

PERSONALITY AND GENDER AS PREDICTORS OF VOTING BEHAVIOUR AMONG THE ELECTORATE IN AWKA, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The study examines the voting behaviour of electorates in Awka: an inferential study of gender and personality. The participants comprised of 263 eligible voters; who are 116 males and 147 females, selected randomly from the population of the people living in Awka. The age of the participants ranged from 19 to 57 years with the mean age of 33.50 years and with the standard deviation of 3.42. The participants were selected through simple random sampling techniques. The instrument used for data collection was 10- items voting behaviour scale by Olaniyi (2004), and the Big Five Questionnaire by John (1990). Multiple regression analysis was used to analyse the data gathered from the field work. The result confirmed that females had positive behaviour more than the males which indicates that gender influences voting behaviour at significant level of $r(1, 263) = .037^$, $P < .05$. Also, significant influence of personality on voting behaviour was confirmed at $r(1, 263) = .021^*$, $P < .05$, with the significant joint influence of the two predictors on voting behaviour. Consequently, the hypotheses were accepted. It is therefore recommended that civil organization and NGOs who are concerned with increasing the knowledge of the people through sensitization programmes should make use of the implication of this study outcome, to promote more voters' education in order to ensure enduring credible elections in Nigeria.*

Keywords: Awka, Electorates, Gender, Personality and Voting behaviour,

Introduction

Democratic system of government ensures that individuals select their leader through a democratic system of electoral process called elections. During elections, individual are allowed an open-secret voting or electronic voting. Voting is regarded as a selection from a group of politicians competing for a particular vacant seat with other participants and amidst other posts needed to be filled or voting behavior is one of the major forms of political behaviour exhibited by the electorates during election and electioneering. It is however always being discussed in different social strata. Free and fair election is the hallmark of a good democracy. In free and fair elections, the electorates are allowed to exercise their franchise through their various forms of voting behavior in relation to the elections (Olaniyi, 2004). This gives a good explanation on why psephologists regard it as

a subset of electoral behavior, which can be explained from the totality of behavioral patterns of the electorates of any named constituency during the electioneering period. On the other hand, voting behavior can be described as the scientific study of the voting patterns of the electorates of various constituencies in an election; it provides insight into the sociology of the voters, factors that influence their voting patterns and the direction of their votes. Onah (1997) argued that of all the various forms of participation in the political process in a country, 'voting is perhaps the simplest, cheapest and the most form of participating in politics.

The voting behaviour in Nigeria can be explained in line with three categories of politicians; namely (1) god-fatherism or political contractors (2) Political technocrats and (3) political masses. Political fathers/ contractors are individuals who sponsor politicians of their interest, and when they win they usually recoup what they spent to secure such victory. In addition, they placed such politicians into occupation of paying some percentage of the quarterly allocation made to the state, constituency or the local government. The attitude of these political contractors have been the bane of corruption in the Nigerian body politics. This situation has led to unending embezzlements of public fund by the politicians. The technocrats are another political category that want to enthrone sanity in the Nigerian politics. But they are usually curtailed by the scarcity of resources to achieve their aims. They only resort to writing in the pages of the newspapers and magazines criticizing the government and hoping for the better days to come. The last categories of individuals are the political masses that are highly impoverished by the excessive of the politicians and their political godfathers. They are under the influence of mentality of being lead blindly. They jump to the carrots and peanuts given to them, in order to mortgage their voting conscience. All these factors affect to a greater extent the dividends of democracy.

The analysis of voting patterns invariably focuses on the determinants of why people vote as they do and how they arrive at the decisions they make. Sociologists tend to look at the socio-economic determinants of support for political parties, observing the correlations between class, occupation, ethnicity, sex, age and vote; political scientists concentrated on the influence of political factors such as contentious issues, political programmes, electoral campaigns, and the popularity of party leaders in relation to voting behaviour (Olaniyi 2004).

The aftermath of voting may involve rigging, as desperate political office holders tends to struggle at all cost to return to power and this fuels bad governance and extension of poverty. Often times, social and economic infrastructures meant to develop and improve lives are being neglected; there are also lapses on security of lives and properties. The pseudo-capitalist hegemony continues to raise its head to sustain masses economic deprivation in a bleak political future. After fifty years of developmental retardation orchestrated by political servitude, Nigerians through March 2015 elections had resolved to rescue the dying giant from its state of comatose.

The electorates usually vote for a change, a change from unimpressive past and status-quo to a new order that is expected to initiate a new dawn in the history of Nigeria and national development. The people who have for so long been eluded with good

governance and its associated factors; stood to the rescue of the nation that suffers from the plaque of her leaders. In fry of action, the people turned out massively and voted for candidates of their choice amidst political harassment and intimidation. They decided to salvage Nigeria's deeming political relevance among the committee of nations. They sacked all the non- performing political parasites and elected new leaders whom they authorized to raise political power on their behalf for the next four years (All, 2015). This is what several researchers have called political persuasion; an attempt to control the politics using ones' voting behaviour as machinations.

It should be noted that ever since the 'behavioral persuasion' pervaded the discipline of feral science in the 1950s, empirical research on political behaviour has dominated its discipline's research agenda (Ricci, 1984). Broadly defined as behavior, concerned with the relationship between citizens and their governments, political behaviour covers a large 56 areas of possible subjects of research, from the behaviors of bureaucrats and interest to the dealings of political terrorists. Among political behavior, the study of voting behavior over the years has occupied a central position, both in terms of quantity and quality. Its antecedents going back to the beginning of this century, voting research first, was predominantly and demographically oriented, an orientation partly forced upon it by the aggregate nature of the available election and census data. With the advent of first public opinion polls in the 1950s, it became possible to research on voting choice at the level of the individual voters. Stimulated by the emerging "behavioral persuasion', use of opinion polls and surveys quickly proliferated to become the dominant method of inquiry in the field of electoral research, if not in most areas of political behavior research.

The behavioral persuasion offered a clear set of guidelines for political research. Inspired by Karl Popper's philosophy of science, which posited that behaviourists of political science origin emphasized the dichotomy between factual and normative considerations/ the importance of testability as a requirement of scientific propositions and, of falsifiability and tentatively as a characteristic of scientific results. Application of the scientific method was considered crucial, both with regard to the reliability of research results to the communication of such results to the scientific community. In addition to these tenets, behaviorist political scientists also conceived of their endeavour as contributing small building blocks of piecemeal research results to a steadily expanding whole of scientific knowledge about the world of politics (Ricci 1984: 136-144); While in the early 1970s the prominence of behaviorism in political science became subject of critique by "post-behaviorists', some ten years later a certain sense of disillusion also spread among political scientists who had remained committed to behaviorism.

Theoretical Review

Social Role Theory According to social role theory, it is the differences in men and women's social roles to create gendered behaviour (Eagly, 2000). This theory focuses on the social conditions of a society instead of the passive reactions assumed in social learning theory. In this paradigm, the way in which labour is divided between men and women in society explains why men become agnatic and women become communal. It is because men are

primarily responsible for work outside the home that they adopt an agnatic framework; women's responsibility for work inside the home (even when employed) leads them to adopt a communal orientation. When women do work outside their employment patterns, it is different from those of men's jobs that require competitiveness and benefit from some amount of aggression such as business or law is male-dominated, while service industries which require the ability to nurture, such as nursing or teaching, are dominated by women.

However, social role theory does not require that men adopt an agnatic outlook or women a communal one; rather, it theorizes that it is because societies have differentiated men and women's social roles (perhaps as path-dependent extensions of evolutionary roles) that gender differences exist. Wood and Eagly (2000) have advanced a modification of social role theory that takes into account the function of physiological differences between men and women as well as the social roles they occupy.

Theories of Balance and Dissonance Basic in Festinger's theory is the notion that "the human organism tries to establish internal harmony, consistency, or congruity among their opinions, attitudes, knowledge and values. That is, there is a drive toward consonance among cognitions' (Festinger, 1957). Two cognitive elements are dissonant if they are considered at the same time. The observed one element, is psychologically implied by the other. The presence of dissonance gives rise to pressures to reduce that dissonance; the strength of these pressures is dependent upon the magnitude of the existing dissonance, thereby magnitude is a function of the importance of the dissonant elements. Strategies of dissonance reduction include a change of existing cognitive elements, the addition of new elements or a decrease of the importance of existing elements.

Besides the decision situation, Festinger (1957) identified a number of other situations that may imply the existence of cognitive dissonance. It may arise among members of a group in case of open expression of disagreement in that group. Earlier investigations of group dynamics had shown that communication processes inside groups tended towards conformity, given each member's tendency towards consonance. In case of agreement, much communication inside the group will be directed at the disagreeing person(s), and the sharper of the disagreement, the greater the group pressure towards compliance with group norms. The tendency towards consonance at the individual level leads to a tendency towards conformity at the group level (Festinger 1957).

Cognitive Theory of Voting Behaviour Cognitive psychology drew the attention of mainstream voting analysts largely as a result of the belief system debate. The public will recall that the Michigan researchers held that the mass public exhibited little cognitive constraint in their political thinking (Converse 1964; 1975). Later replications of this research, however, implied that public political thinking had become more structured during the 1960s. Probably as a result of startling events of that decade, the American voter had become more interested in politics and more aware of ideological differences (Nie et al. 1976). An alternative explanation of this increase was offered by Achen (1975); not so much the roaring sixties, but changes in the wording of survey questions and response formats accounted the differences in constraint levels recorded by the researchers (Nie et al, 1976).

In a number of subsequent studies this dilemma was solved by exposing subjects to the Converse question formats and the later formats at the same time. The outcome that the apparent change in the cognitive structure of the mass public's thinking is an artifact of the change in questionnaire stimuli and not as a result of genuine change among the public (Bishop, Oldendick, Turchfaber 1978; Luskin 1990; Sullivan & O'Connor, 1972).

The independency of responses on the format of survey questions raised some fundamental questions about the attitudinal model underlying mainstream voting research. On the one hand, in those psychological experiments in which the overt behavior could be observed apart from the attitudes which supposedly gave rise to that behavior, correlations between the two were practically zero (Wahlke 1976). This fact was cogently illustrated in the "obedience to authority studies, in which the social setting, surveillance and scientific authority invoked in the experiments induced a majority of the subjects to administer "lethal" shocks to fellow humans, contrary to those subjects' own attitudes (and the expectations of behavioral experts as well) (Milgram 1974). On the other hand, tailoring attitudinal measurements are more closely to the voting response which tends to lead to somewhat trivial, if not tautological statements, like "voters who strongly identify with the Republican Party show a strong tendency to vote for that party. In such cases the "psychological distance" between independent and dependent variables may become too small, representing two sides of the same dispositional coin (VanDeth 1986).

The most important objections against the Michigan-inspired mainstream research concerned the fact that measurements of attitudes and behavior typically abstained from assessing the context in which attitudes operate, although contextual variation can make a large difference in the ways attitudes are related to behavior. The confusion surrounding the nature of mass belief systems is due to the fact that voters respond differently to different issue formats, which different formats in their turn correspond to meaningful differences in stimuli that voters encounter in real political situations. There are single, general forms of an attitude stimulus which can affect the general procedure for recording an attitude response in a Voting environment (Bennett 2017).

In comparison to these seemingly troublesome aspects of the attitudinal approach, a cognitive model seemed to have two main advantages. First, the cognitive approach is both general and flexible. A voter may have dozens (or even hundreds) of schemata available for representing political situations and for engaging belief processes. Which schemata are activated is dependent upon the voter's perception of the social context of the stimuli and his relationship to that context. The model thus addresses the important of how people can respond differently and at the same time meaningfully to the same situation. Second, the cognitive approach accounts for variation in individual and action in similar situations over time; subtle differences in a context may occur or can engage individuals in different schemata, resulting in a different judgment in a particular environment (Bennett, 2018).

The cognitive approach seemed particularly well-suited to address an important question that emerged from the belief systems debate: given the fact that voters usually

display such low levels of political sophistication, how they do that nevertheless; do make some sense in the existing political world, instead of concentrating on absolute levels, the conceptualization of the cognitive model focused on the ways voters acquire process and organize the information available to them (Dalton & Wattenberg 1993; Kinder 1983; Popkin 1994). Central in most cognitive accounts of electoral decision-making is the concept of schema, 'organized prior knowledge, abstracted from experience with specific instances, that guides the processing of new information and the retrieval of red information (Conover & Feldman 1984: 96), see for related definitions (Dalton & Wattenberg 1993; Fuchs & Klingemann 1990; Hamill & Lodge 1986; Lau & Sears 1986ab; Miller, Wattenberg, Malanchuk 1986).

Another potentially important schema was ideology, the significance of which already been indicated by Downs (1957). Fuchs & Klingemann (1990: 205). Provide the first full treatment of ideology in schematic terms, defining it as means for education of complexity, which serves primarily as an orientation function for individuals and a communication function for the political system'. In order to fulfill functions, the schema should have the structural properties of symbolic generalization, limitation of meaning elements and binary schematization, all of which they present among European voters, but less so among Americans. When empirically pitted against the party schema, however, ideology proved to be less effective in structuring political information (Hamill & Lodge. 1986). A third subject of possible schematic processing concerned the personality of U.S presidential candidates. On the basis of cognitive theory, it could be assumed that voters organize their thoughts about presidential candidates into broad preexisting categories, which direct their attention and assist them in the storage and retrieval of pertinent information. In an empirical analysis of open-ended evaluations, Miller, Wattenberg, Malanchuk (1986), discovered five of such cognitive categories underlying personality traits of candidates such as competence, integrity, reliability, charisma and personal traits, all of which proved quite stable in sage over time (Miller, Wattenberg, Malanchuk,. 1986; Anker 1995).

Personality Theory Research evidences supports many aspects of Eysenck's theories. However, in recent years, a consensus has emerged that five factors, which which overlaps imperfectly with Eysenck's three dimension, best characterize the personality structure. (Wiggins and Pincus, 1992). Although this factors are not accepted by all personality researchers (Block, 1995; Eysenck, 1992; Pervin, 1994). The Movement towards the five-factor model represented attempts to find structure among the large list of traits that Allport and Odbert, (1936) had extracted from the dictionary. The traits were boiled down into about 200 synonyms clusters that were used to form bipolar traits dimensions that have a high pole and low pole, such as responsible versus irresponsible. Next people were asked to rate themselves and others on the bipolar dimensions, and the ratings were subjected to statistical procedures to determine how the synonyms clusters were interrelated. Using this method, several independent research teams came to the same conclusion: that there are only five basic dimensions underlying the traits people use to describe themselves and others.

These five factor models are as follows: Extraversion which boarders; talkative, energetic and assertive versus quiet, reserved and shy. Agreeableness which includes; sympathetic,

kind, and affectionate versus cold, quarrelsome and cruel. Conscientiousness entails being organized, responsible, and cautious versus careless, frivolous, and irresponsible. Neuroticism encompasses being stable, calm, and contented versus anxious, unstable and temperamental. Finally, the openness to experience is the caveat for being creative, intellectual, and open-minded versus simple shallow, and intelligence. Assessing the theories reviewed in this study. The five-factor model of the personality theory is hereby adopted as the theoretical framework of this study, because the emphasis is more on the personality of the electorates in relation to their voting behaviours.

Empirical Review

In line the conceptual and theoretical model of this study, several empirical findings have been brought forward in an attempt to understand the relationship of other variables with the construct. A study by (Olaniyi, 2004) investigated how socioeconomic and gender differences affected voting behavior. The participant was 815 who reported having voted in the last general elections in 2003. Of the 815 voters 644 (79%) were married, 94 (11.5%) were single, 64 (7.9%) were divorced, 14 (1.5%) were separated or widowed; 447 (55%) were men and 368 (45%) were women. The mean age was 37.69 years. In regard to education only 6.8% had not completed high school, 33.5% had a high school education, 35.2% had University education, 12.5% had Primary school education and 12% indicated none. The instrument used for the study was voting behaviour scale by the author. It is a 10-item index scale.

The result demonstrated that both socio-economic status and gender affected the voting patterns of the electorates. On overall women rather than men were found to have the highest voter turnout and indicated to have participated in more voting behavior than their male counterpart. The findings also showed objectively that electorates within the middle class and above participated less in the voting processes than all their two other counterparts. These findings also showed that economic hardship was a major contributor to electorates demanding a political change and this correlated highly with voting patterns and voting behaviour across socio-economic status.

Personality traits have also been found as a model relevant to the explanation of voting behaviour. Previous study by Eagly, (2000) emphasized that extroverts and those personalities open to change are more inclined to vote towards a new government than other types of personality and are prone to be associated to change process of propaganda than the rest types of personalities. The authors also argue that voting pattern and needs do not necessary match the electorates needs to sack un-performing government but rather reiterates how near and distant the personality traits associated to the propaganda, which is directly associated to political processes and behavior. Voting behaviour for Eagly (2000) reflects voters' associations to the political parties, the candidates and the state of affairs under which the elections is taking place.

Earlier, Eagly (2000) carried out a study which suggested that the reason why more women are involved in the voting behaviour than men stems from the fact that the socio-biological difference makes women to be more inclined to communal duties than agentic duties which men are directly involved in. For the author, the voting exercise and behavior

is more of a communal action and function than an agentic one and may explain the reason for more voting behavior from women than men. The participants for the author's study were 817 eligible votes, 316 were male while 501 were females. The findings of this research suggest that there exists qualitative difference in gender and voting behavior for middle age adult voters than their adolescent counterpart.

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Sule (2019); titled: The 2019 presidential election in Nigeria: An analysis of the voting pattern, issues and impact. This study examined the process of the conduct of the 2019 presidential election, the outcome and analysis of the voting pattern and its implication. The work adopted both primary and secondary sources of data. The research discovered that the outcome of the 2019 general election continued to reflect the voting pattern in Nigeria where ethno-religious and regional affiliations determine how the electorates choose their president even though the two major contenders this time emerged from the region unlike the previous situations. The study therefore recommends that there is a need for massive enlightenment among electorates towards the choice of leaders based on performance and not on sentiments.

In a study conducted by Lago (2019) on: A research agenda in election and voting behaviour in a global and changing world. He demonstrated that electoral democracies have expanded rapidly worldwide in the last decades. According to the dichotomous measure of democracy by Boix, Miller & Rosato (2013), while in 1975 there were 47 democracies in the world (the 30.92% of the existing countries). In 2015 the number of democracies rose by 2.5-117 (the 60.62% of existing countries). This spread of democracy around the world has been particularly noticeable in Africa; only two countries (Botswana and Gambia) were democracies in 1975, but 16 in 2015. However, elections are not restricted to democracies nowadays. In 2018 111 national elections (Assembly, Head of Government, Lower House, Upper House, and Referendum) were held in the world, at least 30 in non-democracies (Election Guide, <http://www.electionguide.org>). The purpose of election in non-democracies is, of course different in democracies (Gandhi and Lust-Okar, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, the general elections into various positions in the land are taken as a very important exercise. Unfortunately, disappointments from several elected administrations and corruption with which the electoral body INEC discharges their duty has made many Nigerians lose faith in the exercise. Again, election period has turned into money making period with several politicians willing to flaunt their money to any willing voter to vote for them. Jobless youths 'also expect to get ad-hoc works during the period to earn money. Consequently, these situations have in essence affected the voting behaviour of the citizenry. The way it affects the citizens characteristically differs from one citizen to another due to several factors including: gender, personality differences, socio-economic status, place of domicile, level of education etc. These factors have in one way or another influenced peoples' voting behaviour. With increasing voter-education and civil right sensitization on the gains

of democracy, it is important to determine how certain factors may influence voting behaviour and how the knowledge might be used, towards improving the voting behaviour of the populace.

In order to articulate the problems of this study, the following research questions will be addressed: (a) Will personality significantly predict voting behaviour of the eligible voters? (b) Will gender significantly predict voting behaviour of the eligible voters? (c) Will personality and gender jointly predict voting behaviour of the eligible voters? The major purpose of the study is to evaluate the influence of personality and gender on voting behavior among the electorates. Specifically, the objectives are the following; (a) To examine whether personality will predict the voting behaviour among the eligible voters. (b) To examine whether gender will predict the voting behaviour among the eligible voters. (c) To examine whether personality and gender will jointly predict voting behaviour among the eligible voters.

In pursuant of this objective, it is very obvious that there has been bad governance in the system of government since the inception of the nascent democracy in Nigeria. This has largely been as a result of high level of corruption by the politicians and those business moguls 'who believe that they are the power brokers that anoint the politicians. This situation has seen several trillions of Naira looted in the country, with lip service promises by incoming governments to recover them. These situations have helped fuel continuous downtrend of standard of education and soaring unemployment rate. These have in turn have increased the demand for white collar jobs necessitating in essence the excessive trend of certificate seeking across border with less practical relevance, decay of infrastructure at all levels, increase in the crime rate as a result of unemployment/poor justice system, and a total collapse of ethical and moral standards of behaviour.

Operational Definition of Key Study Variables

Voting Behaviour These are those behaviours of the electorates which are part of the electoral processes required in order to select candidates that will vie for vacant positions and electing those selected candidates eventually into the vacant positions in the business of governance. Voting behavior include; casting of ballots, observing the counting of casted ballots and observing the result of the casted ballots *Personality* It is an enduring and characteristically distinct way of a person's behaviour which includes his thoughts, abilities and traits which makes him or her unique and distinct. *Gender* The term gender is defined as socio-cultural classification of people into distinct permanent roles of either male (a man) or female (a woman).

Hypotheses and Method

This study is guided by three hypotheses

- (a) Personality will significantly predict voting behaviour of the electorates
- (b) Gender will significantly predict voting behaviour of the electorates
- (c) There will be interactive prediction of personality and gender on voting behaviour of the electorates.

Participants The researchers compared 263 participants which comprised of 147 male and 116 female participants who were drawn from a population of eligible electorates (18 yrs. and above) from Awka capital territory of Anambra State. The age [ranges of the participant were between 18 and 57 years with a mean age of 37.5yrs and standard deviation of 11.7. The method of sampling was simple randomized sampling technique.

Instruments Two sets of instruments were used for the study namely; Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI) by John, Donahue & Kentle (1991) and Voting Behaviour Scale by Onah, (2004). In addition, demographic variables such as gender, age, educational background were included in the demographic data of the instrument used in the study. The Big Five Personality Inventory (Revised) is the fourth version of the series of personality inventories by John, Donahue & Kentle (1991). The author John (1990) reported a general internal consistence of .80 for the scale and the following Cronbach alpha validity for the subscales: (A) Agreeableness = .75, (B) Extraversion = .66, (C) Openness to Experience .54 (D) Conscientiousness = .70 and (E) Neuroticism = .59.

Voting Behaviour Scale (2004) The Voting Behaviour Scale was developed and validated by Onah (2004) in Nigeria. It is a - 10 item questionnaire used to measure respondents' behaviour pattern on actual voting exercise and behaviours related to it. The author reported an alpha coefficient of .78 for its validity. The items are measured in 5-point Likert scale of strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

Validity/Reliability - For its use in Nigeria the reliability analysis within two weeks [interval period were carried out and the result revealed a coefficient range of $r = .64$ to $.67$ / $r = .72$ to $.76$ for the general scale.

Procedure Before proceeding to the main study, the researchers shared 57 sample copies of the instrument for the pilot study to ascertain the reliability of the instruments to be used in the main study. During the pilot study, the researchers selected a different group of participants other than the ones to be used in the main study. The participants for the pilot study were randomly selected through a paper cast, where those that picked "YES" participated in the study. Afterwards, having obtained positive and significant coefficients, the researchers proceeded to the main, study.

In selecting the participants for the main study, simple random sampling technique were used; only those who picked the YES" ballot participated in the study. The participants were given the questionnaires with written instructions on it on how to answer the questions and they were advised to do so candidly for academic purposes. During this period of distributing the questionnaires which lasted for three weeks, the researcher drops copies of the questionnaire with different ministries and other organized organizations to who the researchers introduced themselves as scholars carrying out a study for academic inquiry. The researchers also hand-distributed the rest of the questionnaire by themselves while eliciting the responses of the participants. After responding to the items in the questionnaire, they were collected back for coding.

The participants were assured again that the genuine purpose of the research is for academic inquiry and that all their responses will be treated confidentially though some of the respondents were either hostile or in a haste to fill the questionnaires. On the whole,

after 3 weeks, a total of 283 questionnaires were administered while only 274 (96.8%) were collected back. Only 263 that were correctly filled were used for the data analyses of the study.

Design and Statistics The design for the study is a correlation design with 5 dimensions of the Big five personality and gender serving as independent predictors. The appropriate statistic used in analyzing the data is the multiple regressions analysis. All analyses were done using statistical package for scientific studies SPSS version 16.00.

Result Hypothesis I

Table 1: SHOWS DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF RESPONDENTS ON VOTING BEHAVIOR FOR THE 5 PERSONALITY TRAITS AND FOR MALES AND FEMALES TESTED.

		Value Label	Mean	Std Deviation	N
Personality	1.00	Openness	37.7551	4.02660	45
	2.00	Conscientiousness	33.4653	3.45450	59
	3.00	Extraversion	26.0274	4.46823	67
	4.00	Agreeableness	29.0042	2.17051	73
	5.00	Neuroticism	21.3910	1.94680	19
Gender	1.00	Males	29.0693	3.82450	
	2.00	Females	32.6428	.90252	
	Total		30.8214	3.07225	

Table 2: SUMMARY OF REGRESSIONS ANALYSIS SHOWING PERSONALITY AND GENDER AS PREDICTORS OF VOTING BEHAVIOUR AMONG ELECTORATES IN AWKA. (Regressions Coefficients (a))

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1 (constant)	56.981	.961		59.277	.000
Personality	10.997	.578	.819	19.025	.021
Gender	.392	.577	.029	.678	.037
Personality & Gender	.403	.598	.051	.721	.028

a Dependent Variable: Voting behavior

The result in table 2 above shows that hypotheses I, II & III were accepted. This confirms that both personality traits and gender differences had significant influence on voting behavior among electorates in Awka Capital Territory. Hypothesis I which stated that personality trait will positively and significantly influence voting behavior was confirmed at $r(1, 263) = .021^* p < .05$. Openness to experience and conscientiousness personality traits displayed more positive voting behaviour than the (rest of the personality traits. Hypothesis I was confirmed and accepted.

In addition, in the second hypothesis, data observed confirmed that gender differences influenced the voting behaviour of eligible voters. Females showed more positive voting behavior than their male counterparts. Hypothesis II is equally accepted at $r(1, 63) = .037^*$, $p < .05$. As observed from the result in the table 2 above, the predictor variables personality and gender also had joint predictive influence on voting behaviour among electorates in Awka at $r(1, 263) = .026^* p < .05$. The association of gender and personality differences influenced the voting behavior of eligible voters.

Discussion and Conclusion

By way of discussion, the researcher examined the influence of personality traits and gender on voting behavior among eligible voters within Awka Capital Territory. It was conceptualized in the model of this study that individual differences due to differences in background, world view and other internal factors such as inert personality traits and gender will generally influence the voting behavior of the study population. In line with the model of this study, significant relationships were sought and data analyzed confirmed that both personality traits and gender significantly influenced the voting behavior of eligible voters in the population of the study. Consequently, all proposed hypotheses were confirmed and accepted.

In the first hypothesis, personality trait significantly influenced voting behaviour. This implies that there is a predictable relationship between the predictor variable (personality) and the criterion variable (voting behaviour). It is observed that this significant influence is what caused certain personality traits to record more positive behaviour than others. For example, from the descriptive statistics, it is observed that openness to experience and conscientiousness personality traits had more positive behaviour than others such as neuroticism personalities whose voting behaviour is current, in comparison to other personality traits. This finding is also supported by the study of Olaniyi, (2004) which investigated socio-economic and personal differences in voting behavior. Olaniyi (2004) concluded his finding by opining that outside socio-economic reasons, differences in understanding and perception which can be termed personality differences) are the key major factors that influence voting behavior of electorates.

Previous studies by Eagly, (2000) emphasized that extroverts and those personalities open to experience are more inclined to vote towards a new government than other types of personality traits and are prone to be associated to change process of propaganda than the rest types of the personalities. Personality traits have also been found as a model relevant to the explanation of voting behaviour especially with regard to the type of government that is in power. Hence, the theoretical model of this study also suggest that

close affinity between candidates' personality characteristics and voters' personality traits may be the link that influences voting behavior of voters in a particular electoral process.

In addition, the second hypothesis which stated that gender will significantly influence voting behaviour was confirmed and accepted. From the mean table, females characteristically exhibited more positive voting behaviour than the males. This is also given support in the theoretical framework put forward by Eagly (2000) which suggests that the reason why more women are involved in the voting behaviour than men lie in the fact that sociological differences make women to be more inclined to communal duties than "agentic" duties like men. For Eagly, the voting exercise and behaviour is communal action and function than an agentic one and may explain the reason why women have more positive voting behaviour than men. Considering the previous study of (Olaniyi, 2004), where 817 eligible voters participated, 316 were males while 501 were females. The findings of his research suggest that there exists quantitative relationship between gender and voting behaviour for middle age adult voters than their adolescent counterpart.

In hypothesis III, joint predictive influence of personality and gender was ascertained on voting behavior. Data also confirmed that both personality trait and gender predicted voting behaviour. Hypothesis III is equally accepted. From this finding it was observed that the study by Eagly (2000) and Olaniyi (2004) laid theoretical empirical foundations significant enough to explain this joint predictive influence already supported by hypotheses I & II. Consequently, given the theoretical and empirical support, it is possible to conclude that different personality traits and the socio-cultural influences of gender are the major reasons for the manifestation of different voting behaviours in most elections in Nigeria.

Limitations of the Study

The framework of this study only investigated an aspect of voting behaviour as described in the voting behaviour inventory developed by Onah (2004). The content of the instrument in essence is not exhaustive of all aspects of the voting behavior. This is a great limitation as findings may not be generalized in reference to an aspect of the behavior as a whole. Also constraints occasioned by the inability to decipher whether the responses of the participants in part represents their true feelings as regards the questions asked is another limitation. The size and population of the sample no doubt is another aspect of limitation, including time constraints and paucity of finance to get a fair sample of population size.

Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

In view of the importance of political system in the lives of the people and taking cognizance of the fact that political leaders are elected by the people; voting behavior which determines how these leaders are elected are central to the success of the electoral process. It is therefore recommended that; sensitization processes before, during and after the elections be increased to improve the positive voting behaviour of the participants. This sensitization awareness will take into account several factors that juxtapose the intended voting behaviour of electorates. This will help government, NGOs and politicians

come up with an effective sensitization programmes targeted at motivating different classes of people coming from diverse socio-economic, political and religious background on what election is all about, and the expected voting behaviour during elections. It is hereby recommended that future studies should equally study the influences of religion, locality and level of education on voting behavior of eligible voters. This will enable future scholars underline other factors that may be divergent with the desired voting behavior and thus help to campaign against that.

Conclusion

The study of voting behavior is of practical importance to the growth of new democracy in Nigeria. Factors which influence voting behavior are increasingly being studied by government, social analysts and politicians for their own benefits. This study attempts to add to the list of factors which may likely determine behaviour of voters during elections and by so doing be able to predict more accurately the voting process and outcome. Given the theoretical assumptions for this study, statistical analysis confirmed that positive and significant relationships were observed between personality traits and voting behaviour and between gender and voting behaviour with joint predictive influences. The study concludes that the personality of the voters significantly influences their voting behaviour as well as their gender.

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