

POLITICAL PARTY POLITICS AND ELECTIONEERING CAMPAIGN IN NIGERIA: AN EVALUATION OF THE 2023 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN EDO STATE.

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ABSTRACT

All over the world, electioneering campaign activities play significant role in the creation of the much needed atmosphere through which the electorates partake in the political processes. It also link electorates with the government procedures and processes, as well as aggregate diverse political interest. This paper examined the impact of political party politics on electioneering campaign in Nigeria with a view to ascertain the extent political party politics influenced the 2023 presidential election results in Edo state and to examine the various specific purposes for expressing political speeches, party slogans and campaign expressions . To en-focus this study hypotheses were formulated, questionnaire and survey methodology were utilized to elicit data from randomly sampled respondents from the three Senatorial Districts in Edo state The data collected were analyzed and interpreted using the Pearson's Product Movement Correlation Coefficient (r).It was found out among other things that there is a positive correlation with political party politics and electioneering campaign. Another finding was that the election result was influenced by party politics activities. It is therefore of the recommendation that political party aspirants and party members should endeavor to exhibit a high degree of patriotism, truthfulness and considerable level of sincerity when informing and educating the general public. Rather than mislead them with enticing words. Also Political candidates and political party members should learn to adapt to the simple expression of communicating their political agendas in a more acceptable language. Finally the government should further strengthen the legal pathways of the Electoral Acts, which regulates the affairs of political party campaign activities. The implication of this is that it will create for a healthy campaign and political arena for good governance.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In every democratic system of governance, according to (Albert, 2011) the main objective for the existence of any political party is to struggle and compete for political power. For this to be achieved a political party must be able to publicize their ideologies, principles, idea, missions and visions, as well as creating the policy framework to achieve their goals and objectives. The ability to realize this is dependent upon its capabilities to sale out and be able to convince the electorates on how best in achieving its goals. This is made possible during the electioneering campaign (Albert, 2011). Electioneering campaign has become the major instrument of communication for both the electorates and the political aspirants evidently, in the developing and advance democracies of the world.

Electioneering campaign activities play important role in creation of the much-needed atmosphere through which the electorates partake in the political processes. They can as well play vital role in the aggregation of diverse political interest.

In the developed societies campaign activities are essentially determined by the party's manifestos which will further manifest into policies formulation and implementation. Unlike in the developing democracies where campaign activities become clear manifestation of disarticulation of campaign speeches often times a mere hallow speeches of hate and antagonism. In most cases, ignoring issues fundamental to the promotion of sustainable economic, political and social development. They find it easy to manipulate religion, sectionalism, ethnic and other primordial

sentiments as a take for sale point to the electorates (Albert, 2011) further explained.

In Nigeria, Electioneering activities are vital to political parties and for the entrenchment of democratic governance. These vital roles are further strengthening by the Nigeria Electoral Acts of 2010 and 2022, mandated to regulate the affairs of political party campaign activities devoid of electoral violence and electoral malpractices. Section Sections 95, 96, 99, 100 - 102 of the 2010 Electoral Law provides for decent electoral campaign devoid of bad language Oni (2017). No usage of language by politicians is neutral he asserted further that "It is of interest to note that language choices by politicians, no matter how innocuous the context may appear, tend to be politically clouded. The interesting thing is that even those making use of such language may consider what they are doing as being within reason".

The United Human Rights Council (2019) had severally discussed the power of political language during campaign and debates/interview, the way it results in particular social cognition. Daniel (2018) opined that the social cognition can be so insidious that it could make people act in particular ways as designed by the power holders in the society. The way and manner political influencers use language to dominate the thinking of the people and make them do what they want them (the populace) to do.

According to (Omodia, 2018), "the use of political debates/interview during campaigns has become increasingly popular and is very important to the electoral process and voting behavior because it bridges the communication gap between political parties, political candidates and electorates. Hence, the study tends to fill the gap in literature by examine the impact of party politics on political campaigns in Nigeria, with specific emphasis on the 2023 presidential election in Edo state".

The number of political parties and their spread seems to give the impression that representation has become an important requirement for the existence of political parties (Omodia, 2018). For example, one of the requirements stipulated for the registration of political parties in the political transition dispensation that characterized the Nigerian Fourth Republic was that aspiring political associations or political groupings are needed to garner at least ten percent of the votes in twenty four out of the thirty six states to qualify for permanent registration (Aina, 2015). In the assertion by (Feyipitan, 2015), "the ultimate goal of almost every political party campaign is to win election and to offer promises to the people in order to secure votes in return". Some of the major forms of political campaigns are political rallies, political debates, political interviews and political advertisements etc (Opeibi, 2019).

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The advancement in Internet accessibility like the Social media networks, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have enabled candidates aspiring for particular posts to use their Facebook pages and Twitter accounts for campaigns among others are commonly used by political parties during electioneering campaigns in canvassing for votes to win elections and in educating the voters to vote wisely.

Also, the use of appropriate language calls for the proper identification of the kinds of electorates targeted for mobilization during or after a political campaign according to a report by the EU on the campaigns preceding the Fourth Republic (2007).

It is imperative to note also according to (Oyeleye, 2014), that "there are specific purposes for expressing political speeches, party slogans and campaign expressions. This action may be to inform the electorates about the intention of a political aspirant and/or express the manifesto of a political party. It may also be intended to persuade or convince the consciences of the electorates to vote in favor of a candidate or a political party.

Every electorate has expectations which may be clearly expressed or otherwise but such expectations are usually measured against certain symbols particularly, language expressions, which may present different meanings in the context of political campaigns and electioneering campaign". (Oyeleye, 2014), went further to notes in his article, that "The Power of words and the Techniques of Public Communication" that the situation, audience and purpose of communication integrate to determine the function and choice of language to use in exchange. Extent to which these could be actualized is dependent upon the usage of political slogan in their activities as well as hate speeches in campaigns become vital to this study. Therefore the following research question becomes useful to this work;

To what extent party politics influenced electioneering campaign in Edo state?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

To examine to what extent party politics impacted electioneering campaign in the 2023 presidential election in Edo state.

To proffer solutions that will address the issue of party politics with its attendant effects on our electioneering campaign in Nigeria.

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

H0¹: There is no significant relationship between political party politics and electioneering campaign in the 2023 presidential election in Edo state.

Hr¹: There is a significant relationship between political party politics and electioneering campaign in the 2023 presidential election in Edo state.

2.1 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Political Party Politics and Electioneering Campaign in Nigeria: Patterns and Dynamics

Party politics are the various activities of political parties employed in a democratic environment to seek for the control of political offices through the stated norms of elections (Olaniyi 2017). To this end, he stated further that "party politics exist when elective principles are present in a state and by implication under a democratic regime which recognizes the legitimate choice of the citizens to select or elect those to represent them in governmental

offices. For example, in the pre-independent era in Nigeria, party politics was not in existence until 1922, when the Clifford constitution was introduced with its principles”.

In the words of (Okoye, 2020), party politics therefore are “activities of formal structure, institution or organization which compete through electoral process to control the personnel and policies of government, and with the aim of allocating the scarce resources in a state through an institutionalized means or procedure. Hence, the primary objective of party politics is directed toward a single goal of wrestling for government or political power”.

However, despite the fact that party politics serve some other numerous purposes, outside the primary objectives, such as integrative mechanism, feedback mechanism, aggregative machinery or tool, regulatory and promotional roles, its roles are punctured and truncated by various negative activities such as polarizing and widening gap between and/or among ethnic groups, unhealthy rivalry, marginalizing tool, exploitative mechanism and expropriatory role, apart from undemocratic rule (Azeeze, 2012).

Party politics is the politics engaged in by, expressed through the channel of and or considered from the ideal of political parties as opposed to national interest (Nwankwo, 2021). More so, party politics are activities of formal structure, institution and organization which competes through electoral mechanism to influence people policies and programmes as well as allocation of public wealth through a stipulated and articulated procedure (Okoye, 2021). Though, party politics is ordinarily directed towards ensuring Checks and balances in governance, strengthening the democratic institution and serve as feedback mechanism, however, its activities have been extremely abused through political rivalry, ethno-religious sentiment and making it undemocratic (Philip, et al, 2014).

The reality is and can be much different, because of the constricting effect on the choice of the electorate of (i) contradictions such as oligarchic and undemocratic tendencies in political party organization; and (ii) market imperfections and structural distortions in the economic organization of the liberal democratic state (Adeyi, 2011).

Campaign is the principal institution that links politicians and the electorate and at the same time provides a critical link between citizens and government. This assertion is justified in the words of William Riller (Geer, 1998): Campaigns are a distinguishing feature worldwide, of modern representative democracies. But never the less, there are some other factors that need to be addressed and tackled because they remain a clog in the progress of Nigerian politics and constitute a threat to electioneering.

There are five methods of electioneering campaigns that are used by political parties according to (Ojo, 2010), they include: national tours, state tours, local rallies, house to house canvassing and advertisements in the media. Firstly, national tours are usually led by the party's chairman or presidential candidate. Apart from explaining the programme of the party, national tours are opportunities for showing the electorate the national officers of the party. State tours serve a similar purpose. Thirdly, rallies are organized in the various districts by local party organs after official

permit has been obtained from the Divisional Police Officer. Fourthly, house to house canvassing is done by female party cadres who go into homes to explain party manifestoes to female voters in Moslem dominated electoral districts and, fifthly, the mass media are the popular form of campaigns. Advertisements are placed in the major newspapers.

Similarly, advertisements are placed in many weekly magazines. Television and radio advertisements are also extensively used. The advancement in technology as a result of the growth of Internet accessibility like the Social media networks—Facebook, Instagram and Twitter—enable candidates aspiring for particular posts to use their Facebook pages and Twitter accounts for campaigns. Moreover, political parties during electioneering campaigns play important roles in canvassing for votes to win elections and in educating the voters to vote wisely. The nexus of political parties and electioneering campaigns is very crucial due to the fact that their indispensability remain a known fact for thought. In the light of the above, political system which does not select its leaders under the banner of political parties and carries out healthy campaigns for their success at polls can hardly be considered as a democratic government.

Patterns and Dynamics of political parties' activities and Practices in Nigeria between 1999 and 2023.

According to (Adele, 2011), in his words, “many political parties are central to the prospects of future electoral and political violence. At present there appear to be greater risks of intra party conflict than inter party tensions that characterized the 2015 elections. Political party primary and nomination processes are subjected to internal crises and violence. Violence has become common feature during and after election (for example, in Ekiti State, during the gubernatorial primaries held in June 2018). Many respondents were concerned about party's sustainability in terms of structure and crises control, particularly the ruling APC, as evidently shown in the public domain especially in their ability to effectively resolve internal rivalries and crises which, potentially could subject the parties open to fragmentation. There are no major conflict resolution mechanisms amongst political parties in Nigeria. Despite the different Reconciliatory committees that are in existence, but they are hardly able to reconcile aggrieved members.” Other views have pointed to a limited culture of internal party democracy as being a destabilizing factor, exacerbated by the rematch of old allies and adversaries across the country (Adele, 2011).

He went further to explained of the opinion that the “Independent Electoral Commission INEC as the political umpire has the responsibility to monitor party primaries and could impose sanctions on parties that violate regulations; in practice INEC is sensitive to involvement in internal party processes, which often lack transparency. This means that many disputes may end up as protracted legal battles. Since the primary responsibility of INEC is to organize the election, its role as a political party regulator may be an undue burden. The Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC), supported by INEC, is the standing mechanism to resolve interparty disputes and to implement the political parties' code of conduct”.

The controversial and sudden death of General Sanni Abacha (the then head of state) according to (Bello, 2008), signaled the commencement of the fourth republic. Upon his sudden death, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, as it was alleged, who was to have been retired by General Abacha, along with other senior military officers on June 8, 1998 (Bello, 2008), emerged as the new Head of State on June 9, 1998. He was essentially preoccupied with organizing another transition to civil rule while attempting to re-enact a collaborative foreign policy with countries that had regarded Nigeria as a pariah state (Fawole, 1999 and Adebajo, 2006).

In line with the above, (Simbine, 2013), stated as saying that; stating the premises upon which he arrived at a conclusion for dissolving all the five political parties, former Head of state, General Abdulsalami Abubakar stated that, “in particular, democratization was marred by maneuvering and manipulation of political institutions, structures and actors. In the end, we have only succeeded in creating a defective foundation on which a solid democratic structure can neither be constructed nor sustained (Gen. Abubakar, 1998)”. Thus, he doubted that the parties could be the strong pillars and instruments through which democracy can be cultivated and entrenched, maintaining that these qualities were certainly lacking in the Nigerian political space (Simbine, 2013). Abdulsalami’s transition programme essentially threw up three major political parties: Alliance for Democracy (AD), All Peoples Party (APP) and the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) (Momoh 2013).

In the march towards the Fourth republic, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as quoted initially granted provisional registration to nine (9) political parties in 1998 (Simbine, 2013), “the 1999 elections ushered in the Fourth Republic. Three political parties contested the elections. These were the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), the All Peoples Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD)”. The political parties that had sought to engage the emerging democratic order were 24 (Abutudu 2014), however, only three were registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission to assume the status of political parties. This was with the condition that after the local government elections of that year, those that had 10% votes and above in at least 24 states of the Federation would qualify to contest the subsequent State and Federal elections (Simbine, 2013).

In the words of (Agbaje, et al 2007) as quoted “ this was after supposedly surmounting the constitutional huddles of showing that they were not sectional, ethnic, or religious party and that their membership and support bases were sufficiently reflective of the diversity of the country. The empirical test of this national spread requirement was the nationwide local council elections conducted in 1998. Actually, the AD did not exactly pass the test but was nevertheless registered. The government felt this was the only way that the South West which had sustained the pro-democracy agitation since 1993, would participate in the transition programme, thereby lending it credibility” (Agbaje, et al 2007).

A major feature of the Fourth Republic according to (TMG, 2003), “is the proliferation of political parties, that primarily do not seek to contest elections, but which are in more ways limited and self-serving in roles and interests. Though the number of political parties

was 30 in 2002, 33 in early 2006 and 50 in 2007, only 16 fielded candidates in the 2003 General Elections while only 26 contested the 2007 General Elections. Even the parties that contested the elections were merely “temporal machines for electoral contests” (TMG, 2003).

Thus, the major parties; Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Alliance for Democracy (AD), Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), and All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) have been plagued by deep internal crises, disorder, recurring tensions and turmoil manifested in factional fighting, expulsions and counter-expulsions, multiple executives and dual offices. There is a high level of money politics, political vagrancy, indiscipline and in-cohesion (Omotola 2009). Some months into the Fourth republic, according to (Simbine, 2013), with Obasanjo as President, politicians began to clamour for the registration of more parties. The federal government initially refused to register more political parties, a development that forced the unregistered associations to seek redress in court (Simbine, 2013).

As of April 2013, only 25 political parties are recognized by the election management body (Simbine, 2013). With the registration of the new political parties; All Progressives’ Congress (APC) which is a product of a Merger from the three main opposition parties: Action Congress of Nigeria, All Nigerian people’s party, Congress for progressive Change and factions of two other parties) People’s Democratic Movement (PDM), Independent Democrat (ID) the number of the political parties still stand at 25 (Aduku and Umoru, 2014). However, the Fourth Republic has been characterized by numerous internal crises, godfather politics and fractionalization within political parties (Momoh, 2013).

At the 1999 Presidential election, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo of PDP had contested against a coalition of two other parties (APP and AD) which had brought forward Chief Olu Falae as presidential candidate (Momoh, 2013) as quoted in his words, “the election was however not free and fair while traces of ethnic politics still manifested in the creation of political parties as AD had its main followership in the south west. But while the 1999 elections were not free nor fair, the 2003 General Elections were characterized by fraud, miscounting, rigging, and malfeasance”. In addition, the election was not issue-oriented, the political parties lacked well-thought out programmes and manifestos, the executive lord over the other two arms through actual disrespect of ruling or threat of impeachment and blackmail, (Momoh, 2006).

According to (Ibeanu, 2009), the 2007 General elections could best be described as electoral Tsunami or what have been euphemistically referred to as Direct Capture (DC), within the overall strategic framework of Primitive Accumulation of Votes (PAV). In early stages of PAV political parties rigged elections and although the state was generally not neutral, its institutions were used for the purpose of achieving PAV “In other words, state institutions were first captured by private interests, particularly political parties, and then deployed for PAV”.

Political parties in Nigeria are not keen about deepening democracy; rather they are more preoccupied with the crude capture of power. They have abandoned their traditional role of membership

recruitment and mobilization, and political education (Momoh, 2013). With the emergence of godfathers, owners and joiners, political nomads and the use of uncivil means to win elections, Nigerian political parties have continued to contribute to de-democratization. The central challenge of party system dwells on party processes, inter-party relationship, violence, and other ecological factors (Momoh, 2013).

In contra- distinction, (Jinadu, 2013) rising to the defense of political parties in Nigeria especially in the fourth republic contend that:

“This is not to say that all has been bad or that all has not been well since May 1999. It is only to point to creeping and indeed deepening contradictions, which require urgent policy action. The action is urgent, if the considerable and obvious progress the country has made towards deepening democratic transition since 1999 in the following areas is not to turn into a fleeting mirage: (i) continuing commitment to federalism; (ii) the political succession, in line with constitutional fixed term limits and/or through democratic elections, at the federal and state level, even if still problematic and controversial in several respects; (iii) the ebb and flow in the watchdog role of the legislature and judiciary especially at the federal level, under the separation of powers; (iv) the apparent subordination of the military to civilian control; (v) the vibrancy of the Civil Society as democratic sentinel; and (vi) the limited, though not inconsequential, success of democracy-promoting institutions”. Such as, the Independent National Electoral Commission, the National Human Rights Commission and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Aduku and Umoru, 2014) further expressed.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Rational Choice theory was used. Its relevance was to direct the focus of this study in order to bridge the gap between party politics and electioneering campaign within the ambit of the stated objective. It is “a popular theory that is used to explain the actions of voters as well as politicians (Edwards III, (2002). Its basic assumption is that the individuals act in their own best interest, such an individual carefully weighs the costs and benefits of possible alternatives.” Hence, the theory is used to understand human behavior.

It therefore, has long been the dominant paradigm but most recently, since the behavioral revolution it has become more widely used in other related disciplines to explain social phenomena (Green, 2002).

The essentiality is centered on the fact that all action is fundamentally ‘rational’ in character and that every person decides on the likely costs and benefits of any action before deciding what to do, and its application to social interaction takes the form of the exchange theory. This is further expressed in the following words “political parties compete, at least in theory, as in a market place, a party is in the market for votes. Its products are its candidates and policies. In the context of our analysis, the Rational Choice Theory seeks to explain political processes and outcomes as consequences of purposive behavior”. Political actors are assumed to have goals they can pursue sensibly and efficiently (Downs, cited in Edwards, 2002) argues that voters want to maximize the chance that the

policies they favour will be adopted by government, and parties they want to vote into office. Thus, in order to win, the wise party selects policies that are widely favoured. Parties and candidates may do all things to win, but they will primarily use their accomplishments and policy position to attract votes (Ogu, 2013).

To win election, attention must be paid to those problems that affect the voters most in their campaigns. If voters are worried about insecurity issues, like in Nigeria at present, parties must put in their campaign agenda the insecurity issue and how to address it to get the support of the voters and win the election. Hence, this theory explains the reality of the electioneering campaigns pursued by the political parties and their aspirants.

The survey research design was used with a population study of 4,235,800 of voting age (18 years and above) respondents from the eighteen (18) local government areas of Edo state. The cluster sampling technique was applied in this study, because of the homogenous yet internally heterogeneous population. The entire population was first broken into Senatorial Districts from Senatorial Districts to Local Government Councils from where a sampling size of 1,200 respondents was selected.

Table 1.1: Population of the three senatorial districts, local Government councils and Questionnaire Quota.

		POPULATION	QUESTIONNAIRE QUOTA
1	EDO CENTRAL		
a	Esan Central	137,900	40
b	Esan North East	159,800	46
c	Esan South East	217,900	62
d	Esan West	167,300	47
e	Igueben	92,100	26
		775,000	221
2	EDO NORTH		
a	Akoko Edo	342,600	97
b	Etsako East	193,000	55
c	Etsako Central	123,400	35
d	Etsako West	260,700	74
e	Owan East	202,600	57
f	Owan West	129,800	37
		1,252,100	355
3	EDO SOUTH		
	Oredo	490,600	139
	Orhionmwon	241,000	68
	Ovia North East	203,500	57
	Ovia South West	180,900	51
	Egor	445,800	126
	Uhunmwode	159,500	45
	IkpobaOkha	487,400	138
		2,208,700	1,200

Source: The National Population Commission of Nigeria (2018) and the National Bureau of Statistics (2017).

Table 1.2: Senatorial District, Population, and Sample Allocation (questionnaires) to each of the Three Senatorial District of Edo State.

AREA	POPULATION	SAMPLE ALLOCATION
Edo Central	775,000	221
Edo North	1,252,100	355
Edo South	2,208,700	624
Total	4,235,800	1,200

Formulae (A) used in arriving at the Total Sample Allocation of questionnaires for each of the Senatorial Districts is,

$$\text{Total No. of LGA Population in a Senatorial District} \times \frac{\text{Total Sample Size}}{\text{Total No. of Population in the three Senatorial Districts}}$$

$$\text{Total No. of Population in the three Senatorial Districts} = 1$$

$$\text{For instance, } \frac{775,000}{4,235,800} \times 1,200 = 221 \text{ (Edo Central)}$$

$$\frac{1,252,100}{4,235,800} \times 1,200 = 355 \text{ (Edo North)}$$

Edo Central had a total number of 221 interview questions administered in the district, Edo North 355 were administered while 624 were also administered in the Edo South senatorial district. A total of 1,200 questionnaires were received and administered to respondents.

Formula (B) for arriving at the total number of 1200 respondents (sampling size) is by adding up of the total numbers of samples allocated to each of the senatorial districts.

Table1: Frequency distribution of responses to questionnaire item 1 that the choice of language during electioneering campaign impacted the 2023 presidential election in Edo state.

Question 1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	90	5.9	5.9	5.9
Disagree	50	15.1	15.1	21.0
Undecided	146	10.6	10.6	31.7
Valid Agree	424	40.4	40.4	72.0
Strongly Agree	490	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

5.9% strongly disagreed, 15.1% disagreed that the choice of language during electioneering campaign impacted the 2023 presidential election in Edo state.10.6%, undecided. 40.4% agreed, 28.0% strongly agreed that the choice of language during electioneering campaign impacted the 2023 presidential election in Edo state.

Table 2: Frequency distribution of responses to questionnaire item 2 that political debate and interview impacted the choice of elected candidate during the 2023 presidential election in Edo

Question 2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	80	10.4	10.4	10.4
Disagree	40	17.6	17.6	28.0
Undecided	158	17.6	17.6	45.6
Valid Agree	428	33.2	29.2	74.8
Strongly Agree	590	25.2	25.2	100.0
Total	1200	100.0	100.0	

Table. 3: Frequency distribution of responses to questionnaire item 3 that the different strategies adopted i.e. slogan / propaganda during the electioneering campaign impacted the 2023 presidential election in Edo state.

Question 3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	154	10.6	10.6	10.6
Disagree	120	19.4	19.4	30.0
Undecided	86	18.6	18.6	48.6
Valid Agree	34.2	34.2	82.8	82.8

Strongly Agree	488	488	17.2	100.0
Total	1200	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.shows the frequency distribution of the different strategies adopted e.g. political slogan during the electioneering campaign impacted the 2023 presidential election in Edo state. 10.6% of 154 of respondents strongly disagreed 19.4% of 120 of respondents disagreed that the different strategies adopted e.g. political slogans and propaganda during the electioneering campaign impacted the 2023 presidential election.18.6% were' undecided. 34.2 % and 17.2% strongly agreed that the different strategies adopted during the electioneering campaign impacted the election.

Testing of Hypothesis

In testing the relationship between party politics and electioneering campaign question one was utilized.

Question One

That choice of language impacted the 2023 presidential election in Edo state.

Statement of Hypothesis

H01: There is no relationship between political party politics and electioneering campaign.

H-R1: There is a relationship between political party politics and electioneering campaign.

Table 4: Regression analysis between political party politics and electioneering campaign.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig.
1	.848a	.719	.718	.000b

Regression is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 4. showed that there was a positive relationship (Pearson $R = 0.848$) between the party politics and electioneering campaign, where p -value (Sig. = 0.000) is less than 0.01, this means that the research hypothesis is been accepted which stated that there is a relationship between the between party politics and electioneering campaign and the null hypothesis is rejected which stated that there is no relationship between party politics and electioneering campaign. Therefore there is a clear evidence to reject the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant and positive relationship between political party politics and electioneering campaign leading to the overwhelming victory in the 2023 presidential election in Edo state by the Labour Party (LP) having the majority votes against the other political parties of the people's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Peoples Congress (APC) among others.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Pearson's r of $= 0.848$ at $\alpha 0.01$ showed a high positive relationship between party politics and electioneering, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis which stated that there is no relationship between the party politics and electioneering campaign. The findings concerning party politics and electioneering campaign vis a vis impacting the election a causative factor in impacting the 2023 presidential election has a direct replica in (Feyipitan, 2015), "the ultimate goal of almost every electioneering campaign is to win election and to offer promises to the people in order to secure votes in return".

This is further accentuated in the Assessment of the Role of Citizens Participation in the Electoral Process in Nigeria: A Study of the 2016 Governorship Election in Edo state which had posited that the political stability and development of any political system is a function of the awareness and positive involvement of the citizens in civic and political matters (Mustapha and Ebomoyi 2017).

Also added to the above facts (Olaniyi 2017) is of the view that Party politics are activities of political parties in a democratic environment to seek for the control of political offices through stated norms of elections. Such norms of good conduct by the political aspirants / electorate was completely ignored neither was Sections 95, 96, 99, 100 - 102 of the 2010 Electoral Law which provided for decent electoral campaign devoid of bad language Oni (2017) was evidently absent in the 2023 president election.

As they were more concerned with the desperation of winning the election, this fact is further given credence to by what the concept of what political party is, as organizations' whose members have values, ideals and aspirations in common and at Least participates in the organized contest/struggles for political power. Coleman & Roseberg (cited in Smith 1996). This is further supported by the theory adopted in this work the Choice Theory, the Rational Action Theory or the Theory of Reasoned Action. It is "a popular theory that is used to explain the actions of voters as well as politicians Edwards III (2002).

CONCLUSION

Electioneering campaigns are important attributes for democracy. In Nigeria, the context of politics and electoral competition for power have necessitated all kinds of undemocratic, extra-legal and unbecoming abuses of the legal framework governing political party activities. One of the difficult circumstances created by the pattern of political party politics in Nigeria is the betrayal of the very basis of the campaign as a process of interest articulation and aggregation (Gambo and Ribadu 2017)

It can justly be concluded from the research so far that political party politics pre-dominates as well as determine the electioneering campaign arena in Edo State politic. And the activity of the politicians cannot be over emphasized in this regard. This role is further worsened by the choice of language used by Politician's that are clouded in the political expediency of ethnicity, religion and sectional appeals. Baseless campaign promises made by them not only create fear and apprehension about the future of democracy in the country.

But also expressing the difficult circumstances in which the democratic process is conditioned as expressly manifested in political debates/interview that proved as a major causative factors that have impacted the 2023 presidentially election in Edo State. Political education is therefore highly required to empower and to educate the uninformed electorates on how to determine who to vote, campaign for and why. Not until this is done with other issues mentioned in the discussion of electioneering campaign are addressed and translated into policy action by relevant agencies or authorities ethnic politics, vote buying and personality attacks will continue to dominate electioneering environment in Nigeria.

It is however, good to be said that voters were able to vote their conscience {rather than engaging in vote selling that has pre-dominated elections in the past} irrespective of the content and manner or pattern of campaigns. But the sustainability of this paradigm shift will be determined by the upcoming and subsequent elections in the state.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were reached:

1. Political candidates as well as party members should be more concerned with the business of persuading electorates for their votes rather than mislead them with enticing words or making hate speeches capable of disrupting the electoral process and causing disenchantment among the electorates.
2. Political aspirants should communicate their political agenda without the use of force, destructive tendencies and unhealthy rivalries between party members and the electorates.
3. There is the need also for inter-party dialogue that can create for routines confidence among party members and party members and electorates.

4. The government on the other hand, should further strengthen the legal pathways in the Electoral Acts that regulates the affairs of political party campaign activities. The implication of this is that it will create for a healthy campaign and political arena for good governance.

5. They need to be re-engineered and re- focused from their mere role of being mainly institutions for the acquisition of political power through elections.

Finally, electorates should endeavor to exercise their political rights without fear or favor. As this in the long will help to develop and build upon their confidences and truth in the electoral processes.

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