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## **Influence of Ethnic Chauvinism on the Lagos 2023 Gubernatorial Elections**

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Masters in International Studies

Supervisor:  
PhD. Clara Carvalho, Associate Professor

ISCTE – Instituto Universitario de Lisboa

September, 2024



**SOCIOLOGIA  
E POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS**

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Department of History

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study to my family who has been with me during a lifetime of learning. This study is especially dedicated to my parents, Mr & Mrs Abraham, who have continued to support and guide me.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **RESUMO**

O chauvinismo étnico continua a ser um determinante significativo da dinâmica política em sociedades etnicamente diversas, como a Nigéria. As Eleições Governamentais de Lagos de 2023, marcadas por violência, insegurança e resultados contestados, destacaram as profundas divisões e tensões políticas dentro do estado. Apesar do papel bem documentado da identidade étnica na definição dos resultados eleitorais na Nigéria, ainda existe uma lacuna na compreensão de como as estratégias de campanha baseadas em etnia e as percepções dos eleitores sobre o chauvinismo étnico impactaram as eleições de Lagos em 2023. Este estudo busca preencher essa lacuna investigando a influência da identidade étnica e do chauvinismo no comportamento de voto durante as eleições. Foi utilizada uma abordagem quantitativa de pesquisa, com dados coletados de 150 respondentes por meio de questionários estruturados. Os dados foram analisados utilizando estatísticas descritivas, como frequências, percentuais e médias, bem como estatísticas inferenciais, incluindo o teste Qui-quadrado e a Correlação de Spearman, para testar as hipóteses formuladas. Os resultados indicam que a identidade étnica desempenhou um papel dominante na influência do comportamento dos eleitores, enquanto o chauvinismo étnico, embora presente, teve um impacto menos acentuado. Isso sugere que, embora a identidade étnica continue a ser um forte preditor do comportamento eleitoral, seu efeito pode ser mitigado por campanhas baseadas em questões e reformas nas práticas eleitorais. O estudo conclui recomendando medidas destinadas a reduzir a polarização étnica no cenário político da Nigéria.

**Palavras-chave:** Chauvinismo étnico, Lagos, Eleições Governamentais

## **ABSTRACT**

Ethnic chauvinism continues to be a major determinant of political dynamics in ethnically diverse societies like Nigeria. The 2023 Lagos Gubernatorial Elections, marked by violence, insecurity, and contested outcomes, highlighted the deep-seated divisions and political tensions within the state. Despite the well-documented role of ethnic identity in shaping electoral outcomes in Nigeria, there remains a gap in understanding how ethnic-based campaign strategies and voter perceptions of ethnic chauvinism impacted the Lagos 2023 elections. This study seeks to bridge that gap by investigating the influence of ethnic identity and chauvinism on voting behaviour during the elections. A mixed-method approach was employed, with data collected from 150 respondents via structured surveys. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentages, and means, as well as inferential statistics, including Chi-square and Spearman Correlation, to test the stated hypotheses. The findings indicate that ethnic identity played a dominant role in influencing voter behaviour, while ethnic chauvinism, though present, had a less pronounced impact. This suggests that while ethnic identity remains a strong predictor of electoral behaviour, its effect can be mitigated through issue-based campaigns and reforms in electoral practices. The study concludes by recommending measures aimed at reducing ethnic polarization in Nigeria's political landscape.

**Keywords:** Ethnic chauvinism, Lagos, Gubernatorial Elections

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background to the Study**

Ethnic chauvinism is defined as an extreme belief in the idea that one's ethnic group is inherently superior over others, often expressed through discriminatory attitudes and exclusionary practices (Chaurasia, 2024). This form of chauvinism can manifest in various ways, from subtle biases to overt acts of hostility, and it contributes significantly to the strengthening of societal divisions. The roots of ethnic chauvinism are frequently linked to historical grievances, cultural myths, or political manipulation, where the dominant group may perceive threats to its status or identity, leading to efforts to marginalize or suppress other ethnic groups (Fourchard, 2015). Such dynamics are not just limited to individual attitudes but are often institutionalized within social norms, laws, and political practices, contributing to long-standing inequalities and tensions.

Ethnic chauvinism in Nigeria has been a persistent issue, heavily influencing the nation's socio-political landscape. Nigeria is among the most ethnically varied nations globally, with over 250 unique ethnic groups, including the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo, who hold significant influence (Ojo, 2020). The nation's colonial past, characterised by a divide-and-rule approach, intensified ethnic differences, resulting in a legacy of distrust and rivalry among diverse groups. This competition has often resulted in conflicts, such as the Nigerian Civil War, and continues to shape political and social dynamics today. In Nigerian politics, ethnic chauvinism is frequently exploited by political elites, who use ethnic sentiments to mobilize support and maintain power, often at the expense of national unity and the inclusion of minority groups (Adetiba, 2019). This ongoing interplay between ethnic identity and political power highlights the enduring impact of ethnic chauvinism in Nigeria's history and present-day reality. The influence of ethnic chauvinism extends beyond national politics and is particularly evident in gubernatorial elections, where ethnic and religious identities significantly shape voting behaviour and outcomes.

Gubernatorial elections in Nigeria are the electoral process through which governors are elected to lead the various states within the country. These elections are

an important aspect of Nigeria's democratic system and are influenced by several factors such as infrastructure, ethnicity, religion, violence, social media, political parties, and public opinion. Infrastructure, including road and rail networks, healthcare, and educational facilities, plays a significant role in determining electoral outcomes and candidate choice. Ethnic and religious identities also impact voting behavior, with citizens often aligning their choices based on these factors. Violence is also a common factor during elections in Nigeria, often affecting the conduct and outcomes of gubernatorial elections. The electoral dynamics in Nigeria, particularly during gubernatorial elections, are significantly influenced by the unique characteristics of each state. Lagos State, for instance, stands out due to its vibrant cultural diversity and economic importance, both of which play a critical role in shaping its electoral landscape.

Lagos State in Nigeria is known for its vibrant and diverse culture, encompassing a rich tapestry of cultures, languages, and religious beliefs (Orunbon, 2023). This diversity is a key aspect of the state's identity, influencing its economic and cultural significance. As the economic and commercial center of Nigeria, Lagos State plays a significant influence in the nation's economy, experiencing a notable rise in tourism activities (Salisu, 2023). The state has emerged as a focal point for international visitors, with over 1.4 million international tourists recorded in 2021, highlighting its increasing importance in the tourism sector. Lagos State's cultural importance is highlighted by its status as a melting pot of various ethnic groups and traditions. The state's diverse ethno-religious landscape showcases a fusion of different identities, contributing to its unique cultural fabric (Orunbon, 2023). This cultural diversity is further demonstrated through the presence of numerous heritage sites, festivals, and artistic expressions that honour the identities and traditions of the local communities (Araslı et al., 2021).

Ethnicity significantly influences politics and elections in Nigeria. Alabi (2023) discusses how identity politics, which incorporates ethnicity, religion, and regionalism, influences voter preferences and election outcomes. This phenomenon has led to the emergence of identity politics that significantly impacts electoral processes. Study on tribalism in Nigerian politics highlights the deep-seated tribal mindset within the country, emphasizing the reliance on ethnic mobilization and violence against minorities during local and state-level campaigns and elections (LeBas, 2020).

The historical context of Nigerian elections reveals a pattern of ethnic divisions and political instability rooted in ethnic politics (Aderayo & Olawunmi, 2022). Politicians manipulate ethnic identities to influence voting behavior, increasing ethnic tensions and divisions during elections (Tal, 2023). Electoral malpractices, lack of transparency in candidate selection processes, and the culture of "do or die" politics contribute to the perpetuation of ethnic chauvinism and political unrest in Nigeria (Omilusi, 2022; Aniche, 2017). The implications of ethnic chauvinism on democratic consolidation and national unity in Nigeria are profound. The commodification of politics through party funding and the challenges posed by godfatherism in governance highlights the detrimental effects of ethnic politics on the democratic state of the nation (Ayeni, 2019). Elections in Nigeria, including the Lagos 2023 Gubernatorial Elections, are characterized by violence, insecurity, and disputed outcomes, reflecting deep-rooted ethnic divisions and political tensions (Grace, 2023). Addressing ethnic chauvinism in politics necessitates comprehensive reforms to promote transparency, inclusivity, and accountability during the electoral procedure, ultimately fostering national integration and democratic development in the country. Hence, this study focuses on investigating the influence of ethnic chauvinism on Nigeria Election with focus on the recently concluded Lagos 2023 Gubernatorial Elections.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Ethnic chauvinism has long been a significant factor in shaping electoral outcomes in multiethnic societies. It often manifests in voters aligning their support with candidates who share their ethnic identity or in the deployment of ethnic-based campaign strategies that appeal to these sentiments. Such dynamics can skew the democratic process, leading to outcomes that reflect ethnic allegiances rather than the broader interests of the electorate. Ethnic chauvinism is critical when analyzing electoral outcomes, particularly in diverse settings like Lagos State, Nigeria.

In Nigeria, ethnic chauvinism has historically played a central role in the political landscape, influencing voter behavior and election outcomes. As the country continues to grapple with deep-seated ethnic divisions, these issues have become increasingly pronounced in its electoral processes. The Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections were no exception, with ethnic tensions reportedly heightened during the

campaigns. Looking ahead, there is concern that if unchecked, ethnic chauvinism could further entrench division and undermine the integrity of the electoral process, increasing political instability and hindering national unity.

Despite the recognized influence of ethnic chauvinism on electoral outcomes in Nigeria, The literature appears to be lacking in information about the precise effects of ethnic-based campaign strategies and voter perceptions of ethnic chauvinism, particularly in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. This gap is significant because understanding these dynamics is important for addressing the challenges posed by ethnic chauvinism to the democratic process. Therefore, this study seeks to assess the level to which ethnic-based campaign strategies influenced voter preferences and to explore the relationship between voters' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and their support for specific candidates in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to investigate the influence of ethnic chauvinism on voting behavior and voter preference in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. More specifically, it aims at:

1. To assess how ethnic identity influenced voting behavior in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.
2. To examine the effect of ethnic-based campaign strategies on voter preferences in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.
3. To investigate the relationship between voters' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and their support for specific candidates in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.

### **Research Questions**

The present study is expected to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent did ethnic identity determine voter choices in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections?

2. Did ethnic-based campaign strategies impact voter preferences in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections?

3. Is there a relationship between voters' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and their support for specific candidates in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections?

### **Research Hypothesis**

1. Ethnic identity does not significantly influence voting behavior in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.

2. Ethnic-based campaign strategies do not have significant impact on voter preferences in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.

3. There is no significant relationship between voters' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and their support for specific candidates in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections

### **Significance of the Study**

This study holds both theoretical and practical significance in understanding the impact of ethnic chauvinism on electoral outcomes in Nigeria, with a specific focus on the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. Theoretically, it contributes to the broader body of literature on ethnic politics by examining the intersection of ethnicity, voter behaviour, and campaign strategies. It also sheds light on how ethnic chauvinism influences voting patterns in multi-ethnic states like Lagos, offering new insights into the influence of ethnic identification on the formation of political preferences. This study's findings will be helpful in government, Independent electoral bodies (INEC), policymakers, political analysts, and civil society seeking to advance inclusive government and lessen the adverse consequences of ethnic-based politics. By addressing the influence of ethnic chauvinism on the democratic process, the study provides a foundation for electoral reforms aimed at reducing ethnic tensions, fostering national unity, and ensuring more transparent and inclusive elections in Nigeria.

## **Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study is restricted to the analysis of the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections and the role of ethnic chauvinism in shaping voter behavior and campaign strategies. The study focuses specifically on Lagos State due to its cultural and ethnic diversity and its economic and political importance in Nigeria. The research investigates how ethnic identity and ethnic-based campaigns influenced voter preferences, while also examining the perceptions of ethnic chauvinism among voters. The study does not cover other states or national elections in Nigeria, although the findings may provide insights applicable to broader political contexts within the country.

## **Thesis Organization**

This thesis is structured into five parts. The introduction presents the study, including the background, problem statement, objectives, research questions, hypotheses, and significance of the analysis. Chapter One reviews relevant literature on ethnic chauvinism, ethnic politics, and electoral behavior, and presents the theoretical framework guiding the research. Chapter Two outlines the research methodology, detailing the data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analytical tools used in the study. Chapter Three presents the study's findings, analyzing the data gathered from the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. Finally, Chapter Four offers conclusions, policy recommendations, and suggestions for future research, based on the study's findings.

## **CHAPTER ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1.1 The Concept of Ethnic Chauvinism**

Ethnic chauvinism, characterized by an exaggerated belief in a particular ethnic group's superiority over others, is a significant challenge in multi-ethnic societies like Nigeria. This phenomenon, rooted in historical grievances and often exploited for political purposes, leads to discriminatory attitudes and exclusionary practices that undermine social cohesion and national integration (Fourchard, 2015). Studies have shown that ethnic chauvinism is associated with ethno-nationalist grievances, where Groups separated from central state institutions are more liable to participate in civil conflict (Wucherpennig et al., 2015). Moreover, ethnic discrimination is worsened by racial attitudes and the conviction that social structures ought to primarily advantage one's own ethnic group.

#### **1.1.1 Ethnicity**

Ethnicity is the social construct used to group people according to common cultural characteristics like language, religion, customs, language, and historical experience. It encompasses a sense of belonging and identity often rooted in a common ancestry or geographic origin (Huang & Stormshak, 2011). Unlike race, which primarily based on physical characteristics, ethnicity is more about cultural and social affiliations. These affiliations can shape an individual's worldview, values, and interactions with others. Ethnicity plays a crucial role in forming group identities and can influence social dynamics, especially in multicultural societies where multiple ethnic groups coexist (Huang & Stormshak, 2011).

The concept of ethnicity is fluid and can evolve over time as cultures interact and adapt. Ethnic identities can be passed down through generations, but are not fixed; they can be redefined or reinterpreted depending on social, political, and economic circumstances (Huang & Stormshak, 2011). Ethnicity can also be instrumental in how individuals or groups mobilize for social or political causes. It often serves as a basis for solidarity, where individuals within the same ethnic group support one another in the face of external challenges or perceived threats from other groups (Huang & Stormshak, 2011).

However, a cause of separation and strife is ethnicity especially when ethnic identities are politicized (Ford & Harawa, 2010). In many societies, ethnic differences have been manipulated by political elites to create or exacerbate social tensions, leading to discrimination, marginalization, and sometimes even violence (Ford & Harawa, 2010).

Studies has shown that ethnic identity formation is a dynamic process influenced by various factors, including familial socialization, social interactions, and cultural experiences (Hughes et al., 2006). Familial ethnic socialization, particularly during adolescence, plays a significant role in shaping ethnic identity, impacting aspects such as self-esteem, coping with discrimination, and overall psychosocial well-being (Nava et al., 2022).

### **1.1.2 Ethnic Groups**

Ethnic groups are communities of people with a common cultural background, often characterized by similarities in language, religion, traditions, and historical experiences. These groups typically have a strong sense of identity and belonging, distinguishing them from other groups within a society (Ashebir, 2020). The formation of ethnic groups is often linked to shared ancestry or geographic origins. Still, they can also arise from social or political circumstances that bring people together based on shared cultural attributes. In many parts of the world, ethnic groups play a significant role in shaping social structures and relationships (Ashebir, 2020).

The size and influence of ethnic groups can vary widely, from small, localized communities to large, transnational populations. Within a given society, ethnic groups may occupy different social, economic, or political positions, sometimes leading to hierarchies or inequalities between groups. These dynamics can be influenced by historical factors, such as colonialism or migration, as well as contemporary issues like economic competition or political power struggles. Ethnic groups often serve as a basis for social organization, providing members with a sense of identity, community, and support (Hughes et al., 2006).

Ethnic groups can be cohesive and united in their cultural practices and beliefs, but can also be diverse and internally divided. Class, gender, or geographic location can create variations within an ethnic group, leading to different experiences and perspectives among its members (Nava et al., 2022). Despite these differences, ethnic

groups often maintain a strong sense of solidarity, when facing external threats or discrimination. This solidarity can manifest in various ways, from social networks and cultural preservation efforts to political mobilization and advocacy (Huang & Stormshak, 2011).

The relationships between ethnic groups within a society can range from peaceful coexistence and cooperation to tension and conflict. When ethnic identities become a focal point for competition over resources, political power, or social status, it can lead to inter-ethnic tensions or even violence. Understanding the complexities of ethnic groups and their interactions is essential for addressing issues of social justice, equality, and national integration in multi-ethnic societies (Lendák-Kabók, 2024).

### **1.1.3 Ethnic Chauvinism**

Ethnic chauvinism refers to an extreme and irrational belief in the superiority of a particular group over others (Chaurasia, 2024). This form of chauvinism is often characterized by a sense of pride that borders on arrogance, where individuals or groups view their ethnicity as inherently superior and dismiss or denigrate other ethnic groups. Ethnic chauvinism can show out as discriminating attitudes, exclusive policies, and even violent behaviours against those who are perceived as different. It is a divisive force that can exacerbate social tensions and undermine efforts at fostering inclusivity and social cohesion (Chaurasia, 2024).

The roots of ethnic chauvinism can often be traced to historical grievances, cultural myths, or political manipulation. In many cases, ethnic chauvinism is fueled by a perceived threat to the status or identity of the dominant group, leading to efforts to marginalize or suppress other ethnic groups (Fourchard, 2015). This can result in social and political policies that discriminate against minority groups, limit their access to resources, or exclude them from meaningful participation in public life. Ethnic chauvinism is not just a matter of individual attitudes but is often institutionalized in social norms, laws, and political practices (Fourchard, 2015).

The impact of ethnic chauvinism is far-reaching, contributing to social division, conflict, and even large-scale violence. In multi-ethnic societies, ethnic chauvinism can hinder national integration and create an environment of distrust and hostility between

different groups (Chaurasia, 2024). It can also perpetuate cycles of discrimination and retaliation, making it difficult to achieve lasting peace and social harmony. Combating ethnic chauvinism requires not only addressing the attitudes and beliefs of individuals but also challenging the structures and systems that perpetuate inequality and exclusion based on ethnicity (Chaurasia, 2024).

Research has shown that ethnic diversity can affect social cohesion, with some studies indicating that diversity may undermine social solidarity (Letki, 2008). However, social cohesiveness is a complex idea that calls for a careful examination of the link between diversity and social capital (Laurence, 2009). Understanding the impact of ethnic variation on social cohesiveness must consider factors such as in-group trust, group threat, and social disorganization (Meer & Tolsma, 2014). Additionally, political leadership and policies that promote diversity, equality, and justice are essential for addressing the root causes of ethnic chauvinism and building a more cohesive and harmonious society.

#### **1.1.4 Ethnic Chauvinism in Nigeria**

Ethnic chauvinism in Nigeria is a significant social and political issue that has shaped the country's history and continues to influence its present-day dynamics. Nigeria is a highly diverse nation, It is inhabited by more than 250 ethnic groups, the three predominant being the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo (Ojo, 2020). The country's colonial history, combined with its complex ethnic landscape, has contributed to the emergence of ethnic chauvinism, where different groups compete for political power, economic resources, and social influence. This competition has often led to tensions, conflicts, and a deep sense of mistrust between various ethnic groups (Ojo, 2020).

Historically, ethnic chauvinism in the origins of Nigeria can be traced to the colonial era when the British employed a divide-and-rule strategy, increasing ethnic divisions to maintain control. The artificial borders created during colonial rule grouped diverse ethnic groups into a single political entity, setting the stage for post-independence conflicts. These divisions were further entrenched by the regionalization policies of the 1950s, which favored the major ethnic groups and marginalized smaller ones. The civil war (1967-1970), which pitted the Igbo-dominated Eastern Region

against the rest of the country, is one of the most significant manifestations of ethnic chauvinism in Nigeria's history (Adetiba, 2019).

In Nigerian politics, ethnic chauvinism has often been a tool used by political elites to mobilize support and gain power. For instance, during election periods, politicians frequently appeal to ethnic sentiments, promising to advance the interests of their ethnic group if elected. This has led to a political landscape where loyalty to one's ethnic group often trumps national unity, leading to the exclusion of minority groups and the marginalization of regions perceived as politically insignificant. The "zoning" arrangement in Nigeria's political system, intended to rotate key political offices among different regions, is a direct response to the challenges posed by ethnic chauvinism but has also reinforced ethnic divisions (Adetiba, 2019).

Examples of ethnic chauvinism in Nigerian politics are numerous, from the Ijaw and other minority populations' marginalisation in the Niger Delta, leading to militancy and agitation, to the persistent North-South divide that influences political alignments and decision-making. Ethnic chauvinism also manifests in conflicts such as the herder-farmer clashes, where ethnic identities are politicized, leading to violence and displacement. Addressing ethnic chauvinism in Nigeria requires a multi-faceted approach, including promoting inclusive governance, equitable resource distribution, and fostering a national identity that transcends ethnic lines (Ojo, 2020).

### **1.2.1 Ethnic Politics in Nigeria**

Political party politics and the founding of political parties started ethnic politics in Nigeria. The electoral concept the Clifford Constitution of 1922 introduced—which limited elective representation to just Lagos and Calabar—made this possible. Herbert Macaulay established the first political party, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), largely a Lagos issue in response to the Clifford constitution. Other political groups that arose following this were so grounded in ethnicity. Oladiran (2013, p. 699) notes that during this time the seed of ethnic politics was sowed, first in the First Republic then extending to later republics. Later in 1934, the National Youth Movement (NYM) only challenged NNDP's hegemony in Lagos politics (Ataide & Enebong 2020).

Ethnic implications dominated pre-independence Nigerian party politics as political parties were founded. Prominent pre-independence parties and the First Republic emerged from national ethnic and socio-cultural groups. Ataide and Enebong (2020) noted that the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon (later renamed National Convention of Nigeria Citizens – NCNC) was the first political party starting with a national perspective. Though the NCNC began with a national orientation and nationalist dedication, an ethnic view of it surfaced. According to Crawford (1993), the flamboyant and controversial nature of NCNC leader Nnamdi Azikiwe explained the sharp change in the national goal of the organization. Responding to the alleged threat of Ibo dominance, Chief Obafemi Awolowo founded the Action Group (AG) in 1951. Though the party was first meant to be national, its Yoruba roots will not let it escape. The Action Group, which attracted most of its members and support from the western region, soon revealed its ethnic identity since its birth coincided with a pan-Yoruba cultural association, the Egbe Omo Oduduwa (the association of the descendants of Oduduwa, the legendary ancestors of the Yoruba).

For the same concern of ethnic dominance, Sir Ahmadu Bello also founded the Northern People's Congress (NPC). This party sprang from a Hausa socio-cultural group known as Jamiyar Mutanen Arewa (association of the northern people). It therefore attracted most of its members from the northern region of the nation. All three ethnic groups' dread produced the three parties, which were essentially ethnic in their inception, makeup, and interest serving nature. The Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa/Fulani competed aggressively for control of the center out of this ethnic politics of the First Republic. Other groups such the United National Independence Party (UNIP), the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) headed by Aminu Kano, the Bornu Youth Movement (BYM), and the Dynamic Party (DP) followed this pattern of ethnic political party allegiance. Drawing members from their ethnic roots, all these political groups supported ethnic courses. Especially, Arthur Richard's constitution sped up ethnic politics in Nigeria and increased the mutual mistrust among the several ethnic groups there (Albert, 1998). Nigerians from Northern and Southern parts never had the chance to mingle as one people until 1947. But the acceptance of the regionalism concept included in the Richards Constitution of 1946 (Oladiran 2013) resulted in the three regions—Western, Eastern, and Northern—as well as significant political parties associating with the corresponding ethnic groupings. Consequently, the acrimony

between political parties and the tensions and conflict resulting from ethnic politics caused law and order to collapse and the early end of the first effort at democracy.

Second Republic politics were not different from those of the past. The same politics of acrimony and ethnic biases that haunted First Republic politics defined her elections. The then military government's attempts to make sure political parties refrained from copying those of the First Republic never paid off (Isiaq, Adebisi, & Bakare, 2018). Five political parties registered to challenge the Second Republic general elections over this period: the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Nigerian People's Party (NPP), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), People's Redemption Party (PRP), and Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP). Arguing that their perspective and philosophy were largely the same as those of the First Republic, (Adamolekun 1983) characterized these parties as "old wines in new bottles". Therefore, ethnic connection clearly affected the formation and leadership of these parties. This does not mean, however, that the members of the Second Republic did not appreciate membership from other ethnic groups outside their territory; rather, such memberships were weak and negligible (Salawu and Hassan, 2011).

Under greatly influenced by the dominant military government, the Third Republic was a brief and finally failing experiment in Nigerian politics and democracy. Only two political parties—the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC)—were let to take part at this time. This limitation lessened the possibility for any political party to dominate along ethnic lines, therefore lessening the influence of ethnic politics in the voting process. Still, this did not totally remove the impact of racial chauvinism and other ethnic factors. M.K.O. Abiola first used ethnic appeals in his campaign, Opayinka (2023) pointed out, but he changed his approach to philanthropy after realizing that ethnic politics was less successful than expected. Widely thought to have been won by M.K.O. Abiola, the annulment of the June 12 presidential election finally brought the Third Republic to fall and ethnicism back into prominence in Nigeria. According to Salawu and Hassan (2011), the experience of the aborted Third Republic revealed a negative correlation between ethnicism and good government. This was clear as Nigerians, driven by M.K.O. Abiola's promise of good government, voted for him all around despite religious and ethnic divisions.

Ethnic manipulation has obviously shaped the political scene of the present Fourth Republic. Three main political parties engaged in the 1999 general elections

were the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the Alliance for Democracy (AD), and the All Peoples Party (APP). While the AD was strongly linked with the Yoruba, frequently considered as a rebirth of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), the Hausa-Fulani ethnic community supported the APP mostly. The AD had especially great impact in the southwestern states, as it guaranteed all of the governorships. By contrast, the PDP won seats in all six of the geopolitical zones and acquired a national mandate. The 2011 presidential contest underlined even more how much ethnicity shapes voting results. Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP, Mohammadu Buhari of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), Nuhu Ribadu of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), and Shekarau of the All Nigerian People's Party (ANPP) were the major candidates in this election. With exception of Borno State, Acting President Goodluck Jonathan came out triumphant, but his popularity was much less in the northern parts of the nation.

Moreover, the institutionalization of ethnic politics in modern Nigeria is best shown by the inclusion of "zoning" in political appointments and elections, where leadership roles are rotated among the six geo-political zones of the nation meant to promote national unity and fair representation (Akpakpan, & Abeki, 2023). After two terms of stay in the South since 1999, the rotating pattern brought the presidency back to the North. Other national electoral offices engaged in the rotation schedule are the Vice President, Senate President and Deputy Senate President, Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives. Every one of the offices is occupied by an elected official from one of the six geo-political zones of the nation; none of the areas concurrently enjoy two of the offices (Salawu & Hassan, 2011). This cycle had very clear consequences during the 2011 election season when Goodluck Jonathan announced his decision to run for the presidential fight. The Northerners considered this as a breach of the agreement as Ya'Adua's death prevented him from serving his term whole. This led to strong resistance to Goodluck Jonathan's presidential aspiration (Isiaq, Adebisi, & Bakare, 2018).

Consequently, the ethnic tensions, mediated and exacerbated by political parties since the First Republic, have profoundly shaped the nation's ethnic dynamics and significantly contributed to entrenched prejudices surrounding ethnicity.

### **1.2.2 Causes of Ethnic Chauvinism in Nigeria Politics**

Ethnic chauvinism in Nigerian politics is deeply rooted in historical, socio-political, and economic factors. The colonial legacy of British rule significantly impacted the country's political landscape, favoring major ethnic groups like the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo over smaller ethnic groups, leading to a foundation of inequality (Tony, 2024). This unequal treatment during colonial times entrenched ethnic identities as political tools, a practice that persisted post-independence, shaping the dynamics of ethnic politics in Nigeria (Tony, 2024).

Also, ethnic chauvinism in Nigeria politics is closely tied to the country's federal structure and the competition for control over natural resources, particularly oil (Langer, 2024). The federal system in Nigeria provides a platform for different ethnic groups to compete for political power and influence, with politicians frequently leveraging ethnic affiliations to mobilize support and maintain their hold on power (Langer, 2024). This competition for resources and political dominance along ethnic lines has perpetuated a cycle of ethnic chauvinism, where loyalty to one's ethnic group takes precedence over national unity, resulting in a fragmented political landscape (Langer, 2024).

Moreover, Socioeconomic disparities among different ethnic groups in Nigeria play a significant role in fueling ethnic chauvinism. Unequal access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and employment opportunities intensifies feelings of marginalization and fosters resentment among marginalized ethnic groups (Archibong, 2018). This sense of exclusion drives these groups to rally around their ethnic identities to demand more equitable access to resources and opportunities, perpetuating ethnic divisions and conflicts (Archibong, Moerenhout, & Osabuohien, 2022). The socio-economic gaps between ethnic groups create fertile ground for ethnic tensions and chauvinism as groups seek to address their grievances through ethnic solidarity (Ezenna, 2021).

Lastly, weak institutions and poor governance further exacerbate ethnic chauvinism in Nigerian politics. The failure of state institutions to provide essential services and ensure justice diminishes public trust in the government, prompting many Nigerians to rely on their ethnic groups for security and support (Samuel and Deinibiteim, 2023). This lack of trust in state institutions creates an environment where

politicians exploit ethnic loyalties to gain power, perpetuating ethnic divisions and undermining national unity (Samuel and Deinibiteim, 2023). The absence of a robust political culture that fosters inclusivity and national unity allows ethnic chauvinism to flourish, impeding the country's progress towards broader democratic and developmental objectives (Samuel and Deinibiteim, 2023).

### **1.2.3 The 2023 Lagos State Gubernatorial Elections**

The 2023 Lagos State gubernatorial election, initially scheduled for March 11, 2023, took place on March 18, 2023, alongside elections for the Lagos State House of Assembly and 27 other gubernatorial races across Nigeria. This election followed the presidential and National Assembly elections held three weeks earlier. Incumbent Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu of the All-Progressives Congress (APC) sought re-election after being renominated by his party in a primary held on May 26, 2022, where he ran unopposed. Meanwhile, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) selected Abdul-Azeez Olajide Adediran (Jandor) as their candidate, and Gbadebo Rhodes-Vivour, after withdrawing from the PDP primary, emerged as the Labour Party (LP) nominee following a rerun primary in August.

While Sanwo-Olu and Adediran were initially viewed as the main contenders, the rapid rise of the Labour Party, fueled by Peter Obi's presidential campaign, posed an unexpected challenge. However, the LP faced internal conflict as its original nominee, Ifagbemi Awamaridi, refused to concede to Rhodes-Vivour, leading to a party crisis. This dispute was eventually resolved, allowing Rhodes-Vivour to officially represent the party, further boosting his chances given the growing popularity of the Labour Party (Orunbon, 2023).

In February 2023, polling data from Stears Business showed Sanwo-Olu leading in the gubernatorial race, although a significant portion of voters remained undecided. Around the same time, incidents of violence targeting LP supporters raised concerns, especially following attacks before an Obi rally in Lagos. The governor also faced criticism for his administration's alleged misuse of state resources and agencies, as well as accusations of ethnic-based campaigning against Rhodes-Vivour, due to his Igbo heritage.

The presidential election on February 25, 2023, saw Peter Obi winning Lagos State with 45.8% of the vote, defeating the APC's Bola Tinubu in his home state. This result intensified focus on the gubernatorial election, with many seeing it as a potential shift in the political landscape of Lagos. Sanwo-Olu, who was already under pressure following the upset, faced further scrutiny for his campaign strategies, which included vote-buying and ethnic tension.

Despite these challenges, the APC candidate, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, secured a victory in the March 18 gubernatorial election with 762,134 votes. Gbadebo Rhodes-Vivour of the Labour Party came in second with 312,329 votes, while Abdul-Azeez Olajide Adediran of the PDP finished in third with 62,449 votes. The total vote count for all the parties that participated in the 2023 Lagos State governorship election was 1,182,620. This includes votes for all 16 political parties, with the largest contributions coming from the All Progressives Congress (APC), Labour Party (LP), and People's Democratic Party (PDP) (Orunbon, 2023).

#### **1.2.4 Role of Ethnic Chauvinism in Lagos Elections**

Ethnic chauvinism has played a notable role in shaping electoral dynamics in Lagos State, One of Nigeria's main centers for politics and economy. The city's diverse population, comprising various ethnic groups such as the Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa, has witnessed elections where ethnic identities significantly influenced voting behavior. Lagos provides a significant case study for investigating the interaction between ethnic chauvinism and electoral outcomes, as the state's socio-demographic composition reflects a diverse representation of people from across Nigeria. This diversity increases the likelihood that ethnic factors play a central role in its electoral processes. According to Ajisebiyawo (2014), electoral outcomes in Lagos have often mirrored the ethnic composition of the electorate, with political parties and candidates leveraging ethnic loyalties to secure votes. This strategy is particularly effective in regions where ethnic groups are geographically concentrated, allowing candidates to appeal directly to the cultural and social affinities of a particular ethnic community. Consequently, political campaigns in Lagos frequently emphasize ethnic identity, often at the expense of policy-driven discourse, underscoring the significant impact of ethnic chauvinism on the electoral landscape of the state.

The Lagos 2023 presidential and Gubernatorial elections were marred by intimidation from members of a certain ethnic group who considered themselves superior to the other ethnic groups. Ethnic tensions and their resultant political violence significantly impacted electoral participation and threatened democratic stability during the 2023 presidential and gubernatorial elections. Cases of violence and intimidation directed against minority ethnic group voters have occasionally occurred among those who reside in Lagos state. The severity of this violence, deeply rooted in ethnic divisions, was alarming (Etim, 2023). Etim (2023) recounted an incident where members of dominant ethnic groups targeted and assaulted individuals from minority groups, as well as those who were suspected of belonging to these groups based on their appearance. He likened this incident to the persecution of Jews in Germany during the 1930s, highlighting its disturbing parallels.

Such events severely impact the country's democratic process, which should uphold human rights and the rule of law. Voter intimidation caused many Lagos State electorates to abstain from voting. Those who defied intimidation were physically attacked or maimed. Jennifer Seifegha is a perfect example since she suffered eye injuries during the 2023 Lagos State gubernatorial elections. Political thugs attacked Seifegha in Nuru/Oniwo Ward, Polling Unit 065, Surulere when she was queuing to cast a ballot. Odunsi (2023) reports that she sustained a significant eye injury after being hit by a bottle. Seifegha's case highlights the reported violence during Nigeria's 2023 elections. Numerous instances of ethnic-motivated violence targeting voters and polling stations have been reported

From the post-2023 presidential and gubernatorial elections, Osmound and Anaukwu (2024) noted that the consequences of ethnic politics grew complicated and multifarious. They maintained that although ethnicity can be a strong motivator for voter mobilization and election participation, it also has the ability to sow division and conflict. These events give people questions regarding the possible use of ethnicity to compromise the democratic process. The effective merging of democratic institutions and practices in Lagos State after the 2023 elections would mostly rely on the management of ethnicity. If used to inspire political involvement, ethnicity might help democracy flourish. On the other hand, if it is taken advantage of to split and threaten voters, the integrity of the democratic process runs the danger of being compromised (Osmound & Anaukwu, 2024).

### 1.2.5 Ethnic Chauvinism and Voting Behaviour

Ethnicity has consistently been recognised as a significant factor influencing individuals' electoral behaviour, shaping their voting patterns and decisions. Isiaq, Adebiyi, and Bakare (2018) highlighted that ethnicity and race, as integral aspects of individual identity, substantially impact political attitudes and behaviour, particularly among minority groups more likely to identify based on ethnicity than majority groups. Consequently, ethnic chauvinism—characterised by an excessive and prejudiced allegiance to one's ethnic group—can profoundly affect voter behaviour in multicultural societies. This phenomenon often results in voters prioritizing ethnic group interests over broader societal concerns, leading to polarized electoral outcomes. As political candidates and parties increasingly recognize and leverage these ethnic loyalties, the electorate's choices shift from policy-based decisions to identity-based preferences.

In a democratic system, one of the primary mechanisms through which citizens engage in governance is by voting in elections. This act represents a fundamental political tool enabling individuals to influence governmental responsiveness to their needs. Rolfe and Chan (2017) noted that voting serves as the principal method of political participation and that the focused study of voting behaviour is one of the most advanced areas within political science. Voting behaviour thus, pertains to the factors influencing how specific groups of individuals cast their votes for particular political parties or candidates during elections (Çinar, 2023). Additionally, it encompasses the analysis of electoral behaviour, explaining both the decision-making processes of public officials and the reasons behind voters' choices of candidates.

The impact of ethnic chauvinism on voter behaviour is often evident in the way political campaigns are structured. In many cases, candidates and political parties deliberately appeal to ethnic identities, using rhetoric that emphasises ethnic solidarity and historical grievances to mobilise support. This form of identity politics can lead to the entrenchment of ethnic divisions, as voters are encouraged to see elections not as a contest between competing policy platforms but as a struggle between ethnic groups. The consequence is a political landscape where elections become zero-sum games, with each ethnic group vying for dominance or survival. Studies have shown that in such contexts, voters are more likely to cast their ballots based on ethnic affiliation rather than the candidates' qualifications or policy positions (Horowitz, 1985; Chandra, 2004).

The effects of ethnic chauvinism on voter behaviour are not limited to the individual level but extend to the broader political system. In societies where ethnic identities are deeply entrenched, electoral outcomes often reflect and reinforce existing ethnic hierarchies. This can result in the marginalisation of minority groups, as the dominant ethnic group consolidates power through the electoral process. The marginalisation, in turn, fuels further ethnic chauvinism, creating a vicious cycle of exclusion and resentment (Posner, 2005). In extreme cases, this dynamic can lead to electoral violence, as excluded groups resort to extra-legal means to assert their political rights (Fearon & Laitin, 2000). Studies show that when ethnic identities are politically salient, voters are more likely to participate in elections, driven by a sense of ethnic solidarity and the belief that their vote will contribute to the advancement of their ethnic group's position within the political system (Horowitz, 1985; Kasara & Suryanarayan, 2015). However, in cases where ethnic minorities feel marginalised or excluded from the political process, they may abstain from voting altogether, perceiving the electoral system as biased against their interests. This can result in lower voter turnout among these groups, further entrenching their marginalisation. (Collier & Vicente, 2014).

Additionally, ethnic chauvinism may influence voters' candidate choice and decision-making. The decision to vote along ethnic lines is often reinforced by political rhetoric that emphasises ethnic identity and historical narratives of marginalisation or conflict. Candidates who appeal to ethnic chauvinism may highlight past grievances or fears of exclusion to garner support from their ethnic group, framing the election as a battleground for ethnic survival. Posner (2005) asserts that such a strategy not only solidifies the candidate's ethnic base but also discourages voters from considering candidates from other ethnic groups, regardless of their qualifications or policies. As a result, electoral competition becomes more about ethnic loyalty than substantive issues, diminishing the quality of democratic decision-making.

In particular areas with notable ethnic concentrations, ethnic identification has been a potent weapon for motivating voters across years of Nigerian history (Adebanwi, 2021). Such mobilization techniques might affect political power distribution, candidate choosing, and voting behavior. For instance, Isiaq, Adebisi, and Bakare (2018) observed the significant role of ethnic identity in shaping the 2015 presidential electoral outcomes. With candidates and parties tailoring their campaigns to appeal to

specific ethnic groups, From their respective geo-political zones, the two main presidential contenders obtained more bloc votes than others. Such strategic voting based on ethnic loyalty often overshadows policy debates, leading to electoral results that reflect ethnic affiliations more than political platforms. This alignment between ethnic identity and voting behaviour highlights the power of ethnic chauvinism in influencing election outcomes, making it a crucial factor in political analysis.

### **1.3 Theoretical Framework**

This study investigates the role of ethnic chauvinism in the Lagos election through the lens of the theory of ethnocentrism and the social identity perspective. The theory of ethnocentrism first introduced by William Graham Sumner, a Yale University Professor of Political and Social Science, in 1906 in his book *Folkways*, describes it as a view by "... which one's group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled and rated in reference to it." (Sumner, 1906, p. 13). Sumner's definition highlights the belief in the unique value and inherent superiority of one's ethnic group, which often leads to prejudice, tribalism, and ethnic conflicts. In the context of elections, this attitude can manifest as a strong desire to exclude outsiders from accessing scarce resources, such as political power.

Recent research by Bizumic et al. (2007; 2008; 2009; 2010) suggests a reconceptualization of ethnocentrism as a profound sense of ethnic group self-importance and self-centeredness, expressed in both intergroup and intragroup contexts. Intergroup ethnocentrism involves a preference for one's ethnic ingroup over outgroups, belief in ingroup superiority, a desire for ethnic purity, and the exploitation of outgroups to benefit the ingroup. In elections, these intergroup dynamics often translate into ethnic chauvinism, where voters are driven by the belief that their ethnic group should dominate political power. This belief fuels electoral strategies that prioritize the needs and interests of the ingroup, often at the expense of fair competition and inclusivity

Intragroup expressions of ethnocentrism, on the other hand, emphasize the need for group cohesion and devotion within the ethnic group. In the political scene, this can lead to a unified voting bloc that supports candidates who are perceived as protectors of the group's interests. This intragroup cohesion often strengthens ethnic chauvinism, as it reinforces the idea that the group's success in elections is paramount,

overshadowing broader societal concerns. These expressions provide a premise for exploring how ethnic chauvinism influenced by both intergroup and intragroup ethnocentrism played a crucial role in the Lagos election. Voters' preference for candidates from their ethnic ingroup, belief in the superiority of their group's right to political power, and desire to maintain ethnic purity can shape the electoral landscape.

The Social Identity Perspective is highly relevant in understanding ethnic chauvinism within the context of politics and elections. This perspective draws on two key theories: Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization Theory. Social Identity Theory primarily addresses intergroup ethnocentrism, while Self-Categorization Theory focuses on intragroup ethnocentrism. In the realm of politics, when individuals identify themselves as members of a specific ethnic group, their perception of the importance of their ethnic group becomes heightened. This identification is driven by a motivation for self-aggrandizement, where the success or dominance of their ethnic group is seen as a personal achievement. This is especially evident during elections, where ethnic identity can strongly influence voting behavior and political allegiances. People are likely to favour candidates and policies that they believe will benefit their ethnic group, often to the detriment of outgroups.

Moreover, the process of categorization, which leads to depersonalization, further intensifies ethnic chauvinism within the group. Depersonalization shifts focus from individual interests to the interests of the group as a whole, thereby enhancing ingroup cohesion. As noted by Turner (1999), this depersonalization transforms personal self-interest into a collective group interest, a crucial aspect of ethnic chauvinism in politics. In this way, ethnic groups may become more cohesive and united in their political actions, driven by a collective desire to see their group prevail in the political arena. This dynamic can significantly impact electoral outcomes, as ethnic groups mobilize to support candidates who they perceive as champions of their group's interests, sometimes leading to heightened tensions between different ethnic communities within a political system.

#### **1.4 Empirical Review**

Akinwande (2023) examines the impact of ethnic chauvinism on religious crises and its implications for democratic stability in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. Utilizing a

qualitative methodology, the study employs social conflict group theory and historical design, with data gathered through content analysis of documents, journals, reports, and publications from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Community Stakeholders, and Non-State Actors (NSAs). The findings reveal that ethnic and religious divides, particularly the "Emilokan Syndrome" (a sense of entitlement based on ethnicity or religion), continue to hinder democratic stability in Nigeria. The study concludes that to stabilize democracy, Nigeria must avoid using religious affiliation in electioneering campaigns and in the distribution of government positions, as these practices exacerbate ethnic and religious tensions.

The study by William (2023) titled *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria: An Ethical Perspective* explores how ethnicity shapes and influences politics in Nigeria, a country characterized by a volatile mix of cultures and ethnic groups. The paper examines the phenomenon of ethnic politics, which has led to chronic ethnic fractionalization, resulting in high levels of political violence and challenges that undermine Nigeria's democratic ethos. Ikre attributes the prominence of ethnic politics in Nigeria to the colonial era, during which the three major ethnic groups were favored by colonial powers in the distribution of socio-political and economic resources. This historical legacy has continued to shape the political landscape, leading to ongoing conflicts and tensions. The study calls for an ethical analysis of ethnic politics and emphasizes the need for ethical considerations to play a central role in Nigerian politics to address these deep-rooted issues.

The study by Aghogho and Ugo (2020) investigates the complex interplay between ethnicity, religion, and politics and their effects on national development. Conducted in Delta State, the research employed a descriptive method with data collected from 400 respondents across 25 Local Government Areas using structured questionnaires. Non-probabilistic sampling techniques, including purposeful and convenience sampling, were utilized. The study's findings, derived from correlation and regression analysis, reveal that ethnicity, religion, and politics significantly and negatively impact Nigeria's national development. Emoghene concludes that Nigeria requires purposeful leadership with a vision focused on prioritizing the collective welfare of all citizens, irrespective of ethnic origin, to overcome the challenges posed by ethnic chauvinism and the misuse of political power. The study emphasizes the need

for leaders who view political power not as an end but as a means to serve the nation inclusively.

With a view toward the South-South geopolitical zone, Gbosien (2017) examines how ethnic politics affect electoral violence in Nigeria. Under a cross-sectional research design, 600 respondents' data were gathered and examined with statistical instruments including basic percentages, correlation, and linear regression with SPSS version 23. The results expose a clear link in the South-South zone between ethnic politics and electoral violence, indicating that ethnic politics significantly contributes to electoral violence in the region. Sokoh concludes that ethnic politics plays a critical role in fueling electoral violence in Nigeria and recommends that political leaders prioritize the collective interests of all citizens, rather than engaging in ethnic chauvinism, to reduce electoral violence and promote true democracy in the country.

The study by Adekunle and Babatunde (2014) titled *Power Politics, Ethnic Chauvinism and Succession Crisis: The Aftermath of 2011 Elections and The Fear of 2015 Elections in Nigeria* explores the complex interplay between power politics, ethnic chauvinism, and succession crises in Nigeria, particularly in the context of the country's elections. Analyzing the patterns since the start of the democratic era in 1999, the paper highlights how politically motivated violence before, during, and after elections has become a defining feature of the power struggles among ethno-political elites. This situation has escalated security risks, including the rise of a primordial culture over civic culture, political assassinations, arms stockpiling, extortion, fraud, and election rigging. The authors express concern that if these trends continue, Nigeria's fragile democracy could be at risk of collapse, potentially leading to a return to military dictatorship or even the country's breakup by the 2015 general elections.

The empirical review highlights how ethnic chauvinism has persistently destabilized Nigeria's political landscape, exacerbating political violence, electoral malpractices, and national disunity. The studies by Akinwande (2023), William (2023), Aghogho (2020), Gbosien (2017), and Adekunle & Babatunde (2014) collectively illustrate that ethnic chauvinism, intertwined with religious biases and power struggles, remains a significant challenge. Akinwande's exploration of the "Emilokan Syndrome" and William's examination of colonial legacies underscore the deep-rooted nature of

these issues. When viewed in the context of the 2023 Lagos gubernatorial election, these findings suggest that ethnic chauvinism significantly influenced electoral outcomes, reflecting broader national trends. This election underscores the ongoing threat ethnic divisions pose to Nigeria's democratic stability, emphasizing the need to address these challenges to secure the country's future.

### **1.5 Summary**

This chapter provided a critical review of the existing literature on ethnicity, ethnic groups, and ethnic chauvinism. It traced the emergence and development of ethnic politics in Nigeria, from the First Republic to the contemporary democratic era, highlighting the significant role ethnicity has played in shaping Nigerian politics. The chapter also explored the underlying causes of ethnic chauvinism and its impact on Nigerian politics. Additionally, it examined how ethnic chauvinism manifested during the 2023 Lagos gubernatorial elections and its influence on voter behaviour. The chapter concluded by outlining the theoretical framework employed to investigate ethnic chauvinism in this study and presenting empirical research that has explored related issues.

## CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter details the research methodology employed in the present study, which examines the influence of ethnic chauvinism on the 2023 Gubernatorial Elections in Lagos. It provides a structured research framework by outlining the systematic techniques utilized, including the philosophical approach, research strategy, and time horizon. Additionally, this chapter offers an overview of the instruments used to collect data from study participants and describes the methods used to analyze the data collected.

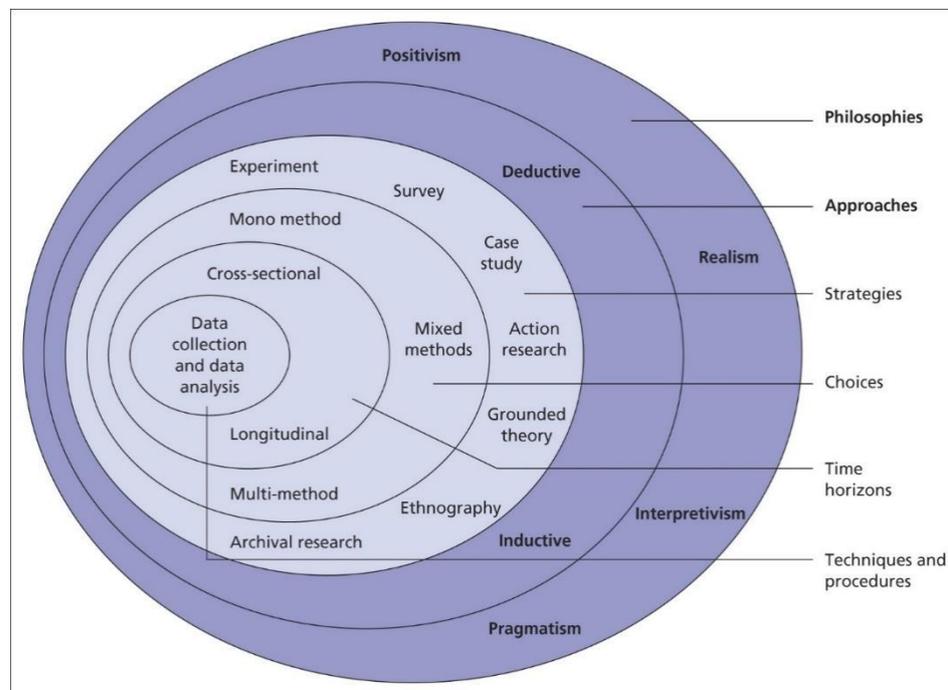


Figure 1: The Onion Model (Saunders et al., 2016)

### 2.2 Research Philosophy

The research philosophy is typically the art of understanding the approach utilized and the thought behind any research. The nature of the research problem defines the design of a research study, and no research design supersedes another. Saunders et al (2016) identified three main research approaches: interpretivism, realism and positivism. Interpretivist researchers focus on better understanding the depth, complexity and meaning of human experiences and relationships. Interpretivism conducts research that

looks beyond statistical evaluation and aims to generate rich knowledge about the world. On the other hand, realist researchers believe that there's a world that exists independently of our thoughts and perceptions. So, they try to understand this reality as it is, even if it's beyond human experience.

Positivism, on the other hand, is a more scientific approach. Saunders (2016) claims positivism is distinguished by its emphasis on objectivity, measurability, and the identification of cause and effect utilizing experiments, polls, empirical data and statistical testing. Positivism argues that reality is stable and can be investigated and described objectively without any interference with the entities under study. Researchers who adhere to the principles of positivism typically employ scientific research methods, such as experiments and surveys, to test hypotheses and draw broader findings that can be applied to the social environment.

The positivist approach is the best fit for this study because it is cost-effective, objective, dependable, and systematic in achieving the research objectives. This method enables the researcher to evaluate how ethnic identity measurably influences voting behaviour by employing surveys to gather quantitative data. Furthermore, the positivist framework facilitates an in-depth investigation of the influence of ethnic-based campaign strategies on voter preferences by leveraging statistical testing. This objectivity is essential for understanding the relationship between voters' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and the support of candidates. The structured nature of the positivist approach ensures that the findings are reliable and replicable, enhancing the credibility of the conclusions drawn from the study.

### **2.3 Research Approach**

Saunders et al. (2016) identified three primary methods for theory development: abductive, inductive, and deductive. Abductive, inductive, and deductive approaches serve as fundamental methods of inference and reasoning in research. Abductive reasoning involves coming up with the best possible explanation for an observation, even when we don't have all the information. It's like making an educated guess based on what is known (Behfar & Okhuysen (2018). Inductive reasoning, on the other hand, involves moving from specific observations or patterns to broader generalizations or theories (Fakhravar & Ouabira, 2021). It involves noticing a pattern and then coming

up with a general idea based on that pattern. Deductive reasoning is applying logical reasoning to derive specific conclusions from general principles or theories (Pearse, 2019). This approach starts with a general theory or concept, which is subsequently evaluated through specific observations or experiments to determine its validity. It is a more systematic and logical approach to arriving at conclusions. Deductive reasoning is a systematic approach to developing knowledge, whereas inductive reasoning is less systematic.

When using the deductive method, we start with an existing theory or idea and then test it to see if it's true. This testing is done by using a survey, where the goal is to either confirm or disprove the theory. Deductive reasoning is a key part of any quantitative research). The main purpose of this approach is to check if predictions made by the theory hold in real life and to find out if there are any cause-and-effect relationships. In this study, a deductive approach will be used. This approach works well with the positivist philosophy, which focuses on being objective and systematic. By combining these approaches, a hypothesis was created, and data analysis was used to evaluate the results, ensuring that the conclusions were reliable and based on the data.

## **2.4 Research Strategy**

Saunders et al. (2016) assert that a research plan guarantees that data collecting, and analysis complement the study objectives using a systematic and pragmatic framework for doing research. This strategy can encompass various methods, including experiments, surveys, case studies, ethnography, design, action, and archival research. The selection of a particular approach depends on the research philosophy, the nature of the research question, and practical considerations such as time constraints, data availability, and budget limitations. For this study, the survey research strategy has been chosen.

The survey research strategy systematically collects and analyses data from a target population, providing the most effective answers to data-related questions (Ghazi et al., 2019). A survey, typically a structured questionnaire, is designed to gather data through queries and scales. This method is particularly relevant for achieving the objectives of this study. By using surveys, researchers can obtain detailed insights into how ethnic identity influences voting behaviour, understand the impact of ethnic-based campaign strategies on voter preferences, and explore the relationship between voters'

perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and their support for candidates. Surveys allow researchers to identify trends, evaluate effectiveness, and propose improvements based on extensive data collection, making them a valuable tool for gathering quantitative data.

Additionally, survey research is closely associated with positivism, a philosophical approach emphasising objectivity, replicability, and causality (Ferreri, 2023). Adopting a positivist perspective enhances the design and data collection process by adhering to strict standards of objectivity and reliability, making survey research results more dependable and applicable to other contexts.

## **2.5 Research Design**

A research design is a comprehensive plan that guides the process of achieving the study's objectives. There are three primary types of research designs: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method approaches. A quantitative approach was adopted for this study. It relies on numerical data for analysis and conclusion (Maulidayani et al., 2021). This approach emphasizes using numerical methods in data collection and analysis, treating numerical data as objective facts and certain truths (Ferdiansyah, 2022). It involves scientific investigation using statistical analysis to test hypotheses and identify patterns. Typically, this approach uses structured tools such as surveys, experiments, and questionnaires.

The quantitative approach is particularly suitable for studies that generalize findings across populations using measurable data. It aligns well with the positivist perspective, which advocates using structured techniques to gather and statistically analyze data. For instance, researchers might use structured questionnaires or surveys to understand voters' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism, voting behaviours, ethnic-based campaign strategies, and candidate preferences. By employing quantitative data obtained through targeted questionnaires, the researcher can gain a clear and objective understanding of the issues surrounding ethnic chauvinism and the Lagos Elections.

## **2.6 Area of the Study**

Lagos State is located in the southwestern region of Nigeria, approximately between latitude 6.5244°N and longitude 3.3792°E. It is not only the most populous

state in Nigeria but also a major economic powerhouse, contributing significantly to the country's GDP.

Lagos blends different ethnic groups, reflecting Nigeria's diverse cultural landscape. The Yoruba ethnic group predominantly inhabits the state. However, due to its status as an economic hub, Lagos has a significant presence of other ethnic groups (Igbo, Hausa, and minority groups). This diversity influences various aspects of Lagos, from business practices to cultural expressions. The state is divided into five administrative divisions and twenty Local Government Areas (LGAs), each hosting various economic activities and cultural interactions.

## **2.7 Population of the Study, Sample and Sampling**

This study's population includes all Lagos residents aged 18 and above. Lagos, with an estimated population of 9.1 million, is divided into 20 local government areas (LGAs). Given the large population, surveying the entire population was impractical. Two LGAs were purposefully selected to capture the diversity of the population: Mushin (a densely populated area) and Epe (a less densely populated area). This allowed for sampling from areas with different population distributions and socio-economic backgrounds. Within each LGA, a simple random sampling technique was used to select participants. In this approach, each eligible resident (18 years and older) had an equal chance of being selected. A list of households or residents from the LGAs was obtained from community records or census data, and random numbers were generated using Microsoft Excel to select 75 respondents from each LGA. This ensured that the sampling process was unbiased and that every individual in the population had an equal opportunity to participate in the study. Therefore, a sample size of 150 respondents was determined for the study.

### **2.8.1 Data Collection Instrument**

Data were gathered primarily through online structured questionnaires, an essential research tool. These questionnaires are highly efficient, and user-friendly, and enable data collection from a broad and geographically diverse population. As Jamil et al. (2022) note, online questionnaires are the most effective way to reach an audience beyond a single geographic area. Additionally, they offer a significant cost advantage,

allowing researchers to collect data at a much lower expense than other methods like telephone interviews, focus groups, or home visits (Jamil et al., 2022). The online questionnaire was hosted on Google Forms, a free tool provided by Google. Google Forms allows users to easily create, distribute, and analyze surveys, with customizable question types and real-time response tracking. Its user-friendly interface ensures accessibility across various devices, making it an ideal choice for reaching a broad audience.

### **2.8.2 Data Collection Process**

Several steps are involved in the data collection process to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data. A closed-ended questionnaire was used for quantitative analysis, designed to be clear, concise, and free from bias. The research supervisor validated the questionnaire to ensure the appropriate use of language, relevance to the study topic, alignment with the study's objectives, and comprehensive coverage of content areas. Once finalised, the survey was distributed online, via platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, and in-person, specifically targeting residents of Lagos State, who were the only participants requested to complete the survey. Research Assistants were trained to assist with data collection. Their role involved educating the respondents on the purpose and content of the questionnaire, ensuring proper administration, providing necessary clarifications, and assisting in the distribution. This helped to ensure the accuracy of responses and smooth facilitation of the survey process

### **2.9 Data Analysis and Presentation**

The data collected from the study participants was reviewed to ensure completeness. Once reviewed, the data was transferred to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. The respondents' demographic information was examined using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentages, and will be presented with charts and graphs. Research questions were addressed through measures of central tendency, specifically mean and standard deviation, which help to simplify complex datasets into single values representing the typical or central value within the data distribution (Khorana et al., 2022). The hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics, such as chi-square and Spearman's correlation, to assess the

relationship between voters' behaviour, perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and their preferences.

## **2.10 Summary**

The chapter outlined the methods employed in the study, designed to explore the influence of ethnic chauvinism on the 2023 Gubernatorial Elections in Lagos State. The chapter detailed the positivist research philosophy and deductive approach, which provided a robust framework for investigating the research questions. It also described the data collection through structured online questionnaires, ensuring a systematic and objective data-gathering process. Using purposive and random sampling techniques and focusing on the densely and less densely populated areas the study aimed to obtain a representative sample of Lagos residents. Thus, this study is well-positioned to generate reliable and replicable findings that will contribute to understanding the impact of ethnic identity on voting behaviour in Lagos.

## CHAPTER THREE: DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, we present the research findings conducted to investigate the influence of ethnic chauvinism on voting behaviour during the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. Through quantitative analyses and detailed statistical tests, we explore the relationships between voters' perceptions of ethnic identity, the impact of ethnic-based campaign strategies, and the overall dynamics of voter support. The insights gained from this analysis not only shed light on the role of ethnic identity in shaping electoral decisions but also highlight the complexities and nuances of voter behaviour in a diverse and multifaceted political landscape. By examining the data collected from a sample of 150 respondents, this chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of how ethnic considerations influenced electoral outcomes and the implications for future political campaigns in Lagos and beyond.

### 3.1 Demographic Information

This section was designed to assess the demographic factors of the respondents. These factors were measured to find the individual age, sex, ethnic group, and Occupation,

#### 3.1.1 Gender of the Respondents

Table 3.1 Gender of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	96	64.0
Female	54	36.0
Total	150	100.0

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3.1 shows that the majority of respondents are **Male (64.0%)**, while **Female respondents** make up **36.0%** of the sample. This suggests males participated more in the survey.

### 3.1.2 Age Group of the Respondents

Table 3.2 Age Group of the Respondents

Age group	Frequency	Percent (%)
18–25	18	12.0
26–35	31	20.7
36–45	50	33.3
46–55	29	19.3
56 and above	22	14.7
Total	150	100.0

**Source:** Researcher’s Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3.2 shows the age distribution of the respondents. The majority, **33.3%**, are aged **36–45 years**, followed by **20.7%** in the **26–35 years** group. Respondents aged **46–55 years** make up **19.3%**, while **14.7%** are **56 years and above**. The smallest group, at **12.0%**, consists of those aged **18–25 years**. This distribution indicates that most respondents are middle-aged.

### 3.1.3 Respondents’ Ethnic Group

Table 3.3 Ethnicity of the Respondents

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent (%)
Hausa	25	16.7
Igbo	50	33.3
Yoruba	75	50.0
Total	150	100.0

**Source:** Researcher’s Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3.3 presents the ethnic composition of the respondents. The majority, **50.0%**, are **Yoruba**, followed by **33.3%** who are **Igbo**. The smallest group, representing **16.7%**,

is **Hausa**. This distribution shows that the Yoruba ethnic group is most represented, while Hausa respondents are the least represented in the sample. The ethnic diversity in the sample could provide insight into varying perspectives based on cultural backgrounds in the study.

### 3.1.4 Occupation of the Respondents

Table 3.4 Respondents' Occupation

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Student	43	28.7
Private Sector	39	26.0
Public Sector	38	25.3
Self-employed	20	13.3
Unemployed	10	6.7
Total	150	100.0

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3.4 outlines the occupational distribution of 150 respondents. The largest group, **28.7%**, consists of **students**, followed by **26.0%** in the **private sector** and **25.3%** in the **public sector**. **Self-employed** individuals comprise **13.3%** of the respondents, while the smallest group, **6.7%**, is **unemployed**. This indicates a fairly even representation across various occupations, with students being the most prominent group, suggesting a significant portion of the sample is engaged in academic activities.

### 3.2 Influence of Ethnic Identity on Voting Behaviour

Table 3.5 Respondents' View on their Ethnic Identity and impact on Voting Behaviour

Item	Strongly Agree F (%)	Agree F (%)	Disagree F (%)	Strongly Disagree F (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
I considered the ethnic background of candidates before voting in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections	58 (38.7)	40 (26.7)	22 (14.7)	30 (20.0)	2.84	1.147
I believe that my ethnic group should have more representation in the Lagos government	18 (12.0)	23 (15.3)	36 (24.0)	73 (48.7)	1.91	1.058
My decision to vote for a specific candidate was influenced by their ethnicity	33 (22.0)	52 (34.7)	30 (20.0)	35 (23.3)	2.55	1.078
Voters in Lagos are more likely to support candidates who share their ethnic identity	46 (30.7)	58 (38.7)	27 (18.0)	19 (12.7)	2.87	.992
Ethnic unity is more important than national unity when voting in gubernatorial elections	27 (18.0)	31 (20.7)	34 (22.7)	58 (38.7)	2.18	1.136

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey, 2024. Decision mean: 2.50

Table 3.5 highlights respondents' views on the role of ethnic identity in their voting behaviour during the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. The statement, "I considered the ethnic background of candidates before voting," had a mean of **2.84** and a standard deviation of **1.147**, indicating that many respondents factored ethnicity into their decision. Similarly, with a mean of **2.87** and a standard deviation of **0.992**, the statement "Voters in Lagos are more likely to support candidates who share their ethnic identity" suggests a moderate belief in ethnic alignment influencing voting behaviour.

On the other hand, respondents showed less support for the idea that their ethnic group should have more representation in the Lagos government, with a mean of **1.91** and a standard deviation of **1.058**, reflecting a general disagreement. The mean of **2.18** for the statement "Ethnic unity is more important than national unity" also suggests that most respondents prioritize national over ethnic unity when voting. These findings imply that while ethnicity plays a role in voting, many respondents do not see it as the dominant factor in political decisions.

### 3.3 Impact of Ethnic-Based Campaign Strategies on Voter Preferences

Table 3.6 Respondents' Voter Preferences Based on Campaign Strategies

Item	Strongly Agree F (%)	Agree F (%)	Disagree F (%)	Strongly Disagree F (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Campaign messages based on ethnic identity influenced my choice of candidate	69 (46.0)	40 (26.7)	13 (8.7)	28 (18.7)	3.00	1.141
Ethnic appeals were common in the campaign materials I encountered during the Lagos 2023 elections	27 (18.0)	30 (20.0)	75 (50.0)	18 (12.0)	2.44	.923
Candidates from my ethnic group used ethnic-based strategies to gain voter support	49 (32.7)	58 (38.7)	20 (13.3)	23 (15.3)	2.89	1.033
I felt more inclined to support candidates who aligned with my ethnic group's values and interests	35 (23.3)	70 (46.7)	24 (16.0)	21 (14.0)	2.79	.957
Ethnic-based campaign strategies should be discouraged in Lagos gubernatorial elections	40 (26.7)	69 (46.0)	26 (17.3)	15 (10.0)	2.89	.913

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey, 2024. Decision mean: 2.50

Table 3.6 reflects respondents' preferences based on campaign strategies during the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. Campaign messages rooted in ethnic identity had a notable influence, with a mean of **3.00** and a standard deviation of **1.141**, suggesting that many respondents were swayed by such messages. Similarly, the statement "Candidates from my ethnic group used ethnic-based strategies to gain voter support" had a mean of **2.89**, indicating a moderate agreement, implying that ethnic-based strategies were perceived to be common.

However, when asked if ethnic appeals were common in the campaign materials they encountered, the lower mean of **2.44** and standard deviation of **0.923** suggests a less prominent view of these tactics. Additionally, the mean of **2.79** for the statement "I felt more inclined to support candidates who aligned with my ethnic group's values and interests" indicates that many respondents did consider ethnic alignment, but not overwhelmingly so. Interestingly, a mean of **2.89** for discouraging ethnic-based campaign strategies reflects a moderate agreement, suggesting a preference for moving away from these approaches in future elections.

### 3.4 Influence of Ethnic Chauvinism on Support for Candidates

Table 3.7 Respondents' Perception of Ethnic Chauvinism and Support for their Candidates

Item	Strongly Agree F (%)	Agree F (%)	Disagree F (%)	Strongly Disagree F (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
I believe that ethnic bias was a factor in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.	54 (36.0)	57 (38.0)	10 (6.7)	29 (19.3)	2.91	1.095
Ethnic-based favoritism influenced the way political candidates were supported in the elections.	36 (24.0)	65 (43.3)	38 (25.3)	11 (7.3)	2.84	.875

Ethnic divisions create separations between different groups in Lagos.	36 (24.0)	66 (44.0)	14 (9.3)	34 (22.7)	2.69	1.074
Ethnic-based voting threatens the democratic process in Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.	53 (35.3)	67 (44.7)	19 (12.7)	11 (7.3)	3.08	.879
I supported candidates who actively promoted my ethnic group during the elections.	30 (20.0)	83 (55.3)	19 (12.7)	18 (12.0)	2.83	.886
Ethnic bias should be addressed to ensure fairer elections in Lagos.	43 (28.7)	63 (42.0)	24 (16.0)	20 (13.3)	2.86	.983

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey, 2024.

Decision mean: 2.50

Table 3.7 reflects respondents' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and its impact on candidate support during the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. A significant portion of respondents believed that ethnic bias was a factor, with a mean of **2.91** and a standard deviation of **1.095**, indicating a general agreement. Similarly, the statement "Ethnic-based favoritism influenced the way political candidates were supported" had a mean of **2.84**, suggesting that many felt favoritism based on ethnicity played a role. However, ethnic divisions, while acknowledged (mean **2.69**), were not seen as overwhelmingly dominant.

Moreover, respondents agreed that ethnic-based voting threatens the democratic process, with a mean of **3.08**, the highest in this set, reflecting a stronger concern. Support for candidates promoting ethnic interests was moderately agreed upon (mean **2.83**), and addressing ethnic bias to ensure fairer elections garnered a mean of **2.86**, showing a consistent belief in the need for reform to reduce ethnic influence in the electoral process.

### 3.5 Responses to Open Ended Questions

Table 3.8: Did you identify any specific political campaign(s) during the Lagos 2023 elections that promoted ethnic chauvinism?

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	90	60.0
No	60	40.0
Total	150	100.0

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3.8 shows respondents' identification of political campaigns that promoted ethnic chauvinism during the Lagos 2023 elections. A majority of respondents, **60.0%**, acknowledged noticing such campaigns, while **40.0%** did not. This suggests that ethnic chauvinism was a notable factor in the political discourse during the elections, as recognized by a significant portion of the respondents.

**Table 3.9: If so, by which party? Among the 90 respondents who answered "Yes"**

Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
APC	60	66.7
Labour party	25	27.8
PDP	5	5.5
Total	90	100.0

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3.9 details the political parties associated with ethnic chauvinism among the 90 respondents who identified specific campaigns during the Lagos 2023 elections. The All Progressives Congress (APC) was cited by 66.7% of respondents, indicating a strong perception of ethnic chauvinism linked to this party. The Labour Party was mentioned by 27.8%, while only 5.5% of respondents attributed such campaigns to the People's Democratic Party (PDP). This distribution suggests that the APC was predominantly perceived as promoting ethnic chauvinism during the elections, highlighting potential concerns regarding its campaign strategies.

Furthermore, respondents who identified specific political campaigns promoting ethnic chauvinism during the 2023 Lagos elections provided insights into

how these campaigns unfolded. Many referenced political messages that emphasized ethnic divisions, especially between the Igbo and Yoruba communities.

The top parties mentioned were the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Labour Party (LP). The respondents noted that: APC's campaign was marked by claims focusing on "indigenous rights," with some members and supporters portraying the opposition as representing non-Yoruba interests, mainly targeting the Igbo community. Several respondents indicated that these messages were spread through social media and grassroots rallies, sometimes fueled by local leaders warning about outsiders taking control of Lagos.

Labour Party's campaign, while less explicitly focused on ethnicity, was perceived by some as representing a broader coalition, which led to counter-narratives from APC supporters emphasizing the risk of non-Yoruba influence in Lagos politics.

Respondents described a campaign environment where ethnic identity was frequently invoked, leading to heightened tensions and fears of division during the election period. Several instances of inflammatory language on social media and in speeches were mentioned as contributing to this environment.

### 3.6 Testing of hypothesis

Table 3.6.1: Hypothesis 1: Ethnic identity does not significantly influence voting behaviour in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.

Option	Observed value	Expected value	Df	Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2$ )	Asymp. Sig.	Remark
strongly disagree	30	37.5	3	19.280	0.000	Ho Rejected
disagree	22	37.5				
Agree	40	37.5				
strongly agree	58	37.5				
Total	150					

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3.6.1 shows that **p-value** of 0.000 is less than the standard significance level (e.g., 0.05), which means we reject the **null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>)**. This indicates a **significant relationship** between voters' consideration of candidates' ethnic background and their voting behavior in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. Thus, we can conclude that **ethnic identity significantly influenced voting behavior** in this case.

Table 3.6.2 Hypothesis 2: Ethnic-based campaign strategies do not have significant impact on voter preferences in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.

Option	Observed value	Expected value	Df	Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2$ )	Asymp. Sig.	Remark
strongly disagree	28	37.5	3	45.040	0.000	H <sub>0</sub> Rejected
Disagree	13	37.5				
Agree	40	37.5				
strongly agree	69	37.5				
Total	150					

**Source:** Researcher's Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3.6.2 shows that the **p-value** of 0.000 is less than the typical significance level (e.g., 0.05), which means we reject the **null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>)**. This indicates that ethnic-based campaign strategies significantly impacted voter preferences during the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. Thus, we can conclude that ethnic-based campaign messages had a significant influence on voter choice in the Lagos 2023 elections.

Table 3.6.3 Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between voters' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and their support for specific candidates in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.

<b>Correlations</b>				
			Voters perceptions	Candidate support
Spearman's rho	Voters perception	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.066
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	150	150
	Candidate support	Correlation Coefficient	.066	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	150	150

The Spearman's correlation analysis revealed a weak positive correlation ( $\rho = 0.066$ ) between voters' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and their support for candidates promoting ethnic identity, with a statistically significant p-value of 0.000. This suggests that while there is a relationship between how voters perceive ethnic chauvinism and their support for ethnically aligned candidates, the strength of this relationship is minimal. The implication of these findings is that, although ethnic perceptions may play a role in candidate support, they do not appear to be a strong driving force in voters' decisions. This highlights the need for political campaigns to address broader issues beyond ethnic identity to resonate more effectively with the electorate.

### **3.7 Summary**

This chapter focused on analyzing the influence of ethnic chauvinism on voting behavior during the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. The results yielded significant insights across three key hypotheses.

The Chi-square tests showed a strong link between voters' attention to candidates' ethnic backgrounds and how they voted ( $\chi^2 = 19.280$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This highlights the important role ethnic identity plays in voting choices. It aligns with previous research on political competition in Africa, which points out that ethnic identities are often emphasized during elections, leading voters to prioritize ethnic considerations (Eifert et al., 2010). Studies further support this, showing a strong

connection between ethnic identity and voting behaviour, including in the 2023 Lagos gubernatorial elections (Orunbon, 2023).

The analysis also found that ethnic-based campaign strategies significantly impacted voter preferences. The Chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2 = 45.040$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) shows how effective these strategies appeal to voters. This suggests that candidates using ethnic appeals were more likely to gain voter support, reinforcing that ethnic identity remains a powerful tool in political campaigns. Research confirms that political parties and candidates often rely on shared ethnic identities to gather voter support, especially in ethnically diverse societies (Koter, 2013). However, this can result in a more divided political landscape, where voters tend to support candidates from their own ethnic groups, deepening ethnic divisions (Adewumi, 2023).

The third hypothesis looked at how voters' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism affected their support for candidates emphasizing ethnic identity. The Spearman's correlation showed a weak positive correlation ( $\rho = 0.066$ ) with a significant p-value (0.000). This suggests that while ethnic chauvinism does influence voter preferences, it's not the main factor. Other factors like the economy, candidate personality, and political party affiliation also play key roles in shaping voter behavior (Achanso et al., 2021). This finding indicates that voters take both ethnic identity and rational considerations into account, meaning candidates need to adopt a well-rounded approach to engage voters effectively (Adewumi, 2023; Achanso et al., 2021).

In conclusion, the study on ethnic chauvinism's influence during the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections shows the complex nature of voting in ethnically diverse societies. While ethnic identity is important, other factors also shape voter choices. Candidates must address a wide range of issues, beyond ethnic concerns, to effectively connect with voters and promote a more inclusive political environment.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, & RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of this research in alignment with the study's key objectives to shed light on how ethnic considerations intersect with political dynamics in the context of Lagos during the 2023 gubernatorial elections. Central to the study were three areas of interest: (1) the role of ethnic identity in shaping voter behaviour, (2) the impact of ethnic-based campaign strategies on voter preferences, and (3) the extent to which ethnic chauvinism influenced support for candidates. These areas are discussed in detail below, with each subsection reflecting the nuances observed in the data collected from 150 respondents. This chapter also proposes actionable recommendations aimed at mitigating the influence of ethnic chauvinism in future elections, fostering more inclusive political participation.

### **4.2 Summary of Findings**

A summary of the findings of the research is explained in this part to reflect the objectives of the research.

#### **4.2.1 Influence of Ethnic Identity on Voting Behaviour**

Ethnic identity has long been recognized as a potent force in shaping political behaviour, particularly in multicultural and multi-ethnic contexts such as Nigeria. The findings from this research corroborate this view, revealing that ethnic identity significantly influenced voting behaviour in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. A considerable proportion of respondents believed that voters in Lagos are more likely to support candidates who share their ethnic identity. This is in line with previous research that highlights the role of ethnic alignment in political mobilization, particularly in ethnically heterogeneous societies (Eifert et al., 2010). The findings from this study further indicated that most of respondents considered the ethnic background of candidates before voting. This suggests that, for many voters, ethnic identity was not just a peripheral consideration but a key criterion in their decision-making process. The salience of ethnic identity in voter behaviour can be attributed to a number of factors,

including historical grievances, perceived marginalization of certain ethnic groups, and the tendency for political parties to exploit ethnic divisions for electoral gain. This is consistent with Koter (2013) argument that ethnic identities are often leveraged by political actors to create an "us versus them" dichotomy, thus reinforcing intra-group solidarity at the expense of broader national unity.

However, it is worth noting that ethnic identity did not completely overshadow other considerations. While many respondents prioritized ethnic alignment, a significant portion also expressed a preference for national unity over ethnic unity when voting. This is reflected in the lower mean score (2.18) for the statement "Ethnic unity is more important than national unity when voting." This suggests that, although ethnicity is a powerful factor, it is not the only determinant of voting behaviour. This finding aligns with studies that suggest that voters in Nigeria, while influenced by ethnic affiliations, are also driven by other concerns, such as economic policies and governance issues (USLU, Bozkurt, & Tüfekçioğlu, 2017).

The influence of ethnic identity on voting behaviour in Lagos during the 2023 gubernatorial elections was significant, as indicated by both the descriptive statistics and the hypothesis testing conducted in Chapter 4. This finding suggests that voters were more likely to consider the ethnic background of candidates when making their electoral choices, thus confirming the hypothesis that ethnic identity plays a critical role in shaping political behaviour in Lagos. The findings from the Chi-square analysis not only highlight the importance of ethnic identity but also provide insights into how this factor interacts with other considerations. The implications of these findings are significant for future political campaigns in Lagos and similar multi-ethnic regions. Candidates who seek to mobilize voters based on ethnic identity are likely to find success in securing support from their ethnic constituencies. However, this strategy can also reinforce ethnic divisions, potentially undermining efforts to promote national unity and democratic inclusivity.

#### **4.2.2 Impact of Ethnic-Based Campaign Strategies on Voter Preferences**

The research findings indicate that ethnic-based campaign strategies played a substantial role in shaping voter preferences during the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. The findings from this study shows that a majority of the respondents believed that campaign messages rooted in ethnic identity influenced their choice of

candidates. This underscores the effectiveness of ethnic appeals in political campaigns, particularly in contexts where ethnic identity is a salient marker of social and political belonging.

The data also revealed that candidates from specific ethnic groups frequently employed ethnic-based strategies to garner voter support. This is consistent with existing literature, which argues that political actors in Nigeria often exploit ethnic divisions to secure electoral advantages (Moshood & Orunbon, 2024). By framing political contests as ethnic struggles, candidates are able to rally support from their ethnic constituencies, creating a sense of urgency and loyalty that transcends other considerations.

Interestingly, while ethnic-based strategies were effective in mobilizing voters, there was also a growing sentiment against their use. A notable proportion of respondents agreed that such strategies should be discouraged in future elections. This reflects an emerging awareness of the divisive nature of ethnic politics and the desire for more balanced campaigns that address the broader needs of the electorate. This finding is significant as it suggests that, while ethnic appeals remain effective, there is a demand for more inclusive and substantive political discourse.

Furthermore, the All Progressive Congress (APC) and the Labour Party (LP) were the two parties that played the ethnic card. The findings from this study revealed that these parties leveraged ethnic identities and “ethnic rights” to stimulate public support and acceptance, thereby emboldening a group of people to exercise ethnic superiority over other certain groups. For instance, the APC’s campaign was marked by claims focusing on “indigenous rights,” with some members and supporters portraying the opposition as representing non-Yoruba interests, particularly targeting the Igbo community. This tactic effectively mobilized Yoruba voters by appealing to their sense of ethnic pride and fear of losing control over Lagos’s political and economic resources.

The Chi-square test results, which indicated a significant relationship between ethnic-based campaign strategies and voter preferences affirm the considerable influence these strategies had on voter behaviour. The effectiveness of these strategies is rooted in the deep-seated ethnic affiliations that many voters hold, which political actors often exploit to secure electoral support. Candidates who emphasized their ethnic ties or framed their campaigns around ethnic solidarity were able to mobilize their ethnic constituencies, thereby reinforcing the salience of ethnic identity in the political

process. The significance of these findings is further supported by the literature, which underscores the role of ethnic-based mobilization in African electoral politics (Koter, 2013). In societies where ethnic identity serves as a primary marker of social and political belonging, candidates often rely on ethnic appeals to rally support. This dynamic was clearly evident in the Lagos 2023 elections, where ethnic-based strategies resonated with a large segment of the electorate.

#### **4.2.3 Influence of Ethnic Chauvinism on Support for Candidates**

Ethnic chauvinism, or the belief in the superiority of one's ethnic group, is a critical factor examined in this study. The findings indicate that ethnic chauvinism did influence support for certain candidates. Most of the respondents agreed that ethnic bias was a factor in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections, and also admitted to supporting candidates who actively promoted their ethnic group. Similarly, a large number of the respondents believed that ethnic-based favouritism influenced the way political candidates were supported in the elections.

The correlation analysis (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.066$ ) revealed a weak positive relationship between voters' perceptions of ethnic chauvinism and their support for ethnically aligned candidates. This suggests that, while ethnic chauvinism played a role in shaping voter preferences, it was not the dominant factor. This finding is important because it challenges the assumption that ethnic chauvinism is the primary driver of electoral behaviour in ethnically diverse societies. Instead, it suggests that voters are also influenced by other considerations, such as the candidates' policies, personality, and party affiliation.

The weak correlation between ethnic chauvinism and candidate support also highlights the complexity of voter behaviour. While ethnic appeals may sway some voters, others may prioritize more pragmatic concerns, such as the candidates' ability to deliver on economic promises or their track record in governance. This aligns with the argument made by Odalonu and Ogu (2022) that voter behaviour in Nigeria is shaped by a combination of ethnic, economic, and political factors, with ethnic identity being just one of many influences.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study has investigated the complex role of ethnic identity and chauvinism in shaping voter behaviour during the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections. Ethnic identity emerged as a significant factor, reinforcing longstanding ethnic loyalties, but it is not monolithic. The interplay between national unity, economic conditions, and political affiliations indicates a shifting dynamic. Similarly, while ethnic-based campaigns remain influential, there is a growing discontent with them suggesting a potential shift toward more issue-based, inclusive political discourse. The findings on ethnic chauvinism highlight that while present, it is diminishing in influence, signalling an opportunity for political actors to look beyond ethnic appeals and focus on addressing broader societal issues. This could lead to a more unified political landscape and a deeper, more substantive engagement with the electorate.

### **4.4 Recommendations**

Lagos state continues to be a city bustling with numerous social-economical and political activities. To achieve a political climate that is inclusive and without intimidation, necessary steps need to be taken by the government and other relevant stakeholders. Political parties and candidates should be encouraged to shift away from ethnic-based campaign strategies and instead focus on issue-based approaches that address the broader concerns of the electorate. By centring their campaigns on issues such as economic development, healthcare, education, and governance, political actors can reduce ethnic polarization and foster a more inclusive political landscape. This would help mitigate the divisive effects of ethnic appeals, promoting unity among voters from different ethnic backgrounds.

Moreover, there is an urgent need to strengthen civic education programs. These programs should emphasize the importance of voting based on candidates' competence, character, and policies rather than their ethnic affiliations. Educating voters on the significance of informed and rational decision-making in the electoral process would reduce the influence of ethnic chauvinism, and a more conscientious electorate can emerge. If effectively implemented, civic education initiatives can play a critical role in curbing the prevalence of ethnic-based voting and promoting a democratic culture rooted in merit rather than ethnicity.

Reforming electoral laws also stands out as a crucial step in addressing the issue of ethnic chauvinism in elections. Stricter regulations on the use of ethnic rhetoric during campaigns should be introduced, with political actors who engage in such divisive tactics being held accountable. The introduction of penalties for violations would serve as a deterrent against the use of ethnic-based appeals, promoting more responsible and inclusive political campaigning. By doing so, the integrity of the electoral process can be preserved, and the harmful effects of ethnic chauvinism on democracy can be minimized.

Furthermore, community leaders, particularly religious and traditional leaders, should be actively engaged in efforts to promote national unity and reduce ethnic tensions. These leaders wield significant influence over their communities and can serve as vital agents of change in reshaping public opinion. When voters are encouraged to prioritize national interests over ethnic loyalties, community leaders can contribute to a more peaceful and cohesive electoral environment. Their involvement in electoral processes can help bridge ethnic divides and foster a sense of shared national identity among voters.

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## APPENDIX

### The Influence of Ethnic Chauvinism on Voting Behavior in the Lagos 2023 Gubernatorial Elections

#### INFORMED CONSENT

This study is part of a research project being carried out at ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa. The study aims to investigate the influence of Ethnic chauvinism on voting behavior in the Lagos 2023 Gubernatorial elections.

The study is carried out by Victor Abraham, who you may contact via [abrahamvictor90@gmail.com](mailto:abrahamvictor90@gmail.com) if you wish to clarify a question or share a comment.

Your participation in the study, which will be highly valued as it will contribute to the advancement of knowledge in this field of science, consists of a series of questions which may take between 5 – 10 minutes for you to answer. There are no significant risks expected associated with participation in the study. Participation in the study is strictly voluntary: you can freely choose to participate or not. If you have chosen to participate, you can stop participating at any time without having to provide any justification. In addition to being voluntary, participation is also anonymous and confidential. The data obtained are intended solely for statistical processing and no responses will be analyzed or reported individually. At no point during the study do you need to identify yourself.

I declare that I have understood the objectives of what was proposed and explained to me by the researcher, that I was given the opportunity to ask all questions about this study and that I received clear answers to all of them, and therefore I agree to participate in it.

- Agree ( )
- Disagree ( )

#### Section A: Demographic Information

Kindly tick ( ) in the appropriate box as provided.

##### 1. Gender

Male ( )

Female ( )

**1. Age Group**

18–25 ( )

26–35 ( )

36–45 ( )

46–55 ( )

56 and above ( )

**2. Ethnicity**

Hausa ( )

Igbo ( )

Yoruba ( )

Other (Please specify)

**3. Occupation**

Student ( )

Private Sector ( )

Public Sector ( )

Self-employed ( )

Unemployed ( )

**4. Did you vote in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections?**

Yes ( )

No ( )

**Section B: Influence of Ethnic Identity on Voting Behavior**

Please read carefully and respond to this scale by ticking ( ✓ ) the most appropriate option

**Keys; SA= Strongly agree    A= Agree    D= Disagree    SD= Strongly disagree**

		SA	A	D	SD
1	I considered the ethnic background of candidates before voting in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections				
2	I believe that my ethnic group should have more representation in the Lagos government				
3	My decision to vote for a specific candidate was influenced by their ethnicity				
4	Voters in Lagos are more likely to support candidates who share their ethnic identity				
5	Ethnic unity is more important than national unity when voting in gubernatorial elections				

### Section C: Impact of Ethnic-Based Campaign Strategies on Voter Preferences

Please read carefully and respond to this scale by ticking ( ✓ ) the most appropriate option

**Keys; SA= Strongly agree    A= Agree    D= Disagree    SD= Strongly disagree**

		SA	A	D	SD
1	Campaign messages based on ethnic identity influenced my choice of candidate				
2	Ethnic appeals were common in the campaign materials I encountered during the Lagos 2023 elections				
3	Candidates from my ethnic group used ethnic-based strategies to gain voter support				
4	I felt more inclined to support candidates who aligned with my ethnic group's values and interests				
5	Ethnic-based campaign strategies should be discouraged in Lagos gubernatorial elections				

### Section D: Perceptions of Ethnic Chauvinism and Support for Candidates

Please read carefully and respond to this scale by ticking ( ✓ ) the most appropriate option

**Keys; SA= Strongly agree    A= Agree    D= Disagree    SD= Strongly disagree**

		SA	A	D	SD
1	I believe that ethnic bias was a factor in the Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.				
2	Ethnic-based favoritism influenced the way political candidates were supported in the elections.				
3	Ethnic divisions create separations between different				

	groups in Lagos.				
<b>4</b>	Ethnic-based voting threatens the democratic process in Lagos 2023 gubernatorial elections.				
<b>5</b>	I supported candidates who actively promoted my ethnic group during the elections.				
<b>6</b>	Ethnic bias should be addressed to ensure fairer elections in Lagos.				

7. Did you identify any specific political campaign(s) during the Lagos 2023 elections that promoted ethnic chauvinism? Yes ( ) No ( )
8. If so, by which party?
9. Please describe how their political campaign went