

**VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN NIGERIA'S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: FOCUS ON THE 2010
ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL IN THE 9TH SENATE**

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the research work in this dissertation titled. ‘Voting Behaviour in Nigeria’s National Assembly: Focus on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill in the 9th Senate’ is the original work carried out by Tom, Samuel E. under the supervision of Dr. Terfa Abraham of the university of Benin/National Institute for Legislative and Democratic studies (NILDS) postgraduate. I further declare that the information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and their references.

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CERTIFICATION

This dissertation titled, ‘Voting Behaviour in Nigeria’s National Assembly: Focus on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill in the 9th Senate’ has been duly presented by Tom, Samuel E. (PG/NLS/1900052) of the NILDS/UNIBEN graduate school, Abuja. Copies of the dissertation are submitted for evaluation by panel of examiners and subsequent oral defense by the candidate.

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This Dissertation has been read and approved as meeting the requirements of the University of Benin/National Institute for Legislative Studies (UNIBEN / NILDS) for the award of Master’s Degree in Legislative Studies (MLS).

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project work to God Almighty and to my family for their love and support.

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I humbly thank and glorify the name of Almighty God who made it possible for me to be alive and see me throughout the program, by making everything a dream come through.

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ABSTRACT

Voting in parliament x-rays the different patterns of voting choices expressed by the National Assembly Legislators, the circumstances that surrounded the passage of the bill into law, the preference of members which also carries the weight of the convictions of their constituents, political party, or lobby group they represent. Whereas the literature has examined the determinants of voting patterns in other spheres such as in periodic elections, the debate that came with the need to vote for electronic transmission of election results during the consideration of the 2010 Electoral Amendment Bill, offers an opportunity to contribute to the literature. The broad objective of this study is to examine the voting behavior in the 9th Senate regarding the electronic transmission of votes as provided by the 2010 Electoral Amendment Bill. The specific objectives are: (1) Examine the factors that shape voting choices on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021 in the Nigerian Senate, and (2) What are the reasons for the voting preferences expressed by Senators on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021.

Data was collected from secondary sources (Senate order paper and National dailies) on how the voting was done in the Senate regarding Section 52 (3) of the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021. While the Senators that voted were also interviewed, a questionnaire was also administered to randomly selected respondents to ascertain their opinion on the factors that influenced the voting pattern of Senators. The sample size involved 79 Senators and 258 respondents randomly selected outside the National Assembly to document their responses on factors they perceived as playing a role in the voter choice of the Senators. The target population are stakeholders in the nations electoral space. These include the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Civil Society Organizations, Nigerian citizens aged 18 and above, and so on. The response obtained is analyzed using descriptive analysis (frequencies, percentages, and charts) processed using SPSS and MS Excel

With regards to objective one, it was found that the vote of the Senators was not against electronic voting. Rather, it was about who should have the final say on whether election results should be transmitted electronically. The recommendation of the Senate Committee on the Election Amendment Bill is that Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should determine, when possible, of practicable it is to transmit the result. On the other hand, the amendment to the committee recommended by the Deputy Whip of the Senate is that the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) should decide when it is safe and secured to transit electronically. Analysis of the voting pattern for the recommendation by the deputy whip showed that by Political Party line, 4% (2 out of 52) PDP Senators voted in favour while APC Senators votes accounted for 96% (50 out of 52). By Northern and Southern categorization, Northern voters accounted for 75% of votes in favour while Southern votes account for 25%. By gender, five female

Senators were present during the votes of which three voted in favour. These females are Oluremi Tinubu (APC Lagos Central), Aishatu Dahiru Ahmed (APC Adamawa Central), and Senator Dadu’ut Ladi (APC Plateau South). All were APC. On the other hand, the committee recommendation is that: the Commission (INEC) may transmit the results of elections by electronic means where and when practicable. By party lines, 27 people voted in favour of this option. All were PDP members. By geopolitical zone, the South-South had the highest number of votes in favour of the committee recommendation. This is followed by the Southeast and the Southwest. The northern zones generally had a low preference for the Committee recommendation. Along gender lines, two women: Betty Apiafi (PDP - Rivers West), and Eyankeyi Akon Etim (Akwa Ibom - South); out of the five women present, voted in favour of the committee recommendation. Analysis of questionnaires and interviews conducted showed that membership of a lobby group and interaction with constituents influenced the voting pattern observed with the votes for electronic transmission. Analysis of proportions also showed that interaction with constituents had more influence on the vote of those who voted following the Committee recommendation than being a member of a lobby group. Analysis of the citizen's responses showed that partisanship was a major determinant in the voting preference of Senators with a total of 53% of respondents, in favour. Party loyalty was another factor found to play a role in the voting behavior of the Senators as 51% of 258 respondents, agreed. While 61.6% of the respondents agreed that INEC is capable of transmitting votes electronically, the state of the nation’s internet infrastructure development would play a significant role in determining the feasibility.

The study recommended that building the trust of the electorate in INEC and developing the nation's internet infrastructure and ICT security, would enhance public confidence in INEC transmitting voter results electronically. The study also recommends continuous testing of the electronic component of the electoral system as well as the transmission of voter results using off-cycle elections before the main elections in 2023. The voting behavior of Nigerian Legislators should be more citizen-centric to build public trust in the process of lawmaking.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Of The Study

Voting behaviour describes the patterns, actions or inactions, agreement or disagreement of a voter or legislator in support or against a candidate, proposed legislation presented at the floor of the house for policy decision making and enactment. Voting decisions reveal not only the major policies that are initiated, shaped, and ratified by the Legislative branch of government, but they also serve to indicate the scope of agreement on the viewpoints that underlie them. This study seeks to examine voting behaviour in the 9th Senate regarding the electronic transmission of election results in section 52(3) of the 2010 Electoral Act Ammendment Bill, 2021.

One of the most common assumptions in the existing studies on legislative voting is that parties compete over national public policies. The literature thus suggests that party leaders impose discipline on rank-and-file party members to increase party unity in legislative voting, which helps to deliver promised policies to voters (see, e.g., Herron 2002; Hix 2004; Nemoto et al. 2008). In this policy-centric context, a few legislators, who have strong incentives to cultivate personal reputations instead of party policy reputations, may undermine party voting unity by defecting from the party line. Thus, for example, party unity tends to be lower among legislators under candidate-centred electoral institutions where candidates compete against co-partisans for voter support, because such an institutional setting encourages politicians to seek personal votes rather than party votes (Carey 2007; Carey and Shugart 1995; Samuels 1999; Shugart et al. 2005). Furthermore, parties tend to be less cohesive in less developed districts where voters often desire particularistic benefits over policy.

Representative democracy is defined by democratically elected legislatures (Kelly, 2004). According to John (2006), legislatures are, formally, the principal policymaking institutions in modern democracies. Policy decisions such as budgets, treaties and trade agreements, economic, environmental, and social regulation, etc., must be approved by legislatures. In fact, Section 4 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as altered) empowered the Houses of the National Assembly to make laws for the order, peace, and good governance of the Federation. A few questions, however, beg for an answer during the legislative approval of policies. First, what forces drive legislators' decisions? And second, how do legislators respond to the demands of the policymaking process? These questions give a glimpse into the representation that citizens expect from their representatives.

Legislative, representative and oversight functions are all well-known functions of legislatures. All other functions, such as its budget function, are presumed to be subsumed into one or more of the three. For example, the budget, which is subject to legislative approval due to its powers and control over public funds (Section 80 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria [CFRN], 1999 as amended), is frequently scrutinized to ensure compliance with legislative intents and equitable distribution of resources among constituencies. The approval of the budget by the legislature reflects the discharge of its legislative mandate, the scrutiny of approved budget estimates to improve performance reflects the discharge of its oversight function, and the distribution of resources among delineated constituencies reflects the discharge of its representative mandate. When a consensus cannot be achieved due to the members' individual policy preferences, the legislature uses the instrument of voting to carry out these functions. Indeed, the law made provisions for such.

Scholars argue differently on the motivation for specific legislative voting behaviour. To illustrate, while (Brady 1988), Cooper and Brady (1981), etc., attribute voting choices to policy preferences, Cox and McCubbins (2005) and Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart (2001) attribute voting choices to party aspirations. Deductively, one can assert that Nigeria's National Assembly is not completely immune to the interplay of such factors during the legislative decision-making process though the proposition is untested. Therefore, one would be inclined to assert that one or all the factors shaped the voting behaviour of legislators on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the voting behaviour in Nigeria's National Assembly, with a focus on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021.

1.2 Statement Of The Problem

On 15 July 2021, the Senate passed the long-awaited Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill, 2021 after division among its members on the electronic transmission of results. A total of 98 Senators were documented to have participated in the vote. Rather than examine the voting behavior of Senators to the entirety of the Electoral Amendment Act, the study restricts the votes to contentious clauses. One of such clauses is the provision regarding the electronic transmission of election results.

The contentious clause is Clause 52(3) of the Amendment Bill. While newspaper reports provided documentation of how Senators voted, further analysis of the voting pattern would provide insight into the determinant of the voting pattern. It would also shed light on the public to understand that voting in

for the consideration of Bills is not a linear process of Yeas and Nays. The study will therefore help to boost public confidence in the National Assembly and enhance knowledge of how the legislature works.

The legislative institution is complex and subject to a myriad of formal and informal rules (Poole & Rosenthal, 1990). Legislative proposals usually require the support of legislative leaders across the board. Given Nigeria's bicameral legislative practice, legislations are often presumably shaped by the 469 elected members of the Senate and House of Representatives. The legislative process begins with the first reading of a bill through to the consideration by the committee of the whole and then assent by the President. This committee though similar in nomenclature to the subdivisions of the legislative assembly assigned jurisdictionally specified tasks differs in its composition as it rightly demonstrates its name by yielding a membership of the entire chamber. At this stage of the billing process, committee recommendations are considered on a clause-by-clause basis and voted on accordingly. Within context, Lawrence, Maltzman, and Smith (2006) allude that members voting behavior are determined by 'preferences' and 'partisanship'.

Explaining, Lawrence, Maltzman, and Smith (2006) claim that legislators' preferences in voting are determined by their beliefs on policy matters, and that there is always a visible disparity between a legislator's voting behavior and the party's success. Conversely, the partisanship voting model, according to Lawrence et al (2006), prioritizes the party as the ultimate benefactor of a legislator's voting preferences. In context, voting choices or preferences in the National Assembly can be situated within any of the models identified by Lawrence et al (2006). Indeed, voting on the 2010 electoral act amendment bill, 2021 paints this picture better. Especially in the Senate where a division was called by the Senate Minority Leader, the partisanship voting model could not have been better expressed.

Legislative observers alluded that calling for a division in voting on the amendment being proposed for Section 52 (3) which seeks the electronic transmission of votes, Senators would have to vote publicly on the Clause. In the end, fifty-two Senators of the All Progressives Congress (APC) stock in the chamber voted 'yes' for the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to be cleared by the Nigerian Communication Commissions (NCC) before executing the electronic transmission of results while those of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) voted 'no' arguing that such action would amount to surrendering the independence of the electoral body to an executive agency (Channels TV, 2021, 16th July). From the votes, it is clear that voting in the National Assembly especially the Senate on such a matter of national importance assumed partisanship, regional, ethnicity and gender dimensions thus

raising concerns on the outcome of the agency relationship between elected representatives and the electorates who in fact have been clamoring for electoral reforms (Vanguard Nigeria, 2021, 6th July). Against this backdrop, this study will examine the reasons for the voting preferences often expressed by the members of the National Assembly against the tenets of the agency relationship existing between the electorates and elected representatives.

1.3 Research Questions

The study therefore raises the following research questions:

1. What factors shaped the voting pattern on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021 in the Nigerian Senate?
2. Are there reasons for the voting preferences expressed by Senators on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021?

1.4 Objectives Of The Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the voting behaviour in the Senate regarding the electronic transmission of votes as provided in the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill. The specific objectives are:

1. Examine the factors that shape voting pattern on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021 in the Nigerian Senate.
2. What are the reasons for the voting preferences expressed by Senators on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021.

1.5 Scope And Limitation Of The Study

The study is limited to how senators voted regarding the electronic transmission of election results in Section 52 (3) of the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021. It relies on secondary data on how senators voted and conducted interview with the some of the senators that voted. The study also administered questionnaires to respondents outside the National Assembly to document their perception of the votes by the Senators. The study is also restricted to the 9th Senate and does not consider past votes in the direction of electronic transmission of votes in previous legislative sessions of the Nigeria National Assembly.

1.6 Significance Of The Study

This study is beneficial in many respects. In a time when public trust for the National Assembly is picking, documenting the factors that influence the type of voting witnessed by Nigerians would help to strengthen the public trust in the legislature. Most discourses on how the National Assembly voted on electronic transmission have been left to the media and pages of newspapers. Another justification for the study is that it would document scientific evidence that will demonstrate to people that every Yea or Nay uttered in the National Assembly, is explained by several factors.

The study also serves as reference material since it would fill the gap in the literature about voting in Nigeria's National Assembly. Given this, policymakers, as well as stakeholders, will find it useful in advancing policy alternatives especially those targeted at enhancing legislative practices and procedures. Also, the National Assembly and various parliamentary organizations like the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly (CPA), and the Pan African Parliament (PAP), would find it immeasurably helpful as they seek to imbibe globally accepted parliamentary standards. Finally, it will serve as a springboard for academia due to the dearth of literature in this area of knowledge.

Relatively, this study would adopt the conditional party government model of legislative voting. In particular, the conditional party government model rightly explains the voting pattern of members of the National Assembly on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021 because of the inclination of the voting towards consolidating parties' positions thus, empowering respective party leaders. It is generally believed that the voting following the call for a division by the Senate Minority Leader-Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe (Channels TV, 2021, 15th July), for instance, is a representation of the respective party positions on the proposed law (Punch Nigeria, 2021, 16th July) due to the politics of the 2023 general elections (ThisdayLive, 2021, 16th July). This further justifies the selection of the conditional party government model of legislative voting by Members of the National Assembly during voting for the electronic transmission of results by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

1.7 Definition Of Key Concepts

The following terms are defined to show their cognitive meaning to this research paper.

Bicameral Legislature: This refers to any lawmaking body of government that consists of two separate houses or chambers, such as the House of Representatives and the Senate

Democracy: This is a system of government whereby people are free to exercise their political powers either directly or through their representatives.

Politics: The activities involved on getting and using power in public life and to influence decision that affect a country or a society.

Voting Behavior: The means whereby a number of person(s) are enabled to indicate their agreement or disagreement with some propositions, or their preferences as between two or more proposals or between two or more candidates for an office

Citizen-centric: a citizen-centric approach is one where, instead of the bureaucracy second-guessing citizens, governments consult citizens about their needs, and encourage their direct participation in policy making and service design and delivery.

1.8 Organization Of Chapters

This project is organized into five chapters. Chapter one provides an extensive background knowledge of the study, including the research problems, questions, objectives, scope and the significance of the study. Chapter two presents the conceptual framework, review of empirical and theoretical literature as well as presented the theoretical framework adopted for the study. Chapter three provides a detailed description of the methodology adopted for the study. It discusses issues such as the design of the research, sources of data collection and method of data analysis. Chapter four presents the analysis of data and discussions the findings of the study. Lastly, chapter five presents the summary of the study, conclusion, and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, literature relevant to the variables being studied were reviewed. The review of the literature was presented thematically, thereafter, the principal-agent theory was used as the framework for conceptualizing the study.

2.1 Conceptualization

The growth of academic interest in voting behaviour coincided with the rise of behavioural political science. As the most widespread and quantifiable form of political behaviour, voting quickly became the focus for new techniques of sample surveying and statistical analysis. The American Voter (Campbell et al, 1960) cited in Heywood (2004), the product of painstaking research by the University of Michigan, became the leading work in the field and stimulated a wealth of similar studies, such as Butler and Stokes' Political Change in Britain (1969) cited in Heywood (2004). At the high point of the behavioural revolution, it was thought that voting held the key to disclosing all the mysteries of the political system, perhaps allowing for laws of mass political psychology to be developed. Even though these lofty hopes have not been fulfilled, psephology (the scientific study of voting behaviour) still commands a central position in political analysis. This is because voting provides one of the richest sources of information about the interaction between individuals, society, and politics. By investigating the mysteries of voting behaviour, we are thus able to learn important lessons about the nature of the political system, and gain insight into the process of social and political change (Heywood, 2004). Voting is one of the cardinal principles of the democratic system of government and the importance of political and election participations in democratic societies have increased dramatically. This brings us to a sharper definition of voting; therefore, voting in this capacity refers to aggregating individual preferences into a collective decision in an election, the action of formally indicating one's choice of candidate or political party at an election (Gerber, Green and Shachar, 2003). Voting denotes the means whereby several persons are enabled to indicate their agreement or disagreement with some propositions or their preferences as between two or more proposals or between two or more candidates for some offices. It is therefore a means of aggregating individual preference into a collective decision. The term generally refers to the process by which citizens choose candidates for public office or decide political questions submitted to them.

According to Bromhead (1960) as cited in Okolie (2004), voting denotes the means whereby a number of persons are enabled to indicate their agreement or disagreement with some propositions, or their preferences as between two or more proposals or between two or more candidates for some office. It is

therefore a means of aggregating individual preference into collective decisions. As noted by Stokes (1963) cited in Okolie (2004), voting is not the sole means of aggregating individual preferences; other means include market mechanisms and processes of informal interaction in many social and political groups. Usually when a vote is taken the decision of the majority prevails; for some types of decisions, it may be if there must be an absolute majority of those qualified to vote, or some majority greater than half, either of all those qualified to vote or of all these voting, for a decision to be valid. A voice vote, in which the voters shout “yes or no”, is simple and quick, but acceptable as a final decision only if those declared to be in minority are satisfied that they really are in a minority (Okolie, 2004).

The voting systems in parliament varies from country to country but one basic point that underlie all voting in each socio-formation is decision making. To vote is to decide about a particular issues or issues at stake. However, the direction of the decision is determined by certain factors which shape voting behaviour.

Voting Behaviour according to connotes is a collection of attitudes, values, and beliefs in which individuals of a given society have towards elections both at the local, national, and international level. While Harrop and Miller using a constructivist paradigm, explained voting behaviour as a pattern of political participation mostly taking place in democratic societies where people react to certain laid down values, principles, and beliefs how they choose their leaders. These set of beliefs could be based on age, sex, ethnicity, religion, and education.

Voting behaviour is clearly shaped by short-term and long-term influences. Short-term influences are specific to a particular election and do not allow conclusion to be drawn about voting patterns in general. The chief short-term influence is the state of the economy, which reflects the fact that there is usually a link between government’s popularity and economic variables such as unemployment, inflation, and disposable income. Another short-term influence on voting is the personality and public standing of party leaders. This is particularly important, because media exposure portrays leaders as the brand image of their party (Heywood, 2004). Furthermore, there are various theories in explaining voting behaviour in human society namely the sociological, rational choice, party identification and clientelistic models (see, for example, Chandler, 1988; Catt, 1996; Sanders, 2003; Van de Walle, 2003; Brooks, Nieuwbeerta and Manza, 2006; Szwarcberg, 2013). Party Identification theory is based on the sense of psychological attachment that people have to parties (Heywood, 2004). Electors are seen as people who identify with a party, in the sense of being long-term supporters who regard the party as

‘their party’. Voting is therefore a manifestation of partisanship, not a product of calculation influenced by factors such as policies, personalities, campaigning, and media coverage (Heywood, 2004). Sociological model links voting behaviour to group membership, suggesting that electors tend to adopt a voting pattern that reflects the economic and social position of the group to which they belong. Rather than developing a psychological attachment to a party based on family influence, this model highlights the importance of a social alignment, reflecting the various divisions and tensions within society. Also, the rational-choice model shift attention onto the individual and away from socialization and the behaviour of social groups. In this view, voting is seen as a rational act, in the sense that individual electors are believed to decide their party preference based on personal self-interest (Heywood, 2004). Voting to this model is seen as essentially instrumental: that is, to an end. Finally, patronage, or clientelism model, can also be an important determinant of voting behaviour (Bratton and Van de Walle, 1997; Van de Walle, 2003). In a clientelistic relationship politicians tend to use their power to provide economic privileges or other material favours to voters in return for their political support at the polls (Szwarcberg, 2013).

2.1.1 The National Assembly And The Electoral Acts Amendment Bill 2021

President Muhammadu Buhari had on 21st December returned the bill to the National Assembly, citing a number of reasons, thereby raising fresh controversies, even as the Civil Society Organizations, academic, opinion molders were further and sharply divided over the development. The bill was as controversial as its amendments, i.e., the provision that deals with electronic means of transmitting election results, direct primary elections and card readers among others.

The Electoral Amendment Act Bill, 2021 is a revised version of the existing Act which was initiated in 2010. Thus, eleven years after, the National Assembly needed it amended based on ugly experiences of election rigging, vote stuffing and buying, thuggery and all forms of political infidelity that threatens the very fabrics of Nigeria’s democracy, so that the country can attain a near perfect elections going forward. Hence, the amendment proposal scaled first, second and third reading at both Chambers of the National Assembly. The bill had public hearings at both houses which were in tandem with legislative standards across the world.

But, DAILY POST recalled that at every stage of the proposed bill, there were two clauses in the general principles of the bill which were introduced by the sponsors i.e. “direct primary elections and electronic

means of transmitting election results that were subject of controversies.” This is notwithstanding that the two clauses, among others, were introduced as the major amendments to the principal Act of 2010; the clauses, arguing for and against at the end of the day, divided the Chambers along political and regional lines.

Some Senators worked hard to castigate the document, some governors who are the ‘defacto’ party owners at the State levels staunchly opposed the Amendment Bill, particularly on direct primary clause. For instance, during a second reading of the bill, Senator Smart Adeyemi representing Kogi West District and a member of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), argued that it would be too costly for political parties to conduct direct primaries, hence, he called for the clause to be expunged from the bill. Adeyemi said: “Direct primaries will be too cumbersome and expensive to implement.”

According to him, “Nigeria is a poor country that should not be feting election bills to a whopping sum of \$586 million every four years and still be allowing another humongous expenditure in conduct of party primaries”.

“The 2019 general election alone cost Nigeria over N189 billion compared to N122.8 billion, while political parties spent up to \$2 billion on campaigns,” he said.

Senator Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi representing Niger North Senatorial district and a member of the APC on his part argued that the electronic means of transmitting election results should be handled by the Nigerian Communications Commission. Sabi’s position was hinged on the lack of connectivity in remote areas across the country, with supervision of the National Assembly. He gave his opinion during the ‘clause by clause’ consideration of the amendment bill which was upheld by the Senate, after putting the clause to voice votes to the consternation of opposition members.

The position of APC lawmakers on the direct election primaries and electronic means of transmitting results highly reflected the position of APC governors who were frequenting Abuja at the heat of the debate to ensure the controversial clauses were not passed into law.

DAILY POST recalls that the Senate Minority leader, Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe, who was unhappy with the manner the two clauses were treated, called for division of the red Chambers. Abaribe, who’s position was the decision of the PDP, insisted that there would be no difference to the amendment if the controversial clauses were not sustained. However, in the lower legislative Chambers, the Speaker of

the House of Representatives, Hon. Femi Gbajabiamia passed into law a full version of the amendment bill with provisions for direct primaries and electronic means of transmitting election results.

The Conference Committee and the Confusion: On 22nd September, 2021, Senate President, Dr Ahmad Ibrahim Lawan set up a 7-man Conference Committee with the Senate leader, Senator Yahaya Abdullahi (North West) as the Chairman with a mandate to harmonize the differences in the version of the Amendment Bill passed in Senate and the House of Representatives. The Committee members, had two from the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) who are: Senator Mathew Uroghide (South South) and Lilian Ekwunife (South East) while others who are of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) representing their various zones are, Senators Kabiru Gaya (North West), Ajibola Basiru (South West), Danjuma Goje (North East), and Sani Musa (North Central).

A look at the composition of the members, it was only Senator Mathew Uroghide of the Peoples Democratic Party that voted in favour of electronic means of transmitting election results, his counterpart, Lilian Uche Ekwunife carefully absented herself from Chambers on the day of voting.

Senator Kabiru Gaya who is the Chairman Senate Committee on the Independent National Electoral Commission, whose Committee report was the subject of heated debate, eventually voted against his own report and further deepened the confusion on whether to approve electronic voting or not. The composition of the Conference Committee further deafened the voices of Civil Society (CSOs) and some human rights lawyers, who insisted that the version of the House of Representatives should be sustained, given that it has the provisions for electronic means of transmitting election results and direct election primaries. However, when the report of the Conference Committee was turned in for the Committee of the whole's debate, amid mounting pressures from the CSOs, opposition political parties and many others which suggested that 'direct primaries and electronic means of transmitting election results' was the popular wish of Nigerians, the report was concurred and passed.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for this research paper is derived largely based on Max Weber's (1964) theory of social action that individuals act in accordance with their own definition of the situation (Mughan, 1990). This includes willingness or otherwise to act and active or passive acquiescence and may be oriented to the past, present or expected future behaviour of others. For Weber (1964) cited in Adeleke (2016), not all human behaviour amounts to action; neither is every human action 'social'. In this case, therefore, one can argue that the action of the members of electorates with regard to voting in

general elections is based on a purely rational perception of the electoral process. The typical social facts in any society are laws and customs, the content of education and currents of opinion and all these constitute the (political) culture of a particular people. Based on the culture, each individual behaves in a unique manner and some forms of uniformity of behaviour are discernible for groups or an entire society. The social action theory is suitable in this study as it takes consideration of external factors (that is, institutional factors) in addition to internal factors (age, sex, religion, tribe, education, perception etc) in explaining the voting behaviour of the electorates. The relevance of this theory still lies on the fact that electorates (voters) are regarded as the soul and role models in any democratic society like Nigeria. Moreover, there are so many reasons such as material, social and economic gains that propel citizen to vote, therefore, voters' low turnout in an election remains a serious threat to the democratic system of government. Voting in this capacity refers to aggregating individual preferences into collective decision in an election, the action of formally indicating one's choice of candidate or political party at an election. Voting in one election indeed affects the probability that one will vote in the next election depending on how the political environment responds to one's level of political participation and social, economic needs. When a registered voter fails to go to the polls, he/she becomes less likely to attract the attention of the campaign. Often time, citizens are moved to action based on certain economic and social benefit one stands to gain. This, sometimes reflect on voting behaviour of Nigerian. People vote not because that national economy is stable or there is growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Nigerians but on certain factors which determine voting behaviour of citizens. Both, the opposition, and ruling parties capitalized on the indecisiveness of the electorate to manipulate election result and engage in vote-buying which is recent phenomenon in field of political science as it has to do with election.

2.3 Theories/Model Of Voting Behaviour

Theoretically, Factors which condition voting pattern and behaviour can be located within three contending and intersecting paradigms (Antwi, 2018). These are the sociological theory, the psychological theory, and the rational-choice theory of voting. The sociological theory, on the one hand, focuses on the nature of the relationship between the individual and the context of the social structure within which he or she exists (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944; Zuckerman et al., 1994). On the other hand, psychological theory places emphasis on the psychological susceptibility of an individual to explain voter choice and decision. Issues such as partisan tendencies and psychological disposition towards individuals are some of the dominant issues considered by this theoretical approach (Campbell et al., 1960). The Rational-choice theory of voting behaviour and pattern sees the individual as a rational

human being who is able to make a cost-benefit analysis of his voting action (Bakalova, 2013; Downs, 1957).

2.3.1 Sociological Theory

The theoretical assumptions of the Sociological Theory of voting pattern and behaviour have their foundation in ‘The People’s Choice’. It is a study carried out by Lazarsfeld et al. in 1944. The initial assumption which drove the study was that the act of voting is personal and is influenced by the disposition of the voter and how conversant he is with the sources of relevant political information including the media, peer groups and other social groups. Findings from the study proved that the influence of social groups which individuals belong to largely determined voters’ choice and not the media (Antunes, 2010). In other words, findings from the study showed that social and cultural environments are the deciding factors which influence voting pattern and behaviour of a group of people. Thus, this indicates that there exists a strong correlation between an individual’s social group and his electoral behaviour. This was evident in the research when close to 80 per cent of first-time voters voted in line with their parents (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944). The main thesis of the sociological theory of voting pattern and behaviour, therefore, is that an individual’s electoral choice is largely conditioned by the individual’s membership of a particular social group and the social position of the group within the larger society (Andersen and Yaish, 2003).

2.3.2 Psychological Theory

The origin of the Psychological Theory of voting pattern and behaviour can be traced to the research conducted by Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes on the United States of America’s Presidential elections of 1948, 1952, and 1956. Comprehensive findings of the studies were published in the book titled ‘The American Voter’ (Campbell et al., 1960). The psychological theory was developed in antagonism to the sociological theory. The protagonists of the psychological theory, (i.e. Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes) argued that membership of a social group has a minimal direct influence on an individual or group’s electoral choice. They argued that the advocates of the sociological theory only discovered the social variables which link social attributes to voters’ choice but were not able to give explanations of what transpires in-between the process. In essence, the psychological theory places emphasis on “the psychological variables which intervene between the external events of the voter’s world and his ultimate behaviour” (Campbell et al., 1960, pp. 85-86).

The main thesis of the psychological theory of voting pattern and behaviour is underscored by the concept of partisanship (Antunes, 2010). Partisanship is seen as a psychological identification with a political party. In other words, it is a constant and perpetual identification with a political party which is not defined in terms of registration or constant casting of votes for such political parties during elections (Antunes, 2010). It is described in terms of the sense of belonging to a political party. Sarlamanov and Jovanoski (2014) argued that political parties through their political ideology can secure members and loyalists through which citizens are given a meaningful sense of living. In essence, partisanship connotes adherence to the principles and ideology of a political party embedded in a sense of responsibility to such party which goes beyond the casting of votes for the party when the need arises (Sarlamanov and Jovanoski, 2014).

The idea of the psychological theory of voting pattern and behaviour can be explained through a metaphorical phrase known as the funnel of causality. This is referred to as the explanatory forms of correlation between factors that are used in investigating electoral behaviour (Antunes, 2010). It connotes the process by which a voter arrives at his or her choice of candidates amidst remote and immediate variables that are capable of influencing a voter's choice during an election. On the one hand, remote variables include socio-economic and historical factors as well as values, attitudes and membership of social groups. On the other hand, immediate factors include societal or public issues, the charisma of candidates, election campaign, the political and economic situation, the government actions and policies and the influence of peers (Antunes, 2010).

The analogy of the metaphor of causality shows that at the atrium of the funnel are the sociological variable which stimulates the psychological variable of partisanship or party identification which is the next elements in the process. Partisanship serves as the framework through which the potential voter assesses the electoral alternatives on offer, deliberate on issues of public concern, examine the events which occurred during election campaigns as well as discussions which emanate from interactions among voters, peers and family (Antunes, 2010). Antwi (2018) noted that partisanship or party affinity is not the only determining factor in explaining voting pattern or behaviour under this theory. He observed that issue orientation and candidate position are also significant factors which determine voters' choice. According to him, issue orientation means individuals' opinions or views on societal or public issues. It also involves voters' embrace or abhorrence for particular public policies. Candidate position refers to voters' affection for the charisma of political candidates (Antwi, 2018).

2.3.3 Rational-Choice Theory Of Voting

The Rational Choice Theory of Voting otherwise known as the Economic Theory of Voting was developed by Anthony Downs in his work *An Economic Theory of Democracy* which was published in 1957. The rational choice theory of voting sees an average voter as not being influenced by partisan preferences or identification with a particular social or ethnic group in making his or her choice during an election. However, a rather rational choice theory views a voter as being a rational being who is capable of making rational thoughts and decisions as regards who to vote for and who not to vote for (Sarlamonov and Jovanoski, 2014). In this regard, it can be said that a voter is driven and motivated by his or her interest when making an electoral choice. Thus, the voter views his vote as an investment in which he or she expects a return. Within this context, the voter tries as much as possible to maximise his or her electoral gains by voting for the political party which he or she believes will cater and provide for his or her general welfare (Sarlamonov and Jovanoski, 2014). This behaviour was explained further by Antunes (2010) when he likened the behaviour of a voter in making an electoral choice to that of a consumer who makes an economic choice in the economic market. Therefore, the rational choice theory of voting sees an average voter as a rational economic actor who behaves like a rational consumer in the economic market (Antunes, 2010). As the economic consumer aims at maximising the utility of goods even when he or she is paying less, the political voter tries as much as possible to invest his vote in a candidate who he or she believes can provide for his or her needs.

In essence, the basic assumption of the rational choice theory of voting is premised on three cardinal assumptions: first, “that all decisions related to voting made by voters and political parties are rational; second, that the democratic political system implies a level of consistency that supports predictions about the consequences of decisions made by voters and political parties and third, that the democratic system assumes a level of uncertainty, sufficiently important to allow different options” (Antunes, 2010 p. 158). Based on these assumptions it is believed that voters will vote for the political party or candidate with valuable policies and programmes that they feel will best suit their interest (Bakalova, 2013; Downs, 1957). Since their emergence as theoretical bases, the sociological, psychological and the rational choice theories have been very useful and pivotal to explaining voting pattern and behaviour. Despite their strengths, these theories have not gone without criticisms.

For instance, the sociological theory has been criticised based on the notion that it places too much emphasis on social groups as the determinant of voters’ choice thereby, undermining the interest of

individual voter and influence of political parties in determining voting pattern and choices. The psychological theory has been criticised based on the role of partisanship which forms the crux of the theory (Antunes, 2010). It has been argued that applying the role of partisanship to electoral systems that are not bi-partisan is almost impossible because there is the notion that the link between individuals and political parties is becoming weaker (Dalton, 2000). The rational choice theory of voting has also been described as having difficulty in explaining individual participation in collective actions of which voting at elections is a vivid example in the sense that during elections a multitude of voters is involved in the voting process (Uhlán, 1989 cited in Antunes, 2010).

Despite these criticisms, the theories serve as valuable and valid theoretical platforms for explaining voting pattern and voters' choice. Studies on sociological theory have been conducted to show a high level of applicability of the assumptions to the electoral process in Africa (Erdmann, 2007; Gyimah-Boadi, 2007; Horowitz, 1993). Horowitz (1993) has contended that there is a significant relationship between ethnicity, party system and voting behaviour, particularly in developing societies. According to him, ethnicity has a strong and direct impact on electoral behaviour most especially in ethnically divided societies. This establishes a long-term psychological belief in party loyalty attaching citizens to parties. Therefore, casting vote becomes an expression of belonging to a particular group. This implies that other social divisions are subordinate to ethnicity. Consequently, elections in this circumstance result in mere census counts (Horowitz, 1993) which indicates the numerical strength of indigenous groups. The 'funnel of causality' which forms the fulcrum of the psychological theory of explaining voting pattern and behaviour has been found worthy in conducting researches to understand how voters' sense of party loyalty becomes the filter through which they evaluate candidates and issues, which ultimately influence their voting pattern. Thus, this model also explains why some voters stick to a particular voting pattern in a series of elections (Antwi, 2018).

Another theory that explains voting behavior is the partisan model or election reform. It stipulates that, many rules governing the conduct of elections are the product of strategic interests of partisan incumbents who (largely) control the process of designing such rules. A wide variety of election rules can be seen as having a zero-sum nature (Tsebelis 1990), such that change from a status quo arrangement may alter the balance of advantages and disadvantages between rival parties. Changes in election rules are often viewed through the lens of partisan self-interest; partisan incumbents often author the rules in their own self-interest (Bowler, Donovan, and Karp 2006). Electoral rules provide many examples of these kinds of processes at work. Expansion of the franchise in the nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries, for example, can be seen as a rule change that offered minority parties opportunities to challenge or surpass the dominance of a majority party of the day (Tsebelis 1990, 113). Elite support for changing to proportional electoral systems can also be understood in terms of strategic calculations by rival partisans. Changes to the electoral system in Australia (Farrell and McAllister 2005), British Columbia (Angus 1952), and New Zealand (Banducci and Karp 1999) have been documented in terms of strategic elites seeking partisan advantage (also see Bawn 1993 on Germany). Mass and elite support for election reform proposals in the United States such as legislative term limits (Karp 1995), changes in redistricting rules (Donovan 2011), primary election rules (Cain and Gerber 2001; Ware 2002), and direct election of the president (Karp and Tolbert 2010) can also be understood through strategic calculations of partisans. In many of these cases, the attitudes of partisans in the public can be seen as reflecting the positions of party elites. A model of partisan self-interest applied to changes in electoral rules is not entirely novel. But we add to this the idea that, in democratic systems, partisan elites often need to generate popular support for proposals—or for challenges to proposals—that change rules about how elections are conducted. Given concern for procedural fairness as a widely held principle in mass attitudes (Tyler 1988), and given public concern over fairness in the process of democratic politics (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001), it is not sufficient for a majority or minority party to promote a rule change with an argument along the lines of “this will advantage our party, we have the votes, so we will do it.” Rather, mass expectations over the integrity of the electoral process require that elites make normative arguments while advancing their partisan interests. Furthermore, research documents that in addition to their partisan interests, legislators evaluate rule changes in terms of their personal values about how democracy should work (Bowler, Donovan, and Karp 2006). This means that election rules, particularly those that are newly adopted, exist as the result of an interaction between strategic calculations of rival partisan elites and political.

2.4 Empirical Literature

Voting pattern and voting behaviour are prominent themes in the literature on political behaviour and their study has long remained one of the pivotal concerns of political scientists. The emergence and foundation of political behaviour are premised on the study of factors which determine individual and group electoral choices (Guardado and Wantchekon, 2017; Heywood, 2013; Diener, 2000). Voting

pattern and voting behaviour are forms of electoral behaviour in which studying and understanding them explains and leads to the understanding of the factors which influence decisions made by the electorate during elections (Goldman, 1966). The quest to study and to understand how electorates make political choices and decisions led to the interdisciplinary synthesis between political science and psychology, hence the development of the area of study of political psychology. One of the main concerns of political psychologists is the study of what prompts voters to make more informed electoral choices (Diener, 2000). Therefore, the most important issues about an election may not necessarily be who won but maybe to investigate why people voted the way they did or what the implications of the results will be. Such posers cannot be easily answered but explanations to these can be acquired through a rigorous study and a broad understanding of voting pattern and behaviour of voters in particular elections (Alvarez, 1998).

As a concept, the voting pattern is the study of partisan preferences or choices of selected voter groups or individuals (Merrill and Grofman, 1999). The pattern of voting of such voting groups or individual is not static but is largely dynamic due to realignment. While several factors are crucial in explaining voting patterns, shared cultural attitudes towards a government, group or the society at large remain one of the conspicuous factors (Merrill and Grofman, 1999). Voting behaviour is an electoral activity. It is a combination of personal and electoral action, which manifests during an electoral process. Such include voting during elections, involvement in electoral campaigns and participation in electoral rallies as well as support for a candidate or a political party (Bratton et al., 2012). In essence, it connotes the participation and non-participation of the electorate in an electoral process.

Studies on political and voting behaviour focus on the determinants of voter choice (Guardado and Wantchekon, 2017; Agomor and Adams, 2014; Bratton et al., 2012; Heywood, 2013; Prysby and Scavo, 1993). These studies demonstrate that electoral decisions are not just taken overnight but are influenced by certain factors which according to Heywood (2013) are conditioned by short and long-term effects. The short-term effects are peculiar to specific elections and can change from one election to the other. Such effects may include the government or regime performance, the charisma of candidates and the condition of the state's economy. Instances of long-term effects may include loyalty to the party which may be stable over a long period (Heywood, 2013). It is important to note that loyalty to the party in some instances can be an element of the short-term effects. This is because in some democracies particularly the new and developing democracies of Africa, party loyalty can be withdrawn in a short time. In such democracies, personal interest rather than party loyalty comes first.

Studying American voting behaviour in Presidential elections from 1972 to 1992, Prysby and Scavo (1993) identified several attitudinal and social factors that may determine or shape the decision of voters in an election. On the one hand, they posited that individual attributes, assessment of government performance, knowledge of particular policy concerns, and party affiliation are the primary attitudinal factors that may determine the choice of the voter during elections. On the other hand, they identified ethnic group, faith, constituency and gender as the social factors that influence the voting decision. The influence these factors have on voter choices during specific elections assists in predicting electoral outcomes and enhances the comprehension of electoral dynamics (Prysby and Scavo, 1993).

In another study, which investigated the determinants of voters' behaviour in Ghana, Agomor and Adams (2014) sought to explain what makes voters in Ghana decide on the choice of candidates or party between evaluative rationales such as characteristics and accomplishments of candidates, the performance of government, and policy platforms of parties or non-evaluative factors such as political affiliation, ethnic or family ties which are largely psychological factors. Findings from the study showed that evaluative rationales such as issue-based campaign, the charisma of candidate as well as the extent to which the ruling party fulfils its campaign promises are factors which influence voters' choice in Ghanaian elections. They argued that this finding supports Nordin's (2014) claim that issue-based political campaigns afford the electorate the opportunity of knowing the better candidate among several others because such campaigns help to define issues about a state's economy and explain to the electorate which candidate is in a better position to offer implementable policies to solve the challenges facing citizens' welfare and the economy in general.

One limitation of the study is that the researchers did not take into consideration the notion that the evaluative rationales which they observed to condition voters' choice and pattern in Ghanaian elections are short term effects which are peculiar to specific elections. Thus, the evaluative rationales may not account for voters' choice and pattern in subsequent elections in Ghana. In another study carried out in Bangladesh, Hossain et al. (2017) examined the voting behaviour of the people of Annadanagar Union, Pirgacha, Rangpur in local elections in Bangladesh. They investigated the factors that determine voters' decision either to vote or not to vote. Findings indicate that political ideology, interest in politics, candidate's qualification, locality, religious factor and citizen's obligation are all factors which determine the choice of voters in Annadanagar Union, Pirgacha, Rangpur local elections. Two out of the five determinants were the major determinants of the choice of voters. These are political ideology and candidate's qualification. While these factors may have long-term effects on voters' choice, the

authors failed to note that such factors may not explain voters' choice or pattern in subsequent local elections in Bangladesh in the sense that other factors such as those with long term-effects may account for voters' choice in future local elections in the nation.

Scholars have also dealt with the determinants of voting pattern and behaviour in multi-ethnic and developing as well as developed democracies (Hoffman and Long, 2013; Oliver and Mendelberg, 2000; Snyder, 2000). Hoffman and Long (2013) in their study employed two broad approaches to study voting pattern and behaviour. They observed that a chunk of literature on democracy admits that ethnic affiliation is the most powerful determinant of voting pattern and choice in multi-ethnic and new democracies. They suggest that ethnicity conditions voters' choice in such democracies. For them, two approaches can suffice for this. The first approach offers that: "bonds of identity are strong enough to cause anxiety of out-group members and positive evaluations of in-group members, regardless of what those members do in office". The second approach states that "the distribution of goods, including patronage and services, in poor, multiethnic democracies primarily follow ethnic lines" (Hoffman and Long, 2013, p. 128).

From the above, Horowitz (1985), cited in Hoffman and Long (2013), noted that voters may vote for candidates from their ethnic group based on common positive evaluations of members from the same ethnic group, thus votes are cast to show electoral support which is a derivative of a social group or ethnic affinity. Similarly, Dickinson and Scheve (2006) opined that voters may tend to vote for candidates from their ethnic group in order to secure themselves against unfavourable consequences of governance spearheaded by another ethnic group. Again, it has been observed that the choice of voters during an election can be conditioned by voters' expectation of patronage and social goods from candidates from their ethnic group (Dickinson and Scheve, 2006). This notion of ethnic voting pattern and behaviour has been found to be the basis of patronage and clientelism in African politics. Patronage and clientelism, according to scholars, are strategies employed by African politicians to distribute social and public goods and services in favour of members who share the same ethnic group with them (Hoglund, 2009; Horowitz, 2001; Bratton and van de Walle, 1994). This situation in their perception is underscored by a patron-client relationship which is otherwise called patrimonialism.

Hoglund (2009) has noted that patrimonialism and neo-patrimonialism are prevalent phenomena in the politics of many post conflict societies. Bratton and van de Walle (1994) further opined that neo-patrimonialism has turned into an important institutional character of African political systems. The

patron-client relationship has been described as a phenomenon in which the patron (godfather) provides protection, services or rewards to the client (usually individuals of lower status) who become the patron's political beneficiaries and who are in most cases of the same ethnic extraction (Horowitz, 2001). While ethnicity has been seen as a chief determinant of voting pattern and voters' choice in multi-ethnic and developing democracies, attributes of and identification with political parties has been discovered as the principal conditioning factor for the choice of voters and voting pattern in developed democracies (Lachat, 2015; McClurg and Holbrook, 2009; Johnston, 2006). These studies perceive party identification as the main determinant of voters' choice in industrialised societies.

Lachat (2015) analysed the role of party identification in models of voting choice that combine 'spatial' and 'behavioural' factors. He observed that most models of party identification make the tacit hypothesis that the effects of party identification and spatial utilities are additive, that is, voters irrespective of their identification with a political party are expected to respond in the same manner to changes in the relative issue of party decisions. He suggested an alternative assumption that: "party identifiers respond less strongly to issue factors than non-identifiers" (Lachat, 2015, p. 12). This hypothesis is found to be in tandem with the notion that party identification plays a heuristic role in that it gives way to voters who identify with a political party to make choices among alternatives during voting at "cognitive cost" and "without treating all information in a systematic way" (Lachat, 2015, p. 12).

Similarly, Johnston (2006) in his study of the American case finds that party identification is a strong determinant of voting pattern and voters' choice. Findings from his study show that there is a strong correlation between partisan tendency and the choice of voters. He further argues that partisan tendency has a direct impact on values and views of voters as well as their perception of the candidate's performance in governance. In their own study, McClurg and Holbrook (2009) investigated the relationship between the intensity of Presidential campaigns and voter behaviour. Findings from their study reveal that the behaviour of voters is more predictable in states where presidential election campaigns are more intense than in states with less intense Presidential election campaigns. This, according to them, is a strong indication that the decisions made at campaigns go a long way to influence election result through how votes are configured (McClurg and Holbrook, 2009).

The Nigerian Parliament which is one of the most potent and important organs of the modern Government. Some countries operate a unicameral Legislature while others run the antithesis which is bicameral Legislature. As a nation operating a bicameral Parliament or Legislature, Nigeria has a

National Assembly with two Houses. The Upper House of the National Assembly is called the Senate while the Lower House on the other hand is called the House of Representatives. The Senate is composed of one hundred and nine (109) elected Senators with a president as the head, while the House of Representatives presently consists of three hundred and sixty (360) elected members. Both the Senators and the House of Representative members are elected for a four-year term based on the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Scholars of elections propose that the legitimacy of democratic regimes depends, in no small part, on public confidence in the integrity of the electoral process (Alvarez, Hall, and Llewellyn 2008; Birch 2008; Elkit and Reynolds 2005; Norris 2004; 2014). Myriad aspects of the electoral process can affect perceptions that elections are fair; studies have found that electoral formula, bribery, vote buying, campaign finance rules, and quality of administration may affect trust and confidence in elections and support for democratic institutions (Anderson and Tverdova 2003; Birch 2008; Bowler, Brunell, Donovan, and Gronke 2015; McAllister and White 2011). One paramount factor affecting perceptions of electoral integrity is confidence in the process of balloting and vote counting (Elkit and Reynolds 2002; 2005; Hall and Wang 2008). Indeed, the major motivation for electoral reform in Nigeria was for a more credible electoral process and to assure public confidence in the process of casting and counting votes. The 2010 Electoral Act Amendment bill 2021 is a birth of a new dawn in Nigeria's Electoral climes, the factors responsible for the voting choices of the Nigerian National Assembly Legislators on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021 in the Nigerian Senate, how the Senate voted are what we shall be discussing on this chapter.

According to Okoosi-Simbine (2010), the legislature is an important part of the democratic process since it serves to express the people's collective will through representative government. Given its numerous nomenclature which indeed does not interfere with its traditional roles of lawmaking, representation, and oversight (Adegunde, 2016), Abonyi (2005) noted that the legislature is referred to as Parliament in Britain, National Assembly in Nigeria, and Congress in the United States. Like votes cast during elections confers legitimacy on political parties and in turn their candidates, legislative assemblies also vote to express unanimity on various matters. The complexity of the lawmaking process further makes the prospect of voting in the legislative assembly inevitable because members of such a house, are drawn from varying constituencies propelled by different interests.

In anticipation of differing policy perspectives by lawmakers, the standing rules of the respective house (the Senate and House of Representatives) made provisions for voting in its proceedings. For instance, Order 72 of the Senate Standing Rule 2015 (as amended) provides for the following modes of voting:

voice vote, signing of the register in a division, or through an electronic device installed in the Senate. Within context, the Senate Minority Leader may have relied on Order 73 (1) to claim a division on the amendment to Section 52 (3) of the 2010 electoral act amendment bill, 2021 which was proposed by Senator Sabi Abdullahi and seconded by Senator Ali Ndume (Premium Times Nigeria, 2021, 15th July). This, notwithstanding, there is an unanswered question of the motivation for the voting choice by lawmakers and in this case, the 2010 electoral act amendment bill, 2021.

To fully understand the above, this study would be situated within the framework of the partisanship model of legislative voting. Lawrence, Maltzman, and Smith (2006) allude that away from the 'preferenceship model' which seeks to influence the voting behaviour of legislators, the voting peculiarities are often confined to partisanship issues. Explicitly, while (Brady 1988) and Cooper and Brady (1981) suggested that members' policy preferences had a significant impact on both party leaders' assertiveness and policy outcomes, Cox and McCubbins (2005), Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart (2001) on the other hand, posited that policy outcomes are determined by the majority party's influence on legislative voting behavior. Though the study would adopt the partisanship model of legislative voting, it was, however, pertinent to enunciate the various models of legislative voting. Having been clarified, the partisanship model is further divided into the: party cartel and conditional party government models. Broadly, Lawrence, Maltzman, and Smith (2006) averred that the party cartel model of legislative voting is driven by the desire of the party to maintain a positive reputation, whereas the conditional party government legislative voting model places shared policy preferences at the core of legislative party organization and seeks to empower party leaders.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presented the methods adopted to achieve the objectives of the study. The areas to be covered would be the area of study, research design, the population of the study, sampling technique and size, research instruments, sources of data, and the method of data analysis, and presentation, and so on.

3.1 Area of Study

This study is limited to National Assembly located in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. Abuja. While the federal legislature comprises of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the scope of the study is restricted to the Senate. Made up of 109 Senators, each of the 36 states of the country are represented by 3 senators and 1 for the FCT. Abuja, the FCT was created on 3rd February 1976 and lies in the Central part of Nigeria. It became Nigeria's Official Capital in December 1991. It was the first planned city to be built in Nigeria and lies at 1180 feet (360 meters) above sea level and has a cooler climate and less humidity. The National Assembly seats in the Three Arms Zone within the Central Business District.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted mixed research design relying on both qualitative and quantitative data. On the one hand, while qualitative data emphasized the interaction between the subject of the research and his environment as well as provide explorative insight, quantitative data would offer a numerical solution to the needs of this study. Given this, Bogdan and Biklin (1982) and Bower and Flinders (1990) alluded separately that the scientific understanding of human action must be centered around and built on the understanding of the everyday life of the performers of those actions. In context, since this study aims to examine the factors responsible for the voting behaviour exhibited by Senators in the legislative chamber which by itself epitomizes an interaction between lawmakers on one hand and the hallowed chambers, on the other hand, the choice of the mixed methodology becomes justified.

3.3 Sources of Data

The primary data refers to the firsthand data collected by the researcher from the field by administering questionnaires or interviews to Senators that participated in the vote for or against the legislations. Secondary data was also used. This were data collected from the reports from the clerk of the senate and other secondary materials from the clerks at table.

Questionnaires were also randomly administered to respondents outside the National Assembly to document their responses on factors they perceived as playing a role in the voter choice of the Senators. The target population are stakeholders in the nations electoral space. These include the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Civil Society Organizations, Nigerian citizens aged 18 and above, and so on. Randomly sampling selections used to target these populations and the response obtained is analyzed using descriptive analysis (frequencies, percentages, and charts).

3.4 Population and Sample Size

The population for the study are members of the 9th Senate of National Assembly. Premised on purposive sampling, the sample for the study are Senators that participated in the vote leading to the passage of the 2010 Electoral Act (Amendment Bill), 2021.

According to Shukla (2020), population refers to all the elements, items, objects, or individuals that are considered when gathering data for a study. In a broader context, the study population would involve all stakeholders critical to the passage of the 2010 electoral act amendment bill, 2021 such as the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), members and secretariat of the Senate Committee on INEC, Civil society organization, the Nigerian people, and so on. However, the focus of this study is to examine the voting pattern of senators considering party, gender, geopolitical zone and committee membership.

Purposive sampling technique is therefore, the choice of data collection for the study. According to Kelly (2010), the purposive sampling procedure is a nonprobability sampling method that emphasizes respondent selection based on preconceived conditions, in this case participation in during the vote for the 2010 electoral amendment Bill.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected is process using SPSS and analyzed using frequency tables, percentages, and charts. Micro soft Excel is also used for the analysis of the data.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The chapter covered the presentation, analysis, and discussion of the data. Two Hundred and Fifty Eight questionnaires administered to INEC, NCC, Party stakeholders, Civil Society Organizations, Nigerian citizens aged 18 above. Key informant interviews and questionnaires administered to 79 Senators randomly selected and completed.

4.1 Factors that shaped the voting pattern of Senators in the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021, with respect to Electronic Transmission of Results

The very first insight into the pattern of voting regarding the electronic transmission of result clause is that no Senator voted against the choice of electronic transmission. Rather, they voted for or against the conditionality for which the electronic transmission should be done.

Table 1: Recommendations for the Electronic Voting Clause	
Committee Recommendation	Amendment by the Deputy Whip, Senator Sabi Abdullahi
The Commission (INEC) may transmit results of elections by electronic means where and when practicable.”	“The Commission may consider electronic transmission of results, provided the national coverage is adjudged to be adequate and secure by the National Communications Commission (NCC) and approved by the National Assembly.”

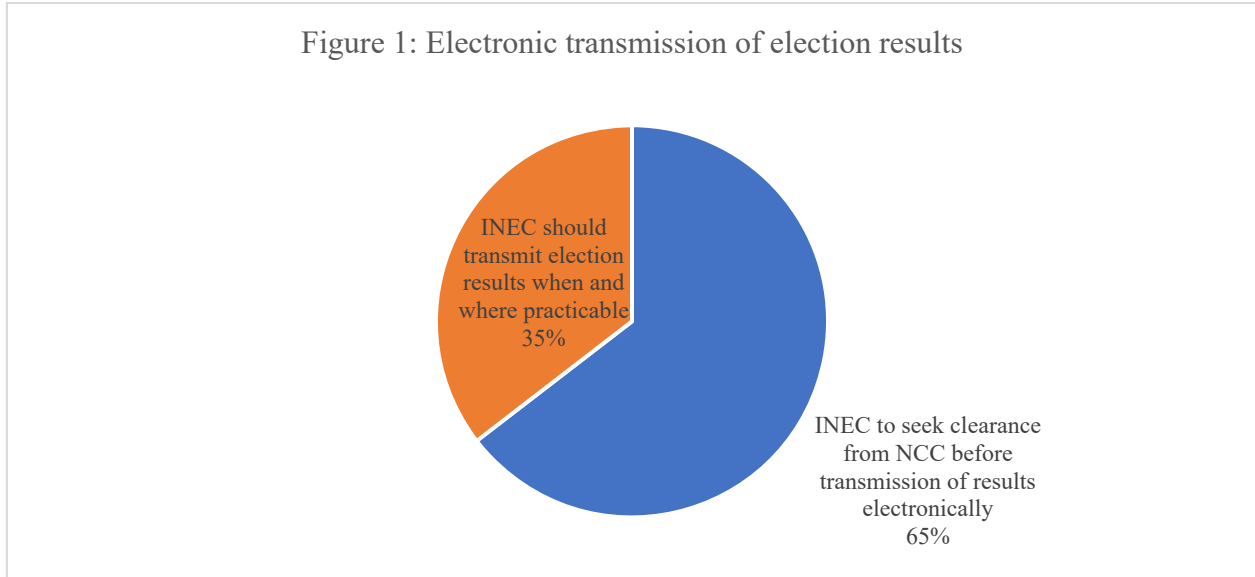
Source: Senate Order Paper/ National Dailies

A total of 98 Senators were documented to have participated in the vote. The choice of this clause was due to the huge media attention it attracted and its possible effect on the image of the National Assembly. In a time when public trust for the National Assembly is picking, documenting the factors that influence the type of voting witnessed by Nigerians would help to strengthen the public trust in the legislature. Another justification for the study is to document scientific evidence that will demonstrate to people that every Yea or Nay uttered in the National Assembly, is explained by several factors.

The contentious clause is Clause 52(3) of the Amendment Bill which states that the Commission (INEC) may transmit results of elections by electronic means where and when practicable. While newspaper reports provided documentation of how Senators voted, further analysis of the voting pattern would provide insight into the determinant of the voting pattern. It would also shed light on the public to understand that voting in for the consideration of Bills is not a linear process of Yeas and Nays. The study will therefore help to boost public confidence in the National Assembly and enhance knowledge of how the legislature works.

The distribution of the votes showed that 52 Senators voted for the INEC to seek clearance from NCC before transmission of results electronically, while 27 voted that INEC should transmit election results when and where practicable.

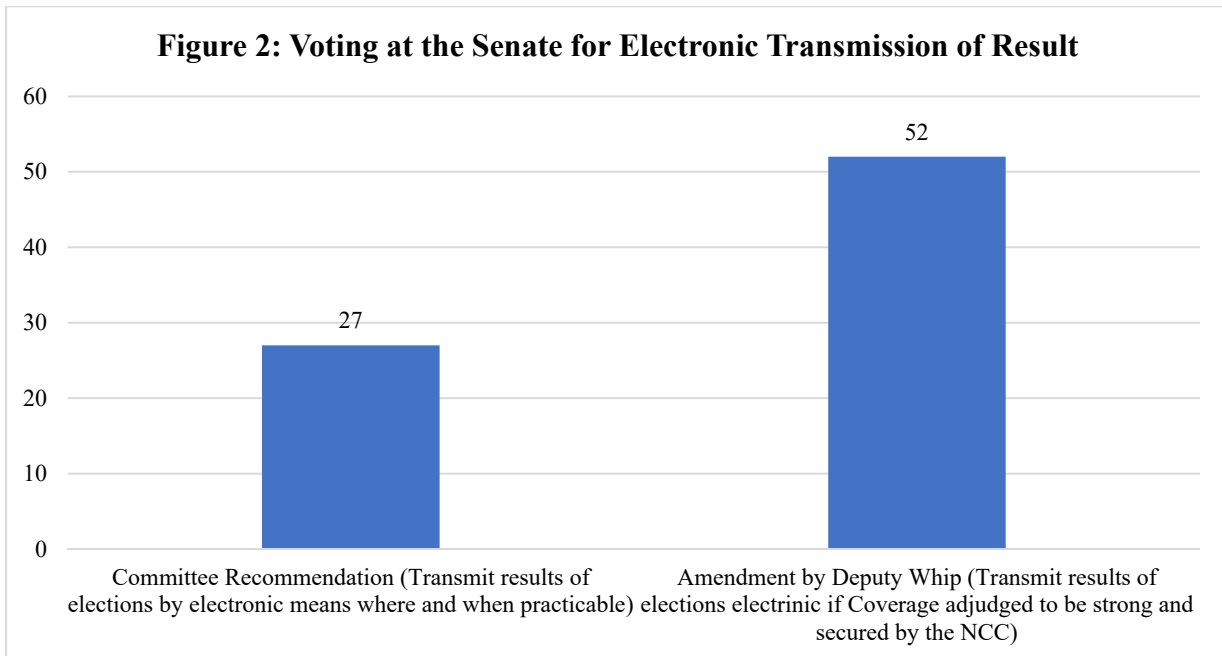
Figure 1: Electronic transmission of election results



Source: Senate Order Paper/ National Dailies

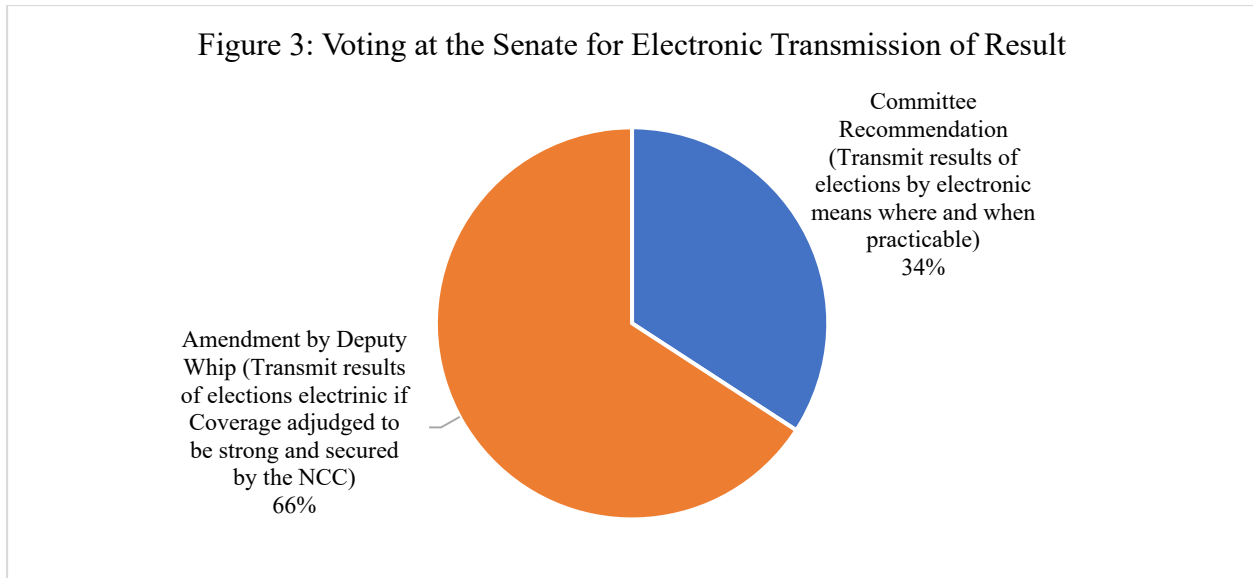
Figure 1 shows that 52 out of 79 (66%) Senators voted that election results should be transmitted if the network coverage is adjudged to be strong and secured by the NCC. On the other hand, 27 out of 79 (34%) voted that election results should be transmitted by electronic means where and when practicable. While the former leaves the decision on the conditionality to transmit to INEC, the former leaves that decision to the NCC.

Figure 2: Voting at the Senate for Electronic Transmission of Result



Source: Senate Order Paper/ National Dailies

Figure 3: Voting at the Senate for Electronic Transmission of Result



Source: Senate Order Paper/ National Dailies

There are six female senators in the 9th National Assembly. Five were present during the votes. They are:

- Senator Oluremi Tinubu (APC Lagos Central),
- Senator Aishatu Dahiru Ahmed (APC Adamawa Central).
- Senator Dadu’ut Ladi (APC Plateau South),
- Senator Betty Apiafi (PDP Rivers West), and
- Senator Eyankeyi Akon Etim (PDP Akwa Ibom South).

Senator Lilian Uche Ekwunife (PDP – Anambra Central) was absent during the vote¹. Senator Rose Okoo died in March 2020. Overall, Senators present during the vote accounted for 72% of the total number of senators (109). While the number of Male Senators were more, women had a higher proportion in attendance: 83% as against men, with a proportion of 72%.

Table 2: Number and proportion of Senators (by Gender Classification) Present During the Votes

Parameters	Male	Females	Overall
Number Present at the Vote	74	5	79
Number Absent at the Vote	29	1	30
Total	103	6	109
Proportion present during the votes	72%	83%	72%

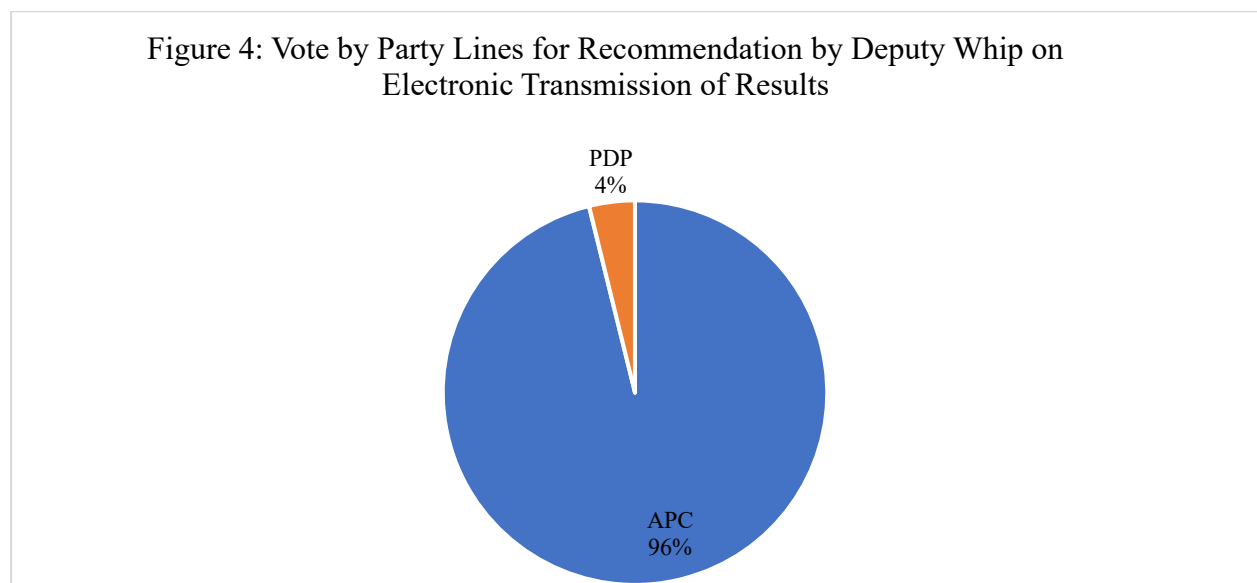
¹ <https://punchng.com/electronic-results-transmission-how-the-senators-voted-full-list/>

Source: Senate Order Paper

4.1.1 Characteristics of the Votes in favour of the Amendment by the Deputy Whip

The recommendation by the deputy whip is that: the Commission may consider the electronic transmission of results, provided the national coverage is adjudged to be adequate and secure by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and approved by the National Assembly. How did Senators vote along this line?

By Political Party lines, 4% (2 out of 52) of Senators that voted in favor of the amendment that transmission should be done but based on the recommendation provided by the NCC on coverage and security of the internet network, is PDP. APC votes accounted for 96% (50 out of 52) of votes in this direction.

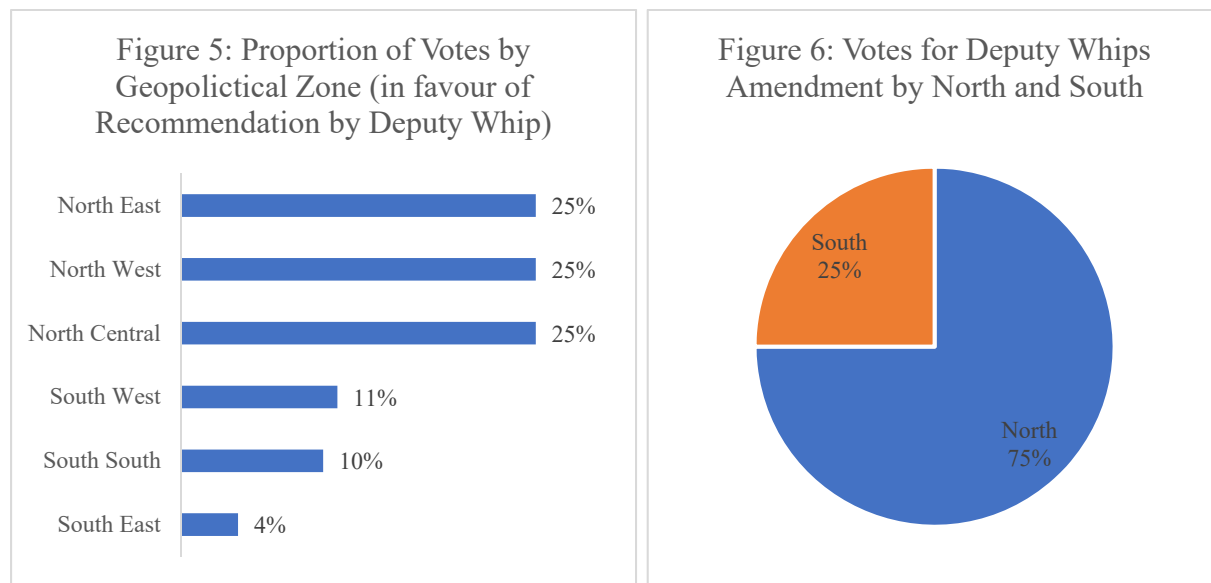


Source: Field Data Analysis

By North and South, Northern voters accounted for 75% of votes in favour while Southern votes account for 25%.

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Votes in favour of Deputy Whips Amendment for Electronic Transmission of Election Results		
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
North West	13	25%
North Central	13	25%
North East	13	25%
South West	6	11%
South East	2	4%
South South	5	10%

Source: Field Data Analysis



Source: Field Data Analysis

Along gender line, there are six female senators in the 9th National Assembly². Five of the females were present during the votes. This implies that 83% of women in the Senate were present for the votes: They are:

- Senator Oluremi Tinubu (APC Lagos Central),

² Initial there were seven. Senator Rose Oko died in March 2020

- Senator Aishatu Dahiru Ahmed (APC Adamawa Central).
- Senator Dadu'ut Ladi (APC Plateau South),
- Senator Betty Apiafi (PDP Rivers West), and
- Senator Eyankeyi Akon Etim (PDP Akwa Ibom South).

Of the five female senators, three voted for the amendment by the Deputy whip. This implies that 60% of female Senators, voted in favour of the electronic transmission as amended by the Deputy whip of the Senate. These females are Oluremi Tinubu (APC Lagos Central), Aishatu Dahiru Ahmed (APC Adamawa Central), and Senator Dadu'ut Ladi (APC Plateau South). All were APC.

Those who voted for INEC to seek clearance from NCC before transmission of results electronically:

1. Ovie Omo-Agege (APC-Delta Central)
2. Peter Nwaoboshi (APC-Delta North)
3. Mohammed Ali Ndume (APC-Borno South)
4. Opeyemi Bamidele (APC-Ekiti Central)
5. Ibrahim Abdullahi Gobir (APC-Sokoto East)
6. Mohammed Danjuma Goje (APC-Gombe Central)
7. Yusuf Abubakar Yusuf (APC-Taraba Central)
8. Bomai Ibrahim Mohammed (APC-Yobe South)
9. Sahabi Alhaji Ya'u (APC-Zamfara North)
10. Uba Sani (APC-Kaduna Central)
11. Kabiru Gaya (APC-Kano South)
12. Ishaku Elisha Abbo (APC-Adamawa North)
13. Ahmad Babba Kaita (APC-Katsina North)
14. Adamu Aliero (APC-Kebbi Central)
15. Yahaya Abdullahi (APC-Kebbi North)
16. Yakubu Oseni (APC-Kogi Central)
17. Isah Jibrin (APC-Kogi East)

18. Smart Adeyemi (APC-Kogi West)
19. Ibrahim Yahaya Oloriegbe (APC-Kwara Central)
20. Oluremi Tinubu (APC-Lagos-Central)
21. Solomon Adeola (APC-Lagos-West)
22. Tanko Al-Makura (APC-Nasarawa South)
23. Godiya Akwashiki (APC-Nasarawa North)
24. Abdullahi Adamu (APC-Nasarawa West)
25. Mohammed Sani Musa (APC-Niger East)
26. Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi (APC-Niger North)
27. Birma Mohammed Enagi (APC-Niger South)
28. Nora Ladi Dadu'ut (APC-Plateau South)
29. Francis Alimikhena (APC-Edo North)
30. Abubakar Kyari (APC-Borno North)
31. Surajudeen Ajibola (APC-Osun Central)
32. Robert Ajayi Boroffice (APC-Ondo North)
33. Orji Uzor Kalu (APC-Abia North)
34. Aderele Oriolowo (APC-Osun West)
35. Aishatu Dahiru Ahmed (APC-Adamawa Central)
36. Degi Eremienyo (APC-Bayelsa East)
37. Ashiru Yisa (APC-Kwara South)
38. Bello Mandiya (APC-Katsina South)
39. Hezekiah Dimka Ayuba (APC-Plateau Central)
40. Francis Ibezim (APC-Imo North)
41. Kashim Shettima (APC-Borno Central)
42. Stephen Odey (APC-Cross River North)
43. Shuaibu Isa Lau (APC-Taraba North)
44. Alkali Saidu (APC-Gombe North)
45. Amos Bulus (APC-Gombe South)
46. Danladi Sankara (APC-Jigawa North-West)
47. Hadejia Hassan Ibrahim (APC-Jigawa North-East)
48. Suleiman Abdul Kwari (APC-Kaduna North)
49. Abdullahi Barkiya (APC-Katsina Central)

- 50. Jika Dauda Haliru (APC-Bauchi Central)
- 51. Lawali Anka (APC-Zamfara West)
- 52. Lawal Yahaya Gamau (APC-Bauchi South)

4.1.2 Characteristics of the Votes in favour of the Committee Recommendation

The committee recommendation is that: the Commission (INEC) may transmit results of elections by electronic means where and when practicable. How did Senators vote along this line?

The recommendation by the committee gives the power to decide on whether to transmit electronically to INEC. By party lines, 27 people voted in favour of this option. All were PDP members.

By geopolitical zone, the South South had the highest number of votes in favour of the committee recommendation. This is followed by the Southeast and the Southwest. The northern zones generally had a low preference for the Committee recommendation.

Table 4: Voting by Geopolitical Zones		
Zones	Frequency	Percentage (%)
North Central	2	7.41%
North West	2	7.41%
North East	0	0%
South West	4	14.81%
South East	6	22.22%
South South	12	44.44%
FCT	1	3.70%
Total	27	100.0%

Source: Field Data Analysis

Along gender lines, two women: Betty Apiafi (PDP - Rivers West), and Eyankeyi Akon Etim (Akwa Ibom - South); out of the five women present, voted in favour of the committee recommendation.

Those who voted that INEC should transmit election results when and where practicable (committee recommendation):

- 1. Enyinnaya Abaribe (PDP-Abia South)
- 2. Francis Adenigba Fadahunsi (PDP-Osun East)

3. Clifford Ordia (PDP-Edo Central)
4. Matthew Urhoghide (PDP-Edo South)
5. Gyang Istifanus (PDP-Plateau North)
6. George Sekibo (PDP-Rivers East)
7. Biodun Olujimi (PDP-Ekiti South)
8. Mpiigi Barinada (PDP-Rivers South-East)
9. Betty Apiafi (PDP-Rivers West)
10. Philip Aduda (PDP-Abuja FCT)
11. Chukwuka Utazi (PDP-Enugu North)
12. Ibrahim Abdullahi Danbaba (PDP-Sokoto South)
13. Danjuma La'ah (PDP-Kaduna South)
14. Francis Onyewuchi (PDP-Imo East)
15. Patrick Ayo Akinyelure (PDP-Ondo Central)
16. Kola Balogun (PDP-Oyo South)
17. Eyankeyi Akon Etim (PDP-Akwa Ibom South)
18. Christopher Ekpenyong (PDP-Akwa Ibom North-West)
19. Seriake Dickson (PDP-Bayelsa West)
20. Cleopas Zuwoghe (PDP-Bayelsa Central)
21. Emmanuel Orker-jev (PDP-Benue North-West)
22. Sandy Onor (PDP-Cross River Central)
23. Gershom Bassey (PDP-Cross River South)
24. James Manager (PDP-Delta South)
25. Obinna Ogba (PDP-Ebonyi Central)
26. Sam Egwu (PDP-Ebonyi North)
27. Nnachi Ama Micheal (PDP-Ebonyi South)
28. Bassey Albert Akpan (PDP Akwa Ibom North-East)

4.2 Determinants of reasons for the voting preferences expressed by Senators on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021.

The questionnaire administered to the Senators also showed that membership in a lobby group and interaction with constituents influenced the voting pattern observed with the votes for electronic

transmission. Analysis of proportions also showed that interaction with constituents had more influence on the vote of those who voted following the Committee recommendation than being a member of a lobby group. On the other hand, those who voted following the recommendation of the Deputy whip had more influence from their membership in a lobby group.

	Voting choice for electronic transmission * Member of a Lobby Group		Voting choice for electronic transmission * Held Meeting with Constituents	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Committee Recommendation	22	35%	15	38%
Deputy Whips Amendment	40	65%	24	62%
	62	100%	39	100%

Source: Field Data Analysis

Count		Member of a Lobby Group		Total
		Yes	Prefer not so say	
Voting choice for electronic transmission	Committee Recommendation	22	5	27
	Deputy Whips Amendment	40	12	52
Total		62	17	79

Source: Field Data Analysis

Count		Held Meeting with Constituents		Total
		Yes	Prefer not so say	
Voting choice for electronic transmission	Committee Recommendation	15	12	27

Deputy Whips Amendment	24	28	52
Total	39	40	79

Source: Field Data Analysis

Questionnaires were also randomly administered to respondents outside the National Assembly to document their responses on factors they perceived as playing a role in the voter choice of the Senators. They were asked if they thought partisanship was a major determinant in the voting preference of Senators. A total of 52 lawmakers agreed (68%), while 27 lawmakers disagreed (32%). This indicates that Partisanship was one of the major determinant in the voting preferences of Senators on the 2010 Electoral Amendment Bill 2021.

Table 8. Responses on do you agree that Partisanship was a major determinant in the voting preferences of Senators on the 2010 electoral amendment bill?		
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	65	25.2
Agreed	72	27.9
Undecided	29	11.2
Disagreed	54	20.9
Strongly Disagreed	38	14.8
Total	258	100

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2022

Responses on whether party loyalty played a role in the voting behavior of the Senators showed that 51% of the respondents agreed that this was the case. From the table above, 29.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that party loyalty played a role in the voting behavior of the Senators on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill 2021. Those that agreed with such an assertion were 22.1%. However, 12.8% were undecided. About 24.4% disagreed with such an assertion while the remaining 11.6% strongly disagreed with the assertion. Thus, looking at the trend of the responses, we can infer that party loyalty played a role in the voting behavior of the Senators on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill 2021.

Table 9. Responses on do you agree that party loyalty played a role in the voting behaviour of the Senators on the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill 2021?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	75	29.1
Agreed	57	22.1
Undecided	33	12.8
Disagreed	63	24.4
Strongly Disagreed	30	11.6
Total	258	100

Source: Researcher’s Survey, 2022.

Table 10. Responses on do you think that INEC is capable of transmitting votes electronically without hitches or errors in collation/counting?		
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agreed	85	32.9
Agreed	74	28.7
Undecided	22	8.5
Disagreed	45	17.4
Strongly Disagreed	32	12.4
Total	258	100

Source: Researcher’s Survey, 2022

Regarding the transmission of results, the responses showed that 61.6% agreed that INEC is capable of transmitting votes electronically without hitches or errors in collation/counting. From the table above, 32.9% of the respondents argued that they strongly agreed with the assertion that INEC has the capacity of transmitting votes electronically without hitches or errors in collation/counting. A set of 28.7% expressed their agreement on the issue. Also, 8.5% were undecided. However, a set of 17.4% disagreed with such an assertion. But the remaining 21.4% expressed their strong disagreement. This position aligns with the Committee's recommendation that INEC can transmit electronically. However, this was not the dominant position reflected in the overall vote in the Senate.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

This chapter covers the summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study. The summary provides a synopsis of all the chapters of the study; the conclusion presents specific ideas forged from the study, while the recommendations are points intended to suffice for the study problem.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The Senate passed the Electoral Amendment Bill in July 2021. The amendment empowers the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and the National Assembly “to determine the use (or not) of electronic transmission of results of elections”. This position was against the committee recommendation which would have empowered INEC to determine the transmission of votes, electronically. Specifically, the initially proposed amendment was changed from “the Commission may transmit results of elections by electronic means where and when practicable” to: “The commission may consider electronic transmission provided the national network coverage is adjudged to be adequate and

secure by the Nigerian Communications Commission and approved by the National Assembly,” as proposed by the Senate Deputy Whip, Sabi Abdullahi. While newspaper reports provided documentation of how Senators voted, further analysis of the voting pattern would provide insight into the determinant of the voting pattern. It would also shed light on the public to understand that voting in for the consideration of Bills is not a linear process of Yeas and Nays. The study will therefore help to boost public confidence in the National Assembly and enhance knowledge of how the legislature works.

The broad objective of this study is to examine the voting behavior in the Senate regarding the electronic transmission of votes as provided by the 2010 Electoral amendment Bill. The specific objectives are: (1) Examine the factors that shape voting choices on the 2010 electoral act amendment bill, 2021 in the Nigerian Senate, and (2) What are the reasons for the voting preferences expressed by Senators on the 2010 electoral act amendment bill, 2021.

The study is limited to how Senators voted regarding Section 52 (3) of the 2010 Electoral Act Amendment Bill, 2021. It relies on secondary data on how senators voted and conducted interviews with some of the senators that voted. The study also administered questionnaires to respondents outside the National Assembly to document their perception of the votes by the Senators. The study is also restricted to the 9th Senate and does not consider past votes in the direction of electronic transmission of votes in previous legislative sessions of the Nigeria National Assembly.

The data collected is processed using SPSS and analyzed using frequency tables, percentages, and charts. Micro-soft Excel is also used for the analysis of the data. The recommendation by the deputy whip is that the Commission may consider the electronic transmission of results, provided the national coverage is adjudged to be adequate and secure by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and approved by the National Assembly. By Political Party lines, 4% (2 out of 52) of Senators that voted in favor of the amendment that transmission should be done but based on the recommendation provided by the NCC on coverage and security of the network, were PDP. APC votes accounted for 96% (50 out of 52) of votes in this direction. By North and South, Northern voters accounted for 75% of votes in favour while Southern votes account for 25%. Along the gender line, there are six female senators in the 9th National Assembly. Five of the females were present during the votes. This implies that 83% of women in the Senate were present for the votes. Of the five female senators, three voted for the amendment by the Deputy whip. This implies that 60% of female Senators, voted in favour of the electronic transmission as amended by the Deputy Whip of the Senate. These females are Oluremi

Tinubu (APC Lagos Central), Aishatu Dahiru Ahmed (APC Adamawa Central), and Senator Dadu'ut Ladi (APC Plateau South). All were APC.

On the other hand, the committee recommendation is that: the Commission (INEC) may transmit the results of elections by electronic means where and when practicable. This recommendation by the committee gives the power to decide on whether to transmit electronically to INEC. By party lines, 27 people voted in favour of this option. All were PDP members. By geopolitical zone, the South-South had the highest number of votes in favour of the committee recommendation. This is followed by the Southeast and the Southwest. The northern zones generally had a low preference for the Committee recommendation. Along gender lines, two women: Betty Apiafi (PDP - Rivers West), and Eyankeyi Akon Etim (Akwa Ibom - South); out of the five women present, voted in favour of the committee recommendation.

The North has more confidence in the recommendation by the Deputy whip which puts the decision to transmit election results electronically in the hands of the NCC. The South, on the other hand, has more confidence in the INEC to decide whether it should transmit election results electronically.

The analysis showed that the Senate did not vote for non-electronic transmission of the election result. Rather, they voted for who the deciding power should rest. Should INEC decide on whether to transmit the results electronically, or the decision should simply be allowed to the NCC to decide based on the strength of internet infrastructure and internet security.

To measure the perception of citizens, Questionnaires were also randomly administered to respondents outside the National Assembly to document their responses on factors they perceived as playing a role in the voter choice of the Senators. They were asked if they thought partisanship was a major determinant in the voting preference of Senators. A total of 53% agreed, while 47% disagreed. This indicates that Partisanship was a major determinant in the voting preferences of Senators on the 2010 Electoral Amendment Bill 2021. Responses on whether party loyalty played a role in the voting behavior of the Senators showed that 51% of the respondents agreed that this was the case. Regarding the transmission of results, the responses showed that 61.6% agreed that INEC is capable of transmitting votes electronically

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that building the trust of the electorate in INEC and developing the nation's internet infrastructure and ICT security, would enhance public confidence in INEC transmitting voter results electronically. The study also recommends continuous testing of the electronic component of the electoral system as well as the transmission of voter results using off-cycle elections before the main elections in 2023.

Based on the above findings, the study recommends that both recommendations by the Committee and the Deputy Whip regarding electronic transmission had valid premises. Hence, continuous testing of the electronic transmission of votes should be thoroughly tested before the 2023 General Elections. The voting behaviors of Nigerian Legislators should be more citizen-centric to build public trust in the process of law-making.

5.3 Conclusion

The Senate passed the Electoral Amendment Bill in July 2021. The debate on how the Senate voted regarding the electronic transmission of results stood out. A study on what factors influenced the voting choices observed and what lessons there are for the representative and law-making functions of the National Assembly is important. This is against the background of the concentration of the debate on the media and the need to provide academic documentation on the votes and their determinants. The literature on voter choices has also concentrated largely on how electorates elect their leaders. This study provides additional evidence on voter choices using the Senate as a case study.

The study concludes that Senators did not vote against electronic transmission rather, they voted for or against the conditionality on which the electronic transmission should be based. The distribution of the votes showed that 52 Senators voted for the INEC to seek clearance from NCC before transmission of results electronically, while 27 voted that INEC should transmit election results when and where practicable. Along party lines, APC votes supported vesting the transmission decision on the NCC while PDP votes supported vesting the power on the INEC. In either case, the concern of ensuring that the votes cast by electorates are what counts remained the focus. Membership of a lobby group (which is hardly revealed by members) plays a role in how votes are determined in the National assembly. A much more revealing determinant, however, is that members strived to do the will of their constituents. Provided the votes cast reflected the immediate interest of the constituency of the legislator, remains a major factor that determined how Senators voted. The study is limited to how senators voted regarding Section 52 (3) of the 2010 electoral act amendment bill, 2021. It relies on secondary data on how senators

voted and conducted interviews with some of the senators that voted. The study also administered questionnaires to respondents outside the National Assembly to document their perception of the votes by the Senators. The study is also restricted to the 9th Senate and does not consider past votes in the direction of electronic transmission of votes in previous legislative sessions of the Nigeria National Assembly.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE ON VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN NIGERIA'S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: - FOCUS ON THE 2010 ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL IN THE 9TH SENATE

Dear Respondent,

I am a student in the Department of Masters in Legislative Studies, National Institute for Legislative and Democratic studies, undertaking a research on **“VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN NIGERIA'S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: - FOCUS ON THE 2010 ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL IN THE 9TH SENATE”**

It will be highly appreciated if you fill the attached questionnaire form and I assure you that all information provided would be used purely for academic purpose and shall be treated with absolute confidentiality. Thanks, in anticipation of your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

TOM SAMUEL E.
PG/NLS/1900052

SECTION A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Strongly Agreed [] Agreed [] Undecided [] Disagree [] Strongly Disagreed []

6. Do you agree that a more citizen-centric voting choice by the Legislators can be achieved in future?

Strongly Agreed [] Agreed [] Undecided [] Disagree [] Strongly Disagreed []

7. How would you rate the level/importance of bills sponsored by ninth (9th) National Assembly Legislators so far on the citizens?

Very Effective [] Effective [] Undecided [] Ineffective [] Very Ineffective []

8. Do you think that INEC is capable of transmitting votes electronically without hitches or errors in collation/counting?

Strongly Agreed [] Agreed [] Undecided [] Disagree [] Strongly Disagreed []

9. In your own view, what do you think are the factors militating against citizen-centric voting choices by the Legislators?

10. Suggest remedies to the factors mentioned above.
