

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEFECTION AND ELECTORAL OUTCOME IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The way and manner politicians in Nigeria defect from one political party to the other has not only constituted democratic nuisance, but has continued to raise serious concern among political observers and participants and this has been attributed to lack of clear ideology which makes candidates defect from one political party to the other which may affect the outcomes of elections in Southwestern, Nigeria. Using content analysis of secondary data obtained from various available literature and documentary evidences, and descriptive analysis of primary data obtained through the administration of questionnaire on purposively selected respondents, this study critically explored the linkage between defection and electoral outcome in Southwestern Nigeria. The study found out that politicians' defection from one political party to another affect electoral outcomes in Southwestern, Nigeria. Specifically, the result of the findings revealed that the weighted average mean was obtained as 3.14 indicating strong agreement of respondents to the negative impact of defection on electoral outcomes. It is concluded that strong connection exists between political ideology and defection and this have effect on electoral outcome. It is our candid opinion that for the purpose of deepening the practice of democracy in Nigeria, any elected politician that defects to another party should be made to stand down and seek re-election. The loophole within Nigeria electoral system that allows this to happen must be changed. That is, a legal reform to affect some enactments, particularly in the constitution whereby machinery for the vacation of seat after defection will make the occupier to lose the seat.

Keywords: Defection, Democracy, Election, Ideology, Political Party,

Introduction

In about the last twenty years, Nigerian democracy has witnessed series of political defections with politicians decamping from one political party to the other particularly from opposition parties to the ruling party. This development which is generally referred to as party cross carpeting, party switching, floor crossing, party-hooping, canoe-jumping, party-jumping, decamping etc., are employed to mean the same thing as defection (Aniche, 2017).

More often, defection is born out of the fact that politics is about contestation for political power between or among the political elites, who have always ensured that they strike a balance in resolving their incompatible interests whether by forming coalitions or cooperating to embrace the spirit of give and take in sharing or allocating political positions (Edet, 2017). Defection has become a permanent feature of the Nigerian nascent democracy and it occurs when every elected party representative within a legislative structure such as parliament, embraces a different political or policy

perspective that is incompatible with that of the party/parties he or she represents (Mustapha, 2018).

Basically, the discontent with his or her former party from where he or she decamps without defection reflecting any ideological virtue such as we are presently experiencing now in Nigeria's present political sojourn. Essentially, the different forms of activities that take place in political parties make it needful for their members to articulate their common or diverse interests and this sometimes led to intra or inter party conflicts. Scholars have associated the reasons with power tussle, personality clash, crisis or division within a given party, divergent views on the operation of a political party's philosophy, realization of one's personal political ambitions, and disagreement on party's position on issues, and party leaders reneging on agreed issues of the political party probably on power sharing formula (Momodu & Matudi, 2013). Factions exist; factionalism is a fact of life within most political parties. Indeed, factionalization creates one of the

incentives for the political elites to defect in order to protect their selfish interest or objectives (Edet, 2017).

The foregoing notwithstanding, not much intellectual resources have been deployed to analyzing defection from the perspective of outcome of election. What is common in the literature is defection masterminded because of crisis within or between parties. Of course, lack of ideology, intra and inter-party crisis, greed, corruption, imposition during primaries among others are known factors of party defection in Nigerian politics. Whereas, existing studies on defection have largely focused on its effect on consolidation of democracy, democratic engagement, voting patterns, political instability and emergence of party's candidacy, thus, information about its influence on outcome of elections in Southwestern Nigeria and Nigeria's democracy is scarcely available, despite obvious cases of party rivalries and undemocratic activities of political parties in Nigeria. One of the fundamental issues bordering on politics in Nigeria which has not been well addressed in literature is the extent at which defection affect electoral outcome in Nigeria. Hence, this study, using Southwestern Nigeria as the unit of the study, focuses on the extent at which electoral outcome is determined by defections of arty members prior to the elections.

Review of Literature

Implications of Defection on Electoral Outcomes

Incessant defections by politicians clearly reveals that there is a problem in our political party formation and management processes, which could be traced to clear lack of political party institutional strengthening in the country's ideology and philosophy, thereby affecting issues and as such resulting into deviation of the integrity of the Nigerian politician. This is capable of making citizens to lose confidence in the political process.

There are several effects of defection on political parties in Nigeria. On the positive side, defection has relatively contributed to the increase of the share of votes for the opposition, especially in presidential elections. A good example was in 2015 general election that produced President Mohammadu Buhari through the merger of four political parties of Congress for Progressive Change (CPC),

Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) and some part of All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA). The limited benefit from defectors to the opposition is partly attributed to various factors, including the mishandling of newcomers. It is important to note that for opposition parties to be able to effectively challenge the incumbent party, they need some external support beyond their routine operations. Defectors, especially from the ruling party, are thus very important because of three factors. (Nwaka and Ogunleye, 2021)

The first factor is that some defectors have served in high positions in the government and the ruling party, and thus have a lot of experience than the opposition is. The second factor is that of defectors possessing 'insider' information that could help the opposition to plan for effective pursuit of the ruling party. The third factor is their possession of resources that could help opposition parties to effectively execute their strategic goals.

All these factors, notwithstanding, the opposition has sometimes failed to properly handle defectors. The relationship between incoming defectors has often been predominated by an instrumental dimension in which, while their new parties require their popularity and services, in some instances they have been perceived as a threat to the status quo. On the negative side, defection has significantly affected the opposition, especially since 1999. It is worth noting that opposition political parties depend much on state subventions to run their parties (Edet, 2017).

Okereka et al (2022) who carried out a research work titled "The Nexus of Party Defections and Their Implications for 2019 General Elections in Nigeria: Dynamics and Horse-Trading" using descriptive analysis. The result of the findings revealed political immaturity and ideological confusion in Nigeria. The findings also showed that defection does not portend good tidings on the electoral process especially the selfish desire of candidates jumping from one political party to another. The findings also showed that this activity can mar the outcome of elections. It was also revealed that Nigerian politician's defect from one party to another not on the basis of ideological disagreement, but on selfish interest and this make mockery of Nigerian democracy, negates the values of opposition parties in democratic system,

invalidate opposing views and reduce the efficacy of alternative democratic choices. The findings of the study also revealed that, party defection if not checked, could move Nigeria into a system without viable opposition to serve as watchdog to the ruling party.

Nwaka and Ogunleye (2021) who carried out research on Politics of Party Defection and CrossCarpeting: Implication for Sustainable Democracy in Edo State. The quantitative methods were adopted using systematic sampling technique of 60 respondents based on their geographical spread. Data obtained were analyzed with both descriptive and inferential statistics using statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings of the study among others revealed that lack of internal democracy, personal ambition of individual politicians, the imposition of candidate etc which have created enmity among members of the parties such that they play bad politics with every issue that borders the wellbeing of the people.

Nandi and Ibrahim (2021) who carried out research on 'The Implications of Incessant Political Defection by Nigerian Legislators on the Country's Democracy and the Urgent Need to address it. The research adopted a desktop research methodology. The findings of the study showed that Nigerian political parties merely served as a vehicle for realizing their selfish political gains and ambitions, therefore, only use the electorates' votes in achieving that. The study further revealed that elected decampers take along with them the offices, positions or portfolios they occupied by virtue of their previous political parties' mandates. The study further revealed that this scenario robbed the political parties of their victories or seats which were won at the integrity of the Nigerian politicians. This is capable of making citizens to lose polls. The study's finding also revealed other factors that are responsible for the continuous political defections in Nigeria to include; lack of party discipline, dearth of political ideology, lingering disagreements between and among members as well as the desire of mostly the political elites to make quick money.

This is also relevant to this study in that it provides insights into the causes of defection among Nigerian political elites and its implications on electoral outcomes.

Mustapha and Yakaka (2019) noted in their study titled The Politics of Inter Party Decamping and the Future of Nigeria's Democracy used both primary and secondary sources of data collection. The result of their findings revealed that most of these issues or problems of inter party decamping are because of personal interest and over ambition to gain power at all cost, the mode of candidate selection among others are the major factors that motivate defection among Nigerian politicians. This is also relevant to this study in that it provides insights into the causes of defection among Nigerian politicians.

Theoretical Framework - Frustration-Aggression Theory

The study adopted two theoretical frameworks of Frustration-Aggression theory and Elite theory.

Frustration-Aggression Theory

The study adopted the Frustration-Aggression theory since frustration from a system can led to aggressive behaviour from those who feel the brunt of the actions of the privilege few who coincidentally control party affairs on the one hand, and since the problems associated with the multi-party system in the country's history is presumed to be *Systemic* on the other hand, hence the defection from one political party to another.

There have been attempts to explain defection, the most popular of which is the frustration aggression theory put forward by Sigmund Freud (1939) and popularize by Hollard, Doob, Miller, et al (1939). The theory holds that the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration. This theory reflects some of the core issues associated with intra party conflicts in relation to democratic governance in Nigeria today and provide contextual appraisal and interconnections. In line with the frustration-aggression theory, an individual is aggressive when he is relatively deprived as a result of the difference between what is desire and what is obtainable in reality. Therefore, aggression is a result of frustration (Amenta, 2005). Once an individual has needs that cannot be satisfied, he becomes aggressive and when a basic desire is hindered or obstructed, the individual is frustrated and directs his aggression toward perceived authorities obstructing his achieving his desire.

Frustration-Aggression (FA) Theory posits that the occurrence of aggressive behaviour in some cases leads to some form of aggressive behaviour. The theory, thus, tends to justify the reasons for aggressive behaviour among individuals or group of individuals in the society of men (Dollard et al., 1939). In truism, aggressive behaviour presupposes that there is the existence of frustration and the existence of frustration leads to aggression. According to Dennen (2005) frustration is used not only to refer to the processes of blocking one's goal attainment but to also refer to the reactions that follow the blocking of one's expected goal.

From this standpoint, it is obvious that blocking of one goal can lead to frustration which can equally lead to aggressive behaviour toward the source blocking one's expected goal. It is important, therefore, to note that aggression manifests in many areas in our society. For instance, aggression manifest in domestic front as domestic violence, abuses of one's fundamental rights, school bullying, war situations, as well as in one's participation in socio-political activities, etc. The actions and inactions of members of the multi-party system in Nigeria, for example, can also result in some forms of disaffections among members. The consequence of this is the multiple problems that are likely to escalate to conflict situations as evident in the case of Nigeria where litigations and defections are last resort. Moreover, the extent to which one is frustrated is based on the extent to which his or her expectations are hindered or blocked by another.

Moreover, the fear of avoiding persecution or prosecution by the government in power have been speculated to be a contributory reason why some staunch party stalwarts may defect from their initial political parties to the party in power. For instance, there were speculations that the main reason why Senator Akpabio, who was a commissioner under a PDP government in his State for eight years; became governor of his State for another eight years on the same political platform and later a senator and minority leader of the Senate under the PDP, may have defected to APC in 2018 was to avoid criminal prosecution by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), though the assertion had been refuted by his associates. However, in a rather judicial twist, a judge of the Federal High Court, Abuja ruled that

Senator Akpabio only "moved to join APC out of frustration of being expelled by the PDP through a letter dated August 2, 2018." The judge further noted that in an attempt to avoid been expelled, Akpabio was at liberty to join another political party of his choice in line with section 40 of the 1999 Constitution and that same cannot be termed as defection. (Danjibo & Ashindorbe, 2018)

The strength of this theory, therefore, lies in the assumption that frustration breeds aggression and that the reason why people behave the way they do is that their expected goal is blocked by another, which can be an individual, group of individuals, institutions, organization, etc. The Nigerian political climate is full of tension and various types of crises within and between political parties and other groups. Most times, the tension and animosity rise out as a result of who get what, when and how coupled the methods and techniques of achieving these objectives. At the beginning of the Fourth Republic in Nigeria in 1999, the most notable intra-party conflict occurred between the former President Olusegun Obasanjo and his Vice Alhaji Atiku Abubakar that made Atiku Abubakar and his supporter to left the PDP to AC. The reason for these political defections were premised on intra-party conflict, lack of internal democracy, non-adherence to party's constitution, automatic party ticket without following the party's constitution etc. (Dike,2003).

The Elite Theory

The elite theory as popularized by Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca and Roberto Michel's; among others no doubt explains the Nigeria electoral process. The theory is propounded on the premise that the society is composed of two broad categories, namely: the leaders otherwise known as "the selected few, who are capable and, therefore, have the right to supreme leadership", and the followers who consist of "the vast majority of people who are destined to be ruled"

The central part of the elitist doctrine therefore, is that there may exist in any society a minority of the population which takes the major decisions in the society. James Meisel (1958) noted that in every society, the elites maintain their dominance due to the fact that they have the following characteristics; cohesion, conspiracy and consciousness, consensus on all issues, they rule all societies, there is upward

mobility, they control all things etc. Most political parties that exist in the present fourth republic could either be classified as cadre or elitist parties, which manipulate the sentiments of the masses for their selfish interest of acquiring economic base". One would agree therefore, that it is almost impossible to discuss democracy in Nigeria without considering the roles played by the Nigerian elites (whether political, economic, military or bureaucratic elites), for in the final analysis, it is from this group that the recruitment of political leadership is made

The issue of political defection in Nigeria could be explained using the elite theory especially when one look at it from the view point of James Meisel, who in his study examined the cohesion, consciousness and political conspiracy of the elites in every society as the crucial elements, that has ensured they retain their powers and dominance in such societies. The Nigerian elites, who are majorly the political leadership, exhibit the above attributes as related to political defection in the sense that, they know one another, and are properly coordinated and always work towards achieving unity in most of their actions, to ensure that they acquire and retain power. Therefore, Nigerian political elites see political defection as a veritable instrument to be used to ensure the maintenance of their power and hold on the Nigeria society. This possibly explains the reason why larger numbers of Nigerian political actors either advice themselves or are advised by other elites to defect at each important point in time, in order to join the ruling party for and ensure that they do not lose power.

The divisions that exist within the elite structure as suggested by Mills and other elite theorists further explains political defection, especially when it happens because of crisis within a political party structure. Due to the fact that members of the "inner caucus", who could be compared to as the god fathers and patrons within a political party, are the ones who decide the important decisions and in most cases lord themselves over, at the lower cadre elites. Situations could be found, whereby some members of the lower cadre would decide to leave a political party due to the activities and domineering attitudes of these god fathers in the party. A good example of the above is the political party defection of individuals like

Ikedi Ohakim, who after the PDP gubernatorial primaries in 2007 in Imo State, felt cheated and decided to defect to the PPA during the gubernatorial elections of 2007. (Nwokoye, 2009).

Furthermore, the lack of ideology based political party and high presence of identity-based politics in Nigeria has been attributed to the activities and nature of the Nigerian elites, who in their mission to acquire and retain power work against ideological party politics, and rather promote ethnic politics, which they use in perpetuating and prolonging themselves in power and promoting their selfish, egoistic, self-centered, greedy and narrow aims and objectives. A good example to buttress the above assertion is the first celebrated case of defection that occurred in the Nigerian political history in 1951, where Chief Obafemi Awolowo of Action Group convinced Yoruba politicians who were then members of NCNC, to defected and join the AG, in order to robbed Dr.Nnamdi Azikiwe the opportunity to lead the Government Business of the Western Nigeria and favour himself in the then Western Regional Assembly. (Mbah, 2009).

Furthermore, one would agree that the structure and activities of members of the elite group within the Nigerian society, has contributed a lot to the unreasonable and senseless political party defection noticeable within Nigerian polity because if the above is not the case, how could one explain the fact that in the Nigerian political system, even the National Chairman and sole founders of Political parties have also experienced defectors, as evidenced by the cases of Alhaji Mahmud Waziri (a one time National Chairman of APP who decamped to PDP), Chief Alani Bankole (of the same APP who decamped to PDP) Chief Godwin Ume Ezeoke (who decamped as a founding member of PDP to ANPP to become the National Chairman of ANPP),the then Governor Orji Uzor Kalu (who was the sole sponsor and founder of PPA, only to defected to PDP) and former Governor Rochas Okorocha (who formed Action Alliance (AA) in 2005 and could not even stayed there up till 2007 general elections) and Alhaji Atiku Abubakar who was one of the founding fathers of PDP who defected to the then Action Congress (AC) when he had running battle with his former boss Chief Olusegun Obasanjo to contest the 2007 general elections as President and later came

back to PDP when he lost the election. He later left for the then Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) again in 2011 to contest the 2011 general elections and later left back for Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) after losing the election and in 2015 defected to All Progressive Congress (APC) to contest the primaries of the party and later defected back to PDP in 2018 to contest the 2019 presidential election. (Oyebode, 2011).

The political elites in Nigeria deriving from their social attributes and privileges of office operate as a formidable team against the masses i.e. people who are weighted down by daily pressure for sustenance and necessities of life. The manipulative likelihood and instruments by the elite hinder any authentic struggle to promote mutual reason in form of qualitative education, shelter, basic social amenities and other infrastructures as dividends of democratic governance. Madunagu (2005) opines that “the prevalent ratio of the Nigerian governing elites does not use the resources they embezzle for the benefit of the masses.

The ruling elites in Nigeria both past and present engage in resource looting, and as an extension of the colonial state, the post-colonial state represented by the ruling elite is also victimizing others for personal gain and exploitative. In addition, Onyishi (2007) opines that successive ruling elites in Nigeria are not accountable to the citizens that voted them into different political offices. This is attributable to the fallen status of Nigerian constitution and weak institutions of governance which ensures that the internal and external machinery for upholding public accountability is grossly restricted. Support for these averments’ hinges on various allegations of public treasury looting by public officials, Governors and local government chieftains to mention but a few.

The institutions that are saddled with the responsibilities of maintaining accountability, transparency and probity in office, moral rectitude in the conduct of government business and integrity in public affairs such as Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practice and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) Code of Conduct Bureau, Judiciary and Police have not been able to do much due to the reasons given above. It is however skeptical if there is anything the poor masses of the population can do about this, in view of the instrument of

coercion at the disposal of the elite. This corroborates Pareto’s assertion that modern democracies are merely another form of elite domination through unaccountability, unprecedented use of power for selfish purpose and self-enrichment are very appropriate as reflected in the foregoing analyses. (Ibietan, 2013)

The challenge of service delivery, infrastructural deficits and qualitative life for citizens among others shows that the expected democratic dividends have not been delivered to the masses. The ruling elite in Nigeria may have become decline and ineffective due to pleasures of easy living and privileges of power in the words of Pareto. Anej (2004) corroborated this issue while identifying the existence of an exploitative state and elite in Nigeria, and submitted that “this may therefore explain the reasons for the lack of development in the country...”

Since Nigeria’s independence to the present time, Nigeria has witnessed the “circulation of elites” as theorized by Pareto; this implies that one elite replaces another so that major transformation in the society can take place. It is however unlikely if major and qualitative transformation had taken place to position the country in the league of developed nations. As another political dispensation begins, it would be a matter of importance to evaluate what the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) or the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) or any other Party have done or can do to better the lot of the masses.

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed method of survey research design and key informant interview. This is necessitated by the fact that the major indicators of candidates’ defection and implications on electoral outcomes in South-western Nigeria cannot be measured using the same instrument. This study was situated in Southwest Nigeria to enable the researcher reach out to the respondents for data gathering. The population for this study consists of politicians/ party members of the two major political parties of All Progressive Congress (APC) and People’s Democratic Party (PDP) in South Western Nigeria. For the purpose of adequate representation, to arrive at the population of the study, two states has been selected with respect to the strength of membership of APC and PDP, one representing

the state with the highest number of registered members for the two dominant political parties and the other with the lowest number of registered members. The rationale for choosing the states with the highest and lowest number of registered members is that it is assumed that membership strength indicates level of political

consciousness in these states. The Taro Yamane mathematical formula was used to calculate the sample size from the study population of 1,086,745 of party members of the two dominant political parties of APC and PDP in South-Western Nigeria.

The Taro Yamane Formula $n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$
 $n = \frac{1,086,745}{1 + 1,086,745 (0.05)^2}$

$$n = \frac{1,086,745}{1 + 1,466,569 \times 0.0025} = \frac{1,086,745}{2716.8625} \approx 399.99 \approx 400$$

Therefore, the sample was 400 respondents, proportionally selected from members of the two dominants political parties situated in Oyo and Ogun States of Nigeria which were PDP and APC for questionnaire administration purpose. In order to have in-depth research, the use of oral interview as a source of primary data collection alongside the survey discussed above becomes necessary. Thus, interviews were conducted with the pressmen and women; Some candidates that have defected from one political party to another in the two dominant political parties of APC and PDP, and State party Chairmen/Secretaries/Publicity Sectaries of All Progressive Congress (APC) and Peoples’ Democratic Party (PDP). The data were analyzed both with descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS.

Responses on analysis of perceived effects of defection on electoral outcomes are as presented in table 1. “Party defection negatively affects election result” which has a mean score of 3.27 ranks highest and is followed by “ party defection makes the result of election to favour the party the defector moves to” which ranked 3.30; “the issue of defection has been one of the major problem to an accepted electoral result” and “party defection can make or mar democratic process” which both have mean score of 3.27; “party defection denied citizens choices and elections become mere selection” which has also a mean score of 3.06; and finally “party defection makes the result of election to favour the party the politicians left” generated a mean score of 2.62. The weighted average mean was obtained as 3.14 indicating strong agreement of respondents to the negative impact of defection on electoral outcomes.

Results

To what extent does defection affect electoral outcome in Southwestern Nigeria?

Table 1 Descriptive Analysis of Perceived Effects of Defection on Electoral Outcomes

Items/ Questions	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	\bar{x}	Std. Dev
The issue of defection has been one of the major problems to an accepted electoral result	14	51	136	182	3.27	.83
Party defection negatively affects election result	3.7	13.3	35.5	47.5		
Party defection makes the result of election to favour the party the politicians left	15	50	126	192	3.29	.84
Party defection makes the result of election to favour the party the defector moves to	3.9	13.1	32.9	50.1		
Party defection denied citizens choices and elections become mere selection	78	85	123	97	2.62	1.07
Party defection can make or mar democratic process	20.4	22.2	32.1	25.3		
Party defection can make or mar democratic process	19	49	114	201	3.30	.87
Party defection can make or mar democratic process	5.0	12.8	29.8	52.5		
Party defection denied citizens choices and elections become mere selection	61.6	90	163	124	3.06	.79
Party defection denied citizens choices and elections become mere selection	23.5	42.6	32.4			
Party defection can make or mar democratic process	16	57	117	193	3.27	.86
Party defection can make or mar democratic process	4.2	14.9	30.5	50.4		
Weighted average mean	3.14					

Source: Survey (2024)

Effect of Defection on the Outcomes of Election

The outcome of election equals emergence of elected individuals who are going to lead or govern a stated boundary, whether national, state or local government levels of government. It is presumed by political scientists, analysts that the impact of defection may be well placed before, during and after election (Arinze & Oliver, 2016; Edet, 2017). Relating to pre-election, defection is believed to be capable of disrupting the stability of political party, as party momentum largely hinge on the numbers of personalities and their key supporters or fans base who may likely follow them to new party. Some of the interviewees insisted:

“Haaaa, yes, defection can have a serious negative effect on electoral outcomes most especially if those that defected are many and they are popular candidates because they also

have their own supporters, so, if they leave the party in large number, it will definitely have a negative impact or effect on the party they left and have a positive effect on the party they moved to” (Interviewee 6, 52 years, BOT member)

“you know that politics is a game of numbers...if party A moves some people from party B, by virtue of promising them juicy appointment many people will move en mass and when the leader calls the followers...okay...my people since you are not comfortable here let’s move to another party...since they must have been promised a position in the other party” (Interviewee 9, 45 years, Secretary)

The overview of the participants’ response is presented in bar chart indicating whether it contributes positively or negatively to electoral outcome in Nigeria.

Impact of Defection

9

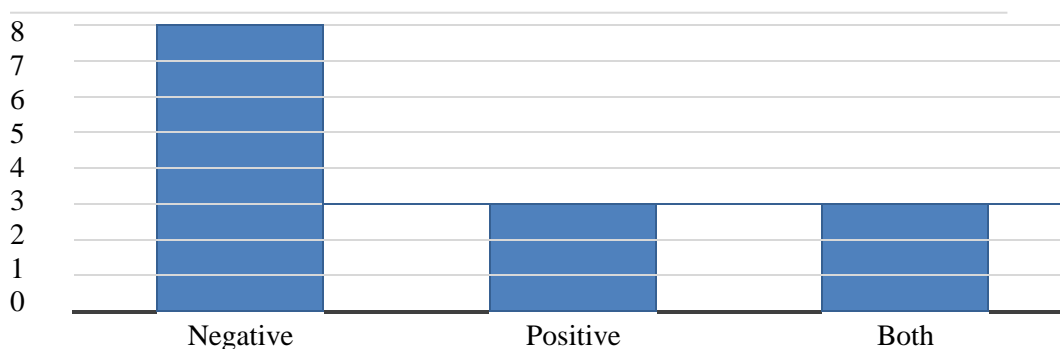


Figure 1: Bar charts depiction of respondents' views of impact of defection on electoral outcome. From the figure, it is obvious that 8 (58%) respondents considered defection as a bad precedence for politics and electoral outcome in Nigeria. However, 3 (21%) participants viewed it in good light since they accepted it as a reality, a game changing impact and the momentum it brings into polity. In sum, the impact of defection on election outcome can be both positive and negative

depending on the recipient. While it boosts the chances of some political parties due to the influx of new member with larger domain of supporters, it can also be devastating since party who losses members to another party may find it difficulty replacing their supports and fan base. In general, defection aggravates ideological confusion and give electorates little rooms for political choice making and leadership.

Table 2 Descriptive Analysis of Activities of Politics of Candidates' Defection

Items/ Questions	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD	\bar{x} (%)	Std. Dev
Defection is aimed at improving one's status or power within a party	204 53.3	140 36.6	29 7.6	10 2.6	3.40	.74
Defection starts with initiation of conflict or issue within the party	167 43.6	159 41.5	51 13.3	6 1.6	3.27	.75
Over ambition to assume political power engenders defection to other party	189 49.3	135 35.2	51 13.3	8 2.1	3.32	.78
Defection is an activity of retaliatory attitude	165 43.1	141 36.8	67 17.5	10 2.6	3.20	.82
Defection is an activity of associating oneself with members of other political parties	163 42.6	173 45.2	44 11.5	3 .8	3.30	.70
Defection is a hypocritical behaviour	165 43.1	148 38.6	54 14.1	16 4.2	3.21	.84
Weighted average mean	3.28					

Responses on analysis of activities and politics of candidates' defection are as presented in table 2. The item "defection is aimed at improving one's status or power within a party" which has a mean score of 3.40 ranks highest and is followed by "over ambition to assume political power engenders defection to other party" which has a mean score of 3.32; "defection is an activity of associating oneself with members of other political parties" which has also a mean score of 3.30; "defection starts with initiation of conflict or issue within the party" generated a mean score of 3.27; and finally, "defection is an hypocritical behaviour" with a mean score of 3.21 ranks last among the items defining the activities and politics of

candidates' defection. The weighted average mean was obtained as 3.28 indicating strong agreement of respondents to the politicking activities associated with candidates' defection.

Test of Association between Defection and Electoral Outcome

There will be no association between defection and electoral outcome of politicians in South-West, Nigeria

The study employed a 2x2 cross tabulation on question do you participate in election, which carries dichotomous response yes or no. Again, for the election outcome, the respondents were asked whether they won the election or not. The chi-square test of relationship (association) was obtained as follow:

Table 3: 2x2 contingency table of party politics and electoral outcome

Variable	Party politics		Total	χ^2	df	p-val.	R
	Stayed (E.C.)	Defected (E.C.)					
Won Election	59	23	82	32.289 ^{a1}			Sig
Electoral Outcome	(47.3)	(34.7)	(82)				
Lost Election	1	21	22				
	(12.7)	(9.3)	(22)				
Total	60	44	104				
	(60)	(44)	(104)				

Note: E.C (Expected Count)

Table 3 displays the cross tabulation of party politics and electoral outcome. The chi-square statistics tests relationships between categorical variables. The null hypothesis of the Chi-Square test is that no relationship exists on the categorical variables (defected/stayed and

won/lost) in the population; they are independent. In the study, the $\chi^2 (1) = 32.289$ was significant at .05 alpha level. The stated hypothesis is rejected. This shows that the party politics influences electoral outcome in South Western, Nigeria.

Negative Impact of Defection on Electoral Outcome for Party

Table 3: The summary table showing significant difference in the electoral outcome based on party-type

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	DF	t-cal	P	Remark
APC	231	3.1147	.32740	.02154	380	-	.024	Sig.
PDP	151	3.1930	.33668	.02740		2.259		

The table 4.12 above showed that there was significant difference in the electoral outcome of APC and PDP as perceived by party members (t= -2.259; P<0.05). The mean value of the table further revealed that party member in APC perceived fewer negative impact of defection (Mean = 3.11) on the outcome of election than did their PDP counterpart (Mean =3.19). This further means that the effect of defection may differ for parties; and further buttress how party strength plays crucial role in both electioneering and outcome of election.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the findings of research question five showed that candidates’ defection has a negative effect on electoral outcomes in Southwestern Nigeria. This result corroborates that of Agboga (2023) who revealed that 58% of Nigerian voters disapproved of party switching and most of the respondents also pointed to re-election and perks of office as the

perceived drivers of switching as opposed to ideological or policy considerations. In addition, the result of the research also demonstrated a negative attitude towards party switching among Nigerian voters, and consistent with similar attitudes found in older democracies as revealed by the study. Also, the result of the findings showed that voters prefer some forms of consistency in their elected representatives and are likely to punish legislators who switch parties. It further revealed that voters would likely reward Members of Parliament who remain loyal to their political party, especially when the party is making efforts to deliver on its manifesto. This implies that legislators who switch are often viewed with suspicion by voters, often based on the risk of betraying them too. Moreover, the findings of the result also showed that in states with institutionalized parties, the survey data showed that Nigerian voters prefer loyalists to party switchers.

Furthermore, the result of the findings also revealed that electoral outcome is a crucial variable to measure voters' response to switching because voters will use their votes to punish MPs for switching because switchers performed worse than non-switchers in elections, holding other factors constant. Also, the multinomial logistic regression models showed that switching reduced the odds for re-election both in the seventh and eighth assemblies in Nigeria as well as in the combinations of both 8th and joint assemblies. The joint model showed that non-switchers' odds of winning were 9.8 times higher than for switchers, which revealed that switching substantially and negatively affected Nigerian Members of Parliament. In terms of probabilities, switchers had 0.09 chance of winning compared to 0.91 for non-switchers and interestingly, the models also showed that switchers were more likely to lose than not contest at all, and these were statistically significant across board.

In conclusion, contrary to speculations by certain scholars that switchers would bear no electoral cost for defecting, the findings of the research showed that switchers performed worse than non-switchers in elections. The results revealed that in the event of a "political divorce" where MPs server ties with their old parties to join another one, voters prefer to remain with the old political party than move with switchers and this showed a negative perception of party switching shown in the survey by voting against switchers as shown in the negative relationship between switching and electoral victory while holding other factors constant.

The result of the findings of research question five also showed that candidates' defection has a negative effect on electoral outcomes in Southwestern Nigeria. This result corroborates that of Okeke et. al (2022) who revealed political immaturity and ideological confusion in Nigeria. The findings also showed that defection does not portend good tidings on the electoral process especially the selfish desire of candidates jumping from one political party to another. The findings also showed that this activity can mar the outcome of elections. It was also revealed that Nigerian politicians defect from one party to another not on the basis of ideological disagreement, but on selfish interest and this make mockery of Nigerian

democracy, negates the values of opposition parties in democratic system, invalidate opposing views and reduce the efficacy of alternative democratic choices. The findings of the study also revealed that, party defection if not checked, could move Nigeria into a system without viable opposition to serve as watchdog to the ruling party.

In the same vein, Nandi and Ibrahim (2021) also revealed that Nigerian political parties merely served as a vehicle for realizing their selfish political gains and ambitions, therefore, only use the electorates' votes in achieving that. The study further revealed that elected decampees take along with them the offices, positions or portfolios they occupied by virtue of their previous political parties' mandates. The study further revealed that this scenario robbed the political parties of their victories or seats which were won at the integrity of the Nigerian politicians. This is capable of making citizens to lose polls. The study's finding also revealed other factors that are responsible for the continuous political defections in Nigeria to include; lack of party discipline, dearth of political ideology, lingering disagreements between and among members as well as the desire of mostly the political elites to make quick money.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

There is strong connection between political defection and electoral outcome which have effect on electoral outcomes in Southwestern Nigeria.

The way and manner politicians in Nigeria defect from one party to the other has not only constituted democratic nuisance, but has continued to raise serious concern among political observers and participants and this has been attributed to lack of clear ideology which makes candidates defect from one political party to the other which may affect the outcomes of elections in Southwestern, Nigeria. The study now found out the politicians' defection from one political party to another affect electoral outcomes in Southwestern, Nigeria. Specifically, the result of the findings revealed that the weighted average mean was obtained as 3.14 indicating strong agreement of respondents to the negative impact of defection on electoral outcomes. It is concluded that strong connection exists

between political ideology and defection and this have effect on electoral outcome. It is our candid opinion that for the purpose of deepening the practice of democracy in Nigeria, any elected politician that defects to another party should be made to stand down and seek reelection. The loophole within Nigeria electoral system that allows this to happen must be changed. That is, a law reform to affect some enactments, particularly in the constitution whereby machinery for the vacation of seat after defection will make the occupier to lose the seat.

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