

# **VOTER APATHY AND THE 2011 ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA:**

## **A RESEARCH REPORT**

COMMISSIONED BY

THE INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (INEC)

AND

THE FRIEDRICH-EBERT-STIFTUNG (FES)

ABUJA, NIGERIA JULY 2011

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## **Foreword**

Voter apathy negatively impacts upon the electoral process and its outcome. Any serious effort at electoral reforms to bring about free, fair and credible elections must take into account the challenges of voter apathy. Thus, as INEC prepared for the April 2011 elections, it became imperative to do a study on the nature, causes, dimensions and consequences of voter apathy, with a view to being adequately informed in designing future strategies to tackle its challenges in the Nigerian context. In a country trying to deepen democracy after a long history of authoritarian military rule, strategies for mobilising people for popular participation and effective engagement in the electoral process have to be well conceptualised and carefully designed. In doing this, peoples' perceptions and attitudes have to be studied, analysed, understood and taken into consideration.

This publication presents the result of the modest effort made by INEC to study and document peoples' attitudes and perceptions of voter apathy and its impact on the electoral process. We hope a range of stakeholders will find it useful, and that it can contribute to paving way for future, similar, perhaps more detailed and rigorous studies. We appreciate the contributions of the researchers, as well as a range of stakeholders and partners towards the success of this project, especially that of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

Attahiru M. Jega, OFR

Chairman, INEC

November, 2011

## Preface

„Without democrats, there can be no democracy“ – the words of Friedrich Ebert (1871-1925), Germany’s first democratically elected President, who experienced the turmoil of Germany’s Weimar Republic, also apply to elections: Without voters, or without a sufficient turnout, there can be no true elections that would reflect people’s preferences. Elections are nothing other than preferences aggregation. A low or lowest voter turnout would not be a true reflection of the people’s preferences, but only that of a minority. And one may ponder: should a minority be given the mandate to govern? The answer is clear but this can inadvertently happen if a majority displays nonchalant attitude. But a high voter turnout will not only make the result of an election more credible; it will also deter criminals from hijacking or sabotaging the electoral process, guarantee more impartiality and fairness, and increase the pressure on elected officials to live up to campaign promises.

After conducting the historic 2011 elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission has decided to cooperate with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, a private German non-profit organization committed to the values of Social Democracy, on combating voter’s apathy in the country, to increase voter turnout and strengthen the Nigerian democracy. This research is a first step in looking into the root causes of voter apathy in the country. Voter apathy is a problem well known to Europe and Nigeria, but with different root causes. Different instruments therefore apply in trying to solve this problem.

INEC and FES started to cooperate in 2010 with a workshop on security challenges of election management in Abuja that sparked an increased cooperation between the commission and the country’s security agencies. In 2011, the INEC Chairman Professor Attahiru Jega, OFR, led a delegation that visited Germany for political discussions, briefings and an exchange on election management.

Both bodies are glad to carry our cooperation one step further in actively pursuing this research agenda.

We would like to thank our lead researcher Professor Adigun Agbaje, who ably guided us through this project, all researchers who were involved in the field work and showed immense commitment while taking personal risks in a volatile environment. We also appreciate the staffs of INEC and FES who were supportive of this research initiative.

Abuja, October 2011

Professor ‘Lai Olurode  
National Commissioner  
Chairman of the Electoral Board  
Nigeria  
Independent National Electoral Commission

Thomas Mättig  
Resident Representative  
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is increasing global realization that credible elections constitute a major factor in democracy, democratization and good governance. Elections in democracies play the vital role of ensuring representation of popular will and, subsequently, help to secure the legitimacy of the political system. It is worrisome, therefore, that there is at the same time global evidence of political apathy, the lack of psychological involvement in public affairs, emotional detachment from civic obligations, and abstention from political activity.

Understandably, therefore, there is ongoing concern to understand the sources and character of political abstention. Voter apathy, a subset of political apathy, has thus emerged as a major problem in mature and emerging democracies, settled and volatile societies, large and thriving economies, as well as small and troubled ones, among youth, women and other marginalized groups as much as among mainstream dominant interests

Several factors that affect voter apathy have been highlighted in relevant literature. Some of these include broad psychological factors and collective memory of historical and contemporary events. Others are patterns of trust, feelings of efficacy, political engagement and disengagement at individual, group and regional levels. While there is empirical evidence that the global trend has been toward a decline in voter turnout, there is lack of grounded and sustained scholarly attention to voter apathy in the context of voter turnout in Nigeria despite the challenges plaguing that country's electoral system.



Therefore, this work seeks to fill this gap with a study of voter perception of voter apathy in the 2011 elections in Nigeria against a backdrop of global and historical experiences.

The objectives of the study are to:

- ▶ assess the causes, gravity of voter apathy in Nigeria;
- ▶ examine the geography of apathy among Nigerians of voting age;
- ▶ identify the social groups in which apathy is pronounced;
- ▶ provide useful data that could guide stakeholders interventions to ensure popular participation in the electoral process, and
- ▶ suggest policy recommendations to address the phenomenon.

## **METHODS**

The 2011 Voter Apathy Study, essentially designed to be exploratory given the paucity of empirically grounded works in the field in Nigeria, was carried out from March to April 2011 on a nationally representative sample of 1200 respondents. Nigerians of voting age were randomly selected and interviewed across the six geo-political zones to provide empirical information on the nature, causes and consequences of voter apathy. The primary sampling unit was the electoral ward. The respondents were selected using a multi-stage sampling design consisting of 12 states, 27 LGAs, 43 wards in rural areas and 60 wards in urban areas. The research instrument for the study was the interview schedule. The schedule was designed to reflect the political issues relating to nature, causes and consequences of voter apathy. Data in this study reflected voter intention from respondents in 12 states in the absence of data on voter registration, voting age population and actual voting.

## **FINDINGS**

### **General impression of election process and elected officials in Nigeria**

At least four out of five respondents affirmed that elections are important in Nigeria. With the exception of the North Central region, where 68% of the respondents indicated that elections are important, other regions recorded a relatively higher positive response. The reasons given for the importance of elections included that they provide opportunity to elect credible leaders and remove bad leaders; that election of good leaders would lead to better development, and ensure democracy stability. For those who did not think that elections are important, the apprehension that their votes may not count was the most cited reason. They identified failed promises, electoral corruption and violence as the reason for thinking less of elections.

### **Rating of elected officials**

About half of the respondents in this study were not satisfied with elected officials. However, there were regional variations to this perception. Although the percentage of those satisfied with elected officials was just 31% in the North East, this region had the highest percentage of satisfied people. Most of the respondents in the other five geopolitical regions, were either fairly satisfied or not satisfied with the elected officials

### **Voter apathy and voter turnout**

More registered voters in the North West indicated intention to vote during the elections than in the other regions. The highest and the lowest turnout intention

among the registered voters surveyed were from the northern part of the country. An aggregate of regions' values show that intending voter turnout percentages were 93% and 89% from northern and southern Nigeria respectively. Voter turnout indicated by the survey was higher among respondents aged 18-40 than others (though not significantly). Male voter intention showed more likelihood of voting than that of females. More respondents in rural areas also indicated intention to vote than those in urban areas.

### **Voting plan of respondents**

More Nigerians of voting age captured by the survey indicated plans to vote during Presidential and Gubernatorial elections than in the National Assembly (NASS) election. The intention to vote during the gubernatorial election was as expected; Governors are closer to voters than the President. However, preference to vote more during the Presidential election compared to National Assembly election can be explained by historical tendency of the Nigerian electorate to consider elections into executive positions in the federation to be more crucial than elections into legislative seats, among other factors.

### **Voter turnout and apathy: Past and present**

Majority of the respondents indicated they had participated in previous elections. Eight years into the Fourth Republic (1999-2007), voter turnout rate almost doubled the number recorded in 1999; it was 18% in 2003, 31% in 2007, with a projected 11% increment in the 2011 elections.

## Who is responsible for voter apathy in Nigeria?

Respondents identified politicians as being most responsible for voter apathy, with the politicians, Government and INEC ranking highest on their list of those considered responsible for voter apathy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Respondents identified voter mobilization as key to reducing voter apathy and ensuring credible, inclusive, transparent, free and fair elections. This, according to them, requires the cooperation of stakeholders, for whom the following recommendations were made:

### Recommendations to INEC:

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| * Conduct transparent/credible elections | * Educate voters                     |
| * Be truly independent                   | * Provide adequate voting materials  |
| * Recruit competent staff and Training   | * Improve voter registration process |

### Recommendation to government:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| * Provide support to INEC               | * Fulfill electoral promises              |
| * Conduct public enlightenment campaign | * Provide adequate security               |
| * Enforce law and order                 | * Do not interfere with electoral process |
| * Stop corruption                       |   |

### Recommendation to political parties:

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| * Fulfill electoral promises                       | * Stop violence/'do or die' politics |
| * Educate members/supporters                       | * Organize political rallies well    |
| * Respond to election results in line with process | * Avoid bribery and corruption       |
| * Provide responsible representation               | * Obey INEC rules and regulations    |

### Recommendation to the mass media:

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| * Assist in voter education                   | * Carry accurate/factual information |
| * Provide unbiased report/ equitable coverage | * Avoid bribery and corruption       |
| * Provide timely coverage of news and events  |                                      |

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Research Report draws from a research project on voter apathy in Nigeria commissioned in March 2011 by the country's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Nigeria office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES). The investigation was conceived by the two organizations to address growing concern in official quarters, political and civil society, academia, the general public as well as the international community among others, over the perceived lingering challenge of voter apathy as the April 2011 elections approached.

To be sure, as is highlighted below in this Report's literature review section, voter apathy as a subset of political behaviour is specifically addressed, identified and measured in the context of voter turnout, namely the incidence and quantum of the exercise of the franchise. Voter apathy describes that aspect of voter behaviour captured by non-voting in an election, and it must be emphasised at this stage that, in this report, no assumption have been made as to the locus of the factors for the non-voting, be it micro or macro, internal or external to the voter. It has emerged as a major problem in mature and emerging democracies, settled and volatile societies, large and thriving economies, as well as small and troubled ones, and among youth, women and other marginalized groups as much as among mainstream dominant interests (Esser and de Vreese 2007:1195-1213; International IDEA 1999; 2002). Again, to be sure, elements of impressions, comments, anecdotal evidence and fragmentary data abound on voter apathy in the specific Nigerian case, as noted below. On both counts, however, this study provides a more scientific, empirically grounded and updated picture of voter perception of voter apathy in Nigeria against a backdrop of global and historical experiences.

The need for this study is made even more urgent by the global realization of the vital role of credible elections as the bedrock of democracy, democratization and good governance. As noted by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance 1999; 2002), elections in democracies play the vital role of ensuring representation of popular will. They help to secure the legitimacy of the political system. In addition, they are vital to political socialization, the exercise of political influence, and serve as the foundation for democratic stability and renewal (Esser and de Vreese 2007:1195; Dulani 2005:3-12; Lindberg 2006:139-151; Lindberg 2006a; Diamond 2010:ix-xxviii). According to Dyck and Gimpel (2005:531):

Understanding the sources of political participation and, perhaps more importantly, the character of abstention, is an ongoing concern of political scientists, journalist, pundits, non-profit advocacy groups, and others bent on electoral reform. It is fair to say that political participation research remains one of the most widely studied topics... today.

## **Objectives**

Against the preceding background, this study set out to provide empirical information on the nature, causes and consequences of voter apathy in Nigeria. Specifically, the research sought to:

- Assess the causes and gravity of voter apathy in Nigeria;
- Examine the geography of apathy among Nigerians of voting age;
- Identify the social groups in which apathy is pronounced;
- Provide useful data that could guide stakeholders interventions to ensure popular participation in the electoral process, and
- Suggest policy recommendations to address the phenomenon

## **Research questions**

In essence, therefore, the study sought to provide answers to the following questions:

- What are the main reasons for voter apathy in Nigeria? Is it caused by conscious decision or by unfavorable circumstances?
- What are the consequences of voter apathy?
- What role does violence play in voter apathy?
- How does this problem project itself demographically?
- What are the gender and youth dimensions of voter apathy? Are the reasons for voter apathy different for these groups?
- How have government policies, politicians, INEC operations, media, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) influenced or contributed to voter apathy and attempts to address it?
- In what ways can voter apathy be positively addressed?

The rest of the Report contains a review of relevant literature, the methods adopted for the research, the study's findings, and recommendations on requirements for enhancing voter turnout in future elections.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section examines relevant literature on voter apathy for appropriate insights, beginning with insights from other experiences before zeroing in on the Nigerian experience. The takeoff point relates to the word “apathy,” at once denoting “an individual’s impassivity or indifference and a form of collective political behaviour” (Mason, Nelson and Szlarski (1991:205):

Political apathy is the lack of psychological involvement in public affairs, emotional detachment from civic obligations, and abstention from political activity. But it is not any one of these things alone, and these may be regarded as necessary, but not sufficient components of political apathy. Political apathy is evidenced in mass, collective behaviour but has its origin at the level of the individual psyche. In the aggregate, political apathy is revealed by attitudes and an absence of expected activity. When people cease to care about political life, withdraw from obligations to civil society, and perform entirely nominal or rote acts- or none at all- in political institutions or organizations, apathy is indicated.

### **Other Experiences**

It is obvious, therefore, that as a subset of political behaviour, voter apathy is multidimensional, operating as it does at the intersections of psychology, sociology, economy and geography, history and the contemporary, laws and structures, process and actors, memory, retention and perception, among others. Some of the interesting dimensions of the challenges of apprehending and comprehending voter apathy is reflected in a 2004 article (Thomas 2004:13). The article in the New Statesman, responding to British official concern over declining voter turnout, responded on a lighter note that nonetheless underscored the seriousness and apparent intractability of the issues at stake, stating that:

Claims that voter apathy “may open the door for extremists” [are] apparently unaware that the illegal invasion of a country, the introduction of internment without trial ..., is hardly the work of



moderates. Parliament is worried that its moral authority would be undermined, and if it had any I would agree. Polls are commissioned and think-tanks funded to investigate our apparent apathy. And the conclusions are ....we don't trust politicians. Well, sprinkle my latte with cinnamon! Not trusted you say? Money well spent for that insight, say I. That anyone in a coma for the past ten years could have told you that is irrelevant. "People are not interested in politics", cry the pundits. But what was the anti-war movement if not political? What the pundits mean is that "people are not interested in the politics we want them to be interested in". Namely, voting for a particular brand. The declining interests in party politics might be linked to the fact that on every major issue from the invasion of Iraq through genetically modified crops to the privatization of the Tube or safety on the railways, people's strongly held opinions have been ignored by government. A "Big Conversation"? We are merely waiting for them, [ruling elite] to say: "We've listened, now f..k off!"

As indicated above (International IDEA 2002;1999), the global trend has been toward a decline in voter turnout. Several factors have been highlighted in relevant literature, some of which include those of psychological involvement and collective memory of historical and contemporary events and issues, patterns of trust, feelings of efficacy, political engagement and disengagement of individual, geographic regions (Margurn 2003: 41-48; Mason, Nelson and Szklarski 1991: 205-233; Verba, Nie and Kim 1978:7; Thomas 2004) campaigns communications and the media (Panagopoulos 2009:70-76; Bergan, Gerber, Green and Panagopoulos 2005: 760-777; Gerber and Green 2000: 653-663; Gerber and Green 2005; 142-154; Levine and Lopez 2005: 180-191; Claassen 2007:124-134; Beck 2002: 309-337; Brady and Johnston 2006:2006), the role of space, distance and convenience of voting (Dyck and Gimpel 2005:531-548); competitiveness of elections on account of extent to which elections are considered strategic and election outcomes are projected to be close (Bowler and Donovan 2011:151-164); impact of technologies and the human, including poll worker, dimensions of elections (Hall, Monson and Patterson 2009:507-522), electoral policy itself (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1993:107-126), and

the wider issues connected to economic considerations and voting (cf Koch 2007; Verba, Scholzman and Brady 1995; Conway 1991; Gray and Caul 2000; Lijphart 1997; Teixeira 1987; Muller 1992).

In this regard, and for lack of space, some of the findings and controversies are listed below as including:

- The more involved individuals are in politics, the higher the probability that they will participate in elections, but decisions in this regard could be subject to other individual and/or group references with regard to political efficacy, depending on the individual, the group, and the context leading to the elections in contention;
- Transitional regimes (as in Poland after the collapse of the communist order and Malawi following the collapse of one-party dictatorship) essentially operating under a climate of high expectation and structural, institutional and process uncertainties and inadequacies, often start with high voter turnout that gradually decline in the face of voter disillusionment;
- There is no significant difference between partisan and non-partisan interest and campaign content on one hand and voter decision to vote; turnout may have more to do with interest in politics or governance or civics or in the election campaign in general;
- There is generally positive relationship between political information and citizen participation in campaigns, a generally negative relationship between information and number of floating voters. Moreover, given that political and civic activists tend to be better informed than voters, activists can and influence voters from one election to the other, even though it is not clear whether change among activists can also translate into change among voters;

- Distance to voting centre may contribute to nonvoting partly because of cost and convenience considerations
- Other things being equal, the more election result are considered likely to be close and/or strategic, the more this translates into more campaign activities and more funding by parties, and the more this leads to enhanced voter awareness and, therefore, enhanced voter turnout;
- While voting technologies are important factor in voter turnout, voter-poll worker interaction is also critically important. Perception of poll workers job performance contributes to political memory over time; recruitment and training of competent poll workers are therefore important to the development of voter confidence and, ultimately, voter turnout.
- Electoral policy, including presence and absence of compulsion policy, registration laws, and other elements of the legal environment are important to the recorded level of voter turnout
- Finally, impact of economic considerations remains mixed. While low and declining voter turnout in national elections and referenda has generally been the rule the world over, it has also been the case that declining turnout has been witnessed in wealthy, advanced industrial democracies. In such advanced economies, it has also been shown in the literature that the wealthier and better educated the citizens are more likely to vote than low income and less educated citizens. At the global level, there is little evidence to support the claim that economic growth is likely to lead to increase voter turnout, while evidence from the Caribbean and Latin America, actually shows that economic growth leads to a decline in voter turnout.

## **The Nigerian Experience**

Perhaps the closest to the first published work on indications of voter apathy in voter turnout in Nigeria is than in the seminal work by Post (1963) which, in its Appendix D offers a 24 page table (Post 1963:451-474) of registration and voter turnout statistics for all constituencies in the Northern Western and Eastern Regions as well as for the Lagos Federal Territory. The average percentage of voter turnout for the Northern Region in that election is put at 89.2% (Post 1963:469), with 74.4% recorded for the East (Post 1963:474) and 76.2% for the Lagos Federal Territory (Post 1963:474). Post attributes the cause of the lowest turnout figure coming from the west despite the west having “the most practically active citizens” to use Post’s word “the more intense party conflict and activity in the west “which led to the registration of people who, being interested in politics, were not prepared to make a second effort and go to vote” (Post 1963:353).

These figures conform to the viewpoint that foundational elections in a transitional period (this time, from colonial rule to political independence) tend to record relatively large voter turnout. In fact none of the Northern Region’s 174 constituencies in the 1959 election recorded turnout less than 70%, the least percentage turnout being recorded in Gubunarawa-Madagoli constituency. For the Western Region, only 25 of the 62 constituencies recorded percentage voter turnout of less than 70%, the last three in this regard being Okitipupa South (53.3%), Ekiti North West (53%) and Ede-Ejigbo (48.4%). For the Eastern Region, only 21% of its 73 constituencies had voter turnout less than 70%, the least three in percentage voter turnout being Onitsha North (49.8%), Ikwo (47.5%) and Ezza (35.2%). None of the three constituencies in the Lagos Federal Territory recorded less than 70%, with Lagos Central recording

78.9%, Lagos North recording 77.4%, and Lagos South recording a voter turnout of 72.3%.

Three years after Post (1963), another major publication focused more broadly on voting behaviours in three Federal constituencies one selected each from the North (Zaria Central), the West (Ibadan Central) and the East (Enugu), but none understandably from the newly created MidWest (Mackenzie 1966: 289-357). This extended study of voter behaviour reported the result of interviews conducted by the author and his field staff in the selected constituencies with a view to finding out reasons underlying voter behaviour in a context in which the whole process of voting was “a relatively new and alien experience” (Mackenzie 1966: 290)

In essence, there has been a paucity of specific, published scholarly and empirical treatment of apathy in the context of voter turnout in Nigeria, even in volumes devoted specific to the study of elections, political parties and/or democratization/democracy in the country. (cf. Dudley 1968; Whitaker 1970; Nelson and Wolpe 1971; Sklar 1963; Peil 1976; Graf n.d; Kochn 1981, Olurode 2010; Kew 2004; Lewis and Alemika 2005; Suberu 2010; National Democratic Institute (NDI) 2007; Tar and Zack-Williams 2007; Tar 2007; Amuwo 2009; Transition Monitoring Group 2007; Simbire 2002; Simbire 2006; Anifowose and Babawale 2003; Kero 2010; Maja-Pearce 2011; International Crisis Group (ICG) 2007; The Economist 2007; Williams 2011; Project 2011 SwiftCount 2011; Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) 2007; Catholic Secretariat of Nogeria 2003; Commonwealth Observer Group 2011; National Democratic Institute 2011; IFES 2007).

Lack of grounded and sustained attention to voter apathy is puzzling, given the realization, as far back as the early stages of Nigeria transitional elections marking the end of colonial rule, of the vital role of elections and matters arising in the political landscape, as well as general requirements for ensuring free and fair elections. By the late 1950s, it was already a settled matter that free elections create “ a sentiment of popular consent and participation in public affairs”, requirements including independent judiciary, nonpartisan, competent and honest electoral management body, a developed network of political parties, and general public acceptance of the “rules of the game, which limit the struggle for power” because “if the rules are not observed more or less faithfully, the game itself will disappear amid the wreckage of the whole system” (Mackenzie 1958:13-14; Post 1963:157).

A few noted publications with some consideration of matters related to voter apathy and voter turnout from the 1979 elections deserve special mention at this stage. In addressing the general issue of voting behaviour in the Presidential, Senatorial and House of Representative elections of 1979, Oyediran (1981:93-110) and Oyediran and Arowolo (1981:123-135) provide important insights into voting behaviour and electoral statistics in the elections in comparison with Post's (1963) findings on the 1959 election and also address matters arising from the pattern of voting and indications of possible bloated figures of voters for the 1979 elections arising from “ multiple registrations, registrations of fictitious individuals and other forms of malpractices” (Oyediran and Arowolo 1981:128) suggesting that 1979 voter turnout may have in fact even higher than officially reported (Oyediran and Arowolo 1981:128).

The important role of ethnicity, the changing nature of Nigeria's federal system, including political memory, the increase in the number of constituent units in the 20-year (1959-1979) period, the party and electoral system, offices being contested for, candidates for the elections, the impact and popular responses to military rule, and class and ideological considerations among others, in determining voter turnout in the 1959 and 1979 elections, have also been noted (Oyediran 1981:95-110). On the 1979 elections, it is warned (Oyediran 1981:109-110) that

It will be most unrealistic to explain voting behaviour at the 1979 elections by ethnic factor alone... Party programme, calibre of candidates, class conflicts, influence of favourite sons, and esteem in which party leaders are held are relevant and significant factors. Historical antecedents also cannot be dismissed.

On the vote in the East, he notes that both in 1959 and 1979, voter turnout in Igbo constituencies was much better than in the non-Igbo constituencies while the opposite was the case in 1959 in the West, a phenomenon for which he adopts Post's explanation of intense party conflict and activity that generated less responsiveness to voting appeals in registered voters. He further notes for the North, the East and the West that voter turnout was very much lower in 1979 than in 1959. Some of the factors he flags to explain this development include (Oyediran 1981: 97)

- (a) The absence of partisan politics for more than 13 years
- (b) The turbulent politics of the pre-military era which discouraged in particular the older generation of voters; and
- (c) The failure of party leaders to reach large sections of the population during the campaigns

While turnout figures for the 1979 elections, no matter how controversial, were released by the then electoral management body, namely the Federal Electoral Commission, as part of its report on the elections, it is interesting to note that the Official Report (INEC 2007) of the Independent National Electoral Commission, the

electoral management body that supervised the 2007 elections, almost 20 years down the road, did not contain data on votes cast for any of the elections held in that year, not to talk of indications of voter turnout. This speaks to the vital issue of capacity and behaviour of electoral management bodies themselves.

A more recent commentary on the integrity of the electoral process amidst malpractices during the 2003 elections further identifies forms of electoral chicanery that have been recorded in Nigeria's political history, including "the corruption and maladministration of elections by electoral and judicial bodies, election violence and ideological confusion and/or sterility among the political parties" (Ibeanu 2007: 49-63, esp. pp. 50 and 54). It then notes:

The electoral process as currently constituted in Nigeria is psychologically alienating for the vast majority of the people who are largely outsiders and are only periodically inserted in the process when they cast votes. At the same time, this alienation is underscored by the fact that even when these vote casters have completed the ritual, the outcome bears little semblance to the choices they have made through their ballots.... So long as the vast majority of Nigerians remain mere vote casters rather than an electorate, the vote in Nigeria will remain devalued... [T]he voters do not attach great promissory content or psychological value to their votes. The vote is grossly devalued and the mandates claimed by politicians are effectively dubious.

Such dire prognosis, shared by many informed commentators on Nigeria's electoral process, contrasts with an equally enduring sense of unvanquished optimism and general faith in democracy and its processes by Nigerians, as captured by private studies of voter preferences and attitudes in the last three decades (Suberu 2010; Bratton 2010). One such study, published in 2007, contains interesting findings (as reported in Adejumbi 2010:110) on voter enthusiasm and persisting optimism in the countdown to the disastrous 2007 elections. The study is quoted as indicating that (Adejumbi 2010:110):



74.6% of the respondents showed very keen interest in voting at the elections, not necessarily because of confidence in INEC but because of their determination to use their vote to make a difference. While there was public enthusiasm and optimism toward the elections, the conduct and outcome of these elections confounded such hope.

The literature highlighted above is rich in an analysis of the political economy and socio-cultural contexts as well as structural, processional and institutional challenges that have bedevilled Nigeria's search for an open, democratic and sustainable electoral order. With the generally acknowledged exception of the 2011 elections, whose conduct appear generally to have rekindled hope in regard of this search, the consensus, to an extent, has been that (Williams 2011:x)

Since the advent of civil governance in 1999, increasingly costly and astronomically prohibitive elections have produced increasingly cruel travesties leading to democratic regressions rather than the consolidation of the democratic process. Civil rule in Nigeria has produced electoral results which cannot stand scrutiny or the elementary tests of integrity. The paradox is that the more costly and prohibitive the elections, the less satisfactory have been the outcome.

Some of the challenges plaguing the electoral system, including discrepancies in results, lack of preparedness or last-minute actions, date back to the 1950s (cf Sklar 1963; Post 1963:441-451; Mackenzie and Robinson 1960) Their persistence, interacting with equally intractable legacies of military rule, problems of corruption, triumph of culture of impurity, erosion of culture of restraint, low-quality political leadership, institutional weaknesses and structural inadequacies as outlined above, have served as constraints to voter turnout and catalyst to voter apathy.

From one election to the other, Election Observer Missions as noted in the references above and below have highlighted the challenge of voter apathy and have made suggestions on how to combat it. Their comments have of course, not

been based on sustained study of the problem as has been done here. Nonetheless, the suggestions have been insightful, including how to handle violence, cultural impediments to women exercising their right to vote, ensure consistency in voter turnout from national to sub-national elections and from elections into executive positions to election into legislative positions at all levels of the federal arrangement, the need to secure polling stations and their environs, training for public officials, strengthening of the institutions for electoral management and security, and effective voter education, among others.

It is hoped that this exploratory study will complement these findings, comments, anecdotes and other viewpoints on voter apathy and, in doing so in a more systematic, comprehensive, and scientific manner, offer a more grounded basis for beginning to actively address in theory, method and practice, this vital challenge to the consolidation of voter turnout in future elections.

What the preceding literature review does offer nonetheless is a multifactor frame that suggests different approaches to understanding and interpreting voter apathy and voter turnout in the Nigerian context. These include individual/psychological, historical, socio-political, institutional/systemic and mechanical/procedural factors

## **METHODS**

The 2011 Voter Apathy Study was carried out in the period March-April 2011 on a nationally representative sample of 1200 respondents. Nigerians of voting age were randomly selected and interviewed across the six geopolitical zones to provide empirical information on the nature, causes and consequences of voter apathy. Although, there are a few previous studies of voter apathy in different parts of the country, this 2011 Voter Apathy Survey (VAS) is based on data from the country's six geopolitical zones or regions and its results are accessible to the public. It must be emphasized that, given the paucity of empirical works on the issue of voter apathy in Nigeria, and challenges in the storage and management of, and access to, voting data over time, this study was designed to be exploratory with attendant limitations. It is hoped that subsequent studies will be more sophisticated and complete in design and methods. For now, it should be emphasized that the results detailed below are from perception data collected from a national sample of 1,200 Nigerians of voting age

### **Sample Design**

The sample for 2011 VAS was designed to provide information on Voter apathy at the national, zonal, state, local government and ward levels. Nigeria is divided into six geopolitical zones namely North Central, North West, North East, South East, South South and South West. Each zone is subdivided into states, and each state is subdivided into local Government areas. For the ease of administration during the election registration and voting process, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) further divided the local government into wards. The primary

sampling unit in this study was the ward. The 2011 VAS respondents were selected using a multi-stage cluster sampling design consisting of 12 states, 27 LGAs, 43 wards in rural areas and 60 wards in urban areas (Appendix 1).

### **Research Instrument: Interview Schedule**

The research instrument for the 2011 VAS was the interview schedule. The schedule was designed to reflect the political issues relating to nature, causes and consequences of voter apathy after thorough review by the research team and other stakeholders at the national methodology workshop on the study of voter apathy in Nigeria, held on 14 March, 2011 in Abuja. For each of the 12 states, 100 interview schedules were distributed proportionately between urban and rural areas giving a total of 1200. The instruments were used to collect relevant information on the following key issues:

- Background characteristics of the respondents
- General impression of the electoral process and elected officials.
- Nature of voter apathy in Nigeria
- Causes and consequence of voter apathy in Nigeria
- Role of stakeholders on voter apathy in Nigeria

### **Fieldwork**

A team of 12 researchers from Nigerian Universities, designated as state coordinators, supervised the fieldwork in the twelve selected states. Data collection was done over a period of three weeks, from March to April 2011.

### **Data Processing**

All instruments for the 2011 VAS were returned to the lead researcher in Ibadan for data processing, which consisted of editing, coding open-ended questions, data

entry and data cleaning. The data processing team comprised six data entry operators, two data coders and one data analyst. Data entry and editing were accomplished using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software.

## Response rate

The response rates for the survey in the selected states are shown below. Out of the 1200 instruments administered in 12 states of the federation, 1188 were found valid for the data analysis. This gave an overall response rate of 99%, a rate not surprising given the earlier decision to use interview schedules rather than questionnaires to collect data.

**Table 1: Response rate for the selected 12 states**

Region	State	Response rate (%)
North Central	Kogi	97
	Nasarawa	95
North East	Borno	100
	Taraba	100
North West	Kaduna	97
	Katsina	100
South East	Ebonyi	100
	Enugu	100
South South	Bayelsa	100
	Rivers	99
South West	Lagos	100
	Ogun	100

## RESULT

### **Background characteristics of the respondents**

The background characteristics of the respondents in this study were analysed to assess of the representativeness of the 2011 Voter Apathy Survey sample. Table 2 shows the percentage distribution of the respondents by selected background characteristics. The sex ratio, defined as the number of men per 100 women, was 107- about 52% of the study population was male and 48% female.

The proportion of respondents below 40 years of age was thrice that of those above 40 years. This picture reflects Nigeria's young population. This pattern of age and sex distribution of respondents was reflected in all the geopolitical zones of the country. Several studies have shown that education attainment is a strong determinant of the choices that people make, either socially or politically, and that it has implications for their attitude and behavior. At least one out of two respondents in this population completed secondary education. More than 70% of the respondents in the study area were literate in English, having completed formal education up to primary level and beyond.

Majority of the respondents were married while a few were separated, divorced or widowed. Overall, more than 70% of the respondents were either self-employed or in paid employment. Except for the South West, where about 93% of the respondents were employed, there was little or no difference in the distribution of occupational status in all the geopolitical zones.

Forty-eight percent of the respondents were from rural areas and 52% from urban areas. Non-response in some study areas affected the desired 50-50 urban-rural

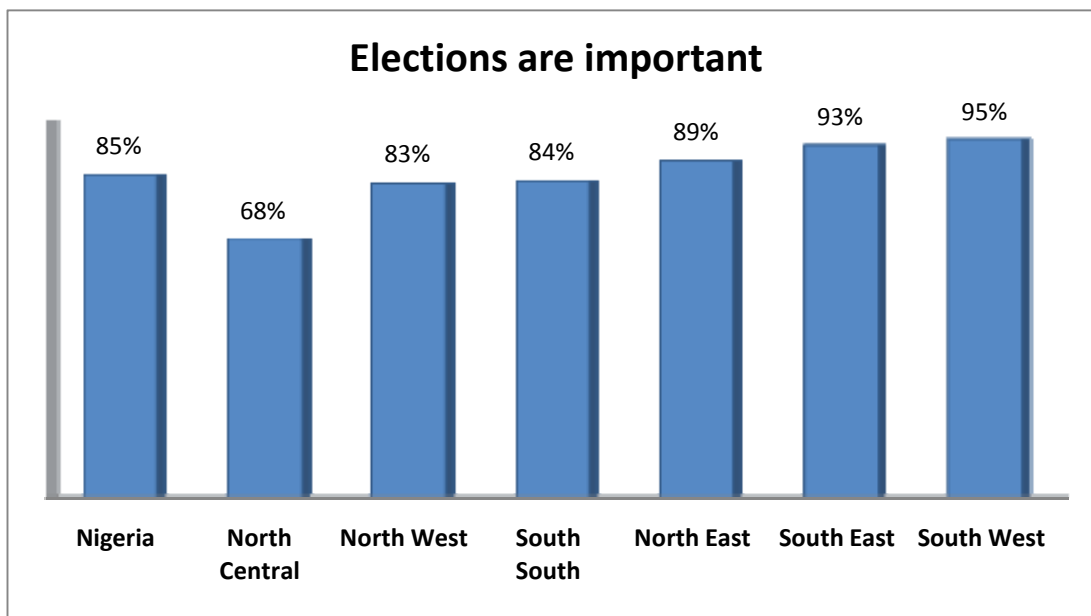
distribution in all the regions except the south west. Duration of residence in a community could affect attitude toward the electoral process. The longer the stay, the more familiar individuals are likely to be of the political climate of their neighborhoods. The breakdown for this study shows that about two out of five respondents had been living in their neighborhood for more than twenty years. This is quite significant.

**Table 2: Background characteristics of respondents**

Characteristics	Nigeria	NC	NE	NW	SE	SS	SW
Age							
18-30	39.9	42.6	49.5	36.0	40.0	40.9	30.5
31-40	31.8	41.1	34.5	28.4	25.0	22.7	39.5
41-50	17.6	14.7	12.5	19.3	17.5	18.7	22.5
Above 50	10.7	1.6	3.5	16.2	17.5	17.7	7.5
Sex							
Male	51.6	54.2	52.0	52.6	50.5	51.0	49.7
Female	48.4	45.8	48.0	47.4	49.5	49.0	50.3
Residence							
Urban	51.6	50.5	52.5	49.2	53.0	54.3	50.0
Rural	48.4	49.5	47.5	50.8	47.0	45.7	50.0
Occupational status							
Paid employment	33.1	49.7	24.2	35.6	35.9	37.7	17.0
Self employment	38.1	26.8	39.4	29.9	28.2	26.6	76.0
Unemployed	28.8	23.5	36.4	34.5	35.9	35.7	7.0
Educational level							
None	9.2	6.3	14.1	26.2	1.0	3.0	4.5
Primary	13.2	4.8	20.7	12.3	5.7	8.1	26.6
Secondary	32.9	27.0	34.8	28.7	19.3	37.1	49.7
Post secondary	44.7	61.9	30.3	32.8	74.0	51.8	19.1
Marital status							
Single	35.4	38.1	47.0	29.4	41.7	39.9	16.1
Married	60.9	58.7	50.5	69.5	51.8	53.5	81.4
Sep./Div./Widowed	3.7	3.2	2.5	1.0	6.5	6.6	2.5
Duration of stay in the community (yrs)							
1-5	16.4	3.9	31.1	4.2	12.8	29.5	14.6
6-10	19.5	21.1	21.4	12.2	18.2	32.1	11.6
11-20	23.6	42.8	23.0	13.8	29.7	17.6	17.2
Above 20	40.6	32.2	24.5	69.8	39.2	20.7	56.6

## **General impression of election process and elected officials**

Electioneering is a major component of democracy. It gives citizens the opportunity to decide who represents them at local, state and national levels. Thus, in principle, elections are important for the sustenance of democracy in any country. The findings from this study (Figure 1) buttresses this assertion. While 68% of the respondents in the North Central region felt that elections were important, other regions recorded a relatively higher positive response. Overall, at least four out of five respondents affirmed that elections were important.



**Figure 1: The percentage distribution of respondents on importance of elections**

Majority of the respondents perceived that elections provide opportunity to elect credible leaders, which could lead to better development of the country and stability of democracy.

### **Reason for the importance of election (n=1002)**

- 69.7% - It is an opportunity to elect credible leaders
- 10.8% - Election of good leaders will lead to better development
- 8.4 % - To ensure democracy stability
- 6.4% – Opportunity to remove bad leaders
- 4.8% - Civic right to vote



This is affirmed by the responses as stated below:

*It provides the opportunities for the electorate to cast their votes for the right candidates to lead them (Female, 52yrs)*

*We need capable hands to carry on the development process being gradually experienced in Nigeria presently (Male, 25yrs)*

*Election is the major characteristic of a democratic state, which for now is the best form of government (Male, 68yrs)*

For those who did not think that elections were important, the apprehension that their votes might not count was the most cited reason. Such respondents did not see much value in elections, which, in their estimation, would be neither free nor fair. They equally identified failed promises, electoral corruption and violence as the basis for not thinking much of elections.

**Reason why election is not important (n= 164)**

- 49.4% - Election is not free and fair/ votes do not count
- 28.7% - Unfulfilled promise by the politicians
- 14.0% - Corruption in the electoral system
- 7.9% - Violence

This is clearly underlined by comments from some of the respondents:

*The spate of forgery in Nigeria especially as it affects elections makes it not to be important (Male, 68yrs)*

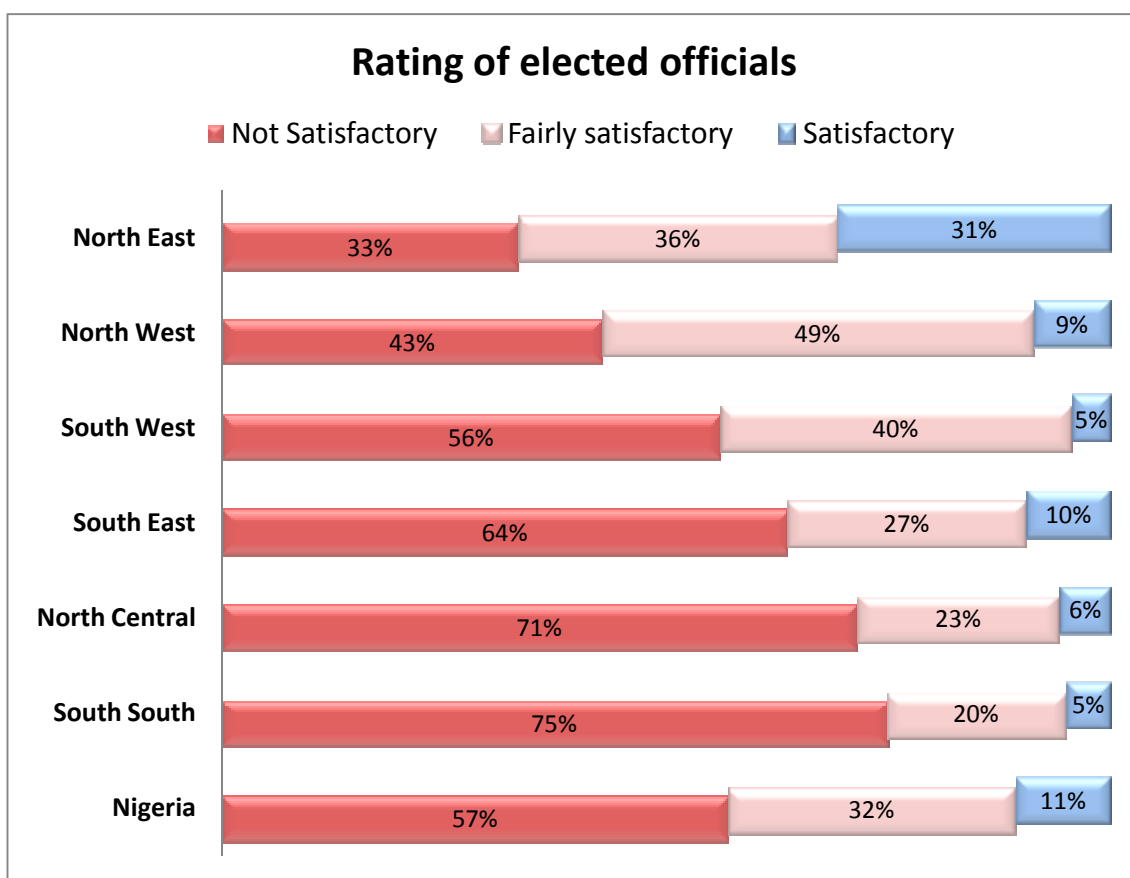
*Because, we people of Nigeria even if we vote for a right person they will not give him the post (Male, 21yrs)*

*Once voted, the office holder now becomes and exhibit great level of self-centeredness. He becomes passive about the plight of the masses (Male 31yrs)*

*It is no longer safe to vote in Nigeria (Male, 38yrs)*

Since the Fourth Republic, there have been three civilian-to-civilian elections (2003, 2007 and 2011). Although with post-election disharmony, petitions and

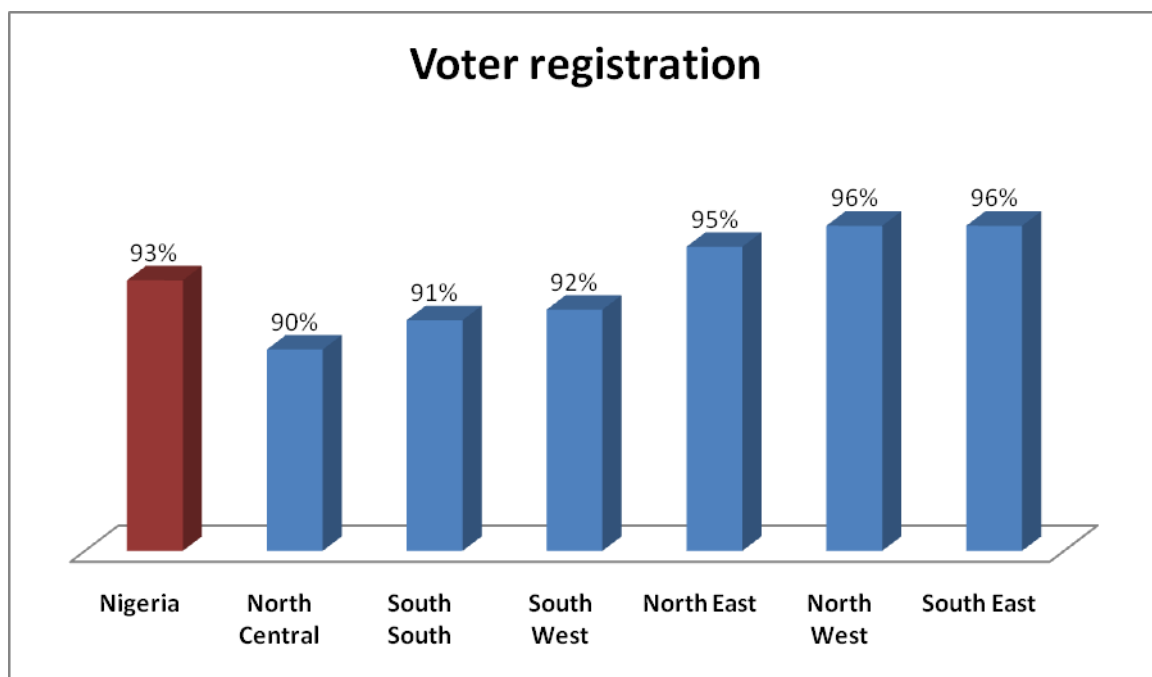
counter-petitions, these elections have produced political office holders. It is therefore, important to understand the general impression of the populace about the elected officials in Nigeria. The rating is shown in Figure 2. Overall, about half of the respondents in this study were not satisfied with elected officials. However, there were regional variations to this perception. In two of the six geopolitical regions, South South and North Central, most of the respondents were not satisfied with elected officials in the country. The selected states in these two regions were Balyesa, Rivers, Kogi and Nasarawa. Although, the percentage of those satisfied with elected officials was just 31% in the North East, this region recorded the highest percentage of satisfied people.



**Figure 2: General rating of elected officials**

## **Voter Registration**

Voter registration is a basic requirement for political participation in Nigeria; without registering, a person of voting age is not allowed to vote. Although the act of registration is supposed to be an evidence of an individual's determination to vote, observations from previous elections have shown that voters may be registered for different reasons other than to vote. Therefore, a very important question posed to the respondents in this study was, 'Did you register as a voter?' Among the sampled respondents, 93% registered for the 2011 April election. Although there are variations in the responses by region, at least nine out of 10 persons registered for the April 2011 election (Figure 3).



**Figure 3: Distribution of registered respondents**

Most of the respondents claimed that they registered in order to elect the right leader as well as exercise their civic right. However, some were mandated to register while others registered just to enjoy the benefits of the voter's card. The respondents in their own words summarize the reasons they registered to vote:

*Because we were told in the church to do so (Female, 55yrs)*

*Because of our experience during the National I.D card; it might be demanded for in schools, hospitals or banks (Male, 42yrs)*

Registered to vote: 92.9%	Did not register: 7.1%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 73.7% To elect the right leaders</li> <li>• 16.9% To exercise civic right</li> <li>• 8.4% To enjoy benefits of having a Voter card</li> <li>• 1.0% Was mandated to do so</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32.5% Just not interested</li> <li>• 32.5% Votes do not often count</li> <li>• 18.1% Not available during registration</li> <li>• 10.8% Duration is too short</li> <li>• 6.0% Insecurity and violence</li> </ul>

While some believed that votes do not count, some were just not interested. Other reasons given for not registering included shortness of the timeframe for registration, that they would not be available during the election period, as well as violence and insecurity. On this last issue, a respondent had this to say:

*I almost lost my life because some drunk mobile police men started sporadic shooting at the polling station (Male, 69yrs)*

Another respondent said:

*I deliberately avoided voting to study the present crop of individuals who profess to be politicians. I intend to align myself with the appropriate "channel" who will liberate Nigerians come 2015(Female 28yrs)*

Furthermore, respondents' views were sought on the effect of social networks on voter registration. The result in Table 3 shows that those who did not register were more likely to know a friend or neighbor who refused to register than those who did (significant,  $p=0.007$ ). The need to mobilize Nigerians of voting age to register was

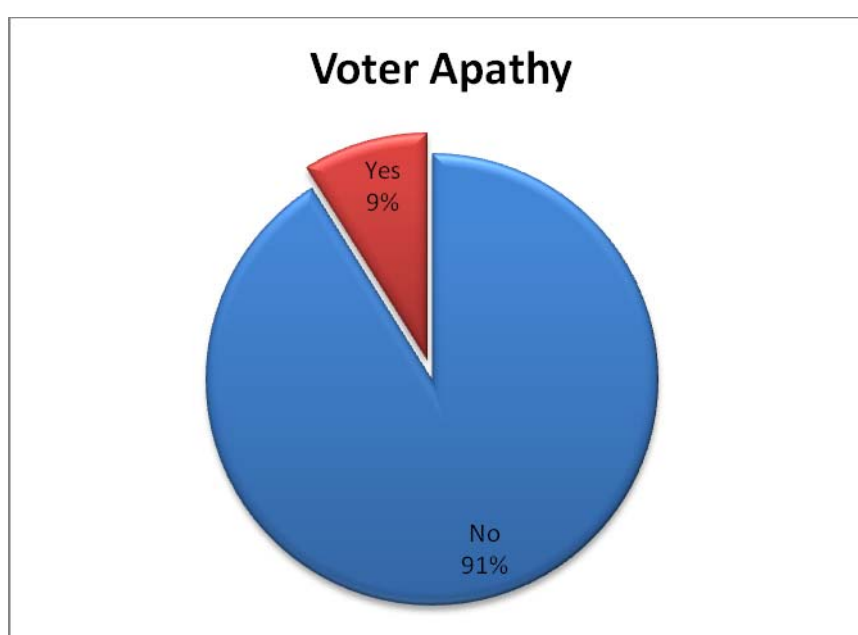
further assessed in this study. Four out of 10 respondents who were mobilized to register actually did.

**Table 3: Social Network and Voter registration**

	Registered (%)	Not registered (%)
Mobilized to register	40.6	59.4
Know a friend/neighbour who refused to register	22.0	78.0

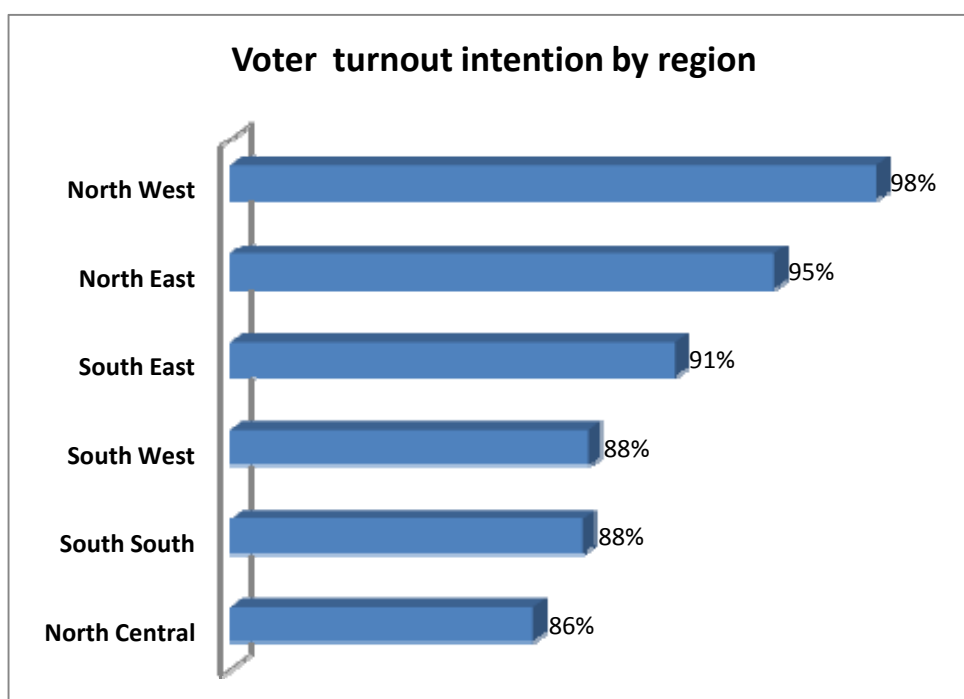
### **Voter apathy and voter turnout**

According to International IDEA, voter apathy can be operationalized in two forms: Voter registration percent (Vote/Reg%) and Voting age population percent (VAP%). The Vote/Reg% is the percentage of the registered voters who turn out to vote on the Election Day. The VAP% however, refers to the percentage of voting age population, registered or not registered, that cast their ballots on the Election Day. For this study, the analysis was based on voter intention data collected from respondents in 12 states in the absence of data on voter registration, voting age population and actual voting. The result is shown in Figures 4 and 5. For all the selected states, 8.9% of those that registered had no intention to vote.



**Figure 4: Voter Intention**

Responses indicated that more registered voters in the North West intended to vote during the elections than in the other regions. This could be explained by the mass appeal in that part of the country of an opposition party, the Congress for Political Change (CPC) and its presidential candidate, General Muhammadu Buhari, who hailed from zone. The highest and lowest turnout intention of registered voters was recorded in the northern part of the country. An aggregate of regions' values shows that voter turnout intention percentage was 93% and 89% for the northern and southern parts of the country respectively.



**Figure 5: Voter turnout intention by geopolitical region**

An examination of voting intention at state level showed that except for Kogi State, the northern part of the country displayed a similar pattern for the elections (Table 3). The home states of the two top presidential aspirants in the April elections, Bayelsa (for incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP) and Katsina (for General Muhammadu Buhari of the Congress for Political Change,

CPC), recorded some of the highest affirmative responses on voter intention. It is surprising, however, that a violence-prone state such as Borno recorded over 90% of respondents indicating intention to vote. This figure is attributable in part to intense voter mobilization in that state, perceived as a key political battle ground, by at least three of the key political parties – namely, the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), the party in power in the state, the PDP, the party in power at the federal centre, and the CPC, the relatively new party that had suddenly captured the imagination of the masses in Northern Nigeria in the context of debates on whether or not the next president of the federation should be of northern extraction.

**Table 4: Voter turnout intention by State and Geopolitical region**

State	Percentage
Kogi	79.1
Nasarawa	93.8
Borno	92.6
Taraba	96.8
Kaduna	97.7
Katsina	99.0
Ebonyi	99.0
Enugu	83.2
Balyesa	96.9
Rivers	77.4
Lagos	94.8
Ogun	80.5

### **Voter turnout intention by Background Characteristic**

Further examination of the pattern of voter turnout intention by background characteristics is shown in Table 5. Age distribution of respondents on intention to vote was high for all age groups. Those between ages 18 to 40 years, the youth population, however, indicated more likelihood to vote than the older groups.

**Table 5: Voter turnout intention by age, sex and residence of registered respondents**

Characteristics		Percentage
Age	18-30	91.4
	31-40	91.0
	41-50	90.8
	Above 50	90.7
Sex	Male	91.7
	Female	90.5
Residence	Urban	88.1
	Rural	94.2

Among the registered male respondents, 91.7% indicated they were likely to vote while 90.5% of registered females planned to vote. While intention to vote was high in both rural and urban areas, a higher percentage of registered respondents in rural communities indicated intention to vote than their urban counterparts.

The socioeconomic characteristics of respondents by intention to vote are shown in Table 6. Eighty-eight percent of registered Nigerians of voting age who were self-employed indicated they would vote in the elections. This was considerably lower than those who were unemployed or in paid employment; data also showed that unemployed respondents were likely to vote more than those with any form of employment. Interestingly, higher voter turnout was expected among the uneducated than those with primary, secondary or post-secondary education; expected turnout decreased by 5.4% as highest level of education attained by respondents moved up from primary to secondary education.



**Table 6: Voter intention by socio-economic characteristics of registered respondents**

Characteristics	Percentage
Occupational status	
Paid employment	92.4
Self employment	88.2
Unemployed	93.0
Educational level	
None	95.0
Primary	94.2
Secondary	88.8
Post secondary	91.0
Marital status	
Single	92.2
Married	90.7
Sep./Div./Widowed	87.8
Duration of stay in the community (yrs)	
1-5	90.1
6-10	92.2
11-20	87.7
Above 20	92.2

Data also showed that voters who had been domiciled in an area for more than 20 years indicated they would vote in the elections more than those with less period of residency in their community.

Having observed the effect of social networks on voter registration among Nigerians of voting age, an examination of social network and other considerations on their intention to vote is shown in Table 7. The respondents who knew persons who registered but refused to vote was more likely to do the same (significant,  $p=0.002$ ), while a substantial proportion of those who had voted at previous elections also indicated plans to vote in the 2011 elections (significant;  $p=0.001$ ). There was, however, no significant difference in intention to vote among respondents 'mobilized' (meaning, induced) to vote and those not so 'mobilized'.

**Table 7: Social considerations and intention to Vote**

Social considerations	Plan to vote (%)	No plan to vote (%)
*Know of any persons registered but refuse to vote		
Yes	32.6	67.4
No	48.4	51.6
*Ever voted at any election		
Yes	79.2	20.8
No	63.3	36.7
Awareness of any party manifesto		
Yes	43.2	56.8
No	21.2	78.8
Mobilized to vote		
Yes	37.9	62.1
No	38.4	61.6
Paid to vote		
Yes	3.2	96.8
No	6.2	93.8

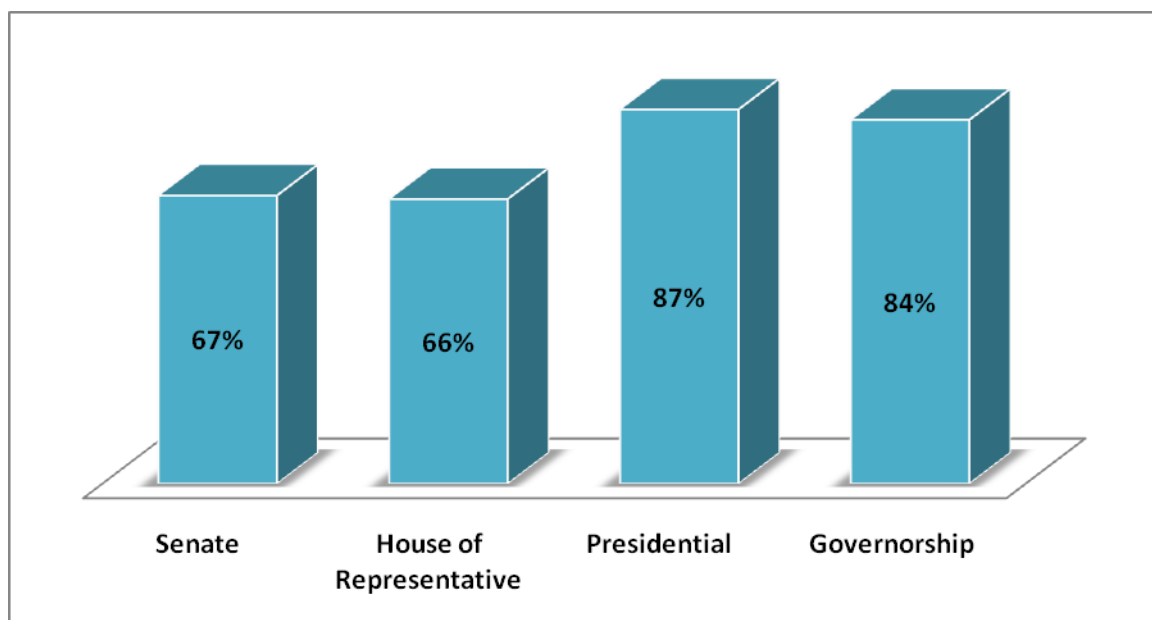
### **Voting plan of respondents**

Nigerians of voting age who registered for the 2011 elections indicated intention to vote more during presidential and governorship elections than during National Assembly (NASS) elections (Figure 6). While the responses on governorship election was as expected, voter focus on the presidential election over and above national assembly election runs contrary to conventional wisdom that voter turnout would be higher for elections into offices closer to the grassroots than for other elections. The reasons for this differ from one country to another. In Malawi, for instance, voters feel that presidential elections are more important than parliamentary elections. This is based on the perception that only the president can make positive change happen in the lives of the people (Chinsinga 2006). While this may also be a factor for Nigerian voters, further explanation is to be found in the background, personal character and the credibility of the presidential candidates.

Other reasons cited for planning to vote in the 2011 elections included the need for positive change, progress and development as well as desire to vote out the wrong people. The responses to relevant open-ended items in the interview schedule supported this assertion:

*To choose a good leader that can positively affect the Nigeria state (Male, 22yrs)*

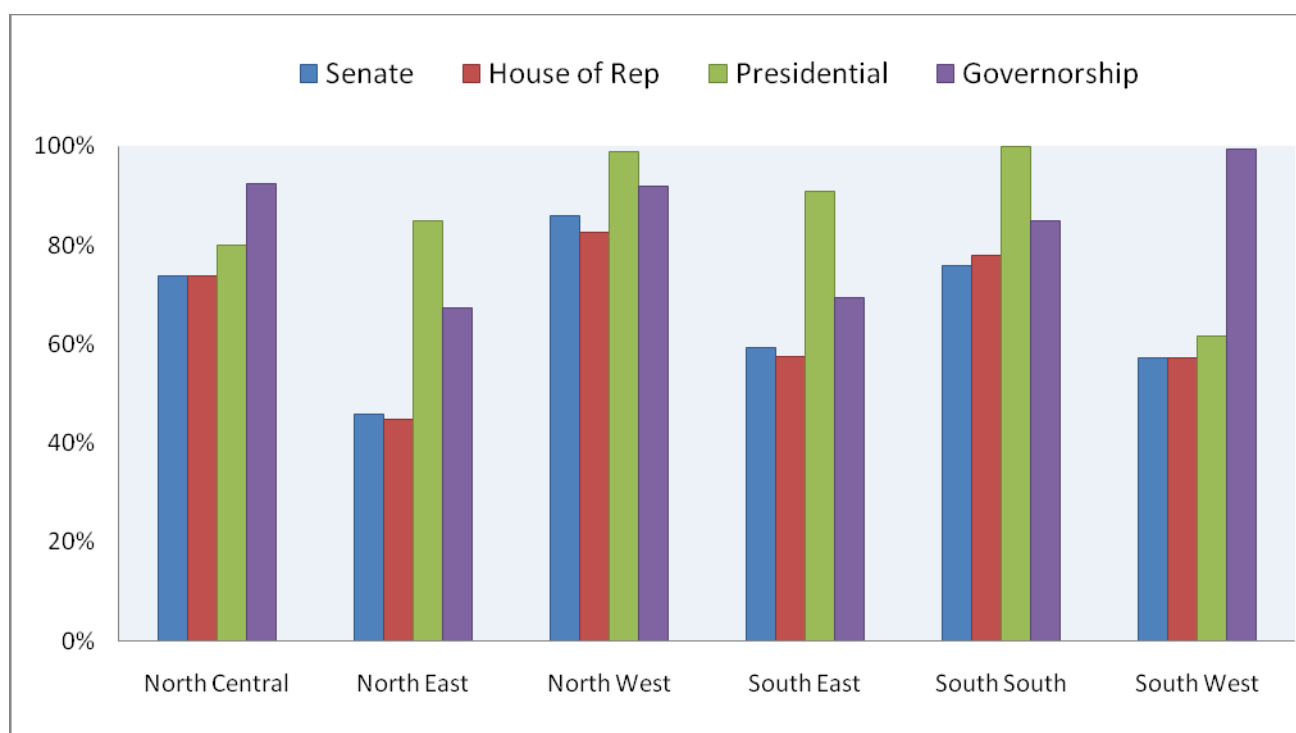
*I've listened to some campaigns and I know who and who to vote for (Female 38yrs)*



**Figure 6: Registered voter turnout plan**

There were regional disparities in plan to vote (Figure 7). With the exception of the South West and North Central regions, the presidential election was on top of the list of voting plans for most of the respondents. The South West exceptionalism can be explained by the fact that in the countdown to the elections, most of the debates focused on the apparent non-performance of incumbent PDP governors in contrast to the apparent performance of the only Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) governor (in Lagos State). Voter attention in most of the states in the region was therefore

focused on the governorship election, with the focus being further sharpened by opposition campaigns reminding the electorate in that region that, prior to the 2003 and 2007 elections, they had historically voted for ACN-type ‘progressive’ parties and not for PDP-type ‘conservative’ parties. Similar arguments resonated in parts of the North Central region.

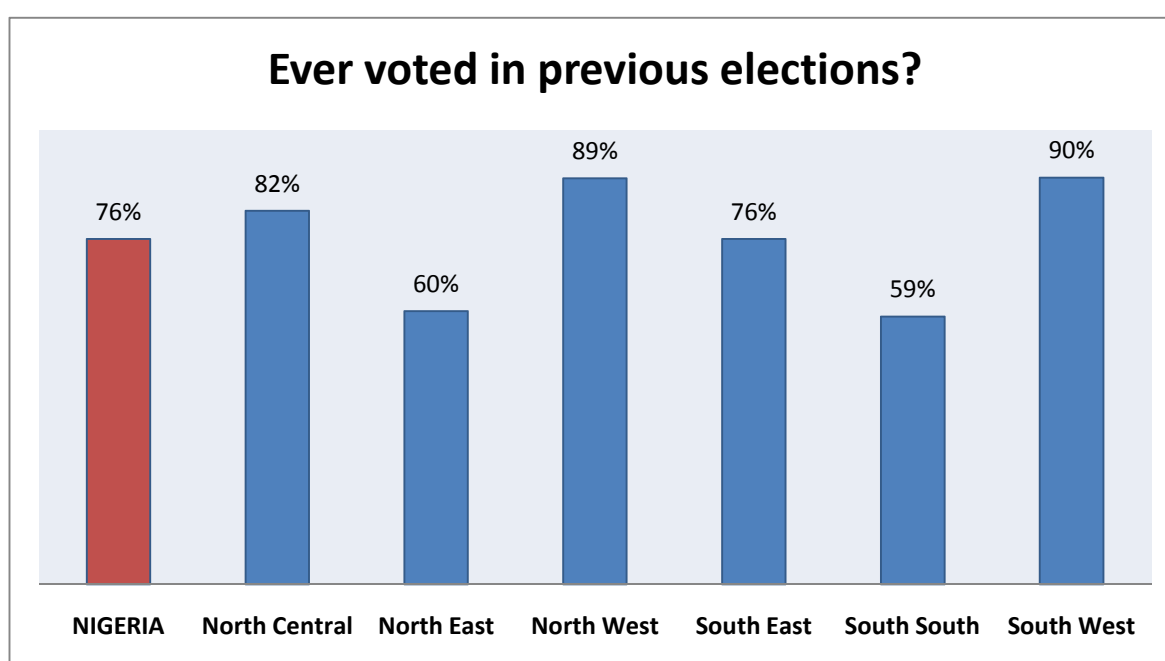


**Figure 7: Registered Voter turnout plan for the April 2011 elections by region**

### **Voter turnout and apathy: past and present**

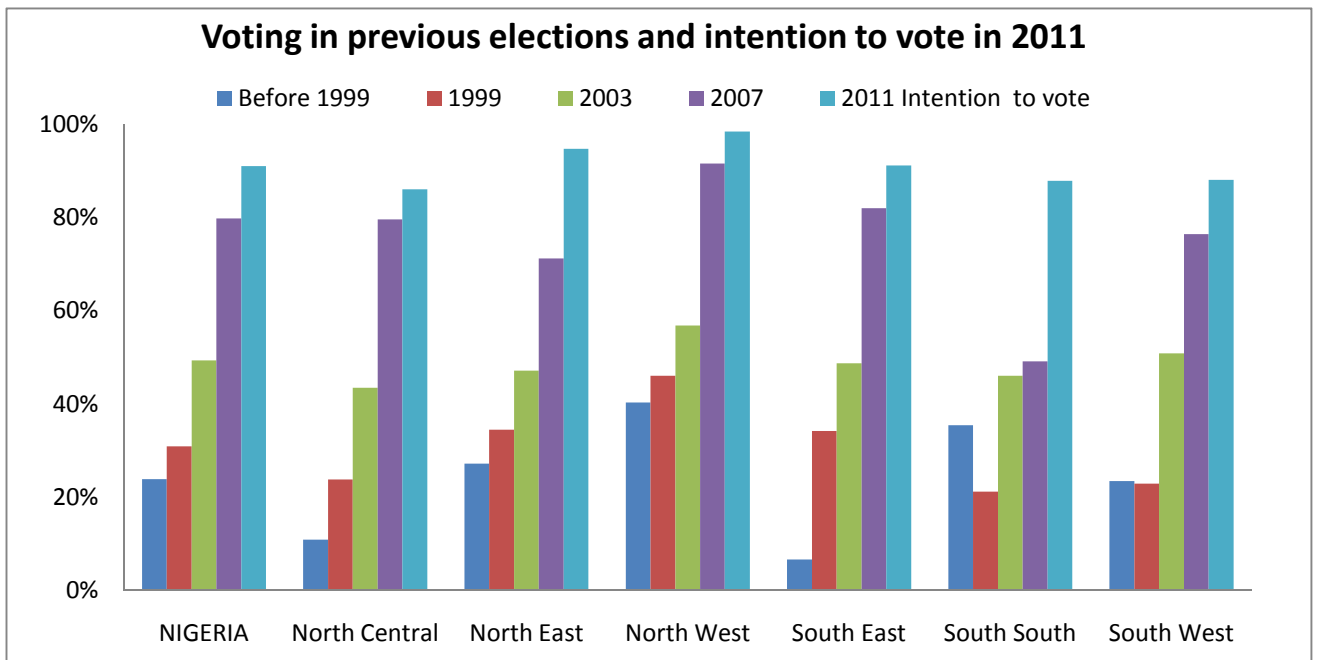
Majority of the respondents indicated they had participated in previous elections before 2011. Emerging picture from Figure 8 shows that more than 70% of those sampled had voted at least once prior to the 2011 elections. This result had slight regional differences. The North East and South South recorded fewer respondents with prior voting experience compared with regions like South West or

North West. Previous voting experience was also high among respondents in the North Central region (82%) and the South East (76%). However, there was considerable improvement when those with prior experience in the South South were compared with those who registered and plan to vote in the 2011 elections (Figure 9).



**Figure 8: Percentage of respondents who had voted in at least one previous election**

Voter perception as captured in this study also reported that voter turnout has been improving since 1999. This is generally attributable to the return to civilian rule and change to democratic governance, although it is not yet fully clear the extent to which such 'increases', especially in regard of returns from such controversial elections as those of 2007, were due to vote rigging and ballot stuffing.



**Figure 9: Voting in previous elections and intention to vote in April 2011 by region**

By 2007, eight years into the Fourth Republic, voter turnout rate had almost doubled the number recorded in 1999. It was 18% in 2003 and 31% in 2007, with a projected 11% increase by the 2011 elections. In the South West, turnout was slightly better prior to 1999, even though it increased rapidly in subsequent elections. An interesting pattern is also observed in the South South where the second highest turnout was recorded before 1999, but dropped sharply during the 1999 elections. Experiences at previous elections surely do affect future elections. Negative experiences during previous elections included stealing of ballot boxes, manipulation of results, violence, as well as logistic problem and delays in the voting process. A 35-year-old male respondent flagged what he called *“unnecessary victimization of the voters coupled with unreliable attitude of electoral officers with security agents”*,

Only 28% of the respondents claimed that the elections they experienced were peaceful and well conducted.

### Experience at previous elections

- 39.8% Elections not free and fair, stealing of ballot boxes / manipulation of results
- 27.8% Well conducted and peaceful election
- 26.2% Violence and fighting
- 6.2% Elections not well organized/ Logistic problem

### Stages in manifestation of voter apathy

The respondents were asked to identify stages in the electoral process in which voter apathy usually arose. Was it during voter registration, campaigns, or during actual voting, or was it in the general context of regular party activities? From the result in Figure 10, significant perception indicated that people tended to display apathy during the voting process. At least five out of ten respondents in this survey claimed that they were apathetic toward voter registration, voting, and activities of political parties.

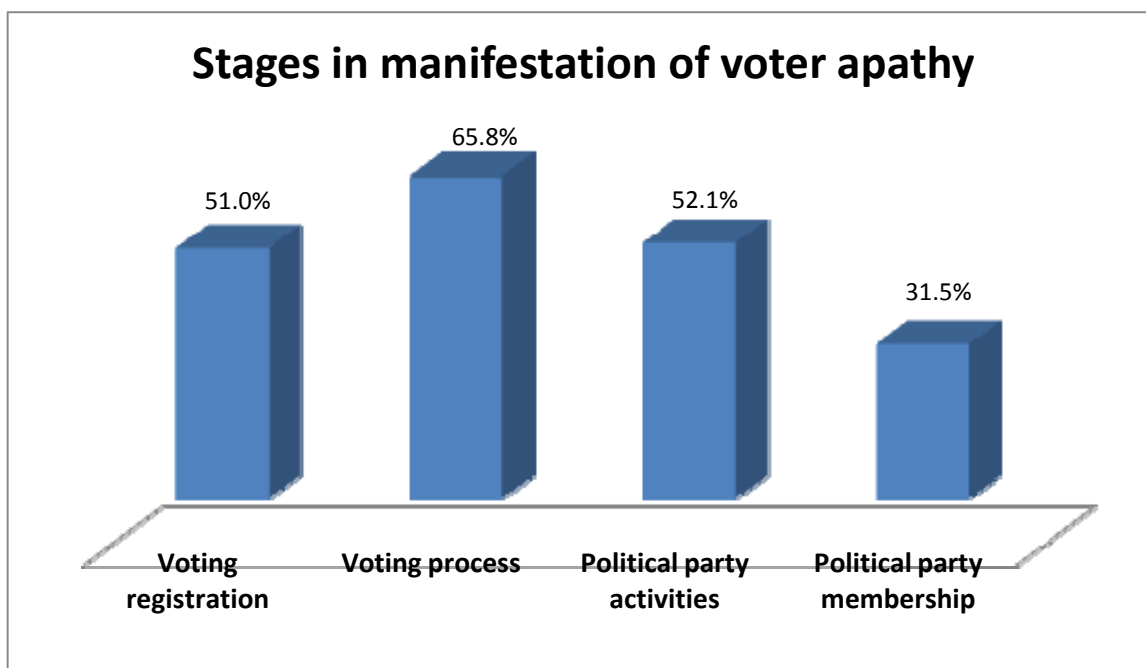


Figure 10: Stages in manifestation of voter apathy

### **Those responsible for voter apathy**

Table 8 shows that more than half of the respondents, especially those in the southern part of the country, identified politicians as being most responsible for voter apathy while at least four out of 10 respondents believed that Government and INEC were responsible for voter apathy, Very few blamed the press and the voters themselves.

Further analysis showed that most respondents in the North East and South East fingered INEC as being most responsible for voter apathy. However, some still felt that voters should really be held responsible for indifference to voting. In fact, about 10% of the respondents in the North Central and North West opined that voters should be blamed. The proportion of those who blamed the voters is even significantly higher in the South East and South South; voters were perceived as significant stakeholders that ought to be held responsible in this regard.

**Table 8: Those perceived as being responsible for voter apathy**

	<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>SW</b>
INEC	42.8	46.9	63.5	30.5	54.0	25.1	36.5
GOVERNMENT	43.9	25.5	28.0	55.8	59.5	46.7	47.0
POLITICIANS	51.3	45.8	24.0	52.8	64.5	59.3	61.5
PRESS	14.6	19.3	16.5	11.7	35.0	3.5	1.5
VOTERS	12.5	1.6	9.0	9.6	22.0	30.2	12.5

### **Reasons for voter apathy**

Out of the four possible reasons adduced by respondents for voter apathy in Nigeria, violence and electoral fraud were considered the most significant (Figure 11). Seven out of ten respondents indicated disinterest in elections characterized by violence, insecurity, electoral fraud and malpractice. This is summarized in the words of a respondent:



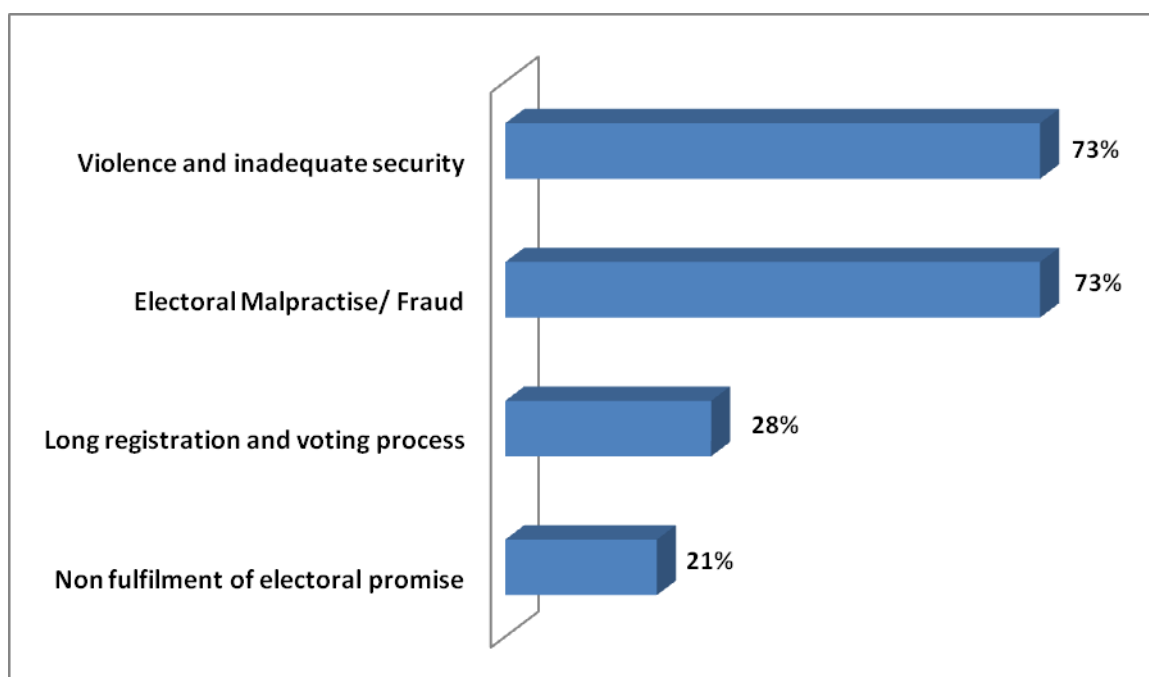
*The votes are sold, rights of the minorities are not protected, candidates do not fulfill the promises they made during campaign (Male, 57yrs)*

In addition, some respondents felt that non-fulfillment of election promise as well as tedious registration and voting processes were not as crucial in determining non-voting as violence or electoral fraud. In the words of a respondent:

*They (voters) are always afraid of being killed. It is always very hot. People are always wary... Because when they are killed, Government will not even do anything for their families.... Avoid violence and there will be large turn-out (Female, 19yrs)*

This implies that even when politicians fail to deliver on their promises, people might still show up at the polls as long as there is no violence. Similarly, more people may still turn out to vote if they are confronted only with logistic problems. In essence, then, adequate security, transparency and credible election process must be in place if voting is to be taken more seriously by the people.

This result also reveals an important fact about the democratic culture in Nigeria. Respondents affirmed that democracy gives them the power to vote in or vote out their representative, a feat possible only through elections.



**Figure 11: Reasons for voter apathy**

In almost all the regions, violence and fraud were major reasons identified by respondents for voter apathy (Table 9). In the North East, where serious apprehension was nursed due to pre-election violence in certain areas, 61% felt that violence was the major reason for voter apathy. This, however, was much lower than the figures returned for the South South (86%) and the South West (83%), reflecting the extent to which violence in general and election-related violence in particular had become an endemic problem in virtually every part of the country.

**Table 9: Reasons for voter apathy**

Region	Violence and inadequate security	Electoral malpractice / Fraud	Long registration and voting process	Non-fulfillment of electoral promise
North Central	60.0	77.5	22.5	20.0
North East	61.1	66.7	16.7	11.1
North West	85.5	83.6	9.1	25.5
South East	51.8	66.1	23.2	26.8
South South	85.9	73.2	60.6	18.3
South West	83.3	63.3	10.0	13.3

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Voter mobilization is vital to reduction of voter apathy. By definition, it requires the cooperation of stakeholders working together to ensure credible, inclusive, transparent, free and fair elections, It is for this reason that respondents were asked to indicate their feelings about how to improve stakeholder contributions to voter mobilization. The stakeholders identified included the Independent National Electoral Commission, politicians, political parties, media, Government and the voters themselves. About 123 respondents considered themselves stakeholders in the mobilization of fellow voters and the content of their advocacy messages included: making the right choice, avoiding bribery, resisting the temptation to sell votes, avoidance of other criminal acts and political violence as well as ensuring that voters defend their votes and protest within the law when necessary. Summaries of respondents' expectations from identified stakeholders are boxed below.

INEC (n=953)	GOVERNMENT (n=892)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50.1% Conduct transparent/credible election</li> <li>• 21.6% Educate the voters</li> <li>• 10.9% INEC should be independent</li> <li>• 9.0% Provision of adequate materials</li> <li>• 5.9% Recruit competent staff and Training</li> <li>• 2.5% Improve voters registration process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30.9% Provide support to INEC</li> <li>• 27.7% Fulfill electoral promises</li> <li>• 13.8% Public enlightenment campaign</li> <li>• 13.9% Provide adequate security</li> <li>• 7.1% Enforce law and order</li> <li>• 4.0% Do not interfere with electoral process</li> <li>• 2.6% Stop corruption</li> </ul>
POLITICIANS (n= 885)	PRESS (n=789)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32.8% Fulfill electoral promises</li> <li>• 17.7% Stop violence/do or die politics</li> <li>• 11.4% Educate their supporters</li> <li>• 8.7% Well organized Political rally</li> <li>• 7.7% Accept election result without manipulation</li> <li>• 7.6% Avoid bribery and corruption</li> <li>• 7.5% Responsible and honest representative</li> <li>• 6.7% Obey the INEC rule and order</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36.2% Voters education</li> <li>• 34.1% Accurate/factual information</li> <li>• 25.2% Unbiased report/ equal coverage</li> <li>• 2.3% Avoid bribery and corruption</li> <li>• 2.2% Timely coverage</li> </ul>

Fifty percent of the respondents perceived that conducting a transparent and credible election would be the most important contribution from INEC, with other contributions including voter education, a demonstration of INEC's independence, provision of adequate election materials, recruitment and training/re-training of competent staff as well as improvement of the voter registration process. Respondents allotted the following roles to other stakeholders:

**Government:** Provide support to INEC, fulfill electoral promises, engage in public enlightenment campaign, ensure adequate security for voters, stop corruption, enforce the law and order in the society as well as non-interference in the electoral process.

**Politicians:** Fulfill the electoral promise made during the campaign, stop violence and do or die politics, educate their supporters and organize peaceful political rally. Other suggestions include accepting the election results without manipulation, avoiding bribery and corruption as well as being responsible and honest representative of the people.

**Press:** Assist in voter education; provide timely, accurate and factual information, unbiased report, equal coverage and avoiding bribery and corruption.

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## APPENDIX 1

S/No	State	LGA	Wards
1	Balyesa	Yenagoa	(i) Atisa I (ii) Atisa II (iii) Atisa III
		Ogbia	(i) Otuasega (ii) Imiringi (iii) Ologi
		Brass	Okpoama
		Southern Ijaw	Oporoma
2	Borno	Bama	(i)Shehuri (ii)Soye (iii)Kasugila
		MMC	(i) Bolori II (ii) New GRA (iii) Mafoni
		Jere	(i) Mairi Kuwait (ii)UNIMAID
3	Ebonyi	Abakaliki	(i) Abakpa (ii) Kpirikpiri (iii) Azugwu (iv)Azuiyiokwu (v) Azuiudene (vi) Iyiudene (vii) Abofia (viii) New Layout
		Izzi	(i) Ndeboo Amachi (ii) Ndechi Amachi (iii) Ndegu Amachi (vi) Igbegu (vii) Inyimegu
4	Enugu	Enugu North	(i) Abakpa (ii) Asata (iii) Awkananaw (iv) China town (v) Colliery Camp (vi) Garki (vii) Independence layout (viii) New Haven (ix) Ogui (x) Ogui Nike (xi) Railway artisan quarters
		Nsukka	(i) Ibagwa Ani (ii) Nsukka Town (iii) Obimo (iv) Obollo-Afor (v) Okwutu (vi) Orba (vii) Uzo-Uwani
5	Kaduna	Sabon Gari	(i) Basawa (ii) Hanwa (iii) Samaru (iv) Anguwan Gabas (v) Chikaji
		Giwa	(i) Shika (ii) Kakangi (iii) Dan Mahawayi (vi) Gangara (v) Yakawada
6	Katsina	Katsina	(i) Wakilin Kudu I (ii) Wakilin Kudu II (iii) Wakilin Kudu III
		Mashi	(i) Mashi (ii) Karau (iii) Jigawa
7	Kogi	Dekina	(i) Egume (ii) Okura
		Lokoja	(i) Lokoja Ward I (ii) Lokoja Ward II
8	Lagos	Ikeja	(i) Ikeja (ii) Airport/Onipetesi (iii) GRA/Police Barrack (iv) Adekunle village/Jones/Ogba (v) Wasinmi/Opebi/Allen
		Ikorodu	(i) Igbogbo I (ii) Igbogbo II
9	Nasarawa	Lafia	(i) Agyaragun Tofa (ii) Akurba (iii) Arikya (iv) Chiroma (v) Gayam (vi) Makama (vii) Shabu (viii) Wakwa
		Wamba	(i) Wamba East (ii) Wamba West (iii) Konvah/Wayo
10	Ogun	Abeokuta	(i) Kuto Market (ii) Motor Park (iii) Isale Oja
		Ifo	(i) Ibogun Fashina (ii) Ibogun Oshunboye
11	Rivers	Obio/Akpor	(i) Apari (ii) Oro-Opotoma
		Emuohua	(i) Egbeda (ii) Rundele (iii) Umudioga
12	Taraba	Jalingo	(i) Kona ward (ii) Sinta 'A' ward (iii) Barade ward (iv) Turaki 'B' (v) Kachalla Sembe ward
		Gassol	

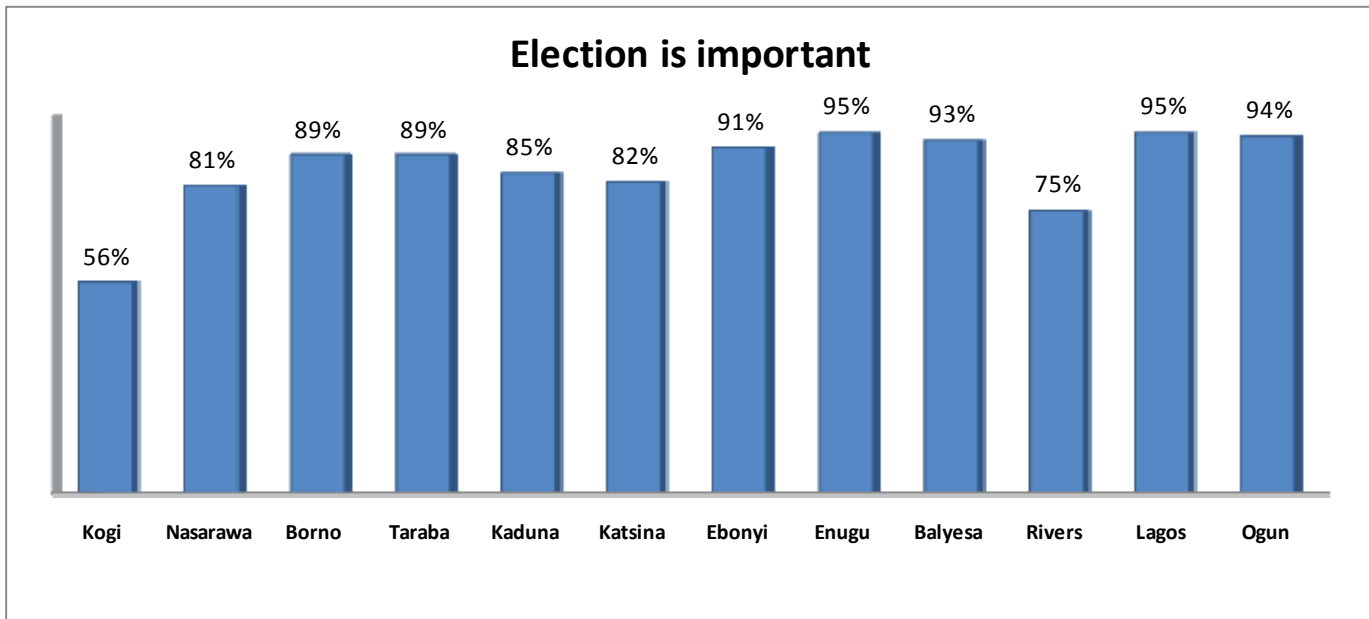
## Appendix 2

### Percentage distribution of background characteristic of the respondents by State

Characteristics	Kogi	Nassar	Borno	Tara	Kadu	Katsi	Ebon	Enug	Balyes	Rivers	Lagos	Ogun
<b>Age</b>												
18-30	37.1	48.4	45.0	54.0	43.3	29.0	36.0	44.0	47.5	34.3	29.0	32.0
31-40	48.5	33.3	38.0	31.0	22.7	34.0	30.0	20.0	19.2	26.3	39.0	40.0
41-50	14.4	15.1	12.0	13.0	13.4	25.0	20.0	15.0	20.2	17.2	25.0	20.0
Above 50	0.0	3.2	5.0	2.0	20.6	12.0	14.0	21.0	13.1	22.2	7.0	8.0
<b>Sex</b>												
Male	51.5	56.8	52.0	52.0	51.0	54.0	50.0	51.0	50.5	51.5	49.0	50.5
Female	48.5	43.2	48.0	48.0	49.0	46.0	50.0	49.0	49.5	48.5	51.0	49.5
<b>Residence</b>												
Urban	50.5	50.5	55.0	50.0	48.5	50.0	50.0	56.0	50.0	58.6	50.0	50.0
Rural	49.5	49.5	45.0	50.0	51.5	50.0	50.0	44.0	50.0	41.4	50.0	50.0
<b>Occupational Status</b>												
Paid employment	51.6	47.8	34.7	14.0	19.1	51.0	44.8	27.3	32.0	43.4	20.0	14.0
Self-employment	25.3	28.3	21.4	57.0	41.5	19.0	31.3	25.3	27.0	26.3	73.0	79.0
Unemployed	23.1	23.9	43.9	29.0	39.4	30.0	24.0	47.5	41.0	30.3	7.0	7.0
<b>Educational level</b>												
None	1.1	11.7	11.2	17.0	20.0	32.0	1.1	1.0	1.0	5.1	1.0	8.0
Primary	3.2	6.4	14.3	27.0	17.9	7.0	6.3	5.2	10.2	6.1	19.2	34.0
Secondary	38.9	14.9	31.6	38.0	34.7	23.0	27.4	11.3	42.9	31.3	53.5	46.0
Post secondary	56.8	67.0	42.9	18.0	27.4	38.0	65.3	82.5	45.9	57.6	26.3	12.0
<b>Marital status</b>												
Single	33.0	43.5	38.0	56.0	28.9	30.0	34.3	49.0	49.5	30.3	19.0	13.1
Married	64.9	52.2	57.0	44.0	70.1	69.0	60.6	43.0	45.5	61.6	78.0	84.8
Separated/Divorce	2.1	4.3	5.0		1.0	1.0	5.1	8.0	5.1	8.1	3.0	2.0
<b>Duration of stay in community</b>												
1-5	1.0	7.1	25.0	37.5	6.5	2.1	12.7	12.9	34.0	25.3	15.0	14.3
6-10	27.1	14.3	16.0	27.1	10.8	13.5	15.9	20.0	27.7	36.4	14.0	9.2
11-20	58.3	25.0	32.0	13.5	19.4	8.3	30.2	29.4	19.1	16.2	17.0	17.3
Above 20	13.5	53.6	27.0	21.9	63.4	76.0	41.3	37.6	19.1	22.2	54.0	59.2

### Appendix 3

The percentage distribution of respondents on importance of election by state



## Appendix 4a

### Reasons why elections are important (Percentage distribution) by State

Reasons	Kogi	Nassar	Borno	Tara	Kadu	Katsi	Ebon	Enug	Balyes	Rivers	Lagos	Ogun
Opportunity to elect credible leaders	72.2	78.1	50.6	57.3	66.7	50.6	68.9	61.1	79.3	87.7	75.5	91.2
Election of good leaders will lead to better development	5.6	2.7	24.7	18.0	19.8	11.1	11.1	12.6	7.6	2.7	7.4	2.2
To ensure democracy stability	1.9	6.8	10.1	4.5	1.2	24.7	4.4	13.7	9.8	4.1	11.7	4.4
Opportunity to remove bad leaders	13.0	2.7	9.0	11.2	6.2	8.6	14.4	5.3	2.2		4.3	1.1
It is civic right to vote	7.4	9.6	5.6	9.0	6.2	4.9	1.1	7.4	1.1	5.5	1.1	1.1

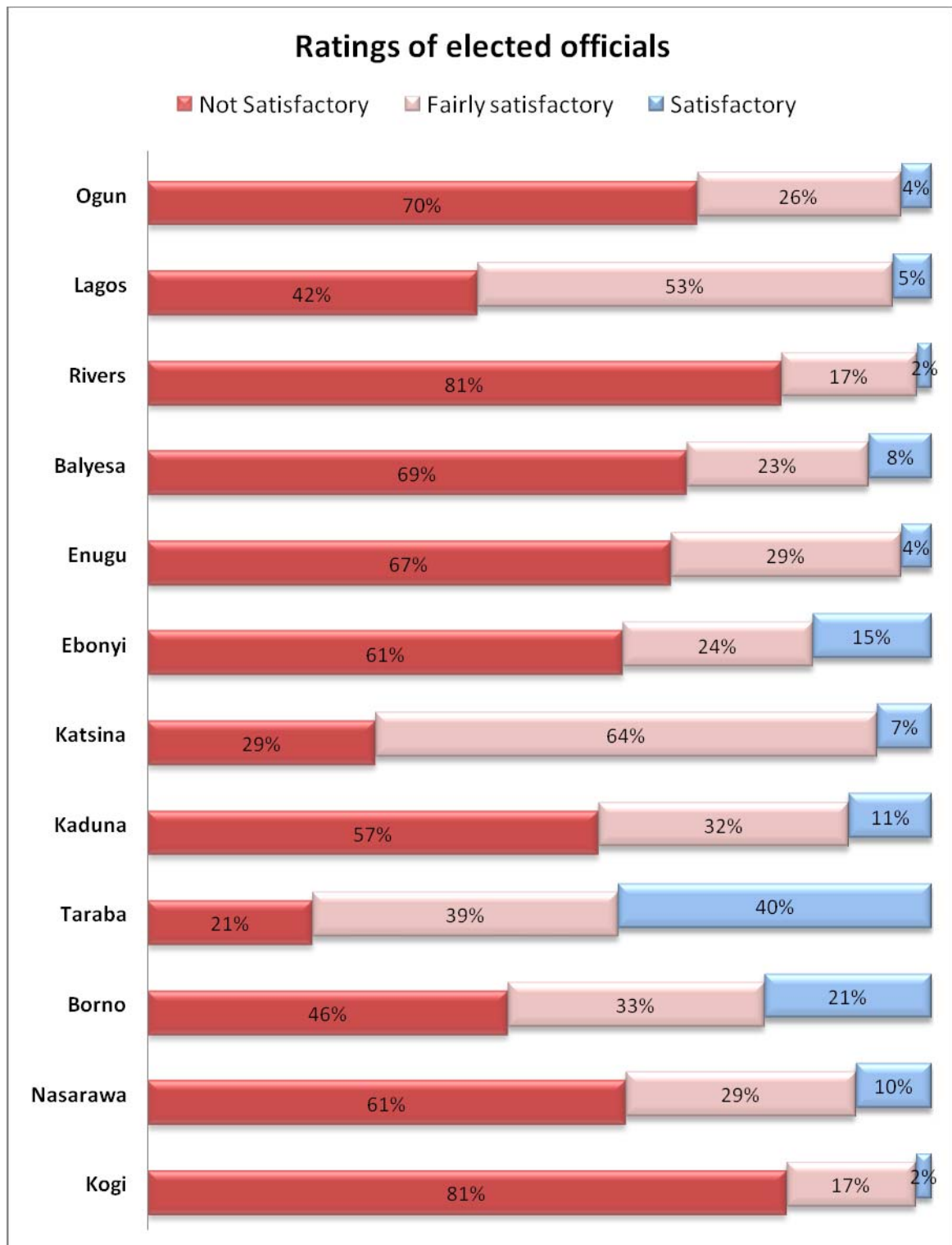
## Appendix 4b

### Reasons why elections are not important (Percentage distribution) by State

Reasons	Kogi	Nassar	Borno	Tara	Kadu	Katsi	Ebon	Enug	Balyes	Rivers	Lagos	Ogun
Election is not free and fair/ votes do not count	57.1	29.4	33.3	100.0	76.9	52.9	50.0	40.0	57.1	4.0	80.0	83.3
Unfulfilled promise by politicians	28.6	47.1	44.4	-	23.1	11.8	-	40.0	28.6	52.0	-	16.7
Violence	14.3	-	22.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	16.0	20.0	-
Corruption in the electoral system	-	23.5		-		35.3	50.0	20.0	14.3	28.0	-	-

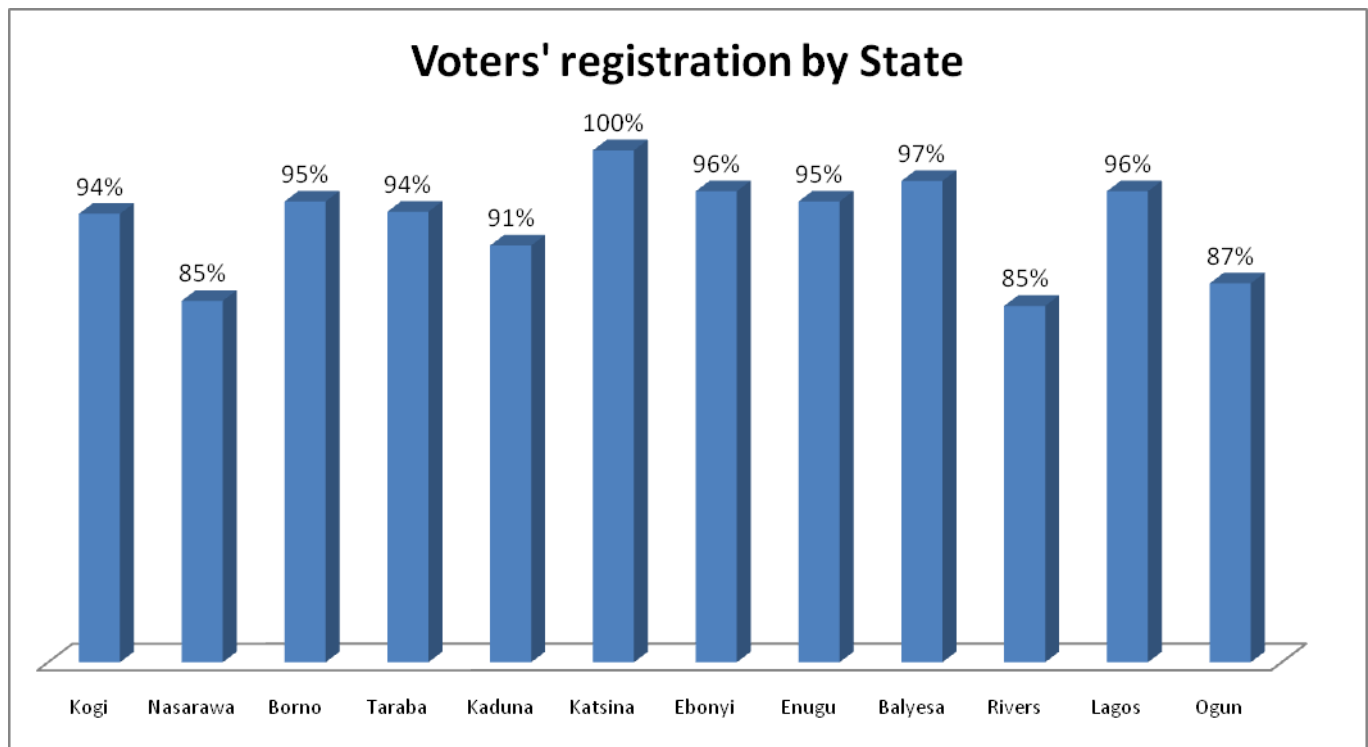
## Appendix 5

### General rating of elected officials in Nigeria by State



## Appendix 6

### Distribution of registered respondents by State



## Appendix 7a

### Respondents' reasons for registering (Percentage Distribution)

Reasons	Kogi	Nassar	Borno	Tara	Kadu	Katsi	Ebon	Enug	Balyes	Rivers	Lagos	Ogun
To elect the right leader	89.0	74.7	77.4	74.7	60.7	90.7	58.7	53.8	79.3	79.5	78.1	65.9
To exercise civic right	5.5	21.5	14.0	23.1	34.5	6.2	39.1	32.3	14.1	-	7.3	5.9
To enjoy benefits of having a Voter card	5.5	3.8	4.3	2.2	2.4	3.1	1.1	12.9	6.5	19.3	14.6	25.9
Was mandated to do so	-	-	4.3	-	2.4	-	1.1	1.1	-	1.2	-	2.4

## Appendix 7b

### Respondents' reasons for not registering (Percentage Distribution)

Reasons	Kogi	Nassar	Borno	Tara	Kadu	Katsi	Ebon	Enug	Balyes	Rivers	Lagos	Ogun
Just not interested	16.7	16.7	50.0	60.0	50.0	66.7	33.3	33.3	31.3	25.0	21.4	16.7
Votes do not often counts	50.0	83.3	16.7	40.0	25.0	33.3	33.3	-	31.3	-	7.1	50.0
Not available during registration	-	-	-	-	12.5	-	16.7	66.7	25.0	25.0	42.9	-
Duration is too short	16.7	-	33.3	-		-	-	-	-	50.0	28.6	16.7
Insecurity and violence	16.7	-	-	-	12.5	-	16.7	-	12.5	-	-	16.7



## Appendix 8a

### Voter turnout by age, sex and residence of registered respondents in each state

Characteristics	Kogi	Nassar	Borno	Tara	Kadu	Katsi	Ebon	Enug	Balyes	Rivers	Lagos	Ogun
<b>Age</b>												
18-30	67.6	89.5	92.9	98.0	97.1	100.0	97.0	88.1	97.8	89.7	96.4	76.0
31-40	84.1	100.0	94.7	96.7	95.2	100.0	100.0	84.2	100.0	61.9	92.1	81.1
41-50	92.3	92.3	80.0	90.9	100.0	96.0	100.0	85.7	90.0	75.0	96.0	82.4
Above 50	-	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	70.0	100.0	77.8	100.0	87.5
<b>Sex</b>												
Male	85.1	93.3	89.6	94.0	100.0	98.1	100.0	83.7	98.0	77.5	95.7	81.4
Female	72.7	94.4	95.7	100.0	95.0	100.0	97.9	82.6	95.7	77.3	94.0	79.1
<b>Residence</b>												
Urban	66.0	90.0	90.4	95.8	97.5	100.0	100.0	79.6	95.8	75.0	93.9	73.2
Rural	93.2	97.6	95.3	97.8	97.9	98.0	97.9	87.8	98.0	80.6	95.7	87.0

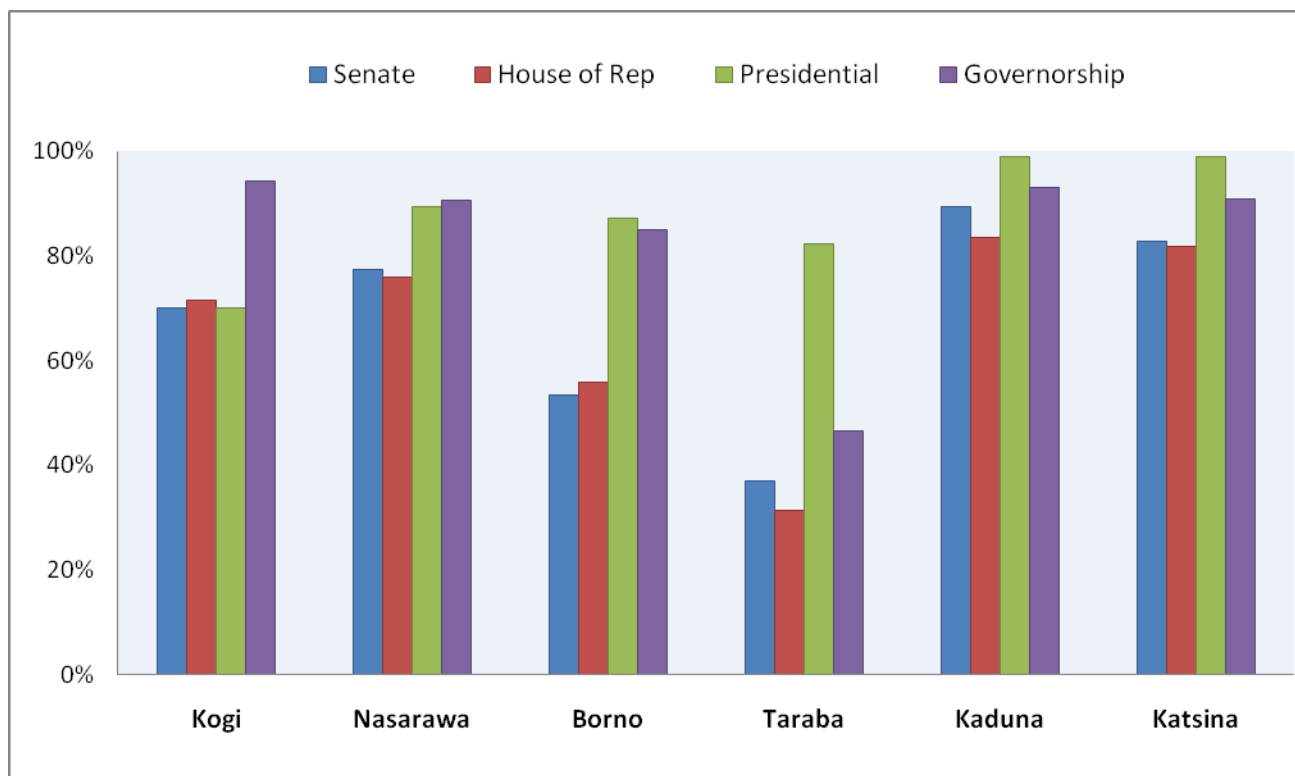
## Appendix 8b

### Voter turnout by socio-economic characteristics of registered respondents in each state

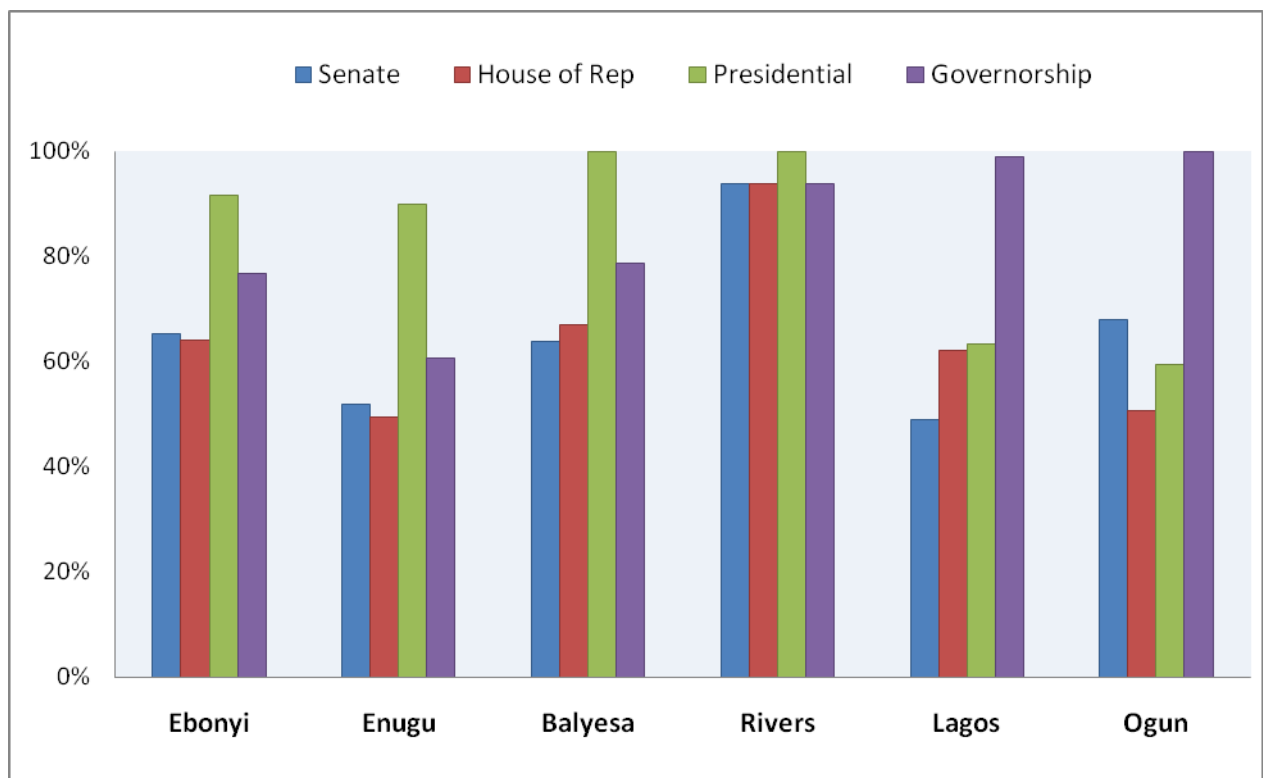
Characteristics	Kogi	Nassar	Borno	Tara	Kadu	Katsi	Ebon	Enug	Balyes	Rivers	Lagos	Ogun
<b>Occupational Status</b>												
Paid employment	86.4	95.3	87.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	84.6	96.7	84.6	94.1	71.4
Self-employment	63.6	94.1	100.0	94.4	94.4	100.0	96.6	73.9	96.2	57.1	94.4	80.9
Unemployed	75.0	89.5	92.7	100.0	100.0	96.7	100.0	86.7	97.6	83.3	100.0	100.0
<b>Educational level</b>												
None	100.0	88.9	100.0	87.5	100.0	96.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	50.0	100.0	100.0
Primary	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	66.7	100.0	50.0	100.0	82.8
Secondary	77.1	100.0	89.7	97.2	92.6	100.0	100.0	81.8	97.4	68.0	92.2	75.0
Post secondary	80.8	93.2	90.2	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.3	83.1	95.6	84.9	96.0	80.0
<b>Marital status</b>												
Single	76.7	88.9	94.4	98.0	100.0	100.0	96.9	87.5	97.9	84.6	94.4	70.0
Married	80.0	100.0	90.7	95.3	96.9	98.6	100.0	79.5	97.7	75.0	94.7	81.1
Separated/Divorce	100.0	75.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	100.0	75.0	100.0	66.7	100.0	100.0
<b>Duration of stay in community</b>												
1-5	100.0	100.0	83.3	97.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	90.0	93.5	81.0	93.3	71.4
6-10	88.0	90.9	100.0	95.8	90.0	100.0	100.0	87.5	96.0	78.1	100.0	100.0
11-20	78.4	88.9	93.3	90.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	88.0	100.0	73.3	87.5	71.4
Above 20	69.2	94.7	96.0	100.0	98.1	98.6	100.0	72.4	100.0	75.0	96.1	81.6

## Appendix 9

### Registered Voter turnout plan for April 2011 election in Northern states

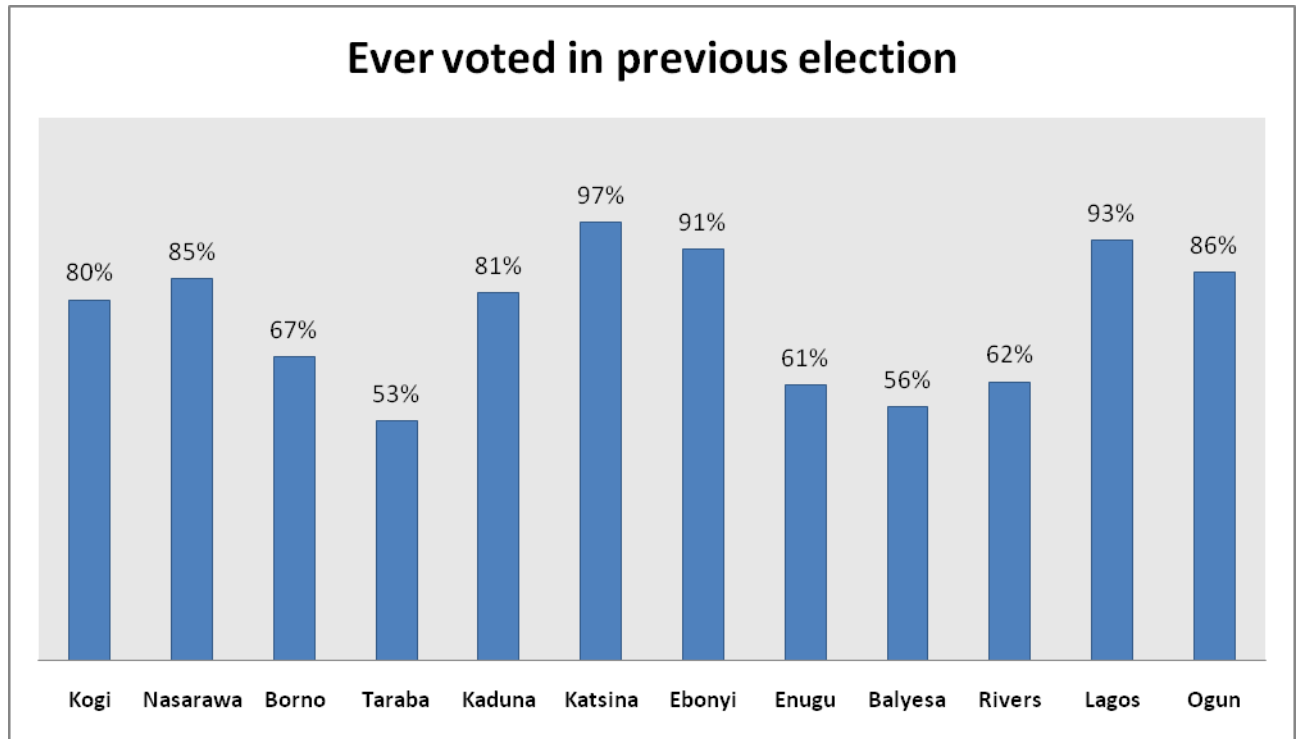


### Registered Voter turnout plan for April 2011 election in Southern states



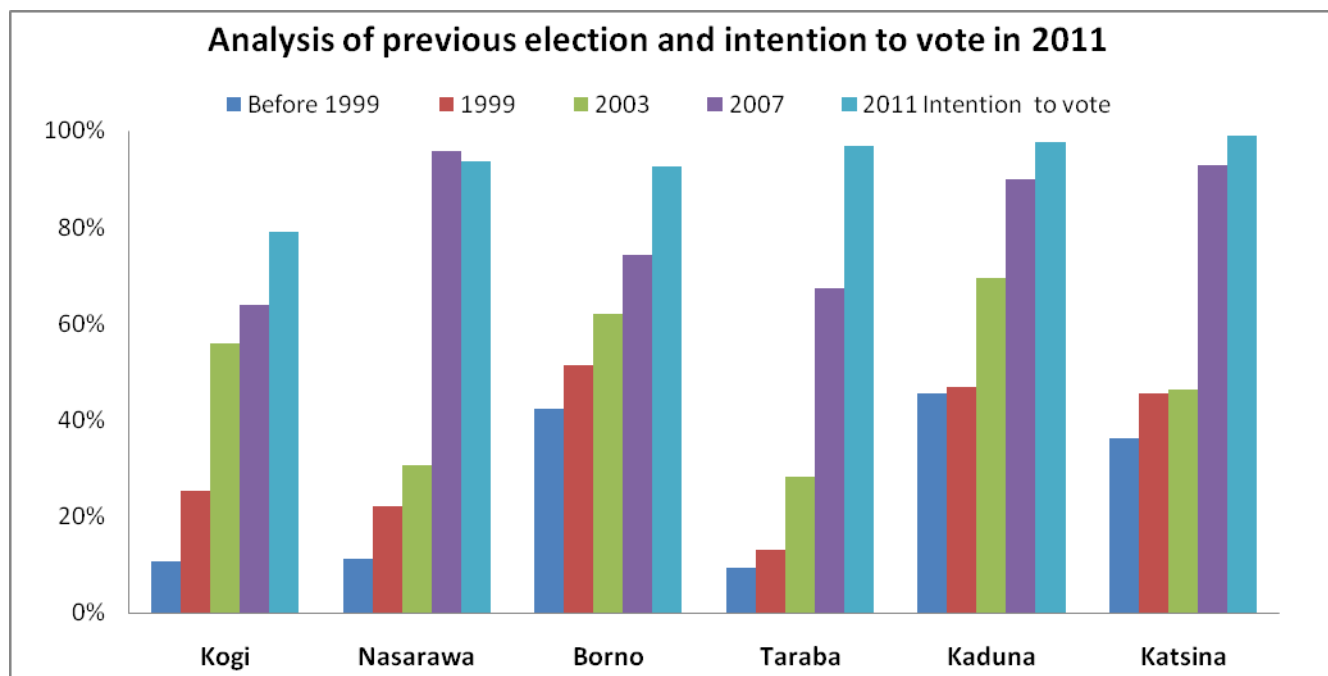
## Appendix 10

Percentage distribution of respondents who have voted in at least one of the previous election by states

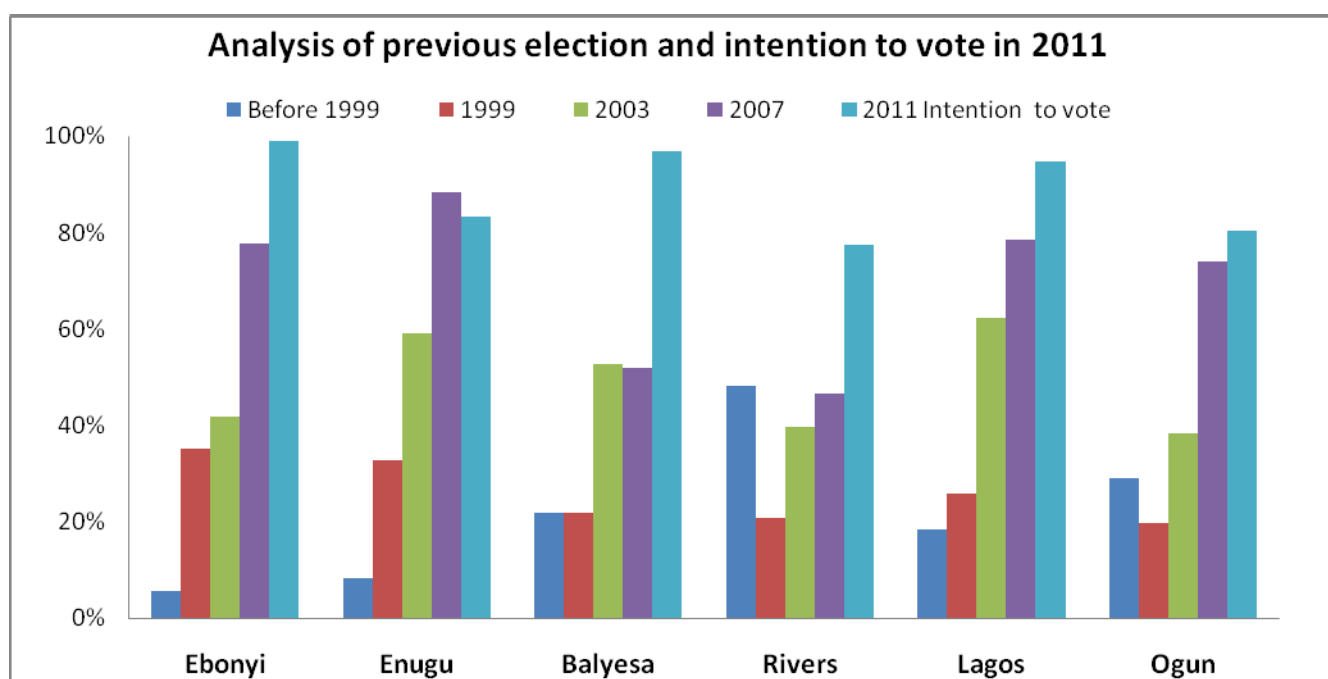


## Appendix 11

### Analysis of previous election and intention to vote in April 2011 in the Northern states



### Analysis of previous election and intention to vote in April 2011 in the Southern states



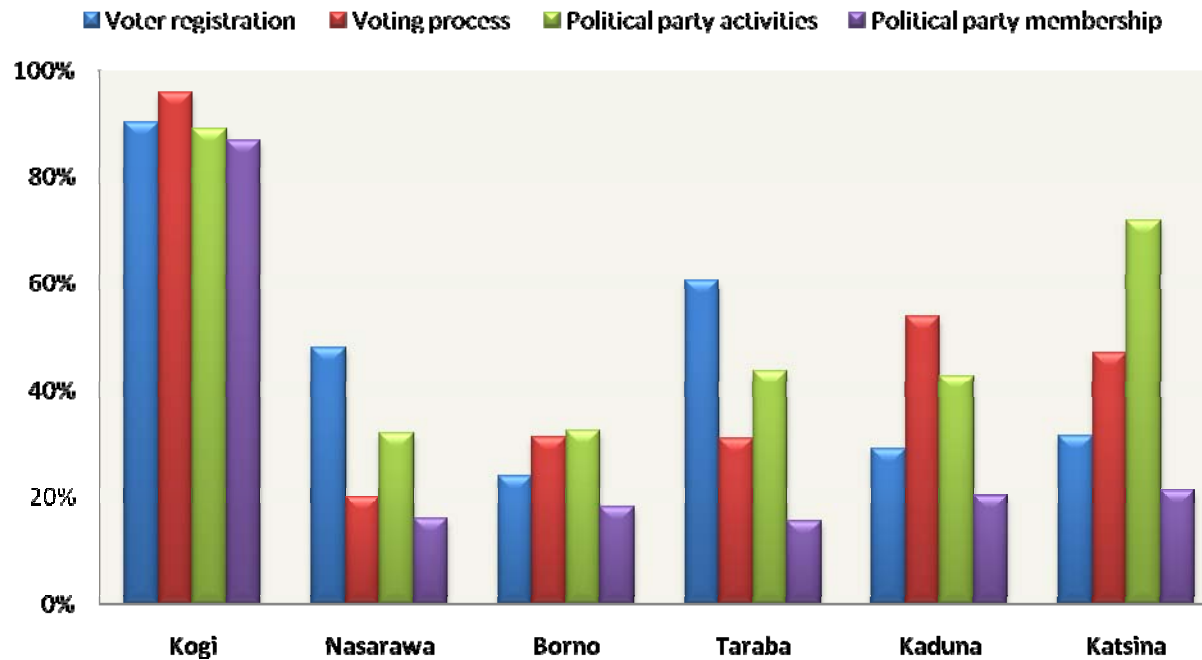
## Appendix 12

### Experience at past elections (percentage distribution)

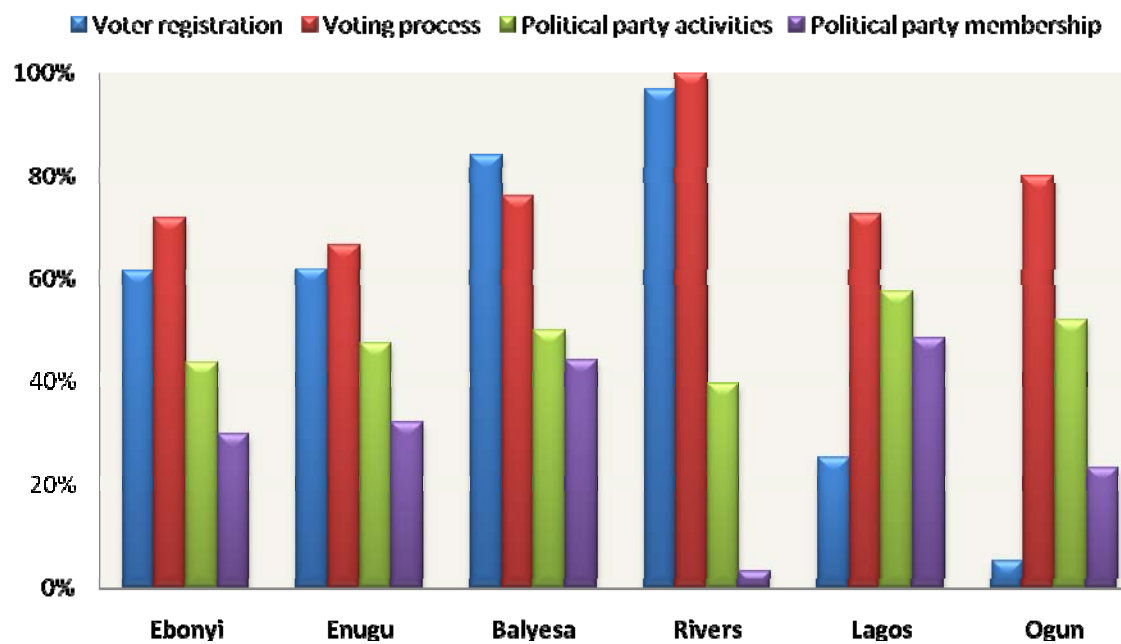
Reasons	Kogi	Nassar	Borno	Tara	Kadu	Katsi	Ebon	Enug	Balyes	Rivers	Lagos	Ogun
Election not free and fair, stealing of ballot boxes, manipulation of results	18.8	53.8	45.5	44.1	34.3	74.0	51.3	45.5	22.6	32.1	22.5	27.2
Well conducted and peaceful election	10.1	4.6	6.1	41.2	26.9	6.3	10.5	7.3	54.7	41.1	60.7	58.0
Violence and fighting	71.0	26.2	33.3	11.8	32.8	18.8	32.9	25.5	15.1	19.6	14.6	13.6
Election is not well organized/logistic problems	-	15.4	15.2	2.9	6.0	1.0	5.3	21.8	7.5	7.1	2.2	1.2

## Appendix 13

### Phases of manifestation of voter apathy in Northern Nigeria



### Phases of manifestation of voter apathy in Southern Nigeria





## Appendix 14

### Person(s) responsible for Voter apathy in Nigeria

State	INEC	POLITICIANS	GOVERNMENT	PRESS	VOTERS
Kogi	39.2	6.2	52.6	1.0	-
Nasarawa	54.7	45.3	38.9	37.9	3.2
Borno	48.0	26.0	27.0	13.0	16.0
Taraba	79.0	30.0	21.0	20.0	2.0
Kaduna	50.5	58.8	51.5	18.6	2.1
Katsina	11.0	53.0	54.0	5.0	17.0
Ebonyi	80.0	71.0	77.0	67.0	18.0
Enugu	28.0	48.0	52.0	3.0	26.0
Balyesa	21.0	48.0	61.0	4.0	26.0
Rivers	29.3	45.5	57.6	3.0	34.3
Lagos	23.0	37.0	68.0	1.0	5.0
Ogun	50.0	57.0	55.0	2.0	-

## Appendix 15

### Reasons for voter apathy by state

State	Violence and inadequate security	Electoral malpractice / Fraud	Long registration and voting process	Non-fulfillment of electoral promise
Kogi	100.0	100.0		
Nasarawa	59.0	76.9	23.1	20.5
Borno	60.0	60.0	20.0	20.0
Taraba	62.5	75.0	12.5	
Kaduna	88.5	84.6	9.6	23.1
Katsina	33.3	66.7		66.7
Ebonyi	22.2	66.7	16.7	55.6
Enugu	65.8	65.8	26.3	13.2
Balyesa	50.0	25.0	25.0	25.0
Rivers	88.1	76.1	62.7	17.9
Lagos	83.3	50.0	16.7	
Ogun	83.3	66.7	8.3	16.7

## Appendix 16

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### 2011 OPINION SURVEY ON VOTER APATHY IN NIGERIA

#### STRUCTURED INTERVIEW IDENTIFICATION

STATE:	STATE CODE:
LGA:	LGA CODE:
WARD:	WARD CODE:
COMMUNITY/STREET:	COMMUNITY CODE:
STARTING TIME:	END-TIME:

Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening. My name is \_\_\_\_\_

I am conducting a survey to assess the degree of voters' apathy (voters' disinterestedness) in Nigeria. The result of this survey will be used to improve future voter education and awareness programmes for elections, as well as address other policy matters. You have been selected by means of a random or chance selection in this exercise. Your views are strictly confidential. Please provide answers to the best of your knowledge

1. Gender:                      MALE [ ☐ ]                      FEMALE [ ☐ ]
  
2. Age as at last birthday:                      \_\_\_\_\_ Years Old
  
3. Level of Education:    None                      [ ☐ ]  
    Primary                      [ ☐ ]  
    Secondary                      [ ☐ ]  
    Post-Secondary                      [ ☐ ]  
    Others, Specify \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Occupational Status: a) Paid Employment  
    b) Self-employment  
    c) unemployed

If a), Profession:

5. Religion: Islam, Specify the Sect: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Christianity, Specify Denomination: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Traditional \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others, Specify: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Marital Status: Single [ ]  
 Married [ ]  
 Separated [ ]  
 Divorced [ ]  
 Widowed [ ]
7. Duration of stay in community (in years): \_\_\_\_\_ -
8. State of Origin: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Ethnic Group: \_\_\_\_\_

10. WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL IMPRESSION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS IN NIGERIA?

- a. Satisfactory [ ]  
 b. Fairly satisfactory [ ]  
 c. Not satisfactory [ ]  
 d. Others, specify \_\_\_\_\_

11. DO YOU THINK THAT ELECTIONS ARE IMPORTANT IN NIGERIA? YES [ ]  
 NO [ ]

12. IF YES: WHY?

.....

.....

.....

.....

13. IF NO: WHY NOT?

.....

.....

.....

.....

14. HOW CAN ELECTIONS BE IMPROVED UPON IN NIGERIA?

.....

.....

.....

.....

15. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS/ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR VOTER APATHY IN NIGERIA? (Rank in order of culpability from most important) 1=most imp; 2=important; 3=fairly imp 4=not important; )

- a. INEC
- b. GOVERNMENT
- c. POLITICIANS
- d. PRESS
- e. OTHERS.

.....

PLEASE EXPLAIN:

.....

.....

.....

16. WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE VOTER MOBILISATION BY

INEC	GOVERNMENT	POLITICIANS	PRESS	OTHERS

17. CAN VOTING HELP TO PICK THE RIGHT LEADERS IN NIGERIA? YES [ ] NO [ ]

18. IF YES,  
WHY.....  
.....  
.....

19. IF NO, WHY NOT?  
.....  
.....  
.....

20. DID YOU REGISTER AS A VOTER? YES [ ] NO [ ]

21. IF YES, FOR WHAT REASON?  
.....  
.....  
.....

22. IF NO, FOR WHAT REASON?  
.....  
.....  
.....

23. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY FRIEND/NEIGHBOUR WHO REFUSED TO REGISTER? YES [ ] NO [ ]

24. DO YOU PLAN TO VOTE IN THE COMING POLLS? YES [ ] NO [ ]

25. IF YES, IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING:

- a. Senate [ ]  
why.....
- b. House of Representatives [ ]  
why.....
- c. Presidential [ ]  
why.....
- d. Governorship [ ]  
why.....

26. IF YOU HAVE DECIDED ON a/b/c or d: WHY?

.....

.....

27. IF NOT, WHY NOT?

.....

.....

28. WERE YOU MOBILISED TO REGISTER?

a. YES [    ]

b. NO [    ]

29. IF YES, BY WHOM?

.....

.....

30. HAVE YOU BEEN MOBILISED TO VOTE?

.....

31. IF YES, BY WHOM?

.....

.....

32. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO VOTE?

.....

.....

.....

33. DID ANYBODY OFFER TO PAY YOU TO REGISTER?

.....

34. DID ANYBODY PAY YOU TO VOTE?

.....

35. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE REASON WHY REGISTERED VOTERS  
REFUSE TO VOTE ON ELECTION DAY?

.....

.....

36. HAVE YOU EVER VOTED AT ELECTIONS? YES [ ] NO [ ]

37. IF SO, WHICH  
ELECTIONS?.....

38. IF YES, WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE?  
.....

39. IF NO, WHY NOT?  
.....

40. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY PERSON WHO REGISTERED BUT REFUSED TO  
VOTE IN AN ELECTION?

YES [ ] NO [ ]

41. WOULD YOU BLAME THOSE WHO REFUSE TO EXERCISE THEIR  
FRANCHISE?

YES [ ] NO [ ]

42. IF YES, EXPLAIN  
.....

43. IF NO, EXPLAIN  
.....

44. ARE YOU AWARE OF THE MANIFESTOES OF ANY OF THE POLITICAL  
PARTIES?

IF SO: WHICH ONES?  
.....



45. IF YOU WILL NOT VOTE, PLEASE LIST THREE FACTORS THAT MADE YOU DECIDE NOT TO VOTE

a.

b.

c.

25. INDICATE PHASES IN WHICH VOTER APATHY CAN MANIFEST (POLITICAL PARTY MEMBERSHIP; POLITICAL ACTIVITIES; VOTER REGISTRATION; VOTING ETC)

.....  
 .....  
 .....

26. Rank on a scale (provide the scale: EG) the extent and degree of responsibility of the following for voter apathy?

	Highly Responsible (1)	Responsible (2)	Not responsible (3)	
INEC				
Government				
Politicians				
Press				
Voters themselves				
Others/specify				

Provide any general comment on Voters' Apathy in Nigeria

Thank you.

