

Electoral Behaviour in Ekiti 2014 Governorship Election in Nigeria

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Abstract

The June 21, 2014 governorship election in Ekiti State, South West Nigeria, was adjudged to be free and fair. However, the election was unique in the sense that the incumbent governor, Kayode Fayemi lost in all the 16 local government areas of the state, while the winner, Ayodele Fayose, was a former governor impeached in 2006 on account of corruption. This paper examines what informed the political behaviour of the Ekiti people in this particular election. The paper relies on newspaper commentaries, as well as interviews conducted by the author with a few voters two days after the election. The paper offers sufficient reasons why the so called “power of incumbency” did not work in favour of the APC candidate in the June 21 Ekiti election.

1. Introduction

In what was dubbed a dress rehearsal for the 2015 general elections in Nigeria, the June 21, 2014 governorship elections in Ekiti State, South West Nigeria, was adjudged to be free and fair, and in comparison, far better than a similar election in Anambra state in 2013 that was marred with some irregularities. However, the election was unique in the sense that the incumbent governor, Kayode Fayemi lost in all the 16 local government areas of the state, while the winner, Ayodele Fayose, was a former governor impeached in 2006 on account of corruption. This paper examines what informed the political behaviour of the Ekiti people in this particular election. The incumbent governor and the APC candidate, Kayode Fayemi was quick to accept defeat. In doing so, he acknowledged that “indeed a new sociology of the Ekiti (Yoruba) people may have evolved. However, the task of understanding how the outcome of this election has defined us as a people will be that of scholars”.

This is the task of this paper. The paper will rely on newspaper commentaries, as well as interviews conducted by the author with a few voters two days after the election. The paper would have been enriched if there were resources to administer lengthy questionnaire. Notwithstanding the limitation, the paper offers sufficient reasons why the so called “power of incumbency” did not work in favour of the APC candidate in the June 21 Ekiti election.

2. The political parties, candidates and their antecedents

Even though 18 political parties presented candidates for the governorship elections, only 3 parties were visible before, during and after the elections.

All Nigeria’s People’s Congress (APC) presented the incumbent governor, Kayode Fayemi, as his candidate. Kayode Fayemi, a civil society activist came to power through a court judgement in 2010. He had contested the governorship election on the banner of the defund Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), in 2007. In that election, the candidate of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), Olusegun Oni was declared the winner by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). After three and a half years fighting through the legal system, the appeal court sitting in Kwara state declared Fayemi the duly elected Governor of Ekiti State on October 15, 2010, and marked the end of Olusegun Oni's administration as the then Governor of the state as Fayemi was sworn in as the governor. Born in 1965, Fayemi received degrees in History, Politics and International Relations from the Universities of Lagos and Ife in Nigeria and a doctorate in War Studies from the prestigious King's College, University of London, England, specializing in civil-military relations.

Before his foray into politics, Kayode Fayemi had worked as Director of the Centre for Democracy & Development, a research and training institution dedicated to the study and promotion of democratic development, peace-building and human security in Africa. He also worked as a lecturer, journalist, researcher and Strategy Development adviser in Nigeria and the United Kingdom.

According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Fayemi was a prominent member of the Nigerian opposition to military rule in exile, and he was one of those responsible for the founding and management of the opposition radios – Radio Freedom, Radio Democracy International & Radio Kudirat and played a central role in the opposition’s diplomatic engagements in exile during the military rule of Gen. Sani Abacha.

His party, The All Progressives Congress (APC) was formed on 6 February 2013 as a result of an alliance by Nigeria's four biggest opposition parties – the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), and a faction of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) –which merged to become a progressive party to take on the conservative People's Democratic Party.

The party received approval from the nation's electoral umpire Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on 31 July 2013 to become a political party and subsequently withdrew the operating licenses of the three previous merging parties (the ACN, CPC and ANPP).

On 25 November 2013, five governors in the existing ruling party, PDP, decided to join APC, as well as 49 federal legislators giving APC a slim majority of 186 legislators in the federal House of Representatives and 58 Senators.

PDP candidate and eventual winner of the election, Peter Ayodele Fayose was born in 1960. His academic credentials were not as compelling as that of Fayemi. He was known to have attended High school. His diploma certificate has been a subject of contention. He won the 2003 governorship election defeating Niyi Adebayo who was the candidate of the AD, one of the forebears of APC. Fayose's election in 2003 was influenced by the mobile clinics which he ran and the distribution of portable water in lorries and tankers which allegedly reduced deadly incidence of typhoid in the state. He was governor of Ekiti state between May 29, 2003 and October 16, 2006 when he was impeached by 24 of the 26 members of the Ekiti state House of Assembly on corruption charges. He was accused of embezzling state funds, particularly the Ekiti state poultry project fund. Fayose is still facing corruption charges brought against him by Nigeria's anti-graft agency, EFCC, which says he stole at least N416 million public funds while in office between 2003 and 2006. Fayose's impeachment in 2006 was also due among many other reasons, to his clash with traditional rulers, and alleged involvement in political assassination of perceived opponents.

His party, People's Democratic Party (Nigeria) was founded in 1998. The People's Democratic Party is a conservative political party which has won every Presidential election since 1999. In 1999, the party lost all the governorship seats in the South West of Nigeria despite Olusegun Obasanjo, a south westerner emerging as the president. The PDP favours free-market policies which support economic liberalism, and limited government regulation.

The labour party candidate was Michael Opeyemi Bamidele. A lawyer by profession and former Students' Union leader, Bamidele was born in 1963. He was elected into the House of Representative in 2011 on the platform of ACN which later fused into the APC. Opeyemi left the APC and joined the Labour party in December 2013 when he discovered that the APC was not ready to jettison Fayemi for him.

He was at different times commissioner for Information and Strategy as well as Commissioner for Youth, Sports and Social Development in Lagos State.

The Labour Party is a social democratic political party in Nigeria formed in 2002 by the Nigerian Labour Congress. In the 21 April 2007 Nigerian National Assembly election, the party won 1 out of 360 seats in the House of Representatives and no seats in the Senate. The Party's flag bearer in Ondo State, Olusegun Mimiko, emerged the state governor after winning a judicial challenge at the Appeal Court in 2009. He remains the only Labour Party Governor in Nigeria having been re-elected in 2013. The Labour party has become a third force in Nigerian politics. It has always provided a platform for those whose governorship ambition could not be realised in APC or PDP. Due to the nearly non-existent political structure of the party however, it was always a tall order to run on its platform.

3. ISSUES IN THE RUN UP TO THE ELECTION

3.1. *Fayemi-Bamidele Faceoff in APC*

The first major challenge encountered by the newly registered APC was the political face-off between a member of the House of Representatives from Ekiti state, Opeyemi Bamidele, and the state Governor, Kayode Fayemi over the governorship ticket of the party in Ekiti state. Both Fayemi and Bamidele became sworn political enemies following the insistence of the latter to contest the 2014 governorship election in the state under the All Progressives Congress, APC, the same party as the governor. The face-off came to a head on December 13, 2013 when Bamidele renounced his membership of the All Progressives Party, APC.

The lawmaker also announced his adoption of the Labour Party as his new political platform. Bamidele alleged that he could no longer remain in the APC because "pseudo-democrats", whom he said had "consistently demonstrated extreme allergy to internal democracy", had hijacked it. "To this extent, therefore, I, Michael Opeyemi Bamidele, in conjunction with many notable leaders and members of the defunct Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) in Ekiti State, have resolved to seek for membership of another progressive party with immediate effect rather than proceeding to register as new members of the All Progressive Congress (APC)," the lawmaker said. "While not attempting to undermine the APC as a newly registered political party with progressive inclination, we make bold to say that the leadership of APC in Ekiti State has, like a really upsetting tragedy, been hijacked by pseudo-democrats and reactionary elements who would stop at nothing to hold on to political power even when they have clearly been rejected by the masses." He said he would now seek solace in the Labour Party, which he described as "a credible progressive platform of convergence for our individual vision and commitment to internal democracy" (Atebo 2013). Just before his decamping to the labour party, a member of Bamidele's faction of the party, Foluso Ogundare was murdered by people alleged to be loyal to Fayemi.

3.2. *Fayose's emergence as PDP candidate*

Unlike the APC where the governorship candidate was adopted without party primaries, the PDP conducted gubernatorial primaries among 14 aspirants on March 22, 2014. Fayose emerged as the PDP governorship candidate after winning four hundred and sixty two votes out of four hundred and seventy Seven votes cast. He defeated a former minister of Police Affairs, Caleb Olubolade, who got seven votes, Mr. Adedayo Adeyeye who got three votes and Mrs. Margaret Ogundipe, who scored just one vote. Fayose was declared winner of the poll amidst protests from other aspirants who boycotted the primary election based on the allegation that the leadership of the party had skewed the process to favour Fayose.

It was a typical political comeback for Fayose starting with admission of guilt, then an apology and then the rocky road to redemption. Fayose's open admission of his past mistakes and willingness and readiness to redress these in the light of exigencies in the state endeared him to the people. Fayose referred to himself as "the prodigal son" and sought to mend fences with the traditional rulers, and other notable individuals.

3.3. *Heavy Military and Police Presence*

The security agencies were determined to ensure that there was peace in Ekiti state before, during and after the election. Consequently,

- All security agencies were fully prepared for the election.
- Officers and men were specially trained for the election and they knew what was expected of them.
- There was massive preparation in terms of personnel and equipment to provide safety and security to staff of INEC to discharge their responsibility and for the people of Ekiti state to exercise their civic right.
- Adequate security was provided to members of the public, Election Observers, Civil Society Organizations and the Media.
- In each Senatorial District, apart from the security agencies deployed to secure Polling Units, another detachment of 126,000 Mobile Policemen patrolled and secured the district.

3.4. *Campaign Rallies*

The three major contenders, APC, PDP, and Labour Party candidates traversed the 16 local governments of Ekiti to canvas for support from the electorate. Fayose seems to have learnt a few lessons with his down to earth and humble messages of "I am your son, brother and friend", and "a friend of the common man" on his billboards, while Fayemi's messages of "*ko Duro soke*-let him stay at the top", and "*owibe sebe*-he does what he says" were considered arrogant.

3.5. *INEC's Preparedness for the Ekiti Election*

Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was determined to make the Ekiti governorship election the best it has conducted so far for two reasons; its conduct of the Anambra state governorship election in 2013 was fraught with irregularities occasioned by late arrival of election materials and abscond of one of its officers with election results, hence INEC needed to use the Ekiti election to reassure Nigerians of her capability to conduct a hitch-free election. Second, not a few people viewed the Ekiti election a dress rehearsal for the 2015 general elections. The electoral umpire therefore needed to assure Nigerians of its resolve to be impartial, and provide a level playing field for all contestants.

To achieve these, the following measures were taken;

- The Commission customized all ballot papers according to local governments such that ballots assigned a particular local government were peculiar to it and cannot be used in another.
- The Commission customized all result sheets such that they were unique to each Polling Unit (PU) and they could not be used in any other.
- The Commission serially numbered all ballot boxes such that they could not be transferred to other PUs and so that if a ballot box is snatched and stuffed it cannot be brought back to the PU.
- The Commission gave additional training to the staff recruited to conduct the election so that they could perform their tasks with proficiency and integrity.
- The Commission also warned its staff to do their jobs with professionalism, impartiality and integrity and that anyone who is in breach will be sanctioned. (Yakubu 2014)
 - 6 National Electoral commissioners were drafted to the state for the election.

4. **Election Conduct and Results**

The June 21, 2014 Ekiti governorship election was adjudged as free and fair by all the stakeholders including the Association of all the political parties, the election monitoring group, and the candidates themselves. There were sufficient election materials, and the materials got to the polling units at the right time. There was no harassment of voters because of the heavy presence of military, civil defence and policemen all over the state. All the 16 local governments and 177 wards were covered by the security agents to maintain orderliness. There was no single case of ballot box snatching or stuffing unlike in the past elections. Collations of results were also orderly. A coalition of over 400 civic organisations under the aegis of the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) verified the final results of the Ekiti State governorship election as released by the Independent National Electoral

Commission. The group asserted that the polling units generally opened on time and polling officials followed the prescribed procedures. The group further confirmed that the Ekiti election was a significant logistical improvement over the Anambra gubernatorial election a year earlier. “Further, drawing on official results independently compiled from a representative random sample of polling units, TMG can independently verify that the official results announced by INEC accurately reflect the ballots. Voters and contestants can have confidence that the INEC results are a true reflection of the will of the voters of Ekiti state.” (Alechenu 2014). TMG deployed a total of 325 observers for the Ekiti gubernatorial election. Of this number, 25 were mobile supervisors who moved around the State and 300 were assigned to specific polling units.

APC candidate and incumbent governor, Fayemi was roundly defeated by Fayose in all the 16 Local Government areas in the state with a wide margin. Fayose polled 203, 090 votes against Fayemi’s 120,433. The Labour Party (LP) candidate Opeyemi Bamidele got 18,135 votes.

This is significant in the sense that Fayemi even lost in his home local government area of Oye. Even though, the immediate past governor, Olusegun Oni, decamped to APC from PDP a few days to the election, he could not help the APC candidate to win in his Ido/Osi local government area. Niyi Adebayo, former governor between 1999 and 2003, could not also secure victory for the APC in his Irepodun/Ifelodun local government area where Fayose and Bamidele also hail from.

Why was Fayemi’s APC so roundly defeated by his opponent who had been impeached from office on account of corruption 8 years earlier? This is the next assignment of this paper.

ekiti election result



**INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION
 EKITI STATE GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION, JUNE 21, 2014.**

DECLARATION OF RESULTS

NAME OF STATE: EKITI

CODE: EK

S/N	CONTESTANT	GENDER	PARTY	VOTES RECEIVED	PERCENTAGE (TVC)	REMARK
1	VINCENT BANKOLE AJAYI	MALE	ACCORD	268	0.07%	
2	OPEYEMI FOLAYEMI AKINYEMI	MALE	AA	146	0.04%	
3	PRINCE PETER A. BAMIGBADE	MALE	ACPN	1,822	0.51%	
4	OSEKITA OLUSEYI VICTOR	MALE	AD	843	0.23%	
5	OROKO BOLA	MALE	ADC	542	0.15%	
6	MUSA ADEBAYO AYENI	MALE	APA	1,224	0.34%	
7	JOHN OLUKAYODE FAYEMI	MALE	APC	120,433	33.41%	
8	AYODELE SAMSON OLAYINKA	MALE	CPP	967	0.27%	
9	PST. OGUNKOLADE A. JOSEPH	MALE	KOWA	222	0.06%	
10	BAMIDELE MICHAEL OPEYEMI	MALE	LP	18,135	5.03%	
11	AJIBOLA JOSEPH AKINWALE	MALE	MPPP	137	0.04%	
12	ILESANMI B. EMMANUEL	MALE	NCP	322	0.09%	
13	PRINCE BANJO GBOYEGA	MALE	PDC	921	0.26%	
14	AYODELE PETER FAYOSE	MALE	PDP	203,090	56.34%	ELECTED
15	ANIMASHAUN GOKE	MALE	PPA	1,050	0.29%	
16	EVANG. GBENGA ADEKUNLE	MALE	PPN	82	0.02%	
17	ADEKOLA ADELEYE AYO	MALE	SDP	95	0.03%	
18	HON. ADENIJI A. PHILIP	MALE	UDP	67	0.02%	

a	TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS	733,766
b	TOTAL NUMBER OF ACCREDITED VOTERS	369,257
c	TOTAL NUMBER OF VALID VOTES	350,366
d	TOTAL NUMBER OF REJECTED VOTES	10,089
e	TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES CAST	360,455

f	PERCENTAGE TURN OUT	50.32%
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Source of the table: INEC

5. Why Fayemi/APC Lost

5.1. Internal disharmony and dictatorship with the APC

One of the reasons cited by Michael Opeyemi Bamidele for leaving the APC for Labour party was lack of

internal democracy within the party. The practice in the APC's forebear in the South west, ACN, was for some party leaders to handpick party candidates. The former governor of Lagos state and APC National leader, Bola Tinubu was known for selecting his loyalists to party positions in most cases. This was one of the reasons why the party lost in Ondo state in 2013. This practice has alienated many supporters of the party.

The people of Ekiti detest "godfather politics". They don't want their governor to take instruction from a man in another state. A former APC member who was also a minister during the Obasanjo's regime, Femi Fani Kayode raised this issue. According to him "The rejection of Fayemi at the polls had as much to do with the disgust and opprobrium that most people in the South West and indeed the country harbour and hold for the tiny cabal of dictators and demi-gods that constitute the APC leadership as much as it does for anything else" (Fani Kayode 2014).

5.2. *Use and Dump Politics*

Some of the artisans interviewed seem to agree on this factor they call "use and dump". They claimed they worked assiduously for Fayemi's victory in 2007 and also for the party in 2011 legislative elections. Fayemi became inaccessible as soon as he reclaimed his mandate at the Appeal court in 2010. These artisans were courted again for the 2011 legislative elections and were dumped afterwards by the legislators they worked and voted for. They were not considered for any political position on account of not being well education and they were treated like lepers afterwards. About two months to the June 21 election, they were approached again with money and bags of rice. This "use and dump" tactics did not resonate well with them. This time around, they took the money and the rice, but decided to vote for Fayose who is not a man of letters like Fayemi, but who relates well with them. Fayemi's administration gave itself an "elitist" posture thereby disconnecting itself with the majority of the voters who are the scarcely educated artisans.

5.3. *Failed Political Promises and "insensitive" Policies*

Fayemi embarked on civil service re-organization as soon as he became governor in 2010. This did not go down well with the state civil servants. The computerization of Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) and introduction of e-payment which blocked the loopholes, through which some civil servants fleeced government resources, put the government on a collision course against powerful bureaucrats who called the shots and determined the political direction of Ekiti. The state has about 53,000 workers who influence the direction of votes in the state. Fayemi was not the in the good books of these civil servants.

Also, Fayemi offended the teachers by introducing the Teachers Development Needs Assessment (TDNA) to test teachers' competence. Fayemi tried to compel teachers to sit for the examinations thrice, but thrice he failed because the Teachers' Union embarked on industrial action each time a date was fixed for the test. Fayemi's promise during the campaign for his re-election to discontinue the test was seen by the teachers as a mere political promise which he would renege upon once he is re-elected. The long drawn battle with teachers over the competency test dealt a severe blow to his popularity among teachers. He also refused to pay the new Teachers' Salary Structure (TSS) until barely a month to the election when it became clear that teachers and civil servants had made up their minds that he would not be getting their votes.

Fayemi also did not fare well with the Tertiary institution students despite his promise to peg tuition during his first campaign. "Fayemi committed political suicide by antagonizing a core constituency – students. Ekiti State University (EKSU) students waged a serious war of attrition against Fayemi over his October 16, 2010, inauguration promise to slash tuition to N50,000 from an average of N120,000. Though the government pegged tuition at N50,000 as promised, school authorities hiked administrative charges - library fees, medical fees among others to the tune of N50,000. As if that was not enough, EKSU directed students to pay all charges with their tuition at once, leading to the closure of the University twice. With the broken promise to reduce tuition..., the students overwhelmingly voted against Fayemi" (huhuonline 2014).

5.4. *Aversion to 2nd Term Syndrome*

Some Ekiti people also have the opinion that those governors re-elected for a second term of four years end up doing nothing in those four years other than to scoop state resources in preparation for life after tenure of office. Since those governors are no longer in need of votes for re-election, they usually care less how the electorates are faring. Based on this thinking, some of the voters desired a change of government. Their thinking was that Fayose did not finish his first tenure and his election should not be considered a 2nd term. A weird but interesting political tradition in Ekiti State is that no governor has been re-elected back to back. Ekiti people seem to take pride in this tradition. Fayose indeed promised that neither he nor his deputy will seek re-election.

5.5. *Emotions & Personality Preference*

The voters seem to connect well with Fayose because of his penchant to stop at different places even after he had been impeached to share a drink or two with the commoners. He was frequent at social functions even when uninvited, at football games and even at school events.

"Those who are still searching for answers behind the reason why Mr. Ayodele Fayose triumphed over the more cerebral Dr. Kayode Fayemi should look no further than the market place of emotions. Reports showed that Mr. Fayose connected emotionally better with the voters than Dr. Fayemi. The critical mass of the voters that swayed

the election were impervious to the substance of what Dr. Fayemi stands for. Fayemi's drive to reposition Ekiti, his social security initiative and many other landmark achievements pales into insignificance when the voters are confronted with the following questions: Do I like him? Does he represent my values? Is he the kind of guy that I can have a drink with? These are some of the questions that Ekiti voters likely asked themselves as they got ready to cast their ballots. The people of Ekiti in following their gut have returned their verdict, in the gubernatorial contest between Ayodele Fayose and Kayode Fayemi, they preferred the former and now we can understand why the philosopher David Hume posited that reason is a slave to emotion" (Ajia 2014)

In fact, one of those interviewed summed it up this way; "We support Fayose because he understands us. He is close to the common man and knows our problem".

5.6. Federal Might

Two days before the June 21 governorship election, some leaders of the APC including the governor of Rivers state, Rotimi Amaechi were barred by security agents who had been deployed in Ekiti state from entering Ekiti to attend the APC rally. APC saw this as an affront on its party leaders and an abuse of federal power to give the PDP candidate an undue advantage. Even though the election was largely free and fair, the overzealousness of some security officials who restricted the movement of some APC Governors into Ekiti and the arbitrary arrest of some officers of the party also prevented the APC from perfecting its last minute plans for the election. One of those plans included the distribution of money to all the 177 wards to influence voters in favour of its candidate. Even where the money got to the ward level, party officials were not able to share the money before the election due to the heavy presence of security personnel. The security personnel were said to have looked the other way when PDP was distributing money two days before the election.

5.7. Unemployed Youth

Youth unemployment also contributed to the loss of APC.

In his open letter to Fayose after his election, legal icon, founder of Afe Babalola University, and a prominent Ekiti indigene, Chief Afe Babalola touched on another factor that aided Fayose's election;

"I observed that your electoral victory could be attributed largely to large number of youths most of whom were unemployed and unemployable who are hoping for a better tomorrow, as well as students who are angling for affordable education, particularly at the tertiary level of education. In a land-locked state like Ekiti which is afflicted with a high dosage of unemployment, it is for you to justify the trust and confidence the electorate had willingly reposed in you by delivering on the promises you have made." (Ariyibi 2014)

5.8. The Lagos Factor

Another factor was the composition of Fayemi's cabinet of commissioners and special advisers. Some of these cabinet members were unknown to the people of Ekiti. They do not have any electoral value as such as they do not command any political following. Most of them were brought in from Lagos and abroad. They hardly spent their weekends in Ekiti. "But the defeat of Fayemi ought not to have surprised pundits, including the ex-governor himself. The mistrust between the people and Fayemi began with the composition of his cabinet. Most of his cabinet members were mainly technocrats, not rooted in grassroots politics, and failed to translate the dividends of democracy to the people outside the corridors of power. The reason, many of them could not deliver their constituencies. Be that as it may, the administration gradually came to be viewed as elitist, with scant regard for the political consequence of major government policies, and how it affected the average Ekiti citizen" (Ibekwe 2014).

Most of the contractors who handled major projects under Fayemi also came from outside the state. Some of those interviewed said small contracts like dredging of drainage were handled by contractors from outside who also brought their workers from outside. Hence, there was a "capital flight" because those contractors and their workers would go back to base after the execution of the contract. Fayose cashed in on this problem when he said during his campaigns and immediately after his election that instead of awarding a N2 million contract for the construction of tables in schools to a contractor from Lagos, he would split the contract up into bits and award them to local roadside carpenters so that the resources of the state will go round.

6. Conclusion

This paper has tried to delve into the electoral behaviour of the Ekiti people. Ekiti state came into existence in 1996. It used to be part of the old Ondo state in the South-western part of Nigeria. Ekiti people were known for being strong-willed, independent minded and well educated. Even those who did not go far in formal education have a high sense of informal education and they strive to be well informed about political issues around them. Fayose's victory despite his antecedents is a testimony to the fact that sovereignty belongs to the people, who have the inalienable rights to elect whomever they prefer even when the elites think otherwise. It is the tyranny of the majority. The electorate have prevailed whether they are right or wrong. To them the political party does not really matter. It is the personality and in this matter, Fayose was preferred over Fayemi. If Fayemi had been in PDP and Fayose in APC, Fayose would still have won.

The election also showed INEC's growing maturity and preparedness for 2015. The only difference is that in a

general election where almost all the 36 states will have elections in one day, the presence of the security personnel will not be as concentrated as it was in Ekiti. INEC has also found a solution to ballot box snatching and stuffing by customising ballot papers such that no two local governments will have the same ballot paper. The election also showed the inaccuracy of opinion polls in some cases. Most opinion polls within and outside Ekiti had predicted a landslide for the incumbent, but shockingly, they were all proved wrong. Fayemi's display of political maturity by calling and congratulating Fayose on his victory as soon as the election results were released showed that he understands the will of the majority and he is not going to contend with it.

While it is believed in some quarters that Fayemi was prudent with the use of state funds, the manner in which he funded his campaign in the last minute by distributing money to different constituencies to curry electoral favour does not seem to justify that belief. On the other hand, for a governor whose scorecard was at least commendable in areas like road construction, and welfare package for the aged, Fayemi's defeat depicts a total disconnect between the government and the people. Majority of the people felt neglected in the scheme of things due to lack of access to the seat of power, and also due to lack of patronage by the core members of the Fayemi's government. Most of these core members were from outside Ekiti state and were unknown to the locals.

Fayemi, to many, was an outsider who "should go back to Ghana". Aside from road construction, most people could not even remember any other thing he did.

Apart from the fact that his government did not communicate his programs well to the people, Fayemi appeared to lack an understanding of what the people really wanted. He was busy giving the people what he thought they wanted rather than asking them what they wanted. The lesson is that every government should periodically conduct impact assessment opinion polls about their policies to ascertain whether those policies meet the expectations of the electorate or not. Fayose, being closer to the people and living amongst them even when he was removed from office understood what the people wanted and promised to give them just that. His political antecedents notwithstanding, he struck the right cord with the people and they believe and trust him more than they trusted Fayemi.

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