurately reflects their expressed will, devoid of any strand of marginalization in the process. The people therefore embraces the participatory involvement of the greater majority in its leadership recruitment process. The concept of voter apathy in Nigeria is becoming an albatross; an enigma that defies logic as it has continuously and persistently impinged on the entrenchment of the democratic tradition of popular consultation and popular participation of Nigerians in this governance framework called democracy which today, is the standard for political legitimacy in the contemporary global community. The 2023 general elections present a horrible spectacle to the challenge of voter apathy. With a total of 93.46 million registered voters from the total estimate of more than 200 million Nigerians, only about 28.63% of the registered voters participated by casting their votes in the elections. This paper explores the dynamics of voter apathy to establish how it obstructs democratic consolidation in Nigeria. It shall apply itself to the qualitative approach in interrogating the causative factors to this ugly trend, using the systems theoretical praxis. The imperatives advanced in this study are models intended to address the inhibiting factors towards entrenching the democratic tradition in Nigeria moving forward as a nation-state in this 21st century.

KEYWORDS: Voter apathy, challenge, democratic consolidation, imperatives, new approach.

INTRODUCTION

Democracy is a composite phenomenon that encourages inclusivity and transparency in all its processes and procedures as the accredited framework for interest articulation, interest aggregation and ultimately leadership recruitment. Its mechanisms of operation are designed to ignite the passion, interest and commitment of the people for purposeful participation, so as to ensure that the majority will prevails, while the minority interest is accommodated without any hindrance.

Voter apathy is an undesirable vocabulary in the democratic process and it is used to describe the lack of interest by the electorate in participating in the electoral process by their tacit and open refusal to vote in an election. This show of lack of interest in participating in the decision-making process of choosing the representatives of the people as the hallmark of the democratic tradition bears some cause and effect implications that impinge on the enthronement of popular representation where a government is formed through the willing and expressed choice of the people for the purpose of guaranteeing their socio-economic wellbeing. This explains why the popularity of any government among the electorates is proportional to the level of political participation demonstrated by voter turnout in an election (Okafor, O. and Okeke, 2022).

The Nigerian state as the largest democracy on the continent of Africa is hamstrung by this malaise of voter apathy. This study brings to the fore the dynamics of voter apathy, and interrogates its causative factors using the prism of systems theoretical approach to accomplish its interrogation. It is segmented into a concise introduction, clarification of concepts, theoretical framework, review of pertinent literatures, a retrospective glance at voter apathy in Nigeria's fourth republic and the imperatives of a new approach with a conclusion and valid recommendations. This paper adopts the qualitative method of sourcing data to achieve its stated objectives. It begins with an abstract followed

by a concise introduction that dovetailed into clarification of key concepts in the study, the theoretical framework which is hinged on the systems approach, was followed by literature review, and a section that appraised the 2023 presidential elections with some imperatives on the way forward towards democratic consolidation in Nigeria. This was followed by the conclusion and recommendations.

Clarification of Concepts

Voter Apathy: The root word apathy in its literary sense depicts a state of not caring; it connotes lack of interest and enthusiasm for things other people are excited about. Voter apathy therefore is the loss of interest for civic engagement in the political process and this occurs when eligible voters are reluctant or deliberately choose not to vote in an election (Okafor, O. & Okeke, 2022). Voter apathy equally refers to a lack of feeling of personal responsibility, a passivity and indifference for political affairs. It connotes the absence of a feeling of personal obligation to participate in the electoral process (Sylvia et al, 2013). Voter apathy manifests in attitudes of aloofness and detachment from the electoral process. The major implication of voter apathy is that the outcome of elections does not reflect the true spirit of majority vote as enshrined in democratic theory. The government that is birth under this circumstance suffers from the deficit of legitimacy.

Challenge: The word challenge as used implies inhibiting factors; obstacles that hinders or make the attainment of certain goals and objectives difficult. It encompasses the inherent obstacles and stumbling blocks to building something of value or accomplishing a task. Challenges are test to the human resolve of goal-setting and achievement and they are part of collective social existence. There cannot be any challenge-free path, but overcoming socio-economic challenges is the fundamental purpose of government.

Democratic Consolidation: To write on democratic consolidation implies that a political system practices democracy as a form of rule as with the present Nigerian state. The journey into the present democracy began on the 29th of May 1999; a day which heralded the dawn of the fourth republic. Democracy enjoys the wide acceptance as a political framework that is rooted in popular consultation, consensus building, and equally guarantees an effective decision-making process that prioritises the majority interest.

The word consolidation is fluid in application, it depicts movement and arrival as well as progress and achievement. It attaches itself to a democracy that is qualitative and firm in principle as much as it is robust and stable in applying the principles of liberal democracy. Taken for granted, democratic consolidation is a journey away from all the threats to democratic breakdown and extinction to a higher pedestal of democratic performance by a political system. It implies deepening of democracy in tandem with the standards of liberal democratic practice as exemplified in Europe and America. The general belief though in relative terms, is that there is a gradual decline in participatory democracy across different parts of the world. This is where the concept democratic consolidation has assumed a remedial perspective akin to repairing the defects in the democratic process.

Imperatives: The word 'imperative' literally suggests a request predicated on the compelling need to act or do something because of its value attachment and role such thing, individual or institution play in the overall benefit of the majority. Imperative sometimes conjure a connotation of warning for the purpose of avoiding an imminent danger. Etymologically from its Latin root, imperative means 'command'. Crystal (1991) opines that, the usage of the word refers to verb forms or sentences, clause types that are typically used in the expression of command. Such command is expressive that something is of utmost importance or necessity.

The word, new approach is the clarion call for a substantive departure from the conventional or hitherto established pattern that have not yielded maximum results. It conjures the re-ordering of priorities in the face of emerging trends or changing realities. It presupposes the response to human dynamism.

Theoretical Framework

Easton is the exponent of the systems theory. He postulates that the political system is a platform of interaction through which authoritative binding decisions are made (Easton, 1953). This theory articulates the position that all social organization is made up of interdependent parts which must work in harmony for their collective survival. The systems theory emphasizes the importance of understanding the relationship between various political actors, institutions and the broader social, economic and cultural contexts in which they operate. It further strengthens our understanding of how different components of a society work together to ensure that entire society function to its maximum capacity.

The input, conversion, output framework put forward by this theory clearly explains that what goes into the system determines the output. Under this arrangement, provision is made for feedback as a mechanism through which the output of the political system influence future inputs into the system. This underscores that the unification and integration of the different elements in the political system is crucial for the attainment of the common objective. When this is juxtaposed with democracy as a political ideology where government hails from the people because it is established through their collective will for the attainment of their common good, integrating and unifying all the elements within the democratic value chain for active participation becomes a *sine qua non*, if the traditions of modern democracy must be entrenched and consolidated in Africa's largest democracy.

Literature Review

In his appraisal of the phenomenon of voter apathy, Fagunwa (2015) opines that the decrease in voter participation is a global challenge that only manifests in varying degrees. He categorized voter apathy in two forms; it encompasses the refusal of the voting population to register during registration exercise preceding elections, and the outright refusal of eligible voters to cast their voters during elections. He held that registration of voters does not automatically translate into the voting power of the electorate because people's reason for registration goes beyond voting at elections and it differs from one person to another. Thus, while some would want to have it as a form of national identification, others may want it for other personal reasons.

Moliki and Dauda (2014) lent their voice to the affirmation that voter apathy is a pervasive and negative wind that is blowing across all democracies. Describing the universality of voter apathy, their appraisal mirrored-in on voter apathy as a situation of citizens' absence in political participation and the lack of passionate concern towards their civic obligations by their continuous detachment from the general political activities of the state. Their position finds acceptance in the view expressed by Fagunwa that voter's registration is only one step that does not show meaningful impact or accurately reflect on the quantity and quality of voters after elections. To them, citizen's participation at the level of registration is not a demonstration of civic obligation but personal aggrandizement.

Sylvia, U.A., Okeke, V.O., Idike, A.N. (2013) in their interrogation of the implication of voter apathy in the electoral process, harped on the legitimacy question that envelops any government that emerge through low voter turnout. According to them, a low voter turnout won't give a true reflection of the people's preferences. That, a high voter turnout is what is needed to make the result of an election more credible, acceptable and also prevent criminal elements from hijacking or sabotaging the electoral process. In their submission, an all-inclusive process in participatory democracy is what will guarantee impartiality of the process, ensure fairness, and minimize electoral violence.

In his seminal essay titled "Transitions, Continuities, and Paradoxes", O'Donnell (1992) put forward an explicit interpretation of democratic consolidation to mean the threat of subtle regression and departure from democratic principles to semi-democratic rule. He described it as a process of withering away and show of lack of concern for democratic participation. Based on his appraisal, he distinguished between "rapid death" and "slow death" of democracy (O'Donnell, 1992:48). According to him, rapid death refers to classical coup politics while slow death represents a progressive diminution of existing spaces for the exercise of civilian power and the effective guarantee for liberal constitutionalism through a slow and opaque process of successive authoritarian advances (O'Donnell, 1992:19). Adopting a similar frame of thinking, Huntington (1996) asserts that with contemporary democracies, the challenge of democratic consolidation is not limited to the overthrow or rapid death of democratic regimes but the gradual erosion of democratic values in acclaimed democratic states. He described it as the intermittent or gradual weakening of democracy by the

political actors who are elected to lead and defend it (Huntington 1996:9). He adopted the concept of democratic erosion to mean something that is substantially wider than what O'Donnell advanced in his formulation on democratic consolidation. O'Donnell's position is that the influence of military supremacy in formal authoritarian states is a cankerworm and virus to democratic consolidation. The re-emergence of coups in some African states in recent times validates the influence of the ugly past in erstwhile states that were governed under military dictatorship.

Schmitter's (1993) appraisal is that democratic consolidation is a process of transforming the accidental arrangements, prudential norms, and contingent solutions that have emerged into structures and relationships that are reliably known, regularly practiced and habitually accepted (Schmitter 1993:12). In his perspective, democratic consolidation is synonymous with building of institutions, the construction of concrete, lower-level institutions, such as political parties and party systems, legislative bodies and other structures for interest aggregation and intermediation. From the foregoing, the structural deficits that impinge on democratic consolidation is apparently endless. A plethora of variables ranging from the performance of government in power, public administrative system, and pattern of decision making process are predominant.

Voter Apathy in Nigeria's fourth Republic: A diagnosis on 2023 Presidential Elections.

Voter apathy in Nigeria's fourth republic presents a recurrent phenomenon, with each election circle witnessing a new phase of it. It is gradually becoming a norm in each election year for eligible voters to abandon their civic duty of voting to choose their representatives. The 2023 elections which was the 7th in the election circle following the return to democracy was not spared of the menace of voter apathy. With a national voter turnout of about 29%, no election in the current republic has had a lower voter participation rate in Nigeria (see table **one** below).

In the 2023 general elections, 93.4 million Nigerians registered as eligible voters, but only 87.2 million of this number collected their Permanent Voters Card (PVC). The damning side to this ugly trend of voter apathy was that only approximately 24.9 million Nigerians came out to exercise their civic responsibility by voting on election day with 62.3 million absconding from the exercise (premiumtimesng.com). The table below provides a summary of voter participation in Nigeria's elections in the past 24 years.

Table 1: showing estimate of population and turn-out of voters in Presidential elections

The table below indicates the strength of population in Nigeria's fourth republic, the number of Nigerians who registered as voters and the total number of cast in each election circle from 1999 to 2023 including the percentage turn-out in each succeeding elections.

Year	Population	Voters Registration	Total Votes Cast	% of Voter Turn-out
1999	108,258,350	57,938,945	30,280,052	52%
2003	129,934,910	60,823,022	42,081,735	69%
2007	131,859,730	65,567,036	35,397,627	58%
2011	155,215,570	73,528,040	39,469,484	54%
2015	181,562,052	67,422,005	29,432,083	44%
2019	200,963,599	84,004,084	28,614,190	35%
2023	220,972,085	93,047,000	24,900,000	28.63%

Source: Adapted from Fagunwa (2015:8); Moliki & Dauda (2014:14) and supported by INEC election Result Gazette, 2023.

The National Bureau of Statistics' estimate of population of each state in Nigeria as at 2022, along with INEC's account on voter registration and participation by each state, clearly establish the percentage of voter turnout in 2023 presidential election as the table below illustrates.

Table 2 below encapsulates the population strength of each state in Nigeria and the number of registered voters for the 2023 election and the percentage of voter turn-out for each state.

State	Population	Number of registered voters	% of voter turnout
Abia	2,833,999	2,120,808	18%
Lagos	9,013,534	7,060,195	19%
Kano	9,401,288	5,921,370	29%
Kaduna	6,066,562	4, 335,208	32%
Adamawa	3,168,101	2,196,566	35%
Akwa-Ibom	3,920,208	2,357,418	25%
Anambra	4,182,032	2,656,437	35%
Bauchi	4,676,465	2,749,268	32%
Bayelsa	1,703,358	1,056,862	16%
Benue	4,219,244	2,777,727	29%
Bornu	4,151,193	2,513, 281%	20%
Cross River	2,888,966	1,766,466	24%
Delta	4,098,391	3,221,697	20%
Ebonyi	2,173,501	1,597,646	21%
Edo	3,218,332	2,501,081	24%
Ekiti	2,384,212	987,647	32%
Enugu	3,257,298	2,112,793	22%
FCT	1,405,201	1,570,307	30%
Gombe	2,353,879	1,575,794	34%
Imo	3,934,899	2,419,922	20%
Jigawa	4,348,649	2,351,298	41%
Katsina	5,792,578	3,516,719	31%
Kebbi	3,238,628	2,032,041	29%
Kogi	3,278,487	1,932,654	25%
Kwara	2,371,089	1,695,927	29%
Nasarawa	1,863,275	1,899,244	29%
Niger	3,950,249	2,698,344	30%
Ogun	3,728,098	2,688,305	23%
Ondo	3,441,024	1,991,344	28%
Osun	3,423,535	1,954,800	39%
Oyo	5,591,589	3,276,675	26%
Plateau	3,178,712	2,789,528	40%
Rivers	5,185,400	3,537,190	16%
Sokoto	3,696,999	2,172,056	28%
Taraba	2,300,736	2,022,374	26%
Yobe	2,321,591	1,485,146	27%
Zamfara	3,259,846	1,926,870	27%

Source: (www.inecng.org), & Population Estimates adapted from National Bureau of Statistics.

The table 2, above is the breakdown of voter participation in the 2023 presidential elections at the state level and it represents the abysmal performance by the voting population and eligible voters in the 36 states and Federal Capital territory (FCT) of Nigeria. From the statistics above, less than half of the electorate turned out to vote in the 2023 presidential elections and, only Jigawa state had 41% of eligible voters exercise their franchise. Plateau state followed with 40%, while Osun came third with 39% votes.

Rivers state, based on population strength came out worse by maintaining the same status with Bayelsa state with less than 2 million populations.

The question has often been asked, and many scholars have tried to interrogate voter apathy and undertake to investigate its causative factors. Babatunde, & Mujidat, (2020), investigates this, and established that the answer from respondents from their empirical survey, ranges from bad governance to unfulfilled political promises, thuggery and political intimidation, rigging of elections, unfair government policies and marginalization, victimization of political opponents, lack of accountability, delay and denial of justice, unfair distribution of resources, corruption, insincerity of the electoral commission, influence of religious sentiments in the electoral process among others. While the above factors collectively play a decisive role in promoting voter apathy however in relative degrees, the common denominators that justify voter apathy in all the sub-national governments in Nigeria are bad governance, lack of voter education, corruption, the lopsided implementation of government projects, thuggery and political intimidation etc. The reality of this elicits the call for a new approach for the attainment of democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

Democratic Consolidation: Imperatives of new approach

Democratic consolidation and its sustained momentum is possible where a concerted effort and energy is deployed towards nation building, and the structures that promote legitimacy through voter education, the diffusing of democratic values through the elimination of authoritarian tendencies and entronement of rule of law, the institutionalization internal party democracy in choosing party flagbearers, entronement of party discipline within the ranks of political parties, and the inclusive participation of all members within the framework of a strong party ideology. This study discusses the imperatives of a new approach in the perspectives below.

Activating the media for extensive voter education: It is imperative to advocate that in addressing the menace of voter apathy in Nigeria's electoral process, the media should be activated to play a more pivotal role in changing present narrative about voter apathy through extensive voter education by creating greater awareness on the need for eligible voters to perform their civic duty of voting, beyond registering as an obligation to the state. This is a panacea for the sustenance of democracy, democratic consolidation, as well as secure legitimacy of the political system (Jay, 2005). The media in this perspective encompasses all the medium of transmitting information through devices and systems that constitute mass communication like newspapers, magazines, radio, television channels, and the internet. Advocating for greater role for the media stems from the power of influence and popularity the media has through wider coverage. This will positively enhance electioneering activities and guarantee an all-inclusive coverage that takes into account the interest of people living in remote areas like nomadic and peasant farmers. Thus, while urban dwellers are kept abreast of electioneering activities, those in remotes areas can as well access information on electoral matters via their transistor radios.

Activating good governance: There are 8 indices and indicators of good governance under leadership theory as advocated by United Nations Economic and Commission. This centres on the participation of all, a sound orientation towards consensus building, accountability, transparency, responsiveness and responsibility of government, effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery, an equitable and inclusive approach to policy formulation and project implementation, and the adoption of a decision-making framework that aligns with the principles of the rule of law (www.unescap.org). As a template for good governance, the rule of law frowns at, and maintains a hostile disposition to corruption, as well as guarantees that the views and interest of minorities are taken into account.

This blueprint of democracy called the rule of law, ensures that the voice of the vulnerable in the society are accommodated in decision making, while ensuring their uninhibited participation in the leadership recruitment process. It is within the threshold of non-adherence to the dictates of the rule of law that voter apathy has been identified because this criterion for good governance has been relegated

to the background in this perspective in our country. The lack of good governance is a repellant to enthronement of democratic principles. It is equally repulsive and offensive to the sensibility and collective wellbeing of many eligible voters in our country.

This study affirms that any political system that ignores, and sponsors wittingly or unwittingly, the non-participation of the greater majority in the electoral process is taken to be irresponsible to the present and future needs of all in the society and does not deserve the support of the people at any level, since such government exist without consideration for the welfare of the people. Thus, when these indicators of good governance are imbibed into Nigeria's governance framework, it will automatically draw on the cooperation of all and sundry to participate in the electoral process as the political system and its institutions will commit to serving the interest of all in the country.

Activating Accountable Leadership: As a corollary to good governance, the democratic theory demands accountability of the political leadership in the management of state affairs. Accountability is a major requirement for an all-inclusive and purposeful leadership. This requires that government institutions and the human elements that drive these institutions conduct their activities in a professional and responsible manner, with uttermost trust and impeccable transparency. This is key to enjoying public support and requires that public trust is consistently not betrayed or squandered on the altar primordial sentiments in the conduct of governmental affairs. Therefore, to consolidate democracy in Nigeria, the unbridled participation remains a sine qua non, and requires that the people must have implicit trust in their representatives to always do what is in their collective interest. Reciprocally, this will draw on their enthusiasm and cooperative engagement in the electoral process.

De-activating Corruption: The unwholesome and consistent perpetuation of corrupt practices is serious liability and albatross to the democratic project in Nigeria. This attitudinal and behavioural deficit thrives at the private and public realms in our society. Corruption stands as any behaviour that deviates from the demands of formal duties and public responsibility in exchange for private gain (Dike, 2003). Corruption is a perversion of the principles of descent conduct in the public affairs; a disruptive attitudinal behaviour that undermines the dictates of the law for self-gratification. Dike's (2003) verdict on corruption is that the corruption that takes place at the highest level of political authority, is the political corruption of greed.

Most eligible voters are not only averse to this but suffers from the burden and pain of poor representation, any time the media reports that money earmarked for social infrastructures has been diverted by their accredited representatives for personal gratification. But, rather than punishing such persons, interminable committees are set up and when anti-graft agencies like EFCC and the courts eventually convicts such individuals, they are granted executive pardon a few years after, to score political goals on the altar of partisan politics.

This is why the claim by political actors to be fighting corruption has failed to register the desired impact as most of them become enmeshed in this disruptive and retrogressive behaviour to national development. Most of them become involved with inflation of contract sum, transfer of public funds to their political associates and relatives, dubious award of contracts, shady procurement process among others. This recurrent attitude is a huge disincentive to the average voter who helplessly observe these unwholesome practices, and resort to personal withdrawal syndrome as a show of lack of respect for the political system and its democratic institutions. Despite all the legislative enactments and decrees promulgated under military rule, corruption persists as a monster that now requires a more drastic approach, which should be the summary execution of any individual confirmed by law to be guilty of corruption.

Conclusion

It is sufficient to state that without significant voter turnout, an election whose outcome accurately reflects the preference of the majority is impossible. Thus, any election that is substantively and

procedurally free and fair, to the extent that the greater majority are involved in the process, gives credibility and legitimacy to the democratic project. There are many good political reasons for the Nigerian state to be concerned more than ever with the quality of our democracy. There appears to be a historical premise for exclusion in Nigeria's democratic trajectory with the policy of elective principle, but it has to change because elections are the platform for aggregating the people's preferences, and where this is characterized by low voter turnout, democracy becomes the government of the minority by the exclusion of the majority. Again, any political system that tolerates and allows the exclusion of a more than disproportionate segment of the population in the electoral process, will suffer democratic stagnation. Nigeria as a democratic state with an estimated population of more than 200 million people yet records less than 50% of this number in active citizen participation during elections evokes the crisis of regime legitimacy for any government that emerge through this shadow democratic process. The idea that the whole is better than the isolation of the part, should be the basis for rejigging the electoral process in Nigeria, if democratic consolidation is to be achieved. Below are the recommendations offered in this study as panacea for better management of elections that will ameliorate the challenge of voter apathy in Nigeria.

Recommendation

The tedious nature of voter registration process is seen as the harbinger to voter apathy in the main election. This study recommends a less tedious, less energy-sapping and time-consuming process of voter registration exercise through the deployment of appropriate technology.

Another observed area of concern in the electoral process is late arrival of voting materials to the polling booth and polling stations. An example is Polling Unit 060 Church Road Ungwa- Barde, Sabo-Tasha in Chikun Local government area of Kaduna State. This study recommends that INEC should prioritize early and hitch-free transportation of voting materials and election officials to each polling station. This will not only facilitate the entire process but also act as encouragement to eligible voters who place premium on time.

Furthermore, the electoral umpire should be readier than ever, to sanction any political party contravenes the terms of the electoral act and insist that the rules governing electoral campaigns must be adhered to by political parties. Such sanctions like automatic disqualification and fines should be enforced on transgressors. They should insist that party campaigns are issue-based and not on frivolities that provoke ill-feelings among contestants and their supporters. As specified in the electoral act, party campaigns should be devoid of hate speech, but based on rich ideological contents so as to woo prospective enlightened and objective voters and discourage voter apathy.

The security agents responsible for monitoring election activities should be bye-partisan and politically neutral. They should live-up to their responsibility of protecting the lives of the people, as well as ensure the safety of election materials against acts of ballot box snatching and burning of election materials.

This study further recommends that an election campaign offense court/tribunal be set up to specifically preside over election campaign violation matters. Relevant laws should be put in place to give legitimacy to this court in apprehending any political party that flaunts or violates the laws governing campaigns.

Lastly, the National Orientation Agency (NOA) and civil society groups should be rejigged to be alive to the duty of sensitization, and public awareness on the virtues of political participation beyond registration as card-carrying citizens.

References

- Babatunde, A. A. and Mujidat, Salawudeen (2020) 'Voting Apathy: Causes and Remedies from the Electorates Perspectives'. *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies*. Vol.XX111 (1). April, 2020. Pp7-8
- Crystal, J. (1991) *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

- Dike, V.E. (2003) *Nigeria and the Politics of Unreason: A study of the Obasanjo Regime*. London. Adonis and Abbey Publishers Ltd.
- Easton, D. (1953) *The Political System: An Inquiry into the state of Political Science*. New York. Wiley press.
- Fagunwa, T.C. (2015) *Voter Apathy and Nigeria's Electioneering Process: A Synopsis on the 2015 General Elections*. Paper presented at a two-day National Conference on the 2015 General Elections in Nigeria. The Real Issues. The Electoral Institute, INEC. June 17- 18, 2015.
- Huntington, S.P. (1996) "Democracy for the Long Haul," *Journal of Democracy*. 7 (2) pp3-13.
- Jay, L. (2015) 'Ahead of Polls: few Nigerians trust in elections'. Gallup, World Polling.
- Moliki, A.O & Dauda, K.O. (2014) *Political Apathy, Election Process and Nigeria's Democracy: A study of the 2014 Ekiti Governorship Election TASUED: Journal of Applied Education and Vocational Research*. 12 (1).
- O'Donnell, G. (1992) "Transitions, Continuities, and Paradoxes," *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*: (eds) Scott Mainwaring, et al (1995) *The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective*. Notre Dame. University of Notre Dame Press. Pp17-56.
- Premium Times (2023) 'Data: What the voting pattern in 2023 presidential election is telling us'. April 11, 2023. Cited at www.premiumtimesng.com/articles.
- Schmitter, P.C. (1993) "Some Propositions about Civil Society and the Consolidation of Democracy," Vienna. Institute for Advanced Studies. Political Science Series. 10.
- Sylvia, U.A., Okeke, V.O., Idike, A.N. (2013) *Voter Apathy and Revival of genuine Political Participation in Nigeria*. Mediterranean Journal of Social Science. Italy. Vol.4 (3).
- www.inecnigeria.org Accessed June, 13 2023.
- www.nbsnigeria.org. Accessed June 13, 2023.
- <https://www.unescap.org/pdd>> Accessed June 14, 2023.