# LOCALITY AND STEREOTYPICAL CONCEPTS AS PREDICTORS OF VOTING ATTITUDES AMONG PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ADULT NIGERIAN EMPLOYEES

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**KEYWORDS**
Locality, Stereotypical concepts and voting attitude

**ABSTRACT**

*The study examined the Locality and Stereotypical Concepts as the Predictors of Voting Attitude among Public and Private Adult Nigerians Employees. Locality as an established place one resides, and stereotype originally demoted a solid metallic printing plate containing stock image that is difficult to change once cast was measured with Gender Stereotype Scale (GSS) developed by Sekhar & Parameswari (2020), and voting attitude as the consistent manner of feeling and beliefs of how a person views the electoral process that predispose one to act in a certain way during voting was measured using Attitude to Voting Scale (AVS) developed by Obiechina (2009). Two hypotheses was formulated and tested, two hundred and six (206), (volunteered (62) and drawn (144)) participants using accidental and convenience sampling technique from eight states within four geo-political regions (East, South, West and North) of the country (Anambra, Abia, Cross River, Bayelsa, Ondo, Oyo. Kanu and Kaduna) participated in the study. They were 122 males and 84 females with their age ranged between 27-59 years, average mean age of 30.69 and standard deviation age of 4.63. The study design was cross-sectional, correlational and hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used as the statistical package. Results of the data analysis shows that gender, locality and stereotype significantly ($\beta = .36^*$; $t = 4.09$, $p < .01$; $\beta = .37^*$; $t = 4.66$, $p < 0.1$ and $\beta = .26$; $t = 4.69$, $p < .01$) predicted the voting attitude of the studied participants. These significant results were discussed alongside with the literature reviewed, implications and recommendation were made.*

## Introduction

Voting as the action of choosing an eligible personality in an election forms an intrinsic part of democracy because technically it is connected with movement that stimulate by or as by life stream of every election. But then, democracy-government by the people, direct or representative; unprivileged class can only be as good as the quality of the decision making process that voters use to elect their leaders. For this reason, Plato, in the *Republic*, posits that democracy comes into being when there is an equal share of freedom and power (Plato, the Republic, 2000). If this being the case, the fact that voters rely on locality, stereotypes-facial appearances, gender, self-image and fixed idea-to elect leaders leaves voting much to be desired as it has posed a great concern to the integrity and transparency of election. It is quite startling and absolutely appalling that some voters bank on the political facial-self-image and locality of individuals to select their candidates which further places more doubt to the credibility of voting. To this effect, stereotype-a relatively fixed and oversimplified generalization about a group or class of people may be used when making quick, decisions (Ogbogu, 2018). In other words, using stereotypes for a category of people could amount to zooming them out of the circuit of rational which could naturally translate into casting them out of the circuit of humanity since the rational faculty is that which makes us human. And when this comes into play, such categories of people will be denied certain quintessential rights, such as politics, civilization and socialization as the case may be. Stereotypes encourage prejudice and may arise for a number of reasons which include, ethnocentrism, sentimental discrimination and physical attack (Vega, 2018). Coming from a tripartite view of intergroup attitude, stereotypes reflect expectations and beliefs about the characteristics of the members of groups perceived as different from one's own, prejudice represents the emotional response, and discrimination refers to actions (Fiske et al; 2008).

Voting attitude on the other hand is a psychological construct, an enduring pattern of evaluative responses towards a person, object, or issue. According to frequently quoted classical definition, it is a more or less consistent patterns of affective, cognitive, and conative or behavioural responses (or of feeling, thinking and behaving) towards a psycho-political object, but the consistency implied by this definition is a supposition that is frequently unmatched by reality, and it is possible to have voting attitude towards something without ever having opportunity to express it in behaviour. Election or voting attitude cannot be complete in isolation of stereotype and locality which refers to the particular area, place or geographical location an individual resides and this boils down to the fact that they are constants in every election or anything that has to do with voting.

In a simpler formation, voting attitude which is flexible depends hugely on the influence the stereotypes and locality have on it during voting. In the same vain, stereotype has a great influence on the voting attitude be it gender, age, ethnicity etc. for instance, when a female candidate is contesting against a male candidate in an election, the majority of voters assume that the female cannot have such a position because for them, some delicate positions should be for the men and women belongs to the kitchen and bedroom as wrongly perceived. This would make the female folks have that wrong conception/impression and make them refuse to come out and vote thereby affecting their voting attitude. Locality on its own has a way of making people in an under develop areas feel their votes do not count because they feel that voting is meant for people that stay in high brow areas hence when development comes it does not go to make them, thereby making them reluctant to vote. In a nutshell, stereotype be it gender or ethnicity affects the voting strength of the people whereas, voting attitude, on the other hand, is a strong variable because many people have the poor mentality of voting saying afterwards their vote would not count based on the canker worm called rigging. In recognition of the foregoing point of fact, this study seeks to examine the predicting, nature of locality and stereotypical concepts on voting attitude among public and private Nigeria employees.

## Statement of the Problem

Elections form a very important component of the democratic process. Thus, there are no less important in a developing policy plagued insatiability in succession crisis attendant to flawed electoral processes, while the principle was introduced in Nigeria almost a century ago, rancor and controversies. Indeed, disputes pertaining to electoral system and process have truncated the democratic process since in the less than half-a-century of Nigeria's existence as an independent state. The return to civil rule after a long period of military interregnum was

expected to usher in an enduring democracy in the wake of the world-wide wave's democratization. Yet the elections of the leaders were as flawed as the previous elections, heightening calls for a reform of the electoral laws.

The idea was to strengthen the system's capacity to conduct free and fair elections that could serve as a basis for orderly transfer of political power and a building block of democratic consolidation. In order to achieve that, the voting attitude of electorate must be considered and transformed positively. There have been so many stereotypes toward voting which most times is linked to the locality of an individual thereby affecting the voting attitude of individuals toward voting; these stereotypes include gender, ethnicity, religion, social-political class etc. For instance, people in rural area are considered incapable of handling political office or position as the case may be, thereby, limiting their chances, of contesting for political position. Worst still, this particular group might not be allowed to vote because they were not enlightened and their votes do not count. Also, they do not have the motivation to come out for electoral activities because they, on their own part, feel their votes no matter how they vote will be manipulated. Hence, the issue of locality as regards the urban/cities and rural comes into clearer perspective in there is no fair play in the administration of changes or opportunities which of cause, is as a result of the concept formation nurtured by people from rural environment. This is what this study seeks to address, to extrapolate the influence of predicting nature of locality and stereotype on the voting attitude of Public and Private Adult Nigerian Employees. Having a better grasp of this study, the following research questions guided the study:

i. Will locality significantly predict the voting attitude of the sampled participants?

ii. Will stereotype significantly predict the voting attitude of the sampled participants?

iii. Will locality and stereotype jointly significantly predict voting attitude of the Public and Private Adult Nigerian Employees?

## Aim/Purpose of the Study

The study is designed to investigate if:

i. Locality will predict voting attitude of the sample participants.

ii. Stereotype will predict voting attitudes of the sampled participants.

iii. Locality and stereotype will jointly predict voting attitude of the Public and Private Adult Nigerian Employees.

## Theoretical Position

### Sociological Model of Voting Behaviour (Berelson et al, 1954)

Accordingly, the theoretical assumptions of the sociological model of voting behaviour is defined in three essential works: the People's Choice (Lazarsfeld et al, 1944), Voting (Berelson et al, 1954) and Person influence (Peter, 1967). From their research and model, Lazarsfeld et al, (1944), assert that an individual learns the partisan predisposition conformable to the political traditional of membership or reference groups. In view of this, this model makes much of the social characteristics of each individual or the properties of group variables than attitudes to issues or candidates having an effect on the final voting decisions and party choices. Of course, sociological model the argument continues, links voting behaviour to group membership, suggesting that elector tend to adopt a voting pattern that reflects the socio-economic position of the group to which they belong rather than developing a psychological attachment to a group on the basis of family influence. This model highlights the importance of a social alignment, reflecting the various divisions and tensions within society. Furthermore, the most significant of these divisions and tensions are class, gender, ethnicity and religion. In simple terms, the sociological model is based on the premise that voting attitude and behaviour is affected by one's social class (Peter, 1967). Again, Lazarsfeld et al; (1944), whose previous interests had focused on the study of the psychological mechanisms involved in the processes of people's choice holds that the act of voting is an individual act, affecting mainly by the personality and the attitude of the voter. Attitude as a context is

dependent on the personality of the individual which is a sum total of the various location, he/she has found him/herself. The theory on its own opines that voting has to do with the attitude and personality of the individual involved.

**Integrated Model of Stereotype Threat (Schmader et al; 2013)**

Although numerous studies demonstrate the effects of threat on performance, questions remain as to specific cognitive factors that underlie these effects especially as it relates to voting behaviour. Schmeader et al; (2013) originally speculated that attempts to suppress stereotype-related thoughts leads to anxiety and the narrowing of attention thereby suppressing the choice of picking a candidate and attitude of an individual towards voting. The integrated model of stereotype threat focused on three interrelated variables:

- Stress arousal
- Performance monitoring which narrows attention.
- Efforts to suppress negative thoughts and emotion

Schmader et al; (2013) suggest that these three variables summarize the pattern of evidence that has been accumulated by past experiments on stereotype threat. For example, stereotype threat has been shown to show poor attitude towards voting as many see it that they are sidelined and hence no need of voting. A number of studies looking at physiological and neurological responses support Schmader and his colleagues' integrated model of processes that produce stereotype threat.

Supporting an explanation in terms to stress arousal, "one study argues that African-Americans under stereotype threat exhibit larger increases in arterial blood pressure (Blascovich et al; 2011). Individuals under stereotype threat display increased heart rates, stereotype threat may also activate a neuroendocrine stress response, as measured by increased levels of cortisol while under threat. The physiological reactions that are induced by stereotype threat can often be subconscious and can distract and interrupt cognitive focus from the task. Stereotype threat causes a lot of reluctance of individuals towards voting and these leads to poor of turnout and poor attitude of people to compete during an election like we have in Nigeria.

Clearly, Nigerians consistently fallen victim to the manifestations of stereotype in the voting attitude and behaviour of its citizens. With an overly pronounced recourse to ethnicity and religion which have marred Nigerian's politics, choice of votes and voter's decisions in electioneering in Nigeria is heavily determined by ethnicity and religion. For one reason, the electoral choice of Nigerians are ethnically and religiously coloured as party formations are ethnically and religiously designated and motivated. These attitudes, in their manifestations, generally underrate people from other ethnic and religious groups and even see them as infidels, and so, are not fit for political responsibilities. The fatal effect of religiosity and ethnicity on electoral activities in Nigeria has remained unceasing even after more-than 60 years of political independence and the struggle for the attainment of national integration and unity. This situation besides going unabated has in recent years assumed a more perilous and dangerous dimension. These indices are apparently experienced in every of our socio-political, religious and economic stage and have also been blamed for the many woes that have befallen Nigerian's voting attitude and behaviour. Such problems as electoral malpractice and inability to practice governance have their basis, to a large extent, in ethnicity and religiosity.

**The Investor-Voter Model (Davies, 2008)**

The investor-voter model focused on how business elites, not voters, play the leading part in political systems and it states that, since money driven political systems are expensive and burdensome to ordinary voters, policy is created by competing coalitions of investors not voters. According to the theory, political parties (and the issues they campaign on) are created entirely for business interests separated by the interests of numerous variables, such as labor-intensive and capital-intensive, and free market and protectionist business. In furtherance, this model assumes a measure of rationality on the part of the voter who expects a modicum of casting his/her vote for a particular candidate in whose political programme(s) he/she has a stake. This process is normally the preview of election financing and class rule, identifying the process by which people come to hold governmental offices funded by a clique or cabal

with economic and political interests to persevere and project.

In Nigeria, the Investor Voter Model could be likened to what is called "money politics" and it is based on the ascendancy registering its presence in just about all the registered parties. For one thing, this model paves way for the political bourgeois in the country to dominate and occupy key elective and appointive political positions and offices in the country. These political Lords and their lieutenants will then control the power of the state and in turn, authoritatively decides who gets what, when and how. Money seems to have taken a centre stage in the political process in many countries in Africa and Nigeria in particular. It is sad to note that money now plays the increasing critical role in political and electoral processes to the extent that the word "money politics" with a pejorative connotation, has crept into the country's political lexicon. The problem with this situation is that the electoral process is often compromised resulting in elections not being free and fair (Davies, 2008, Ovwasa, 2014). The major worry however, is the noticeable corrupting influence of money politics and its negative impacts on the country's democracy as it has done more harm than good in the attitudinal and behavioural-pattern of voters' (Saliu & Lipade, 2005).

**Elite-Voter Theory (Mills 1956)**

The emergence of elite-voter theory as a paradigm of explaining social reality is credited to the works of Gaetano Mosca (1855-1941), Vilfrado Pareto (1848) and Charles W. Mills, (1916-1962). Central to their argument is that a small minority inevitably rules the masses in society. Actually, this theory emphasizes the ways in which a small minority manipulates and rules the masses because of their materials, intellectual or even moral abilities. Mills. (1956), on the other hand, asserts that some individuals (elites) are born with differential intrinsic intellectual endowments which he calls "residues". And that social mobility in an ideal society will favour those endowed with the power of persuasion and force. In every society, there is and must always be a minority which rules. In any type of society at any point of history, there are two classes of people; a class that rule and a class that is ruled. The former contains a few numbers of people and poses all political power and privileges whereas the later consist of large number of people and are subjected to rule of former and provides essential instrument for political organization. Elites are persons who, by virtue of their strategies locations in large or otherwise pivotal organizations and movements, are able to affect political outcomes regularly and substantially (Welzel, 2008). No doubt, Nigerian's political power is accessible only to the privileged rather than openness to contestation as advertised by political analyst and this, as a point in fact, continues to impair democratic governance in the Nigerian polity (Welzel, 2008). Annoyingly, the security apparatus is scandalously being used by the core-elites to repress the masses and silent the hard-core opponents in the bid to maintain state power. These minority groups that rule derived its original power almost invariably from force or coercive services such as the monopoly of military function. But then over time, this coercive services power is routinely transformed into hegemony. The minority ruling circle is composed of all those who occupy commanding political positions. It overtime undergoes changes in different ways. Sometimes, it is through a recruit of people from the lower echelons of the society into the ruling elite group. At other times, a new group is incorporate into the governing elite or by a complete replacement by a "counter-elite" through a revolution. These changes in the composition of the elite group have been termed circulation of elite. All these put together will in turn, be like opening the Pandora's Box to the poor innocent masses. Therefore, sociological theory was considered as a complementary theory in explaining voting attitude and behaviour.

## Empirical Position

Stereotype has a hypnotic power on the voting attitude and behaviour and this boils down to the fact that it determines the gender, age ethnic and religion, of the candidates for political positions. Thus, it seems obvious that stereotyping influences candidate evaluation with regard to issue of competence. For one thing, voters may use candidate gender as an "information shortcut" to estimate the features of the politician, as they might use other demographic characteristics or partisanship to evaluate political candidates (Popkin, 1991). In a society with a traditional division of labour, gender stereotypes tend to be strong, that is they are shared by both men and woman and have a profound effect on voting attitudes and behaviour (Nwachukwu et al, 2014). As this view continues, Dolan, (2010) worked on gender stereotypes, candidates' evaluations and voting

for women candidates. He opines that elections involving women candidates in the United States can offer unsetting examples of voter gender stereotypes, but research on women candidates provides little in the way of available data that allows us to link stereotypes to voter decision-making. This study reports result from a 2010 survey designed to examine gender stereotypes, candidate evaluations and voting behaviour in the U.S House elections with women candidates running against men. In general, stereotypes are not a central part of candidates or voting decisions, but the political party of the woman candidate can shape their role in candidate evaluations and vote choice. On the predictive nature of gender stereotype on voting attitude and behaviour. Sarah, (2017) who investigated the psycho-demographic behaviour on voting attitude on behaviour goes further to observe that gender has a significant influence on voting attitude and behaviour and thus recommends that authorities should create a level playing ground for different gender and age bracket.

Similarly, Sarah (2017) opines that most research demonstrates that many voters use gender stereotypes to evaluate candidates, but does that stereotyping affect women's electoral success? In her paper, she tries to make headway in answering that question by combing a novel empirical strategy with local election data from California. Her empirical strategy relies on two key findings from the existing literature: first, that individuals are more likely to rely on stereotypes when they have less information about the candidates, and second, that the average voters in elections held concurrently with national elections have less information about local candidates that the average voters in off-cycle elections. She proposes that we can therefore estimate the electoral effect of increased gender stereotyping by examining the difference in women's win rates in higher information (off-cycle) and lower-information (on-cycle) elections, and how that difference varies by consistency and the office sought. Her preliminary results shows that the effect of increased stereotyping is more negative for female candidates in Mayoral races than in city Council races, and also that the effect of greater stereotyping is more negative for women running in conservative cities than in more liberals cities. Thus, she concludes that there probably isn't a single, one size-fits all answer to the question of how gender stereotyping affects female candidates, but rather that the direction and magnitude of the effect varies across contexts.

Locality has it deciding influence on election and the voting attitude of voters. For one reason, it focuses on the geographical background, be it rural or urban/city of which the candidate is suitable for which political position. Where is the candidate from? Is the person from a rural community or is he/she from an urban/city area? These and many more are some of the questions voters ask themselves before choosing their candidates. Hence, the location of a person already creates a division in the minds of voters thereby affecting their voting attitudes as to who they will choose as their candidates (Otiato, 2007). People from rural areas have a lower education level, poor means of transporting voters materials and personnel's and less access to information technology which is why it is hypothesized that these citizen will especially rely on non-policy voting instead of policy voting to determine their vote choice. However, the opposite is expected from the urban/city population, who would vote more policy oriented and less non-policy oriented. In comparison to the different electoral outcomes in rural and urban/city areas, the differences in voting attitude and behaviour are small and actually the other way round than expected. Rural voters vote slightly more policy oriented, while urban/city voter focus more on non-policy voting (Otiato, 2007). The effect of interpersonal environment as measured by the degree of heterogeneity of political party preferences among important others in an individual's social network was investigated using a national probability sample in Japan and Regional sample in New Zealand by Liu and Ikeda (2010). In both culture, the interpersonal environment exerted significant and consistent effect on individual voting preferences.

To bring this to clearer perspective, Otiato (2007) worked on voters' behaviour in general elections in kenya from 1992-2007 and its implications for the development of liberal democracy. Consequently, this study endeavours to examine the factors that structure voting behaviour namely: purposive corporate social bonds, primordial corporate social bonds and socio-demographic variables. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design with a multi-stage sampling technique, inferential statistics such as ANOVA, t-test and linear regression were employed to test relationships, predictions and draw conclusions. Research findings obtained revealed that region, religion and income were the best predictors of voting behaviour. Voters in the then Nyanza (LUO) were highly influenced by

social bond in their voting behaviour, while Islam hada persuasive influence in shaping voting behaviour of its adherents more than any other religion. Voters earning more than Ksh 10,000 were found to be independent of social bonds in their voting behaviour. On the basis of these findings, the researchers concluded that this might be some kind of modern-day functionalism. Some form of function tangible or intangible that some regional or religious affiliation perform for voters which is why they are more likely to stick to one of their kind (or against as the case may be) or vote the highest bidder for those with low incomes. It was also concluded that it is because of lack of civic education coupled with strong primary social bonds (that is, in-group identity writes large). This means that voter is more likely to vote for candidates who originate from their regions, conforming voters' strong attachment to the notion of home district.

Every country has its own fair share of the empirical evidence/review and its own corresponding effect on the voting attitude and behaviour. While there may be some traces of locality and stereotype influencing voting attitude and behaviour in Nigeria, the choice of candidates in Nigeria is greatly influenced by the day-today and lived experienced of its citizens. Now looking at the Nigerian political arena, the voter's attitude and behaviour has greatly been influenced by ideological-psycho-social, psycho-political or socio-economic variables such as inflation and unemployment. On the one hand, ideology has become a major influence on votes Nigeria, especially the rural areas in such a way that what people belief in prompts their decision as to whom they will vote for. On the other hand, socio-economical variables, to a large extent influences people's vote because every rational being will want consciously vote for leaders that truly represent them, change their socio-political, socio-psychological and socio-economic status quo.

## Hypotheses

- There will be significant prediction of locality on voting attitude of public and private adult Nigerian employees.
- There will be a significant prediction of stereotype on voting attitude of public and private adult Nigerian employees.
- There will be a joint significant prediction of locality and stereotype on voting attitude of the study participants.

## Method

### Participants

Two-hundred and six (206) (volunteered (62) and drawn (144)) using accidental and convince sampling technique from eight states within the four geo-political regions (East, South, West and North) of the country (Anambra, Abia, Bayelsa, Cross-river, Ondo, Oyo, Kanu and Kaduna participated in the study. They comprised 122 males and 84 females with their age ranged from 27-59 years, average mean age of 30.69, and standard deviation (SD) age of 4.63. Their marital status were 82 single and 124 married. Their educational status were (92) secondary-WEAC, GCE and NECO and (144) tertiary-NCE, Diploma, Degree, Masters and Ph.d. Their years of job tenor or service ranged from 5-35 years. One hundred and fourty-four (144) were Christian, sixty two (62) Muslims, while non-traditionalist (Pagan). Their nature, designation, features and names of their establishments were not variables of interest.

### Instrument

Two instruments was used for the study which includes: The attitude to voting scale (AVS) developed by Obiechina (2009). This scale is 24 item rating scale designed to asses adults perception and attitude towards voting. Items on the scale were like live-point likert format where: SA-strongly Agree-5 to strongly disagree-1 point. Sample items in the scale include; interest in voting develops as election approaches; voting behaviour is influenced by personal appeals; people vote for candidates that will improve their standard of living etc. Obiechena (2009) reported internal consistency .84 Cronbach alpha, split half reliability .79 cronbach alpha, face and concurrent validity score of .48. The second instrument used for the study was Gender Stereotype Scale (GSS) developed by Sekhar & Parameswari (2020). This is a 23 item scale measuring gender stereotype and has internal consistency of .85 Cronbach alpha, split half reliability of .76 Cronbach alpha, face and concurrent validity score of .40. To revalidate the instrument in our context, the researchers in a pilot study obtained an internal consistency value of .82 Chronbach alpha, split half reliability of .68 Cronbach alpha, face and

concurrent validity value of .38. This ensured the adapted nature of the GSS in our context.

**Procedure**

The researchers administered the instruments to the participants (62 volunteered and 144 drawn) from the eight states within-four geo-political zone of country (East, South, West and North) at their leisure time when visited and instructed them on how to fill the instruments administered and return within 40 minutes interval, and the researchers were standby to render assistance to those who might have problems understanding the items on the instruments. On the whole a total of 220 instruments was administered of which 210 was retrieved, still some participants skipped vital items within the returned instrument, while some items within the instruments was mutilated making it a total (4). These four (4) badly affected instruments was discarded, remaining 206 which was formally and properly filled and eventually was used for data analysis.

## Design/Statistics

The study was a survey type while the design was a combination of cross sectional and correlational in nature. Multiple regression analysis was the statistical package used. It is cross sectional because the participants of the study were assessed at a particular point in time, correlation was adopted because the focus of the study was correlation between the predictor variables and criterion variable.

**Result**

Table 1: The mean, standard deviation and corrections of demographic variable, predictors and interior variables are shown in table 1.

| S/No | Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Age | - | | | | | | | - | - |
| 2 | Gender | .26 | - | | | | | | - | - |
| 3 | Marital Status | .29 | .75** | - | | | | | - | - |
| 4 | Religion | .03 | -.06 | .06 | - | | | | - | - |
| 5 | Locality | -.13 | .62** | -.48 | -.04 | - | | | - | - |
| 6 | Stereotype | -.7 | -.32** | .37** | .05 | -.21* | - | | 40.50 | 13.15 |
| 7 | Voting Attitude | -.12 | -.63** | -.62* | -.6 | .41** | .48** | - | 75.58 | 12.28 |

**Note**: *p<.05; **p<.01

Table 1 shows that age, gender, marital status, locality and stereotype were significantly correlated with voting attitude: age (r = -.12; P<.05); gender (r = 63; P<.01); marital status (r = -.62; P<.01); locality (r = 41; P<.01), and stereotype (r = 48; P<.01). However, among the demographic variables, it was only religion that was not significantly correlated with voting attitude.

**Table II:** Hierarchical regression of voting attitude on gender, locality and stereotype

| Variables | Voting Attitudes | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| N = 206 | $\Delta R^2$ | Beta | t |
| Step 1 | .46** | | |
| Age | | .09 | 1.55 |
| Gender | | .36* | 4.09 |
| Marital Status | | .02 | .31 |
| Religion | | -.01 | -.21 |
| Locality | | -.37* | 4.66 |
| Step 2 | .05* | | |
| Stereotype | | -.26 | 4.69 |

**Note: *p<.06, **p<.01**

**Table II** shows the result of hierarchical regression analysis of the participant's voting attitude on gender, locality and stereotype. In the hierarchical regression analysis, all the variables were entered two steps. In step 1, the demography variable was entered, variables entered in step 1 accounted for a significant 46% variance in the participants voting attitude. The results of the analysis indicated that among the demographic variable studied, gender (β = .36*; t = 4.09, P< .01) and locality (β = .37*; t = 4.66; P<.01) significantly predicted voting attitude among the participants. However, age marital status and religion did not show any significant relationship with voting attitude among the poor participants. In the step II stereotype (β = -.26; t = 4.69; P< .01) significantly predicted voting attitude among the study participants, though in a negative direction.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The major aim of this study is to determine the predicting nature of locality and stereotype in voting attitude of Public and Private Adult Nigerian Employees. As a result, two hypotheses were postulated and tested. First that there will be a significant prediction of locality on voting attitude among the sample participants. The result of the study concurred with first hypothesis and the findings is consists with previous other studies such as, Otiato (2010) who discovered that interpersonal environment exerted significant and consist effects individual voting preference. They opine that people in urban areas have more turnouts during selections than people residing in rural areas. To this effect, candidates focus more in campaigning in urban/cities areas where they are sure that will have massive turnout. Locality as seen from the study has a great effect towards voting attitude and this because the place a person resides greatly influence whether the person will come out and vote or not. In Nigerian for instance, we have two areas human residents in, it is either the rural area. Due to some variables like accessibility of roads and educational exposure people residing in urban/city areas come out to vote in mass compared to people residing in rural areas. The rural dwellers see it that they are neglected by the authorities and government due to poor infrastructures so they tend to be so reluctant in coming out to vote. Another variable is academic and learning exposure, as many resides in urban/city areas are academically sound and learned as they know the implications of not voting which would lead to the wrong person stepping into the position.

The result of the hierarchical regression analysis supported the anticipation that stereotype (that e.g, gender, age, marital status and religion) would predict voting attitude of the studied participants. Consequently, the second

hypothesis was partially accepted. This is line with Olapedgba (2007) who investigate the psycho-demographic behaviour on voting behaviour and attitude and goes further to observer that gender (sex) has a significant influence on attitude and behaviour of voting and thus recommends that authorities should create a level playing ground for different and age brackets. A significant body of the work suggests that voters ascribe to women candidates, certain stereotype policy competencies and personality characteristics. In terms of gender linked personality traits, women candidates are generally viewed as more compassionate, expressive, honest and better able to deal with constituents than me. Men are viewed as more competent, decisive, stronger leaders, and possessing a greater ability to handle crises (Burrel, 2008; Paul & Smith, 2008). Assumptions about women candidates generally conform to stereotyped think about position issue as well. Women are assumed to be more interested in, and more effective at dealing with, issues such as child care, poverty, education, health care, women's issues and the environment than are men, while men are thought to be more competent at dealing with economic development, physical and social development, security and life protection, military, trade, taxes, agriculture etc. (Dolan, 2010; Alexander & Anderson, 1993).

Perhaps the most important aspect of stereotypes of women candidates is that ideas about the abilities and competencies of female and male candidate may serve as a basis for voters to choose or reject particular candidate much of the literatures on stereotype and sex raise concerns that the presence of gender stereotypes could mean that people would fail to see women candidates as having the set of skill/abilities or policy interest to be viable leaders (Lawless, 2004). Indeed, a role of gender stereotypes in voter's choice and attitude is supposed to be known as a baseline gender preference. Many people have underlying preference to be represented by a woman or a man and that this predisposition is determined, in part, by gender stereotypes. However, results of previous work suggests that there is no clear evidence as to whether stereotypes will consistently hurt or help women candidates. But the results of this study show from regression analysis that gender, age and locality have a lot of significant towards the voting attitude.

## Implication of Findings

The study has provided evidence that locality and stereotype are strong predictors to the voting attitude of the study participants. From this, it implies that people look at the particular place a candidate comes from and this determines if they would vote for the person or not. People prefer to vote for people from known background, culture or ethnic group as the feel that they would benefit more from in and get what they call the national cake, they feel or believe that people from other ethnic or cultural background may not bring development to their areas, so whenever a candidate is not from their tribe they tend to have poor voting attitude towards voting. Also, for locality, it implies that people dwelling in urban/city areas tend to vote more than people residing in rural areas, this is basically due to education, social, psycho-social and physical exposure and they also tend to get their information and material for voting earlier than people residing in the rural areas. When the rural resides see or observed that these things are not made available to them, they tend to sit down, perceive and feel that they are neglected during voting and this will in turn lead to poor voting attitude and behaviour towards voting.

Moreso, the gender of a person is a predictor of participants choice or voting attitude as some people perceived or feels that some positions are meant for male candidates therefore when a female aspirant comes for it they tend to vote for their male counterpart like what we have in executive positions like counselor for wards Chairman for L.G. A, Governor for state and President for the country. Therefore, a lot of sensitization has to go on if this barrier and stereotype must be overcome.

## Recommendation

Based on the study, the following recommendations have been made known for further consideration such as, seminars, workshops, symposium should be made possible and held to sensitize people on the importance of voting and why people have to come out and vote appropriately for the candidate of their choice, government should make electoral reforms to make sure that everyone irrespective of their locality, age and gender be given a level play ground to context for a position or in an election. When electing officers in political parties some localities and women should not be

neglected, they should be given a fairground in other to motivate electorates to votes. Following the analysis, this study stands on the existing hypotheses analyzed and research questions to prove that locality and stereotype has a greater predicting nature on the voting attitude and behaviour. However, the study also recommends that the political arena of our action and its narratives could be changed as regards the voting attitude and behaviour of voters.

To this end, government officials and citizens alike should work in paripassu such that everybody would have an equal right to exercise his or her franchise, in this way, we will have a better nation which will select her leaders, leaders who will have the common good at heart which will in turn make our nation a well-ordered society and entity.

## Limitation of the Study

There is limited literature available reporting on studies conducted on predictor variables on the criterion variable in varying Nigerian context. Due to this limited available of literature in our context, literatures were drawn from more international context. A limitation to the present study is also the sample size (n = 206) which was small based on finance available, thus, making it difficult to generalize the results to the entire population. By increasing the sample size and conducting research at more than one nations, it may yield an increase in results and more of a willingness to participate. There was a hindrance with the distribution and collection of the measuring scales as few participants were not willing to participate in the study until they motivated (intrinsically & extrinsically).

## Conclusion

The manifestations of locality and stereotype during elections have come to stay, and this stems from the fact that voters always have a way of casting a certain tag which could be on the basis of age, gender, religion, ethnicity, tribe etc. On the candidates during election which, perhaps, determine whether or not they would vote for these candidates. On the other hand, locality wields such great commending influence on voters' attitude and behaviour as it hand picks potential candidates for political positions based on the geographical, socio-psychological, socio-political and socio-economic location of the candidates in question. However, the location and geographical background of political aspirants be it rural or urban/city has gone a long way in creating a division in the minds of voters as to whom they will choose as their leader. Along this line, the place a candidate comes from determines if voters will vote for him or her. Concurrently, it has been suggested that people residing in the urban/city areas tend to vote more than people residing in the rural areas which could be due the perceptions and feeling of neglect coming from the side of the rural areas resides plus the fact that it is believed that the urban/city areas have more access to the social, psycho-social and physical resources needed from them to participate in voting activities which thus creates a lackadaisical voting attitude and behaviour.

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