

Political Apathy in 2023 General Elections in Nigeria: A Case Study of Enugu State, Nigeria

Nkiruka C. Udenta and Jude Okezie Emmanuel Udenta

Department of Political Science, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study examined political apathy and 2023 general elections in Nigeria using Enugu state as a case study. The study raised two specific questions which were: What are the various factors responsible for political apathy in the 2023 general election in Enugu state? How has government interference contributed to political apathy during the 2023 general elections in Enugu State? The study was anchored on the class analysis theory. Using ex-post facto design the study adopted thematic content analysis to examine political apathy and 2023 general elections in Enugu. The study therefore, concluded that there are various factors responsible for political apathy in the 2023 general election in Enugu state and government interference contributed to political apathy during the 2023 general elections in Enugu State. The researcher recommended that state governments should ensure to leave up to the promises of good governance made to the people. All factors that lead to political apathy must be checkmated. Enforceable legislations against election rigging, violence, thuggery, godfatherism and the like should be put into practice. Good governance will ensure, justice, fairness, equity and inclusion for all. All federal government agencies charged with voter education like National Orientation Agency (NOA), INEC, and Ministry of Information should sustain political education at all levels of the society. Political apathy is not the solution to electoral problems rather it endangers the electoral system more. Popular participation in elections will help reduce the influence of godfathers during elections thus creating room for the emergence of credible leaders through a credible election process.

Keywords: Apathy; Political Apathy, Elections; Electoral Fraud and Violence

INTRODUCTION

All over the world, democracy has been projected to be the best form of government owing to the fact that it promotes all-inclusiveness in the way and manner government activities is carried out. One of the underlying principles that have been observed to contribute to the sustenance of democracy is the maintenance of a political climate in which every citizen can exercise his/her political liberty on one hand, and actively participate in the political process of the state, on the other [1]. This presupposes that citizens are expected to demonstrate their civic responsibilities in matters concerning leadership recruitment and leadership succession processes of the state, through registered political parties. In fact, by virtue of the tenets of representative democracy, citizens elect their representatives during elections so that decisions can be taken on their behalf, since it is practically impossible for everybody to partake directly in the governance process of their state or hold a political office [2]. In Nigeria, the first stage of electoral process after registration of voters is nomination of candidates for elective posts. Political parties, party leaders and godfathers carefully screen nominees to ensure that those who are loyal,

electable, have political will and can carry out their dictates emerge as party flag bearers and eventual winners. [3], added that political participation had been endangered and limited by activities of the godfathers who act like demigods and kingmakers as they appropriate to themselves the special role of determining who occupies government positions in the country and on what terms. The resultant effect of the above scenario on the part of an average Nigerian is what is referred to as political apathy. Apathy is a state of indifference, suppression of emotions such as concern, excitement, motivation or passion. It means lack of feeling, emotion, interest or concern about something of great importance [4]. Political apathy means lack of interest in political activities of a country. It is the indifference of an individual to participate in political activities which includes lack of interest in elections, voting or political events. Political apathy is displayed when a citizen of voting age refuses to register, obtain permanent voters card (PVC), belong to any political party, vote or participate in electoral process [4]. [5], are of the view that the high level of political apathy among Nigerians is nothing but a creation of

Udenta and Udenta

the political class who only see politics as a means of accumulating wealth rather than service. More recently, the introduction of Permanent Voter's Card (PVC) by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), though a very good innovation, has also tended to encourage political apathy as more potential voters would refuse to get registered due to the cumbersome and rigorous process associated with registration and collection of the PVCs. In most cases, the voter's card would not be relevant, especially when such a voter has moved to another location outside of the voting point he/she registered.

Ahead of the 2023 presidential election, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) announced that it had achieved all-time high figures in voter registration and collection of Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs). This created an expectation that voter turnout in the 2023 general election would also hit all-time high figures. INEC said it had issued 87.2 million PVCs, although 93,469,008 people had registered to vote. The electoral body put the number of uncollected PVCs at 6,259,229. Data released by INEC had Lagos as having the highest number of PVCs collected at 6,214,970. Kano, Kaduna, and Rivers states were next with 5,594,193, 4,164,473, and 3,459,945, respectively. Ekiti state had the lowest number nationally, with 958,052 PVCs collected. A regional breakdown showed that the North-West had the highest number of PVCs collected with 21,445,000, followed by the South-West, North-Central, South-South, North-East, and South-East with 15,536,213, 14,603,621, 13,284,920, 11,937,769, and 10,401,484, respectively. However, voter turnout in the 25 February 2023 national elections in states like Ekiti, Enugu, Gombe, Jigawa, Kwara, Ogun, Ondo, and Osun had lower voter turnout figures than in 2019. Jigawa recorded the largest drop with a 42% turnout, compared to 71% in 2019. Ekiti went from 59% turnout to 33%. Kwara went from 42.3% to 32%. Osun dropped to 48% after reaching 58% in 2019, and Ogun went from 36% in 2019 to 27% in 2023. Voter turnout is arguably the most important barometer of the credibility of a democracy. It is usually a reliable signal of the extent to which citizens believe their votes play a

Objectives of the study

Broad objective of the study is to examine political apathy in the 2023 general elections: a study of Enugu state. However, specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Ascertain the various factors responsible for political apathy in the 2023 general election in Enugu state.
2. Determine how government interference contributed to political apathy during the 2023 general elections in Enugu State.

role in determining how they are governed. High turnout levels show trust in how votes are counted, respected, and obeyed in policy preferences. Conversely, people ignore the electoral process when they do not feel their votes matter. It is curious how INEC recorded such high rates of PVCs collection and ended up with poorer voter turnout data. Granted, PVCs collection may be driven by the need for a nationally acceptable identification document. The PVC is free, unlike the driver's license and the international passport. The National Identity Number (NIN) scheme has literally failed. This has left the PVC as the preeminent identification document with the right mix of affordability and accessibility for most Nigerians. Indeed, the 2023 federal elections were set to have Nigeria's highest voter turnout, but many voters were either prevented from voting, or their votes were made not to count. INEC appeared to have incompetently handled the election, and the security agencies failed to prevent the violence that marred the election. Highlighting INEC's logistical failure, its election officials failed to turn up at the PUs on time. There were reports of gunmen shooting at voters and ballot boxes being snatched. All of these were widespread. Nevertheless, there was a trust deficit in the ability of INEC to organize a credible, free, and fair election. In a pre-election survey by SBM Intelligence, which sampled 11,534 people, 40% of respondents said they did not trust INEC to conduct a decent election. The concerns the respondents had appear to have been validated. The cases of voter suppression, electoral violence, and failure of the electoral body to use the BVAS machines according to its guidelines depressed turnout figures. Thus, the country continued to steadily decline in voter turnout numbers in its presidential elections since 2003. While it can be acknowledged that some empirical studies have been carried out in this area of research interest, there seem to be some research gaps arising from these previous studies, especially in terms of research locale, respondents and the instruments for data collection. In filling part of this research gap therefore, this study examines the effect of political apathy on the 2023 general election in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study

1. What are the various factors responsible for political apathy in the 2023 general election in Enugu state?
2. How has government interference contributed to political apathy during the 2023 general elections in Enugu State?

Research Hypotheses

H: There are various factors responsible for political apathy in the 2023 general election in Enugu state

H: Government interference contributed to political apathy during the 2023 general elections in Enugu State.

Literature Review Political Apathy

Political apathy is defined as the lack of interest in taking active part in matters of politics either by voting or being voted for or having no share in political activities. Political apathy is expressed and measured by the degree of political phobia and non-participation in political activities in a country. According to [6], a brief reflection on our historical antecedents would show clearly that the choice of rulership or leadership in the entity called Nigeria has never been by popular will. It has always been by some imposition. This scenario has led to a paradoxical situation in which more Nigerians clamour for democracy and at the same time shun political activities such as participation in elections, contributing to public opinions, joining of political parties etc. Critically speaking, [7] opined that the concept of political apathy has continued to be mistaken for the related concept of voter apathy, even from highly unexpected discursive quarters. Political apathy is the deficiency of love and devotion to a state. It is the indifference on the part of citizens of any state as regards their attitudes towards political activities such as elections, public opinions, and civic responsibilities. Political apathy is therefore absence of interest in, or concern about, socio-political life. Thus, an apathetic person lacks interest in the social and political affairs of his country. Political apathy has manifested itself in Nigeria, in the following forms: one, the decline to register as a voter; two, the refusal to vote; three, failure to protest against rigging and four, failure to assist the security agents with useful information [8]. Furthermore, it needs to be highlighted that in conceptual and empirical terms, political apathy is different from voter apathy. Indeed, voter apathy may be a manifestation of political apathy but there

are also other legions of manifestations of political apathy. A broad definition of political apathy necessarily covers lack of interest in the development of an effective political system [7]. [8] describes political apathy as the deficiency of love and devotion to a state. Indeed, every destructive political tendency is a manifestation of political apathy, to the extent that in this “we” versus “them” dichotomy, when one is directing his point-finger to others, as the culprits of political apathy, the rest of the fingers point in the accuser’s direction. [9] further argues:

The most immediate impact of political apathy on a country is a decline in political involvement, which at first may appear harmless. As involvement and interest in government and politics declines, the element of humanity is taken away from government, and politics is no longer of, by, or for the people. Without the expression of real individuals and their concerns, government stops being a living entity of the people and becomes a mindless machine. What is left is a nation at a standstill and a society abandoned.

Thus, in this study, it is argued that in and out of government in Nigeria, there has been continuous decline in genuine political involvement. The people who are in government are there on selfish motives and those who are not there yet, also want to go there on selfish motives. We argue that unselfish involvement and interest in government and politics in Nigeria has continued to decline and the element of humanity is increasingly being taken away from government, consequently, democracy is no longer of, by or for the people.

Reasons for Voters’ Apathy in Nigeria

A lot of reasons has been given for the continuous existence of political apathy in Nigeria. According to [2], they are as follows:

1. The belief that vote does not count in Nigeria: Many people dislike voting in elections in Nigeria because of the negative belief that votes do not count in the country.
2. Lack of trust in corrupt politicians: Many people have lost trust and faith in government and the so-called elected politicians. Many believe that Nigerian politicians will say anything to get elected but once in office, they quickly turn their back on those who put them there.
3. Absence of Security at voting centres.
4. The use of thugs, cultists, criminals and militants to intimidate political opponents.
5. Hyper-critical negative media: Negative political news coverage and political criticisms, which in most cases are not always constructive, create cynicism in many Nigerians. Thus, voters are at times over-fed with falsehood and frightening image of the political environment.
6. Illiteracy and poverty: Illiteracy and poverty are two powerful forces which militate against political participation in Nigeria. Victims of these forces have little or no interest in political activities.

7. Failure of elected political office holders to honour electioneering promises and the

imposition of candidates on voters by political parties.

Election in Nigeria

Election provides citizens with the freedom to choose their rulers and to decide on public policy. Under any democratic system, citizens who are legally qualified to exercise franchise are provided with opportunity to choose political alternatives and to make decisions that express their preferences. In a multi-party dispensation, this choice is made out of the several parties and candidates competing in the electoral market. In a democratic setting, free, fair and credible elections are the only acceptable and appropriate means through which citizens of a country can choose their representatives; but past elections in Nigeria have been characterized by massive irregularities, which have suffocated the democratic journey of the country [10]. Providing good governance through the conduct of credible elections has remained an albatross in Nigeria. Despite its enormous human and material wealth, Nigeria during the last fifteen years has fallen into the list of the World's poorest nations. It suffers from corruption where politicians misappropriate public funds for personal gains while most constituencies lack portable water, roads, healthcare, electricity, and adequate infrastructures. This is a serious barrier to end extreme poverty. Critical reviews have confirmed that about 10 or more sections of the Constitution were amended and these areas cover the electoral reformation. What areas of the amendment concerns policies that affect the

good of the poor masses that will guarantee adequate food, portable water and dignifies the life of the poor [11].

Credible and transparent election is supposed to guarantee good governance which translates to how the poor population is gaining from policies and actions of government. Conducting credible elections in Nigeria is one, getting the right people into power is another and assurances of good governance that will be responsive to the poor is a vital issue. There has never been an election in Nigeria that ever guaranteed the provision of basic rights and development for the poor communities in Nigeria [11]. It has been argued that political pressure to adopt new voting system is a major driver to adopting [12]. The role played by political actors including government agencies, civic and media groups, religious organizations and student movement in entrenching democracy through election is pertinent [13]. Given that e-voting has potential to increase policy inclusion of marginalized groups, especially the disabled and residents overseas by making it easier for them to cast their votes in a more convenient and user-friendly way [14], cross section of organized groups of elites including individuals have been intensifying campaign for the adoption of e-voting to rise to the challenge of technology savvy.

Electoral Fraud

An electoral fraud is an illegal interference with the process of election that interferes with the mandate of the people. In a detailed study, [15] pointed out that electoral fraud comes in different forms such as increasing the number of voters for the favoured candidate, under age voting, mass voting by unregistered citizens, snatching of ballot to be stuffed with thumb printed votes by party candidates, snatching of results before or after elections to favour the ruling party candidate, intimidation at the polls using militant gangs or even state security, scaring away of genuine registered voters from exercising their votes in polling booths located in an opposition favoured constituency, deliberate one side and improper counting of votes and media manipulation to announce or publish the wrong results and declare the wrong candidates as winners before the proper collection of results by the Electoral Commission. [15] noted that since the 1999 to 2019 elections, the Nigeria electoral and political landscape has fallen from Pat to below par and has moved from violence to greater violence. The level and magnitude of electoral and political violence has risen and the

political elite have often converted poverty stricken Nigerian youths into readymade machineries for the perpetuation of electoral violence. Since the return to the civil rule on 29th May 1999, Nigeria has held six general elections apart from the sundry re-run elections and local government polls. Out of the six general elections conducted, none has met both the local and International standard. But the distributing trend is that each general election was worse than the preceding one. This trend shows that the country is faring very badly at each passing election as nobody can talk of consolidating democracy in such an environment. This is because the leaders seem to have forgotten that conducting a free and fair election is vital to the growth and development of any democratic process. Also, an average Nigerian voter is interested in immediate rewards and will easily trade off votes when appropriately induced. This can be explained by the crippling poverty facing the people in the absence of government's provision of the basic amenities required for decent living, as well as justified distrust of the political leaders. In other words, electoral frauds make it difficult for the electorate to

remove an unpopular government and install a popular one. This difficulty will result to the neglect of the electorates as well as lack of transparency and frauds which strip election of its competitive character. This is because the electoral outcome is been determined by every other means but not the votes. Suffice it to say that the results of the

elections are decided before the election proper. In a situation like this, it becomes clear that the capacity to maneuver is unequal as some candidates are better privileged than others. On the side of the electorate, political apathy rising from a general feeling that votes no longer count in the determination of electoral outcomes is inevitable.

Theoretical framework

This study adopted the Marxist class analysis as its theoretical framework; it analyzes social formations and classes and their contradictory relationship. Marxists have argued that class – or very closely linked concepts like mode of production or the economic base was at the center of a general theory of history, usually referred to as historical materialism [16]. The basic idea is that different kinds of class relations are defined by the kinds of rights and powers that are embodied in the relations of production. In Marx's view, the dialectical nature of history is expressed in class struggle. With the development of capitalism, the class struggle takes an acute form. Two basic classes, around which other less important classes are grouped, oppose each other in the capitalist system: the owners of the means of production, or bourgeoisie, and the workers, or proletariat. The approach assumed a radical posture in the interpretation of the economic process. Its emphasis is on social classes, productive forces and social relations of production. Karl Marx maintains that the substructure, which is the economy, determines the overall superstructure of society. Therefore, the economic base of the society determines the political, legal, cultural and other sectors of the society. It focuses on the society in its

entirety through existing relations within it and essentially within the umbrella of social production. In Karl Marx's view, the substructure which is the economy determines the superstructure which is the political, cultural, ideological, social, and legal systems. Following the Marxian line of thinking, [17] argued that, once we understand what the material assets and constraints of a society are, how the society produces goods to meet its material needs, how the goods are distributed, and what types of social relations arise from the organization of production, we have come a long way to understand the culture of that society, its religious system and even its modes of thought. The Marxian class analysis shows how the various parts of the superstructure are used as instruments of domination of the ruling class, and as a mechanism of oppression of the subject class. To [17] the approach explicitly analyses the economic reasons, interests, and agenda behind political and social decisions in any social formation. He maintained that members of the exploiting class, that is, the advantaged class, are usually better educated, more cultured, have higher social statuses and are fortunate, not only economically but also politically.

Empirical Review

[15], study centered on electoral fraud as a major challenge to political development in Nigeria. The study delved into the nature and character of electoral fraud in Nigeria. Marxist theory of the state was adopted as the theoretical framework and sources of data collected was mainly secondary data. The study concluded that the high rate of electoral fraud is adversely undermining the process of democratic development in Nigeria. In their own study, [18] examined the perceived causes of political apathy among Yenagoa residents in Bayelsa state, Nigeria. Descriptive survey was adopted for this study. Findings of the study reveal that several factors were perceived to be the major causes of political apathy among Yenagoa residents. Also, there was a significant difference in the perception of male and female respondents, and between civil servants and businessmen on the perceived causes of political apathy among Yenagoa residents in Bayelsa State respectively. In [19] study, it was conducted to determine causes of political apathy as perceived by secondary school teachers and suggest remedies

to the menace. The study adopted descriptive research design with a sample of 400 secondary school teachers selected through multi stage sampling procedure with two research questions and one hypothesis. He found that teachers perceived all forms of electoral malpractice and bad governance as some of the causes of political apathy. Good governance/leadership and enabling environment for free and fair election among others as perceived remedies to political apathy in Nigeria. [20], investigated the low levels of representation of women in the National Assembly and factors that explain this. Results from the study show that the majority of female respondents indicate active interest in politics but are discouraged by factors that include prevailing gender stereotypes, cultural/religious reasons, unfavourable political environment, lack of financial capacity, electoral violence and restrictive party structures and processes amongst others. The bulk of male respondents confirm these structural biases and barriers to women's political participation. While

Udenta and Udenta

[21] study examined the intertwining influence of electoral security and voters' turnout in the 2019 gubernatorial election in Abia State of Nigeria. Voter turnout was seen as an important indicator of the state of health of any democracy, old or new, consolidated or in transition. Findings revealed that voters' reports were inaccurate as this was manipulated to favour the incumbent. Also, there was a low turnout of voters during the 2019 gubernatorial election in Abia state as a result of massive deployment of political thugs and coercive instrument of the state (security agents) with the

The study adopted the ex-post facto descriptive research design. Descriptive design of the study is relevant to this study because the researcher will not use any statistical tools for the analysis of the research work. The study relied on secondary source of data collection. Secondary sources of data include second-hand information, already documented by another person or institutions. Hence, the study used journal articles, official publications, internet articles, newspaper reports and books. The study adopted observation method of data collection. Observation (qualitative) method is used to obtain in-depth information and concept clarification so as to facilitate instrument designs. Data were analyzed using thematic content analysis. Thematic content (qualitative descriptive) analysis involve summarizing the information generated through secondary sources for the study. Content analysis requires creativity, for the challenge is to place the raw data into logical, meaningful categories and to communicate the interpretation clearly.

Factors Responsible for Political Apathy in the 2023 General Election in Enugu State

In terms of election administration, ahead of the 2023 general elections, INEC instituted several reforms, including simultaneous accreditation and voting, the posting of results at polling units, direct transmission of results from the pooling unit, use of IREV, a more robust review and disciplinary process for INEC staff and enhancement of ballot secrecy and measures to reduce vote buying. INEC tested these innovations in off-cycle during the Isoko South constituency 1 bye-election in Delta State, this was followed the deployment in the local government election in Kaduna State, and was first used in a statewide election in November 2021 in Anambra State.

Low Voter Turnout: However, during the 2023 general elections especially in Enugu state political apathy was significant in the country. Expectations were high that political participation would be high to overcome the dynamics in the previous elections. The following causes were adduced for political apathy in the 2023 general elections in Enugu state.

www.iaajournals.org

clear intention of rigging the election. [22] investigated Killing to Rule: An Analysis of Electoral Violence and the 2015 General Elections in Nigeria. The study examined the problem of electoral violence in Nigeria with focus on the 2015 general elections. It adopted a qualitative method with reliance on secondary sources of data. The study found electoral violence in Nigeria generally, and concludes that electoral violence has remained a sour taste in Nigeria's bid for democratic consolidation and sustainability.

METHODOLOGY

The state recorded a very poor turnout for the presidential election held over the weekend. Out of the 2,112,793 registered voters, only 482,990 voters came out to vote on Saturday, February 25. This gives a voter turnout of 22.86 percent for the last round of elections. The turnout in the 2023 presidential election represents the state all-time lowest over the last three election cycles. The 2015 general election remains the state's best turnout, where it recorded a 42.39 percent turnout. [23], observed that the failings of the 25th February 2023 Presidential and National Assembly elections appeared to have taken a toll on turn out of voters during the Governorship and State Houses of Assembly elections held on 18th March 2023. Situation Room observations indicate a worrying level of voter apathy with this election. In an election that should resonate more with citizens, Situation Room notes that the turnout was very poor. While voter turnout is historically low for the state level elections, Situation Room observations indicate that the voter turnout was also affected by the disappointment that followed the conduct of the 25th February 2023 Presidential and National Assembly elections and the security concerns in different parts of the country. On the other hand, [24] reported in Premium Times that:

There has been low turnout of voters in various parts of Enugu state, Nigeria's South-east, in the ongoing Governorship and House of assembly elections. At polling units (PUs): 005 to 007, Government Technical college Ward, in Enugu North Council Area, for instance, only a few voters were waiting to cast their votes at 8:33 a.m. At PUS 009 to 0011, Obeagu Village, Awkunannaw, Enugu South Council Area, only about 10 voters were seen being accredited by INEC officials at about 9:22 a.m. The situation was not different at PU: 030 and 029, Agbani Ward, Nkanu West Local Government Area. An INEC official told this newspaper, at about 10:a.m., that only about three persons had

Udenta and Udenta

voted at the polling units. "During the last election, there was crowd of people here queuing up to cast their votes, but today, people are coming out in small numbers."

Mistrust in the election management body (EMB): The administration of elections in Nigeria suffers from a number of structural shortcomings. The legal provisions governing the appointment and removal of the members of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on both Federal and State level, as well as the lack of autonomous sources of funding did not provide adequate guarantees for the independence of the electoral authorities and for effective and consistent implementation within the States of the directives issued by the Headquarters. The nature of the structural shortcomings is such that they could not be overcome in time to allow for a genuine improvement between the National Elections and the State elections. Incessant delays occasioned by the INEC ad-hoc staff late arrival during the presidential elections created a lot of frustration in the heart of voters.

Insecurity: Ahead of the 2023 general election, the combination of existing insurgencies, rising insecurity, terrorist activity and electoral tensions meant that polling day would take place against a particularly challenging backdrop. Because the threat of instability was not localised, and instead existed in a number of geo-political zones, there were fears that the security agencies would be stretched throughout the elections, and so, struggle to muster the capacity required to secure the election [23].

Pattern of Nomination of Candidates: With respect to governorship election, party primaries conducted in 2022 with the Peoples Democratic Party nominating former commissioner Peter Mbah on 25 May while the All Progressive Congress nominated businessman Uche Nnaji unopposed on 26 May and the All Progressive Grand Alliance nominated former minister Frank Nweke on 29 May. On 4 August, Chijioke Edeoga (the runner-up in the PDP primary) won the primary of the Labour Party. The LP primary was annulled by a Federal High Court ruling on 9 November but a Court of Appeal judgment on 6 January 2023 overturned the High Court ruling, reinstating Edeoga as the legitimate LP nominee [23]. An informal zoning gentlemen's agreement sets the Enugu East Senatorial District to have the next governor as Enugu East has not held the governorship since 2007. While the APC zoned their nomination to the East, the PDP and APGA did not make a formal zoning decision; all three parties ultimately nominated an easterner. The selection of party candidate in Enugu state saw the PDP settle for Barr Peter Mba based on their zoning formula and

www.iaajournals.org

consensus. The PDP structure is built around political merchants or barons, who consider politics as economic investment, rather than a process built on freedom, equality and fairness. The use of technique of 'anointed'; 'consensus' or 'automatic' candidate by Peoples Democratic Party remains a symbolize of politics in Nigeria. The PDP structure is built around political merchants or barons, who consider politics as economic investment, rather than a process built on freedom, equality and fairness. According to [25], there has been defacto nature of politicking in Enugu state. One party structure is the official, de jure government or de jure party executive, while the other is the political machine, the de facto government who is really in control of party administration.

Electoral Violence: Election forecasts based on pre-election surveys and the pulse-feeling of the electorate had so far little meaning in the Nigerian context [26]. Violence has been a basic feature in Nigerian elections since colonial times [27]. According to lessons learned from previous presidential elections in Nigeria, the pre-election period was the most violent time of election campaigns. Electoral terrorism typically occurred in the period before, during and immediately after elections [28]. During the pre-election period in 2015, for example, terrible attacks took place. In general, Nigerians vote with a shallow knowledge of what the political parties and candidates have to offer. It was the regional affiliation of the candidates and not their competence or political ideology that was decisive for victory. Therefore, the whole electoral process often triggered ethno-religious conflicts, further consolidating the idea of a rotating presidency as a negotiated solution [29]. [30] opined that:

despite the presence of security men mounting road blocks and checks across the country, there were reported cases of political thugs moving freely around polling units and disrupting the election process. Some electoral officials and voters were assaulted in the process. There were several reports and live feeds of electoral violence. Party thugs and hoodlums had a field day invading voting centres to snatch polling materials, destroy voting materials, harass, molest and intimidate voters and, in some instances, INEC officials.

Voting was delayed in some cities due to the late arrival of materials, according to election monitors, and there were allegations of vote rigging in Enugu East LGA. Some voters also stayed away from Saturday's exercise after the Presidential polls were marred by violence and armed thugs burned and

Udenta and Udenta

snatched ballot boxes. Chinedu Obiora, a businessman told Al Jazeera that:

I did not vote because last two Saturdays, the violence in my polling unit scared me away. After voting [thugs] came and burned our result sheets. I don't trust the system to conduct the elections and I couldn't have risked my life as a result of today's exercise, I stayed home with my family monitoring on TV. There appeared to be far fewer people taking part in Saturday's governorship and state assembly polls compared with the presidential and National Assembly elections when electoral officers in some polling areas were overwhelmed with large numbers of voters.

According to [31] report, in the previous election, at least three people were killed and four officials abducted as vote collation commenced in the second leg of Nigeria's general elections. Police confirmed an observer died in southeast Enugu state allegedly through "accidental discharge" of a bullet from a policeman. Polling has closed in most parts of the country amid complaints of a pocket of vote buying, ballot-snatching and thuggery blamed on rival political parties, although the overall assessment is that the exercise was mostly peaceful.

Election Rigging: Violence and election rigging are intertwined. Violence is mostly utilized by political actors to execute election rigging while most

Government interference and political apathy in 2023 general elections in Enugu

The 2023 general elections did not ensure a well-run transparent, and inclusive democratic process as assured by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Public confidence and trust in INEC were severely damaged during the presidential poll and was not restored in state level elections, leading civil society to call for an independent audit of the entire process. Abuse of incumbency by various political office holders distorted the playing field and wide-spread vote buying detracted from an appropriate conduct of the elections. Incidents of organised violence shortly before and on election days in several states created an environment deterring voter's participation [32]. The independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was not truly independent as its name suggests. Excessive government interference in the electoral commission has continued to be a contributor to political apathy. Their independence is also enshrined in the constitution to ensure they organize credible elections and deepen democracy in Nigeria. For instance, section 158 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution guaranteed the independence or autonomy of INEC as an electoral management body. Furthermore, the electoral body's principal officers like the chairman, deputy chairmen, and

www.iaajournals.org

election-day and post-election violence is the fallout of blatant election rigging. For instance, [32] noted that the state elections experienced fewer logistical challenges than the national elections, and the technologies used for voter identification and results tabulation functioned well. Still there were reports of violence and vote buying, particularly in the states of Lagos, Lagos, Rivers, Enugu and Kano. Observers reported that 21 people were killed in election-related violence. Continuing the trend from the national election, turnout was reportedly low and few women were candidates. The crises that occurred in Enugu State during the 2023 general elections was due to the alleged manipulation of election results, inter-party rivalry, ballot snatching and failure of card readers. Similarly, the inter-party clashes reported in Nkanu East and West LGAs of the state between People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Labour Party was due to ballot snatching and result manipulation.

Election rigging questions the legitimacy of returning candidates. Peaceful election serves as an instrument of legitimization for the state and those who manage the reins of that state. The conduct of violent elections in Nigeria since 1999 has generated legitimacy crisis. In a situation where the selection of candidates or party primaries is inherently flawed and do not reflect the true choice and will of the people, the government formed on this basis may not be accepted by the people [33].

other critical members are all appointed by their respective presidents (Section 154 and Part I of the Third Schedule to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). Government usually interferes in election administration to increase its chances of winning to remain in power and, most times, this leads to electoral irregularities that become violent, bloody, and lethal.

Independent National Electoral Commission's operations: The widely welcomed Electoral Act 2022 (the 2022 Act) introduced measures aimed at building stakeholder trust. However, the Act's first test in a general election revealed crucial gaps in terms of INEC's accountability and transparency, proved to be insufficiently elaborated, and lacked clear provisions for a timely and efficient implementation. Weak points include a lack of INEC independent structures and capacities to enforce sanctions for electoral offences and breaches of campaign finance rules. Furthermore, the presidential selection of INEC leadership at federal and state level leaves the electoral institution vulnerable to the perception of partiality [32]. The Nigerian elections are associated with loss of lives, displacement of persons, and destruction of property. In specific terms, the 1998-9 transition elections

claimed 80 lives, with 100 and 300 respectively recorded during the 2003 and 2007 elections. There is this born-to-rule conviction or a feeling of entitlement that Nigerian leadership is an inheritance to northern Nigeria from the British colonial masters at independence. This partly explains why a presidential election that fails to produce a northern candidate is considered fraudulent and is followed by a violent protest. The riots that erupted following the declaration of the 2011 presidential election winner claimed 800 lives (in addition to 165 deaths recorded during the campaign and the elections). The number of deaths decreased to 106 in the 2015 elections in which a northern opposition presidential candidate won. [34] blamed INEC's poor performance in the 2023 general elections on the appointment of its key officers by the president. Their views suggest that the president should not appoint INEC key officers. Two respondents (9.5%) believe that the problem is

INEC Financial Dependence on Government

Apart from the human element in any organization, finance is another important aspect. It is regarded as an organizational life wire [35]. It was argued that, in everything, power lies with those who control finance, not with those who know the matter upon which the money is to be spent. The recruitment, remuneration, training, and motivation of election staff for effective performance, as well as procurement and deployment of new technologies to enhance its operations, require a huge amount of money. Regrettably, this strategic organizational asset (INEC finances) is under the supervisory purview of the Nigerian presidency. Prior to the enactment of the Electoral Act, of 2022, elections were governed by such legal instruments as the CFRN of 1999 and the Electoral Acts of 2002, 2006, and 2010. During these periods, funds disbursement for election management was a major challenge that led to substantial poor reparation of elections. For instance, voter registration was delayed in 2003 and 2007 because of the delayed fund disbursement. In October 2006, several INEC checks were not

Interference in INEC Operations and Manipulation of the Electoral Process

Public confidence and trust in INEC were severely damaged due to lack of transparency and operational failures in the conduct of the federal level polls and INEC's delayed and insufficient explanations for those failures. Until the end of the electoral process, INEC continued to abstain from providing information, limiting its communication to a few press releases and ceremonial statements, and hence failing to address public grievances and rebuild confidence [32]. Two essential components that are very crucial to the operations of any modern organization are human and financial elements, and whoever controls these elements invariably is in firm

control of the organization and its operations. Because INEC is not in firm control of its human and financial elements as it is currently constituted, its efforts to organize credible elections have not achieved appreciable results, measured by the unending incidence of irregularities that embody elections in Nigeria. The use of biometric devices to provide the opportunity for voters to determine their elected leaders through the ballots is sabotaged at the level of implementation by those who control the INEC. Although INEC policy implementation has a tint of decentralization at state and local levels, policymaking by INEC follows the centralized

honed because the Budget Monitoring and Price Unit within the Office of the President did not clear INEC payments for critical electoral materials [36]. During the 2019 election season, the INEC budget for the 2019 elections was ₦189,007,272,393. Regrettably, 86 days before the elections on November 22, 2018, the Federal Government partly released ₦143,512,529,455, which represented 76 percent of the total sum. On December 21, 2018, 57 days prior to the elections, the outstanding balance of ₦45,495,012,938 was released. This does not augur well for election planning and preparation. Although, the Electoral Act, of 2022, provided for early release of INEC funds, but the power to release these funds still resides with the President [37]. A situation where the government delays or engages in the piecemeal release of funds to INEC vitiates the very essence of INEC autonomy makes it susceptible to political influence and undermines its ability to guarantee credible elections.

model. This is because the operations of INEC state and local government offices strictly follow the directives from the central office [38]. Following this absence of a participatory framework in which stakeholder contributions are not factored into INEC policy turnout, the stakeholder operations during elections usually run at cross purposes with the INEC implementation process. Even when INEC uses its Information and Voter Education Committee to mobilize the people through its voter sensitization programmes, the reality during the implementation stage deviates from the policy objectives and information acquired through the programmes [34]. Thus, [39] asserts that it is an entrenched practice in administration that when people are allowed to freely participate in policymaking and their views form part of the policies, they will also ensure that the policy objectives come to fruition during the implementation stage. This provides an insight into why there are always issues with INEC in terms of policy implementation during elections. Thus, one can convincingly argue that INEC's claims of reforms have mainly served the purpose of belongingness and receiving assistance from development partners as frequent failures to dispassionately implement its reform objectives have demonstrated. Additionally, considering election preparation, the environment of the election period is one of intense politicking and heightened tension [40], and the deployment of men (both poll officials

and security personnel) and materials are done in a fashion akin to a war situation [41]. The environment also depicts an atmosphere of poor democratic orientation on the side of Nigerian politicians who rarely believe in the dual nature of electoral contests: every election inevitably produces either a winner or a loser. This situation is also exacerbated by the notion that access to power guarantees access to state resources, and the lucrative benefits and privileges attached to public offices in the country [40]. Therefore, those who control the Nigerian government are in a firm grip on the INEC and influence its operations to increase their odds of victory in any electoral contests. This depicts why Nigerian elections are undermined by incidences of violent electoral irregularities with their attendant loss of lives and property [42]. Elections held in this situation cannot be free and fair and will not wear the hallowed toga of credibility [43]. Ideally, elections are supposed to be a peaceful contest among political actors and their outcomes will either produce winners or losers. However, in the case of Nigeria, elections have become a must-win contest. They have also become bloody, violent, and lethal. The biometric devices introduced to address election-related issues by reducing human interface have turned out to facilitate them on account of government interference in biometric policy implementation, thereby making every election season in Nigeria a life-taking period.

Electoral Irregularities and Voter Participation

According to Yiaga, there were pressure on civil servants by governors, for example through termination of work contracts as an intimidation measure or withholding salaries as a guarantee for delivered results in the campaign. Misuse of state resources was evident, primarily through the promotion of social protection and relief programs, which significantly intensified shortly before the polls. Overall, stakeholders noted an increase in intimidation and vote-buying strategies compared to previous elections suggesting this was a deliberate move to subvert the tightened up electoral process after the introduction of new technology. In accordance with regional and international commitments, the 2022 Act prohibits "the use of state apparatus to the advantage or disadvantage of any political party or candidate" [32]. At the outset of the campaign, INEC revised various campaign regulations including for parties and candidates but lacked the institutional capacity for enforcement. Electoral irregularities, as a concept, have always been a thorn in the flesh of credible management of elections. They represent flawed or manipulated elections that deflate voter participation. As a complex concept that represents a subtle deviation

from established electoral procedures, electoral irregularities manifest in various forms as government interference meant to increase one's winning chances and electoral malpractice. It can begin with flawed voter registration through electoral malpractice and progress into life-taking thuggery and violence. In Nigerian, elections are undermined by electoral irregularities that triggered a series of opposition protests and resulted in the demand for election cancellation and removal of some key INEC officers [32]. Electoral irregularities run at variance with the global standards on credible elections captured in Article 21(3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government [44]. Impliedly, electoral irregularities vitiate the idea of credibility, undermine voter participation, and result in a minority electoral democracy in which a few electors determine their leaders against the majority demand of democracy. Irregularity-free elections reflect a high degree of integrity, which requires an atmosphere free of interference, fear, intimidation, or manipulation at any stage of the electoral process. Election rigging begins from an unreliable register

of voters, suggesting that an election with integrity begins from a voter register with integrity. A secure and peaceful election environment facilitates free, fair, and credible elections. Tranquil conditions in and around voting sites lessen the problems that could compromise the integrity of records, turnout, or election results. Voters must be able to vote without fear and monitors must be able to observe without intimidation. Candidates must be able to campaign without the fear that their supporters will be harmed or even killed. In view of INEC disposition on elections in Nigeria, political apathy has continued to increase tremendously. The reality is that INEC independence exists in the attachment

of “independent” to its name. It has not truly demonstrated its independence in providing a level playing ground for parties and their candidates seeking to gain power through elections. It has not also ensured that all eligible Nigerian voters have the opportunity to cast their ballots for any candidates of their choice and seamlessly allowed all participants (parties, candidates, voters, and observers) to be involved in the electoral process. The 1999 Constitution on which basis INEC derives the legal impetus for its existence, contains various crisis-ridden and ambiguous provisions, which Nigerian politicians leverage to hold it hostage and interfere in its electoral operations.

CONCLUSION

This study has revealed that there were a lot of factors perceived as causes of political apathy in the 2023 general elections in Enugu state. Factors identified as causes of political apathy include: low voter turnout, mistrust in the election management body (EMB), insecurity, nomination of candidates, electoral violence, politics of exclusion and marginalization (women and youths) and election rigging. Since the re-emergence of democracy in 1999, Nigeria has conducted different elections and they were all marred by varying degrees of malpractice. People failed to vote because they have lost confidence in the state following its failure to fulfill obligations and concluded that bad governance makes people less concerned about their political affairs. Some of the causes of political apathy are lack of confidence in the electoral body and militarization of election. Lack of confidence in the electoral body can be attributed to the belief that election results could be cancelled, manipulated, falsified or declared inconclusive. Fear of sustaining injury or being killed through stray bullet could be adduced for their agreement on militarization of election as one of the causes. Lack of interest could be due to stress caused by queuing for long hours under the heat of the sun,

fear of threat from political thugs that could lead to violence or the belief that election could be rigged in favour of an unpopular candidate. Voters avoidance of elections only goes ahead to sustain electoral offenses being identified. Political apathy creates more room for imposition of candidates, increase in the activities of godfathers, election rigging, violence, bad governance and so on. The devastating effect of political apathy on the democratic system far outweighs its gains. The also study revealed that government interference in election administration resulted into political apathy during the 2023 general election in Enugu state. Lending from the maxim; “he who blows the piper dictates the tone”, government exploited provisions of the constitution and the electoral act 2022 to influence the activities of the election management body (INEC). The government appointed card carrying members of the ruling party as resident electoral commissioners in INEC. Due to INEC dependent on government funding, the federal government utilized it to malign the activities of the commission and forced thus making the commission to work for the interest of the party in power.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcome of the study, the researcher recommends as follows:

1. State governments should ensure to leave up to the promises of good governance made to the people. All factors that lead to political apathy must be checkmated. Enforceable legislations against election rigging, violence, thuggery, godfatherism and the like should be put into practice. Good governance will ensure, justice, fairness, equity and inclusion for all.
2. All federal government agencies charged with voter education like National

Orientation Agency (NOA), INEC, and Ministry of Information should sustain political education at all levels of the society. Political apathy is not the solution to electoral problems rather it endangers the electoral system more. Popular participation in elections will help reduce the influence of godfathers during elections thus creating room for the emergence of credible leaders through a credible election process.

REFERENCES

1. Ndoh, C. A. (2003). An introduction to political science. Owerri: Concave Publications.
2. Amanye, N. S., Bariledum, K. & Nwibor, B. L. (2015). Electoral Violence and Political Apathy in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges. *British Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 13(1). 155-173
3. Omotoso, O. F. (2019). Politics of power and power of politics: the anatomy of Nigerian government and politics. The 56th inaugural lecture in Ekiti State University, Tuesday 10th September
4. Oluwagbohunmi, M. F. (2020). Political Apathy: A Worrysome Impediment to Electoral Process in Nigeria. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 10(4), 61-66. DOI: 10.7176/RHSS/10-4-09
5. Gilbert, L. D., & Barigbon, C. B. (2015). The politics of poverty and democratic participation: Nigeria in perspective. *Developing Country Studies*, 5(18), 114-124.
6. Emiri, Festus (2010) "Dealing with Electoral Fraud: The People, Security Agencies and the Law", A paper Presented at the 1st PCRC Conference in Port Harcourt on Oct. 25, 2010.
7. Idike, A. N. (2014). Political parties, political apathy and democracy in Nigeria: Contending issues and the way forward. *Kuwait Chapter of the Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 4(3), 2-10.
8. Yakubu, Y. A. (2012). Democracy and political apathy in Nigeria (1999-2011). *European Scientific Journal* 8(20), 38-48.
9. Tan, K. (2012). Political apathy is harmful. The Oracle. Retrieved from: <https://gunnoracle.com/2748/forum/political-apaty-isharmful/>
10. Musa, Garba & Usman, & Garba Usman, Musa. (2020). THE QUEST FOR CREDIBLE ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA: A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE 2015 GENERAL ELECTIONS.
11. Azutoru David (2011), Elections and good governance in Nigeria. <http://nigerianews.org>.
12. Moynihan, D. P. (2013). Advancing the Empirical Study of Performance Management: What We Learned From the Program Assessment Rating Tool. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 43(5), 499-517. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074013487023>
13. UNDP (2011b). Human Development Report 2011 Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All. New York: UNDP.
14. Kozakova, P. (2011). Can "e-voting" increase turnout and restore faith in politics? Retrieved from <http://www.eotwonline.net/2011/09/01/can-e-voting-increase-turnout-and-restore-faith-in-politics/>
15. Ugwuala, U. D., Kalu, U. G. & Elechi, F. A. (2020). Electoral fraud as a major challenge to political development in Nigeria. *African Journal of Politics and Administrative Studies (AJPAS)*, 13(2). 50-60
16. Cohen, G. A. (1978). Karl Marx's theory of history: A defence, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
17. Ake, C. (1981). A political economy of Africa. Longman.
18. Owede, V. C., Soberekon, S. W. & Daniel, A. L. (2017). Perceived Causes of Political Apathy among Yenagoa Residents in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. https://njss.org.ng/publications/vol_xx_april_2017/CHAPTER%2011.pdf
19. Oluwagbohunmi, M. F. (2020). Social Values Demonstrated by Secondary School Students in Selected Local Government Areas of Ekiti State, Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 16(1), 75. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2020.v16n1p75>
20. Jake Dabang Dan-Azumi & Caroline Asan, 2021. "**Women and Legislative Representation in Nigeria's National Assembly: A Detailed Appraisal of the 8th Assembly (2015-2019)**," *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, Macrothink Institute, vol. 11(2), pages 86109-86109, December.
21. Eme-Uche, U., Okonkwo, C., & Peters, A. S. (2020). Nigeria and the challenges of national unity. *Proceedings of INTCESS*, 677-689.
22. Akpan, Nse & Onya Ph.D, Reason. (2019). Killing to Rule: An Analysis of Electoral Violence and the 2015 General Elections in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration*. 1. 58-68. 10.22259/2642-8318.0102008.
23. Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room. (2023). Report on Nigeria's 2023 General Elections. Nigeria Civil Society. <https://situationroomng.org>
24. Ugwu, C. (2023, March 18). #NigeriaDecides2023: Low turnout of voters in Enugu.

- <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/588347-nigeriadecides2023-low-turnout-of-voters-in-enugu.html>
25. Eme, Okechukwu & Onyishi, Tony. (2014). Boko Haram and Security Challenges in Nigeria. Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review. 3. 1-18. 10.12816/0018685.
 26. Ikem, P., Afamefune, A. O. O & Udegbunam, K. C. (2021). The spirituality approach to electoral politics in Africa: Evidence from the presidential elections in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. The International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society, 12 (1), 33-52
 27. Ugwuoke, C. O., Ajah, B. O., & Chukwuemeka, O. D. (2020). Developing patterns of violent crimes in Nigerian democratic transitions. In: Aggression and Violent Behaviour, pre-print, 101457
 28. Martin Ewi (2015) Was the Nigerian 2015 presidential election a victory for Boko Haram or for democracy?, African Security Review, 24:2, 207-231, DOI: [10.1080/10246029.2015.1051824](https://doi.org/10.1080/10246029.2015.1051824)
 29. Faluyi, O. T. (2022). Nigeria and 'negotiated elections': Examining the impact of rotational presidency on peace, the national question, and development. African Journal of Inter/ Multidisciplinary Studies, 4(1), 180 – 194
 30. Eme-Uche, Uche & Eme, Okechukwu. (2023). The Politics of Exclusion & Governance in Nigeria: A Thematic Analysis of the Buhari Administration. International Journal of Social Science and Human Research. 06. 10.47191/ijsshr/v6-i2-42.
 31. Ajakaye, J. E. (2021). Applications of artificial intelligence (AI) in libraries. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-9094-2.ch006>
 32. EU Election Observation Mission. (2023). Nigeria 2023 general elections: Final report. EU Election Observation Mission.
 33. Ashindorbe, K. (2018). Electoral Violence and the Challenge of Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria. India Quarterly, 74(1),92-105. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0974928417749639>
 34. Obiagu, U. C. & Abada, I. M. (2023). Government interference in election administration and lethal electoral irregularities in Africa: Evidence from Nigeria. *Qeios*, 4(4), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.32388/FEUGJY>
 35. Ezeani, E. O (2005).Electoral malpractices in Nigeria: The Case of 2003 General elections. In Onuand Momoh (Eds.), *Election and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria*. A Traid Associate.
 36. National Democratic Institute. (2008). *Promoting Legal Frameworks for Democratic Elections: An NDI Guide for Developing Election Laws and Law Commentaries*.
 37. Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2022).Electoral Act, 2022. Government Printers.International Republican Institute (IRI) and National Democratic Institute (NDI) (June, 2019). IRI/NDI Nigeria International Election Observation Mission Final Report. National Democratic Institute. <http://www.ndi.org/contact>
 38. Federal Republic of Nigeria. (1999).The Constitution, 1999 (as amended). Government Printers.
 39. Mthethwa, R. M. (2012). Critical dimensions for policy implementation. African Journal of Public Affairs, 5(2).
 40. Abada, I.M., Mbah, P.O., Obiagu, U. C., Udeh, C.O., Omeh, P.H., Odey, C.O. & Chukwu, C. Q. (2023). Winner-takes-all majoritarian system and irregularities in six election cycles in Nigeria, 1999 – 2019. *Qeios* Preprint. doi:10.32388/PQ68SB
 41. Peter O. Mbah, Chikodiri Nwangwu & Sam C. Ugwu | Greg Simons (Reviewing editor) (2019) Contentious elections, political exclusion, and challenges of national integration in Nigeria, *Cogent SocialSciences*, 5:1, DOI: [10.1080/23311886.2019.1565615](https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2019.1565615)
 42. Angerbrandt, H. (2018). Deadly elections: Post-election violence in Nigeria. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 56(1), 143–167.
 43. Onuoha, F.C., Okafor, J.C., Ojewale, O. & Okoro, C. (2020). Militarisation of the 2019 general elections and electoral integrity in Nigeria. *The Round Table*, 109(4), 406-418.
 44. United Nations (1948) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

CITE AS: Nkiruka C. Udenta and Jude Okezie Emmanuel Udenta (2024). Political Apathy in 2023 General Elections in Nigeria: A Case Study of Enugu State, Nigeria. IAA JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES 10(1):65-78. <https://doi.org/10.59298/IAAJSS/2024/101.65.78000>