

**A RETROSPECTIVE APPRAISAL OF THE 2014 GUBERNATORIAL
ELECTION IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA: LESSONS IN DEMOCRACY
AND GOOD GOVERNANCE**

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Abstract

Electoral and political developments in the Southwest Nigeria, where Ekiti State is situated have always attracted considerable attention in extant scholarship. Most existing studies have concentrated on the manifestation and changing scenes of electoral and political conflicts in some parts of the Southwest. Nevertheless, the 2014 gubernatorial election in Ekiti State has not attracted much systematic academic attention despite the peculiar events and developments that characterized that election in the historical anal of Ekiti State in particular, and Nigeria in general. Therefore, employing primary and secondary sources of data collection, this study attempts a retrospective appraisal of the intricate dynamics of the 2014 gubernatorial election in Ekiti State with a view to systematically analyzing the concomitant implications for democracy and good governance in the polity. Findings revealed that despite some acclaimed capital projects although carried in some parts of the state by Governor Kayode Fayemi, unpopular policies of his administration, declining public trust in the ruling party and lack of internal democracy in the APC provoked “protest voting” by the electorate in favour of the PDP during the election. Thus, the 2014 gubernatorial election in Ekiti State marked a landmark development in the political history of the state arising from victory of Ayo Fayose of the PDP over the incumbent. The study submits that credible electoral framework, intensive democratic education,

deliberate people-oriented delivery of democracy dividends and purpose-driven internal democracy in the political parties are of capital importance for effective democratic process and productive governance in Ekiti State.

Keywords: 2014 gubernatorial election; Democratic process; Protest Voting; Democracy.

Introduction

After many years of military intrusion in politics, Nigeria experienced democratic rebirth with the emergence of the Fourth Republic in 1999. However, electoral disputes, among other variables have remained an enduring image of the electoral process, thereby constituting potential threat to the democratic consolidation in the country. The Southwestern Nigeria, where Ekiti State is situated, has being an epicenter of scholarly discourse considering its intricate dynamic influence on Nigeria's democratic experimentation (Ademoyega, 1981; Babarinsa, 2003; Osaghae, 2002; Adebani, 2003; Albert, 2011; Olukotun, 2007; Egwu, 2007).

Nevertheless, emerging trends characterizing the 2014 gubernatorial election in the history of Ekiti State have not been well captured in the literature despite the unprecedented implications these have had for the democratic experimentation in the country since the inception of the fourth republic. Therefore, this study attempted a retrospective appraisal of the 2014 gubernatorial election in Ekiti State with a view to filling the obvious historical lacuna in the study area, and by so doing, putting the chronology of democratic developments in Nigeria's fourth republic in proper perspective.

Employing primary and secondary sources of data collection, the study seeks to identify the variables that influenced the electoral behavior of the electorate across party divides in view of the implications for grassroots democracy and post-election social integration in the state. The study examined the socioeconomic and political events that characterized the tenure of Dr. Kayode Fayemi and related pre-election intraparty and interparty activities in the state and determines how these had influenced the electoral behavior of the Ekiti people on the Election-Day.

Without undermining the impact of other political parties that participated in the 2014 gubernatorial election in the state, the study attempted to lay specific emphasis on the three major political parties in that election, namely All Progressive Congress (APC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the Labour Party (LP). The reason for this is simply because these three invariably represented the overall characteristics and dynamics of the political events in the election under consideration as displayed by the political parties, and for the purpose of coherent collection, analysis and interpretation of data.

The study examined the intriguing trajectories that characterized the 2014 gubernatorial election in Ekiti State in view of the implications for governance and democratic experimentation in Nigeria. The study beamed investigation searchlight into the activities of the political parties with a view to determining how electoral violence, monetary inducement for vote buying and other forms of electoral malpractices compromised the credibility of the exercise that seemed to be free and fair on the face value. The organizing thrust of this study is that undemocratic tendencies in the 2014 gubernatorial election constituted potential threats to good governance and grassroots participatory democracy in Ekiti State in particular, and Nigeria in general.

Conceptual Issue: Liberal Democracy

Election has remained an indispensable component of democracy in modern times. This is because it is considered as an important criterion for political representation in a democracy (Heywood, 2003). Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of human Rights describes election as the very basis of legitimate governmental authority. For any leadership to command popular acceptability, credibility and legitimacy in a democratic environment, the electoral process under which such leadership emerges must be conducted in a free, fair and equitable atmosphere.

However, election is just one of the major preconditions for the entrenchment of democratic culture in a political system because democracy has both electoral and non-electoral components (Heywood, 2003). Any political system that observes the electoral components of democracy at the expense of its non-electoral components is regarded as “electoral democracy”, or 'electoral fallacy' (Johnston, 2001; Green & Luehrmann, 2003). On the other hand, any democracy that fulfills both the electoral and non-electoral conditions of democracy is commonly known as 'Liberal democracy'. Democratic election which is a major corner stone of liberal democracy has certain characteristics as identified by Alemika:

- *Universal or inclusive suffrage, including right of all adults to vote or to run for office;*
- *Independent electoral institutions and tribunals;*
- *Adequate and timely funding of electoral institutions and tribunals;*
- *Explicit electoral rules;*
- *Efficient compilation of comprehensive and accurate voters' register;*
- *Adequate information on voters' registration and polling centres;*
- *Free and fair administration of polls –devoid of monetary and other forms of corruption, fraud and intimidation;*
- *Accessibility of polling centres to registered voters;*
- *Adequate, but non-repressive and non-partisan deployment of security agencies and measures to ensure safety of polling and collation centres and of voting materials; and*
- *Accurate counting of votes and declaration of results (Alemika, 2007: 148-149).*

Suffice it to submit that liberal democracy is “*a political system in which the citizenry enjoys a number of basic civil and political rights and in which their most important political leaders are elected in free and fair elections and accountable under the rule of law*” (Alemika, 2007: 148-149). Criteria for liberal democracy are encapsulated in the 2007 World Bank reports in which it published indicators of good governance

comprising six broad dimensions, namely:

- i. Voice and accountability;
- ii. Political stability and absence of violence;
- iii. Government effectiveness;
- iv. Regulatory quality;
- v. Rule of law; and
- vi. Control of corruption.

An often-neglected aspect of Liberal democracy is the socio-economic rights of all citizens. Adejumobi (2000:9) highlights this when he stated that “liberal democracy especially as it canvassed for Third World countries weighs high in the claim for civil and political rights, but very silent, if not against socio-economic rights”.

Most democratic states in the third world are categorized at the bottom billion because they seem to have reflected shallow indices of liberal democracy and with considerable indices of political violence (Collier, P. 2010). This is because they treat democracy as an event rather than a process by observing the rituals of conducting periodic elections without deepening the tenets and practice of consolidated democracy (Johnston, 2001; Green & Luehrmann, 2003). Given the experience of the 2014 gubernatorial election in Ekiti State, it could be argued that the democratic process has not satisfied the basic criteria for liberal democracy in Nigeria.

Ekiti State in Historical and Sociological Perspectives

The state of Ekiti was one of the six new states that came into being on October 1, 1996. It was carved out of the Old Ondo State during the military administration of General Sani Abacha, as part of the memorable events to mark Nigeria's 36th independence anniversary. During early era of the Nigeria's first republic, Old Ondo State was part of Old Western region and Old Western State. Old Ondo State emerged in 1967 as a distinct state entity in Nigeria's federalist structure. For administrative convenience, the state is divided into four divisions, namely: Ekiti Central, Ekiti North, Ekiti South and Ekiti West. With Ado-Ekiti as the Seat of government, the state has 16 Local Government Areas.

The name of the state was derived from the geographical characteristic of the area where the ancestors of the people had chosen to settle: a hilly place, which in their mother tongue is referred as *“Ile Olotiti, and was coined into “Ekiti”*, which becomes a suffix attached to almost all the names of towns and villages in the state. One unique characteristic of Ekiti State in comparison to all other states of the federation is its nature of homogeneity. Unlike some other states of the federation, the state of Ekiti is not dichotomized along majority/minority groups because everyone in Ekiti is Ekiti (Akinwale, 2001). This homogeneous composition is clearly expressed in the identical suffix (Ekiti) attached to the names of almost all cities, towns and villages in the state, and from which the name of the state is derived. Examples are Ado-Ekiti, Ikere-Ekiti, Iyin-Ekiti, Aramoko-Ekiti, Ikogosi-Ekiti, Ijero-Ekiti, Oye-Ekiti, Ikole-Ekiti, Ifaki-Ekiti, Isan-Ekiti, Isan-Ekiti, Ifishin-Ekiti, Ilawe-Ekiti and so on.

Ekiti State is endowed with numerous mineral resources including granite, gold, iron ore, phosphate, and limestone, among others. The state is also blessed with many tourism attractions including Ikogosi warm spring, Ipole-Iloro Water Falls and Olosunta Hills. For instance, Ikogosi warm spring is unique natural characteristic comprising cold and warm water gushing out from one source.

Moreover, despite the fact that the state is disproportionately predominated by Christianity and Islam, religious factor does not play a domineering role in the electoral process in the state. However, the combination of homogeneous ethnic identity and religious tolerance, coupled with evidence of enviable concentration of political and educated elites in that land of honour has not made it more democratically mature than the rest parts of the southwest in particular, and the country at large.

The 2014 Gubernatorial Election in Ekiti State

The result of the 2014 gubernatorial election in Ekiti State as declared by Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) revealed that Ayo Fayose of the main opposition parties-PDP was the winner. Although this was not the first time that electoral success of the opposition would lead to change in government in the state. What is unprecedented, however, in the history of Ekiti State was the electoral victory of a former governor who aspired for a second term. What is also new in the scenario

is that no executive civilian governor who, having left office for some years has had the privilege of being re-elected for second term in office at staggered or non-consecutive intervals. What is commonplace even in the historical anal of Nigeria is the re-election of an incumbent governor into office for the second term on a consecutive basis, which coincidentally has not been experienced in Ekiti State. Although history seemed to had repeated itself in the re-election of Dr. John Kayode Fayemi (JKF), who, coincidentally lost to Ayo Fayose in 2014, the historic re-election of the latter was that such a scenario was first of its kind in the political annals of the State.

This section appraised the electoral and non-electoral developments that surrounded the 2014 gubernatorial election process in the state of Ekiti with a view to determining the effect on governance and democratic processes in the state.

Pre-Election Periods

Out of all the parties that participated in the 2014 governorship election in Ekiti State, it was only the PDP that conducted primary election, albeit in controversial circumstances. The said primary election in which a total of 14 aspirants participated took place on Saturday March 22, 2014 at the Party Secretarial in Ado-Ekiti. The aspirants under the umbrella of the PDP included Ayodele Fayose, Navy Captain Caleb Olukolade, Prince Dayo Adeyeye, Mrs. Cecilia Dada and Mrs. Margaret Ogundipe. Others were Ambassador Dare Bejide, Senator Gbenga Aluko, M. Bodunde Adeyanju, Chief Abiodun Aluko, Chief Ropo Ogunbolude, Wale Aribisale, Mr. Deji Ajayi and Peter Obafemi.

Dr. Peter Odili, former Governor of Rivers State was the chairman of the five-man delegation of the PDP National Working Committee (NWC) that supervised the election. The NWC maintained that the resolution to conduct primaries became imperative in the interest of internal democracy in the party, such that level playing ground would be provided for all aspirants without preferential treatments. A total of 544 delegates from across the 16 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state were accredited to vote in the election. Meanwhile, some of the aspirants had raised alarm to the effect that the process of the said primary election in the party was anything short of democratic transparency. Substantiating their anxiety, the aggrieved aspirants alleged that:

- (i) Fayose was not legally competent to contest considering allegations of fiscal recklessness and abuse of office leveled against him in respect to his first term in office as executive governor of the state between 2003 and 2006;
- (ii) ward delegates congress conducted on Wednesday preceding the primary did not hold in some local government areas including Ikere, Ado, Gboyin, Emure, Kelorun and Efon-Alaaye, whereas results were declared; and
- (iii) The NWC delegates were alleged of partisan disposition and so were not trusted for holding a free, fair and credible primary election (Tribune March 22, 2014. Retrieved online).

Thus, in the course of the screening exercise, 13 aspirants including Olubolade, Adeyeye, Abidun Aluko, and Mrs. Margaret Ogundipe boycotted the congress and mobilized peaceful protest in Ado-Ekiti. Protesters carried placards with various inscriptions including “all we are saying, no more primaries in the PDP” (Tribune March 22, 2014. Retrieved online).

Nevertheless, despite the protest, the NWC went ahead and conducted the election. At the end of the exercise, it was announced that Fayose won with 462 votes out of the 477 valid ballot papers. Based on their earlier insinuation, the aggrieved aspirants vehemently rejected the result and recommended that it should be nullified by the NWC to pave way for a fresh election that would be guided by the tenets of internal democracy and principles of equal representation.

However, in his acceptance remarks following his victory in the primary election, Fayose claims that he has become a new person who understands the game better on the basis of which he was not going to run a government of vengeance if elected as governor. He submits that:

I served as a state governor 11 years ago and I want to assure everybody that this is a better Ayo Fayose, more nurtured, more responsive and one that will accommodate all ... It is going to be well with this state. --- I understand the game better and I will do the needful with all of them. I will work with them. They should give me the opportunity ---. They know what I stand for and they know that this is the beginning of the end of Fayemi's

administration in Ekiti State. I brought Fayemi to government, I gave him the support and I am the man that will take him out ---- I will be the man that will take him back to where I brought him from--- (Tribune March 22, 2014).

Apart from the PDP, all other parties fielded their candidates by any means other than the conduct of primary elections. This development apparently contributed to the failure of his second term bid in 2014. The imposition of JKF as the anointed candidate of the APC was the major factor that led to the defection of Michael Opeyemi Bamidele (MOB) to the Labour Party, which eventually weakened the potential capability of the APC during the election. The argument is that had the party leadership in Ekiti State allowed the conduct of primary election, the tendency for JKF to win was still there, and which might endear the support of MOB in the interest of the party in particular, and the state in general. The argument of the leadership of the APC was that evolving a consensus candidate would enhance healthy relationship within the party as primary-inclined intra-party rancour would be avoided. Eventually, “the consequences of candidate imposition turned out to be more than the rancour that the APC leaders envisaged to avoid in the primary” (Akinaso in the Punch, Tuesday, July 1, 2014. Pp. 60). This was a gross violation of a core principle of internal democracy in political parties.

During the electioneering process, three major campaign styles prevailed across party divide, namely issue-based campaigns, non-issue-based campaigns and provocative campaigns. A combination of these campaign styles featured in electioneering process of each of the three parties- PDP, APC and LP- albeit in obviously varying degrees. The electioneering campaign period was inundated with much more violent-induced pronouncements than issue-based.

Like most campaign scenario in Nigeria, political gladiators most times demonstrated shallow ideological roots that would have inspired issue-based campaigns which in turn would have guided the expectations of the electorate. An analysis of Fayose's campaign showed that emphasis was not laid on issues of good governance, or policy responses to socio-economic problems of the state despite being a former governor of the state. His poor pedigree might be as a result of premature end of his first tenure which was condemned to systemic corruption and abuse of office.

Nevertheless, Fayose endears himself to the ordinary people and the elite through his peculiar style of grassroots politics. He mobilises fans and supporters across the state from among artisans, Okada riders, taxi drivers, civil servants and market women. He continued to claim that he was a reformed and “born again” politician who had become more democratically matured. Indeed, some defectors from other parties into PDP acclaimed that Fayose was the determinant factor for their decision. Eye witness account by the lead researcher revealed how Fayose's fans and stunt supporters expressed their feelings and endorsement of his candidacy in political chants out of resounding enthusiasm during electioneering campaigns thus: Fayose ooo; Fayose ooo, nitori re ni mo see pada si PDP, Fayosee, nitori re ni mo se pada si PDP, Fayose.... This literally interpreted as: Oh Fayose, my man, Oh Fayose, my man, it is because of you that I defected back to PDP.

What the foregoing simply suggests is that party candidates and not political parties were the deciding factors in the 2015 gubernatorial election in the state. It is, however, instructive to note that massive support for Fayose in the name of his style of grassroots politics might not be unconnected with the distribution of rice and other material goods to prospective voters in the course of electioneering campaign.

On the part of the APC, JKF, who was the incumbent governor and the standard-bearer of the APC employed some measure of issue-based campaigns by announcing the achievements of his administration and promised a leadership of consolidation if re-elected. However, opposition parties undermined Fayemi's claims by arguing that he was running elite rather than populist government. For instance, the N20 million bond raised by JKF administration from the capital market was condemned on the grounds that it put the state into long-term debt which would outlive his administration (Akinaso in the Punch, Tuesday, July 1, 2014. Pp. 60).

It is further revealed that Fayemi's unpopular policy actions and undue involvement of his wife in the power matrix within the party structure and in governance domain refrained some party stalwarts from giving useful insights concerning his campaign strategy (The punch, Friday July 1, 2014. p. 60). For instance, Fayemi's strategy of

awarding contracts to contractors from outside the state, particularly Lagos and the Diaspora was said to have impacted negatively on the voting behaviour of the electorate against Fayemi (The punch, Friday July 1, 2014. p. 60).

Another major factor that worked against JKF during the election was the arbitrary increase in the tuition of Ekiti State University and enforcement of “no payment, no examination” which was considered as insensitivity to the prevailing chronic socio-economic realities in the state in particular, and the country in general (See Jide Ojo. The Punch, Wednesday, June 25, 2014. P. 29). Hence, despite the fact that Fayemi delivered some measure of democratic dividends particularly in terms of infrastructural and human capital developments, he was not endearing to the people compared to Fayose.

On his own part, the electoral campaign of Michael Opeyemi Bamidele (aka MOB), standard bearer of LP was a mixture of issues with anger. MOB claimed that he had to defect from APC because the party leadership did not allow openness in the context of internal democracy particularly in the primary elections. Attempts to reverse the decision taken by MOB failed partly because none of the two principal actors was ready to compromise his political ambition.

The pre-election period was inundated by violence across the state. For instance, on Monday, November 4, 2013, one Foluso Ogundare, a supporter of MOB was shot dead, at Ward 3 in Emure, Ekiti State by unknown gunmen (The Punch, Tuesday, November 5, 2013. P.13). Similarly, election-inspired frictions among the Ekiti State branch of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) resulted in the killing of Omolafe Aderiye. Aderiye was a staunch supporter of Ayo Fayose apart from being a former Chairman of NURWT, Ekiti State branch (See the Punch, Tuesday, September 30, 2014. P.9). Moreover, the campaign of MOB was disrupted at Efon-Alaye when hoodlums attacked the venue of the rally, injuring his party supporters and vandalizing campaign vehicles and personal belongings (The Punch, Monday, April 14, 2014. P.19). On April 7, 2014, the convoy of JKF, the then incumbent governor and APC candidate also came under attack in Ado-Ekiti by those believed to be political opponents of JKF (The Punch, Monday, April 14, 2014. P.19).

Election Day

On Saturday 21 June, 2014, governorship election in the Ekiti State was conducted. Out of the 18 political parties that fielded candidates, the PDP, APC and LP were most competitive. The electoral umpire, INEC took a number of measures to ensure the credibility of the election which included the following:

- Customized result sheets on the basis of each local government across the state;
- Customized ballot papers on the basis of each local government area across the state;
- All ballot boxes were serially numbered according to each polling unit such that intra- and inter- Local Government transfer could not be possible;
- Recruitment of ad hoc staff to complement the efforts of permanent staff of INEC;
- Proper preparation and logistics that was capable of enhancing the professionalism, competence, integrity and impartiality of INEC.

At the end of the exercise which took place across the state, Ayo Fayose of the PDP was declared winner by the returning officer, Prof. Isaac Azuzu Azoma having had the highest number of votes cast, and having won in all the 16 Local Government Areas of the state. He was seconded by the incumbent, JKF and MOB the LP candidate took the third position. Despite the moral support JKF enjoyed from past Ekiti State governors since the inception of the 4th Republic (with the exemption of Fayose)– i.e., Chief Niyi Adebayo and Mr. Segun Oni– it did not influence the electoral behaviour of the electorate in favour of Fayemi.

Results of Ekiti State Governorship Election, June 21, 2014

NAME OF STATE: EKITI				CODE: EK		
S/N	CONTESTANT	GENDER	PARTY	VOTES RECEIVE	PERCENTAGE (TVC)	REMARK
1	VINCENT BANKOLEAIAYI	MALE	ACCOR D	268	0.07%	
2	OPEYEMI FOLAYEMI AJONYEMI	MALE	AA	146	0.04%	
3	PRINCE PETER A. BAMIGBAOE	MALE	ACPN	1,822	051%	
4	OSEKITA OLUSEYI VICTOR	MALE	AD	843	0,23%	
5	OROKO BOU	MALE	ADC	S42	0.15%	
6	MUSA AOEBAYO AYENI	MALE	APA	L224	034%	
7	JOHN OLUKAYODE FAYEMI	MALE	APC	120,433	33.41%	Second position
8	AYOOELE SAMSON OLAYINKA	MALE	CPP	967	0.27%	
9	PST. OGUNKOLADE A. JOSEPH	MALE	KOWA	222	0.06%	
10	BAMIDELE MICHAEL OPEYEMI	MALE	LP	18,135	5.03%	Third position

11	AJIBOLA JOSEPH AKINWALE	MALE	MPPP	137	0.04%	
12	ILESANMI B. EMMANUEL	MALE	NCP	322	0.09%	
13	PRINCE BANJO GBOYEG A	MALE	PDC	921	0.26%	
14	AYOOELE PETER FAYOSE	MALE	PDP	203,090	56.34%	ELECTED
15	ANIMASHAUNGOKE	MALE	PPA	1,050	0.29%	
16	EVANG. GBENGA AOEKUNLE	MALE	PPN	82	0.02%	
17	ADEKOLAADELEYEA YO	MALE	SDP	95	0.03%	
18	HON. ADENIJI A. PHILIP	MALE	UDP	67	0.02%	

a	TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED	733,766
b	TOTAL NUMBER OF ACCREDITED	369,257
c	TOTAL NUMBER OF VALID VOTES	350,366
d	TOTAL NUMBER OF REJECTED VOTES	10,089
e	TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES CAST	360,455

Source: INEC (2014)

Analysis of the results of the candidates from the three closest parties shows that the number of votes cast in favour of the winner was more than those of the other two combined. It is also revealed that there was a low turnout of eligible voters because those who did not participate in the Election-Day voting outnumbered those who actually participated. Out of 733,766 registered voters, 373,311 did not participate compared to 360, 455 of those who did. This low turnout was partly connected with the electoral apathy developed by the citizenry arising from a sense of insecurity that characterized the pre-election period across the state. This was coupled with the high concentration of security operatives across the state a week before the election.

Post-Election Period

The results of the election were received with mixed feelings by various political divides across the state. While some sections described it as victory for democracy, some argued that transparency was not displayed. There were allegations that the crackdown on APC leaders by security agencies prior to the Election Day had devastating consequences on the voting proper. It was also alleged that the arrest of some APC leaders and members on Election Day in Egbe-Ekiti, Ikere-Ekiti, Ilawe-Ekiti and Ado-Ekiti, among others amounted to Violation of the Electoral Act, thereby undermining the credibility of the election.

In any case, the incumbent governor, JKF conceded defeat in the spirit of sportsmanship. In a mid-morning broadcast to the people of the state, Fayemi submits thus:

Yesterday, Ekiti State decided following the gubernatorial elections held in the land of honour, Ekiti State, Nigeria, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has officially returned the candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) as the winner of the election. ---. If the result of the elections is an expression of the voice of our people, we must all heed your voice. --- Elections tend to be highly divisive affairs that often see brother rising against brother. Despite our diverse party affiliations, and regardless of which way we voted on Saturday, we must remember that we are all sons and daughters of Ekiti State. Ekiti State is ours to build together (The Punch, Monday, April 14, 2014. P.19).

A critical analysis of Fayemi's speech shows that his timely declaration of concession of defeat was in the interest of peace in the state, and not on conviction in the credibility of the whole exercise. In other words, by that singular act, JKF restrained his supporters from possible post-election violence in the state.

Election Impact Assessment in Ekiti State

From all indications, the nature of voting behaviour of the people could be described as “protest voting” against JKF and in favour of Fayose. It was protest voting simply because although Fayose was not ordinarily considered a better candidate to Fayemi, but the people of Ekiti wanted to push JKF out at all cost. The people were disappointed in JKF because he could not sustain the leadership trust and confidence reposed in him particularly considering his pedigree as a human rights activist. The electorate decided to “dethrone a 'king' they fought tooth and nail to enthrone on October 15, 2010 after three years of fierce legal battle (Jide Ojo, the Punch Wednesday, June 25, 2014. P. 29).

On the whole, the pattern of voting in the state was specifically demonstrated in four ways:

- (i) those who voted specifically for Fayose not necessarily on the basis of his political pedigree, but because they were against Fayemi's style of leadership;
- (ii) those who voted for Fayose for his street wisdom and navigational skills demonstrated in his so-called stomach infrastructure as a means to meet the peoples' immediate needs;
- (iii) Those who voted for Fayemi on the conviction of his performance in office; and
- (iv) Those who voted for Opeyemi Bamidele either on the basis of their conviction or simply because they did not have a preferred candidate between JKF and Fayose.

Thus, despite all compromising tendencies that questioned credibility of the election including poor turnout of voters, the votes cast demonstrated that Fayose was the most popular even if he might not be the most preferred candidate. The voting behaviour of the electorate was inspired by a number of factors including allegations of elite governance on the part of the incumbent governor, JKF. The administration of JKF was also alleged of lack of transparency in governance and unlawful accumulation of

wealth by the governor. For instance, it was being speculated that JKF was having capital-intensive investments including a private university in Ghana, which he did not possess before assuming office as governor of Ekiti State. JKF was also accused of formulating and implementing unpopular policies and programmes of no value-added to the socioeconomic and welfare of the people. Such programmes included beautification of some roadsides and locations, destruction of traders' shops in some parts of the state such as Ikere Road, post-office road, Opopo Gbooro/Secretarial road, among others in the name of infrastructural development without prior consultation with the affected shop owners, and without providing alternative locations for them ahead of the exercise.

During the post-election period, while the Ekiti State Seventh Assembly still lasted, there was attempted impeachment of Governor Fayose by the APC-controlled House of Assembly (The Punch, Wednesday, April 8, 2015. P.2). The impeachment attempt was informed by the controversy over Fayose's eligibility for contesting for the 2014 election considering cases of fiscal impropriety and abuse of office leveled against him during his first term in office. This development provoked mass protest in some major towns across the state. The affected towns included Igede-Ekiti, Itawure, Efon-Alaye, Iworoko, Ikere-Ekiti, Aisegba-Ekiti, Ise-Ekiti, and Igbemo-Ekiti (The Punch, Wednesday, April 8, 2015. P.2). Also, on Wednesday 1, 2015, the secretariat of Ekiti APC was attacked by hoodlums resulting in vandalism of vehicles and other items. It was alleged by APC members that the attack was perpetrated by PDP loyalists (The Punch, Thursday, April 2, 2015. P. 8).

The victory of Fayose during the 2014 gubernatorial election actually altered 2015 electoral calculus as the PDP made a major inroad into the south-west, the stronghold of APC. Following Fayose's victory, the number of states under the control of APC in the South-west reduced from 5 to 4, namely Ogun, Osun, Oyo and Lagos states. By implication, Ekiti and Ondo States are under the umbrella of PDP, following the defection of Ondo State Governor, Segun Mimiko to PDP from LP under which political platform he won elections in 2007 and 2013.

Since he assumed office, Governor Fayose has been fond of distributing money and food items to the people of the state in the name of addressing their needs through "stomach infrastructure". In his inaugural address on Thursday, October 17, 2014,

Fayose attested to the fact that “stomach infrastructural” was going to be part of his administration's approach to meeting the needs of the electorate. Justifying this style of governance, Fayose argues that:

If you tar the roads, you must also tar peoples' stomach. Whatever the length of road you construct or reconstruct, stomach infrastructure is compulsory. I am a governor of your imagination. I am a governor who eats boli (roasted Plantain) with you; I am the governor who drinks agbo jedi (herbal mixture) with you. I am working for you (The Nation. Friday, October 17, 2015. P.7).

Fayose's attempt to substitute “stomach infrastructure” for effective democracy and governance process implies that such a superficial social scheme will not have long-term impact on social security and sustainable development in Ekiti state. This is because it does not have well-grounded social policy response to capacity-building and human empowerment.

Another major post-election development that manifested as a result of Fayose's victory during 2014 gubernatorial election in Ekiti State was the change in the political direction in the state during the 2015 general elections. The PDP won the presidential as well as National Assembly and House of Assembly elections. For instance, the PDP won the presidential election in Ekiti State with 176,466 as against APC's 120331 (The Punch, Wednesday, April 1, 2015. P.1).

Conclusion

This study made a retrospective appraisal of the 2014 gubernatorial election in Ekiti State in view of the implications for governance and democratic process in the state. Findings show that although Fayemi embarked on certain transformative projects across the state, unpopular policies of his administration and lack of internal democracy in the APC that provoked “protest voting” by the electorate which aided the victory of the PDP during the election. Thus, the victory of Fayose in the 2014 Ekiti State gubernatorial election punctured the predominant assumption by the political elite and supporters of APC at home and in the Diaspora that the transformative project and social security initiatives embarked upon by the JKF administration would automatically translate into his re-election on a platter of gold.

However, it is revealed that Fayose's popularity at the grassroots politics of the state is not as a result of any exemplary quality of service delivery while he was governor between 2003 and 2006. Rather it is as a result of his informal interaction and association with people of the grassroots- farmers, artisans, market women, youths, and so on- majority of whom could not carefully dissect between politics and governance. It is also established that compromising tendencies of state institutions; systematic abuse of Electoral Act by stakeholders; and poor democratic orientation of the electorate undermined the process and outcome of the election with the concomitant implications for the entrenchment of liberal democratic values. This simply suggests that while electoral victory of opposition had brought about regime change in the state, it could be a counter-force for a working democracy and distorts continuity in governance if the process is replete with centrifugal forces against liberal democracy.

The so-called stomach infrastructure popularized by Ayo Fayose as part of his democratic delivery strategies is antithesis to authentic development and does not encourage accountability and transparency in office. Extending a true sense of commitment to good governance and displaying passion for social security must go beyond making caricature of democracy through stomach infrastructure and hobnobbing with the people. There is need for effective policy framework for credible electoral process and democratic education for the citizenry. This will enhance overall quality of democratic process in Ekiti State in particular and Nigeria in general.

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