



ELECTORATES' PERCEPTION OF ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN MANIFESTOS AND POST-ELECTION PERFORMANCES OF GOVERNORS IN EKITI STATE FROM 2010-2024

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Abstract

This study examined electorates' perception of electoral campaign manifestos and the post-election performances of governors in Ekiti State from 2010 to 2024. As electoral manifestos serve as key tools for candidates to communicate policy intentions, there is often a gap between campaign promises and actual governance, raising questions about accountability. The study addressed the limited research on how electorates assess the alignment between pre-election pledges and post-election performance across multiple election cycles. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 400 respondents in Ado-Ekiti, the state capital, through structured questionnaires and focus group discussions. Findings reveal a significant relationship between electorates' perceptions of campaign manifestos and their assessment of governors' fulfillment of promises. Post-election performance was largely influenced by the extent of alignment with campaign pledges, while governance effectiveness, transparency, political communication, and socioeconomic conditions emerged as key determinants of voter perceptions. Furthermore, evaluations of manifesto fulfillment significantly influenced future voting behaviour and political participation. The study concludes that bridging the gap between campaign promises and actual governance is critical for enhancing public trust, accountability, and democratic engagement. It recommends that candidates develop realistic, well-structured manifestos and maintain transparent, effective governance to strengthen electorates' confidence and participation in the political process.

Keywords: *Electorates, Perception, Electoral Campaign Manifestos, Post-Election Performances, Governors, Ekiti State*

Introduction

Ekiti State, created on October 1, 1996, carved out of the old Ondo State, has witnessed significant political developments shaped by its historical, socio-political, and economic contexts. The governance landscape in Ekiti State, Nigeria, between 2010 and 2024, is characterized by various political transitions, policy developments, and challenges that reflect broader national trends. The period saw fluctuating public trust in government, shaped by political rhetoric, perceived performance, and the prevailing economic climate. Electoral campaign manifestos of all these governors vis a vis their administrations are crucial statements that outline the policy proposals, promises, and goals of political parties and candidates during elections. These manifestoes serve as a communication tool between political parties and electorates, presenting a comprehensive vision for governance and policy implementation (Netswera, 1995).



Manifestos often cover a wide range of areas, including economic development, social welfare, education, healthcare, infrastructure, and governance reforms (Okolie, Enyiazu & Nnamani, 2021). Electoral campaign manifestos play significant role in informing electorates about the intended actions and initiatives that candidates and parties plan to undertake if elected (Kedar & Soroka, 2015). Therefore, manifestos are not only important for electorates, but they also serve as a platform for political parties and candidates to articulate their policy agenda and differentiate themselves from their opponents.

However, it is important to note that the relationship between electoral manifestoes and subsequent government actions can be complex. While manifestos provide a blueprint for governance, the actual implementation of policies can be influenced by various factors such as political constraints, resource availability, changing circumstances, and coalition dynamics. For instance, Bowler and Farrel (2016) analyzed the relationship between electoral manifestos and policy outcomes and suggested that while governments make an effort to fulfill their manifesto promises, external factors and political constraints often lead to deviations from the original commitments. Electorates form their expectations based on the information provide by political parties and candidates as well as their own values, beliefs and evaluate the performance of elected officials based on the extent to which they fulfilled their campaign promises (Van Aelst & colleagues, 2012).

Ekiti State, a politically active and influential state in Nigeria, has witnessed several gubernatorial elections within the specified timeframe. Electorates in this state often rely on the campaign manifestos of the various candidates to make informed decisions about who to support. However, there are concerns that the post-election performances of the elected governors may not always align with the promises made during the campaign period.

These potential discrepancies between campaign promises and post-election realities raises important questions about the transparency, accountability, and overall integrity of the electoral process in Ekiti State. It is crucial to understand how electorates perceive the significance and reliability of electoral campaign manifestos, as well as their assessment of the governors' performances in fulfilling these promises.

It is also pertinent to address the problem of the factors that shape electorates' perceptions, the extent to which campaign manifestos influence their voting decisions, and the degree to which the elected governors have been able to translate their promises into tangible outcomes for the people of Ekiti State. The findings of this study can inform policy discussions, enhance voter education, and contribute to the improvement of the electoral process in Ekiti State and in extension to other States of Nigeria.

Specific objectives

The specific objectives include to:

1. Discover how electorates perceive the electoral campaign manifestos presented by governors in Ekiti State from 2010-2024,
2. Analyze the extent to which the post-election performances of governors align with the promises made in their campaign manifestos,
3. Examine the factors that contribute to the Electorates' perception of the fulfillment of campaign promises by governors, and
4. Ascertain how the electorates' perceptions of campaign manifestos and post-election performances influence their voting behavior and future political participation.

Literature Review

Electoral campaign manifestos are official documents outlining the policy proposals, promises, and goals of political parties and candidates. These manifestos serve as essential communication tools between political aspirants and electorates, setting expectations for governance (Okolie, Enyiazu & Nnamani, 2021). They play a crucial role in democratic elections by providing electorates with insights into the policy directions and commitments of candidates, thereby shaping electoral decisions and governance expectations (Kedar & Soroka, 2015).



Campaign manifestos serve several critical functions in democratic governance. Firstly, they provide electorates with a clear understanding of what candidates and parties intend to achieve if elected. This transparency fosters an informed electorate, enabling citizens to make rational choices based on policy preferences rather than personal affiliations or populist rhetoric (Bowler & Farrell, 2016). Secondly, manifestos contribute to political accountability by establishing benchmarks against which elected officials can be assessed. When politicians make explicit promises, citizens and civil society organizations can hold them accountable for fulfilling these commitments.

Another significant function of campaign manifestos is their role in political marketing and branding. Most campaign manifestos are structured around key policy areas such as economic development, education, healthcare, security, and foreign policy. A well-crafted manifesto should be evidence-based, realistic, and aligned with the socio-economic needs of the electorates. Overly ambitious or vague promises can lead to disillusionment and a decline in public trust in political institutions.

Research indicates that campaign manifestos significantly influence voters' behaviour. Electorates often use manifestos as heuristic tools to evaluate party policies and determine which candidate aligns best with their interests (Kedar & Soroka, 2015). In proportional representation systems, where coalition governments are common, manifestos can serve as negotiation frameworks for forming government policies. However, voters' reliance on manifestos varies across different political contexts. In some cases, electorates prioritize candidate personality, historical performance, or party loyalty over policy proposals.

Besides, one of the major criticisms of campaign manifestos is the discrepancy between promises made during campaigns and actual policy implementation. Many elected officials fail to deliver on their manifestos commitments due to political, economic, or institutional constraints (Bowler & Farrell, 2016). For example, in Nigeria, successive governments have pledged to eradicate corruption and improve infrastructures, yet progress in these areas has been inconsistent (Okolie et al., 2021).

Also, the failure of politicians to adhere to manifestos promises can erode public trust in the democratic process. When electorates perceive a pattern of broken promises, political cynicism and voters' apathy may increase. This phenomenon is particularly evident in countries with a history of governance failures, where repeated unfulfilled promises contribute to disillusionment with the electoral process. Therefore, campaign manifestos are integral to democratic elections, serving as blueprints for governance and tools for voters' engagement. They influence electoral choices, shape political discourse, and contribute to democratic accountability.

However, the extent to which manifestos translate into actual policy depends on various factors, including economic constraints, political dynamics, and institutional capacity. Enhancing transparency, strengthening policy monitoring mechanisms, and fostering political accountability are essential for bridging the gap between manifesto promises and governance realities.

Empirical Review

Onuoha and Ochulor (2025) carried a pragma-discourse analytical approach in their study of APC 2023 presidential manifestos. Their analysis focused on how language and rhetorical devices were employed to construct favorable images of candidates while strategically framing policy issues. Their study revealed that manifestos often serve not just as policy documents but as tools for political persuasion, which can obscure vague or unrealistic commitments beneath sophisticated language structures. The study established that the APC candidate employed covert and subtle means to brandish his political opponents' limitations and inefficiency. The scholars primarily used a pragma-discourse analytical approach in their study of APC 2023 presidential manifestos but this study is centered on electorates in Ekiti State perceive electoral campaign manifestoes and post-election performances of governors in the state from 2010 to 2024

Kolawole (2023) conducted a more recent analysis of the 2023 presidential election manifestos of major Nigerian political parties, including the All Progressives Congress (APC), People's



Democratic Party (PDP), and Labour Party (LP). This study underscored the persistent challenge of translating political rhetoric into effective governance. While the study focused on analyzing the presidential election manifestoes of major Nigerian political parties, the current study offers an empirical based analysis of the Electorates perception of electoral campaign manifestoes and post-election performances of governors in Ekiti State from 2010 to 2024.

Further enriching the empirical literature, Moghalu and Ude (2023) evaluated the 2023 presidential manifestos of key candidates through a qualitative lens. Their analysis critiqued the manifestos for lacking coherent philosophical underpinnings and concrete economic frameworks. They also pointed out the absence of detailed anti-corruption strategies, which they identified as a critical shortfall in Nigeria's political development discourse. Their work reinforced previous findings by demonstrating that political parties often prioritize appealing slogans over substantive, actionable policy frameworks. A general weakness observed in most of the candidates' policy documents was the omission of a clear philosophical statement or vision on which their plans are anchored. The failure to anchor economic policy in Nigeria on a philosophical foundation is a major reason for inconsistency of policy and thus the inability to achieve, let alone sustain, long-term success in economic growth that lifts millions out of poverty. Economies that are clearly philosophically anchored, while retaining an element of pragmatism, tend to achieve structural economic transformation better and faster. Rising Asia and the economically advanced western countries offer helpful examples. Economics alone is inadequate to develop any society. Other factors such as values, belief systems (worldviews) matter, and influence the societies and their governments' broader approach to governance that includes how the economy is managed. This study explored the 2023 presidential manifestos of key candidates through a qualitative lens, this current work addressed the Electorates perception of electoral campaign manifestoes and post-election performances of governors in Ekiti State from 2010 to 2024

Solt and Johnson (2018) investigated the relationship between government performance and citizen satisfaction with democracy across various countries. Their cross-national analysis aims to elucidate how perceptions of government effectiveness influence public satisfaction with democratic systems. Utilizing a wide-ranging dataset, the study compares satisfaction levels across different political and cultural contexts. This comparative approach allows for insights into how varying governance structures impact public perceptions globally. The findings suggest a strong correlation between positive evaluations of government performance and higher levels of satisfaction with democracy. The authors argue that effective governance is crucial for maintaining democratic legitimacy and public trust. The authors employed rigorous statistical methods to analyze the data, ensuring the reliability of their findings. By examining a diverse range of countries, the study provides a comprehensive view of the factors affecting citizen satisfaction with democracy. While the quantitative analysis is strong, the paper could benefit from a deeper qualitative exploration of the specific factors that influence perceptions of government performance in different cultural contexts. The study largely emphasizes correlation, which may overlook the complexities of causation between government performance and citizen satisfaction. Solt and Johnson's article makes a valuable contribution to the literature on public administration and democratic satisfaction. By highlighting the critical link between government performance and citizen perceptions, the authors underscore the importance of effective governance in fostering democratic legitimacy. However, the current study focuses on how Electorates perceive the campaign manifestoes and post-election performances of governors in Ekiti State.

World Bank (2017) report explored the intricate relationship between governance frameworks and legal systems across various countries. The document emphasized the essential role that sound governance plays in fostering economic development, reducing poverty, and enhancing social equity. The report outlined how the rule of law is fundamental to effective governance and discussed the importance of legal frameworks in ensuring accountability, transparency, and justice. The authors analyzed how governance quality influences development outcomes, highlighting that weak governance and legal systems can hinder economic growth and exacerbate inequality. The report includes multiple case studies that illustrate successful governance reforms and their positive



impacts on development, and these examples provide practical insights into effective strategies for enhancing governance. The World Bank offers recommendations for policymakers to strengthen governance and legal institutions, emphasizing the need for inclusive participation, capacity building, and the integration of local contexts. The report provides a thorough examination of the connections between governance and law, making it a valuable resource for policymakers and scholars. The inclusion of case studies offers real-world examples of governance challenges and solutions, enhancing the report's applicability. While the report presents valuable insights, some findings may be context-specific and not universally applicable across different countries or regions. This report focused on the intricate relationship between governance frameworks and legal systems across various countries, while the current study is centered on Electorates' perception of campaign manifestoes and post-election performances of Governors in Ekiti State.

Theoretical Framework

Correspondence Theory of Truth

The Correspondence Theory of Truth is one of the earliest and most influential theories of truth, rooted in classical philosophy and later developed within modern analytic philosophy. The central claim of the theory is that a statement is true if it corresponds to objective reality—that is, if what is asserted matches the actual state of affairs in the world (David, 2023).

Gottlob Frege's contributions to logic and the philosophy of language, particularly his distinction between sense (Sinn) and reference (Bedeutung), provided an important conceptual foundation for correspondence-based accounts of truth. In his seminal essay "On Sense and Reference", Frege (1892) argues that linguistic expressions convey meaning at two levels: the sense, which represents the mode of presentation or conceptual content of an expression, and the reference, which denotes the actual object or state of affairs in the world. For Frege, the truth value of a statement depends on its reference; a statement is true if it successfully refers to a fact in objective reality and false if it does not (Frege, 1892).

This conception of truth emphasizes the relationship between language and reality, suggesting that truth is not merely a matter of belief or coherence but is grounded in factual correspondence. Frege's analysis influenced later philosophers such as Russell (1912), who further defended the idea that truth consists in a correspondence between propositions and facts, and Tarski (1944), who formalized the correspondence conception within a semantic framework. Together, these contributions strengthened the theoretical basis of the Correspondence Theory of Truth and clarified its relevance to empirical and evaluative inquiries.

The Correspondence Theory of Truth provides a useful analytical framework for examining the relationship between electorates' perceptions of electoral campaign manifestos and the post-election performances of governors in Ekiti State, Nigeria. In the context of electoral politics, campaign manifestos represent statements of intent, policy commitments, and governance promises made by political candidates to the electorate. According to the Correspondence Theory, such statements can be regarded as true only if they correspond to the objective reality of governance outcomes after the election.

Electorates' perceptions of campaign manifestos play a critical role in shaping voting behavior, as voters generally expect that promises made during campaigns will be reflected in actual policy actions and performance once candidates assume office. When a governor's post-election performance aligns with the commitments outlined in the campaign manifesto—such as the implementation of promised policies or completion of pledged projects—there is correspondence between political representation and objective reality. In such cases, the governor's governance can be considered a truthful representation of the electoral promises made to the electorate.

Conversely, when post-election performance fails to reflect campaign promises, a disconnect emerges between political claims and governance reality. This lack of correspondence undermines the truth value of campaign statements and reinforces public perceptions of deception or insincerity in political communication. Applying the Correspondence Theory of Truth to the



study of electoral manifestos and governance performance in Ekiti State therefore enables a systematic assessment of the extent to which political promises translate into concrete outcomes. By examining the degree of alignment between campaign manifestos and post-election performance, this study contributes to broader discussions on democratic accountability, electoral integrity, and the credibility of political representation. The Correspondence Theory of Truth thus offers a relevant theoretical lens for evaluating whether political actors fulfill their obligations to the electorate in a manner consistent with the realities of governance.

Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach involving both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. The survey method (quantitative research technique) involved the selection of a sample of respondents from a population, administering a standardized questionnaire to them, and thereafter generalizing the result to the whole population. The area of the study is Ado-Ekiti, the capital city of Ekiti State, Nigeria. Ado-Ekiti was selected because it serves as the administrative and political centre of the state and hosts the highest concentration of electorates, particularly civil servants working in various ministries, departments, and agencies. These individuals represent electorates drawn from all sixteen (16) local government areas of the state. The research adopted a statistical model initiated by Taro Yamane to determine the sample size of this study which gave a calculation stated below: sample size of 392 with the calculation state below;

$$\begin{aligned}
n &= \frac{N}{(1+N [e]^2)} \\
&= \frac{20,212}{(1+20,212 (0.05)^2)} \\
&= \frac{20,212}{1+20212 (0.0025)} \\
&= \frac{20,212}{1+ (20212 \times 0.0025)} \\
&= \frac{20,212}{1+50.53} \\
&= 51.53 \\
&= \frac{20,212}{51.53} \\
&= 392.237532 \approx 392
\end{aligned}$$

When sample size,
N= population;
E=sampling Error, while
I=constant

This figure was rounded off to 400. Proportionate sampling was adopted in this. This means that the sample of Civil servants from each ministry were drawn according their population. At the Ministry level, the researcher selected three major departments purposive sampling technique, as these three departments are represented in all the ministries and they are all headed by Directors or Heads of departments. They include: Administration Department, Accounts Department, And Planning, Research and Statistics Department (PRS). At this level, accidental sampling technique was used to sampling only the civil servants who were on duty and met on the spot.

In addition to Survey, Focus Group Discussion was also employed and the Focus Group Guide served as the research instrument. Focus group sessions were held in Ado-Ekiti, among the few civil servants in the selected Ministries such that both male and female staff who were knowledgeable about electoral campaign manifestoes participated. The groups comprise of twelve (12) civil servants employed in the Ekiti State civil service and fall within the age bracket of 25-55. The participants shared the following characteristics in common: communication background and



average exposure to electoral campaign manifestoes. The discussion was recorded with an audio midget and later transcribed into written text. The data gotten were thematically analyzed.

Results

Table 1: Perception of Electorates on Campaign Manifestos

S/N	How Electorates Perceive Electoral Campaign Manifestos	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Interpretation
1	The party's policy proposals are clearly outlined in the manifesto.	150 (37.5%)	120 (30%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	2.96	Agreed
2	The manifesto provides a detailed breakdown of the party's spending plans and budget proposals.	130 (32.5%)	140 (35%)	75 (18.75%)	55 (13.75%)	2.84	Agreed
3	The language used in the manifesto is accessible and understandable.	160 (40%)	120 (30%)	70 (17.5%)	50 (12.5%)	3.00	Agreed
4	The party's key campaign promises are prominently featured.	145 (36.25%)	130 (32.5%)	75 (18.75%)	50 (12.5%)	2.97	Agreed
5	The manifesto clearly articulates how the party plans to fund its programs.	155 (38.75%)	125 (31.25%)	70 (17.5%)	50 (12.5%)	2.96	Agreed
Grand Mean					2.95	Agreed	

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2025

The table provides an insightful examination of how Electorates perceive electoral campaign manifestos based on five key indicators. The mean scores were calculated to interpret the general perception of each statement, with a grand mean of 2.95, indicating that the majority of respondents agree with the statements provided.

The first item assesses whether political parties clearly outline their policy proposals in their manifestos. With 37.5% strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing, the majority of electorates believe that parties present their policies in a structured manner. However, 32.5% (D + SD) of the respondents express skepticism, suggesting that a significant portion of the electorates finds the proposals vague or inadequate. The mean score of 2.96 reflects a generally positive but not overwhelming agreement.

The second indicator evaluates whether the manifesto includes a detailed financial plan. 32.5% of respondents strongly agree, while 35% agree, suggesting that most electorates acknowledge the presence of budget-related information. However, a combined 32.5% disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that many electorates remain unconvinced about the depth or transparency of these financial breakdowns. The mean score of 2.84, the lowest among the five indicators, highlights concerns about the sufficiency of budgetary details in campaign manifestos.

A crucial aspect of an effective manifesto is the simplicity and clarity of its language. This statement received the highest level of agreement, with 40% strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing, leading to the highest mean score of 3.00. This suggests that most electorates find campaign manifestos linguistically accessible, which is essential for engaging a broad electorates. However, 30% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that some electorates still struggle with the technicalities or complexity of political language.



Political parties must highlight their core promises to attract voter confidence. Here, 36.25% strongly agree and 32.5% agree, while 31.25% disagree or strongly disagree. The mean score of 2.97 suggests that Electorates generally recognize key campaign promises in manifestos. However, the notable percentage of dissenters raises questions about whether these promises are vague, inconsistent, or overshadowed by less relevant content.

The fifth statement assesses whether political parties explain how they intend to finance their proposed programs. A mean score of 2.96 suggests that electorates acknowledge some level of financial transparency, with 38.75% strongly agreeing and 31.25% agreeing. However, 30% (D + SD) of electorates remain unconvinced, which could indicate skepticism regarding the feasibility or realism of proposed funding strategies.

The grand mean of 2.95 suggests an overall agreement among respondents that electoral campaign manifestos present policy proposals, key promises, and financial details in a somewhat clear and accessible manner. However, the scores are not overwhelmingly high, signaling that while electorates perceive campaign manifestos as informative, they also recognize certain deficiencies particularly in budgetary transparency and the prominence of key promises.

The relatively high agreement levels indicate that most electorates find manifestos to be structured and readable. However, the disagreement levels (averaging around 30%) suggest that a considerable segment of the Electorates struggles with clarity, accessibility, or credibility of the content. The lowest mean score (2.84) for budget breakdowns suggests that electorates are particularly skeptical about financial details in manifestos. This reflects a broader concern about the feasibility and accountability of campaign promises.

The highest mean score (3.00) for language accessibility implies that political parties are making efforts to use simplified, voter-friendly language. However, some electorates still find certain terminologies too complex or ambiguous. The fact that none of the mean scores exceed 3.00 suggests a cautious agreement rather than full confidence in campaign manifestos. This could be attributed to previous experiences with unfulfilled promises, generic language, or a lack of specific, actionable plans.

Table 2: Fulfillment of Promises

S/N	Fulfillment of Promises	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Interpretation
6	The party has delivered on key promises.	140 (35%)	130 (32.5%)	75 (18.75%)	55 (13.75%)	3.03	Agreed
7	The party has been transparent about progress.	170 (42.5%)	140 (35%)	60 (15%)	30 (7.5%)	3.44	Agreed
8	The party has explained unfulfilled promises.	160 (40%)	135 (33.75%)	65 (16.25%)	40 (10%)	3.29	Agreed
9	The party has shown genuine commitment.	100 (25%)	110 (27.5%)	90 (22.5%)	100 (25%)	2.16	Disagreed
10	The party's performance aligns with its manifesto.	130 (32.5%)	140 (35%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	2.87	Agreed



Grand
Mean

2.96

Agreed

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

The table presents an analysis of electorates' perceptions regarding the fulfillment of electoral promises by political parties.

The first indicator examines whether political parties have delivered on key promises. 35% of respondents strongly agree, while 32.5% agree, leading to a mean score of 3.03. This suggests that a majority of electorates believe some campaign promises have been met. However, a notable 32.5% (D + SD) disagree, indicating skepticism among a significant portion of the electorates regarding the extent to which promises have been honored.

Transparency in political governance is crucial for maintaining voter trust. The second indicator, which assesses whether political parties have been transparent about their progress, received the highest level of agreement, with 42.5% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing. With a mean score of 3.44, this is the highest-rated statement, suggesting that electorates generally perceive parties as providing updates on their performance. However, 22.5% of respondents still disagree or strongly disagree, implying that some believe transparency efforts are insufficient or selective.

A key issue in electoral politics is whether parties provide explanations for unfulfilled promises. This statement garnered 40% strong agreement and 33.75% agreement, resulting in a mean score of 3.29. The relatively high agreement suggests that electorates acknowledge efforts made by political parties to justify unaccomplished promises. However, 26.25% of respondents remain dissatisfied, which could indicate that explanations are either inadequate, insincere, or do not justify the perceived failures.

Commitment to electoral promises is a fundamental expectation from political leaders. The fourth statement, assessing whether political parties have shown genuine commitment, stands out with a mean score of 2.16, which falls into the "Disagreed" category. This indicates that electorates largely believe that political parties lack true dedication to fulfilling their promises. The relatively high percentage of disagreement (47.5% D + SD) highlights a serious concern regarding political accountability and consistency.

The final statement evaluates whether the party's performance aligns with its manifesto. With 32.5% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing, the mean score of 2.87 suggests that while many electorates perceive a correlation between manifestos and actual performance, a significant 32.5% (D + SD) believe there is a disconnect between campaign promises and governance. This discrepancy underscores the persistent issue of political parties making ambitious commitments that may not be fully realized in practice.

The grand mean of 2.96 suggests that, overall, electorates acknowledge some degree of fulfillment of electoral promises. However, the variations in mean scores reveal important nuances. While political parties are perceived as being relatively transparent (3.44) and providing explanations for unfulfilled promises (3.29), their actual commitment to promises (2.16) is widely questioned. This gap suggests that while communication efforts may be effective, substantive action remains a major issue.

The relatively positive perception of transparency and explanation efforts could indicate that political parties are becoming more aware of the importance of public accountability. However, the low score on commitment suggests that these efforts may be more rhetorical than practical. Electorates appear to appreciate updates and justifications but remain skeptical about whether these translate into tangible outcomes.

While electorates generally agree that political parties have delivered on some promises and maintained transparency, the perception of genuine commitment remains low. This suggests a need for political parties to not only communicate their progress effectively but also take concrete steps to fulfill promises in ways that electorates can clearly recognize and validate. Addressing this gap between rhetoric and action could enhance public trust and improve the credibility of political leadership.



Table 3: Post-Election Performance

S/N	Post-Election Performance	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Interpretation
11	The party has demonstrated effective leadership.	155 (38.75%)	130 (32.5%)	70 (17.5%)	45 (11.25%)	3.32	Agreed
12	The party has made progress on key policies.	150 (37.5%)	135 (33.75%)	75 (18.75%)	40 (10%)	3.25	Agreed
13	The party collaborates with opposition & stakeholders.	180 (45%)	140 (35%)	50 (12.5%)	30 (7.5%)	3.53	Agreed
14	The party has shown sound financial management.	145 (36.25%)	130 (32.5%)	75 (18.75%)	50 (12.5%)	3.15	Agreed
15	The party's decisions align with its manifesto.	100 (25%)	110 (27.5%)	90 (22.5%)	100 (25%)	2.34	Disagreed
Grand Mean					3.12	Agreed	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

The table presents an analysis of electorates' perceptions regarding the post-election performance of political parties. The mean scores were calculated to interpret general perceptions, and the grand mean of 3.12 suggests an overall agreement that political parties have performed reasonably well after elections.

The first indicator evaluates whether the party has demonstrated effective leadership. With 38.75% of respondents strongly agreeing and 32.5% agreeing, the mean score of 3.32 indicates that a majority of electorates perceive the party's leadership as competent and decisive. However, 28.75% of respondents (D + SD) express disagreement, suggesting that while many approve of the leadership, a significant minority remain dissatisfied with its effectiveness.

The second statement assesses whether the party has made progress on key policies. A combined 71.25% (SA + A) of respondents agree, leading to a mean score of 3.25. This suggests that electorates generally acknowledge some advancements in policy implementation. However, 28.75% disagree, which implies that some citizens either do not see tangible progress or believe the pace of implementation is insufficient.

Collaboration with opposition parties and key stakeholders is crucial for effective governance. The third statement received the highest level of agreement, with 45% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing, resulting in a mean score of 3.53. This suggests that electorates perceive the ruling party as engaging in dialogue and cooperation with various political actors. The relatively low 20% disagreement (D + SD) further reinforces this positive perception, indicating that political inclusiveness is relatively well-practised.

Financial management is a critical aspect of governance, and the fourth statement evaluates whether the party has demonstrated sound fiscal responsibility. With 36.25% strongly agreeing and 32.5% agreeing, the mean score of 3.15 suggests that electorates generally perceive the party as managing resources responsibly. However, 31.25% (D + SD) of respondents express doubts, indicating that concerns about financial accountability still exist. This suggests that while financial



management may be perceived as adequate, improvements are necessary to increase public confidence.

The final statement assesses whether the party’s decisions align with its manifesto. This received the lowest level of agreement, with a mean score of 2.34, falling into the “Disagreed” category. 25% of respondents strongly agree and 27.5% agree, but an equal 47.5% (D + SD) disagree, highlighting a major concern regarding political consistency. This suggests that while the party has made some progress in leadership and policy, there is a widespread perception that its governance does not fully reflect the commitments made during the campaign.

The grand mean of 3.12 suggests that, overall, electorates have a positive perception of post-election performance. However, key insights emerge from the variations in mean scores. While leadership effectiveness (3.32), policy progress (3.25), stakeholder collaboration (3.53), and financial management (3.15) are generally well-rated, the lack of alignment between decisions and campaign manifestos (2.34) raises concerns about political accountability and trustworthiness. This discrepancy suggests that while electorates acknowledge governance efforts, they remain skeptical about whether campaign promises translate into real policy actions. Political parties may need to enhance their commitment to campaign promises and improve communication on policy alignment to bridge this gap.

While post-election performance is generally viewed positively, the significant concern regarding manifesto alignment suggests that political parties must work harder to ensure that their governance reflects their electoral commitments. Strengthening policy transparency and ensuring tangible implementation of campaign pledges could help improve public trust and long-term electoral credibility.

Table 4: Factors that Contribute to the Electorates' Perception of the Fulfillment of Campaign Promises by Governors

S/N	Factors	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Interpretation
16	Governance effectiveness significantly contributes to the Electorates' assessment of the fulfillment of campaign promises.	140 (35%)	130 (32.5%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	2.84	Agreed
17	Transparency significantly contributes to the Electorates' assessment of the fulfillment of campaign promises.	130 (32.5%)	125 (31.25%)	85 (21.25%)	60 (15%)	2.70	Agreed
18	Communication significantly contributes to the Electorates' assessment of the fulfillment of campaign promises.	140 (35%)	135 (33.75%)	75 (18.75%)	50 (12.5%)	2.83	Agreed
19	Socioeconomic conditions significantly contribute to the	120 (30%)	110 (27.5%)	90 (22.5%)	80 (20%)	2.52	Agreed



20	Electoralates' assessment of the fulfillment of campaign promises. Empathy with the masses significantly contributes to the Electoralates' assessment of the fulfillment of campaign promises.	160 (40%)	130 (32.5%)	70 (17.5%)	40 (10%)	3.18	Agreed
Grand Mean					2.81	Agreed	

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2025

The table presents an analysis of factors that influence electoralates’ perception of the fulfillment of campaign promises by governors. The mean scores were calculated to interpret general perceptions, and the grand mean of 2.81 suggests that electoralates generally agree that multiple factors shape their assessment of governors’ fulfillment of campaign promises. However, differences in individual mean scores reveal the relative significance of each factor.

The first factor, governance effectiveness, received 35% strong agreement and 32.5% agreement, resulting in a mean score of 2.84. This suggests that electoralates consider the overall performance of a governor’s administration a key determinant in evaluating whether campaign promises have been fulfilled. However, 32.5% (D + SD) of respondents express disagreement, indicating that while governance effectiveness is crucial, other factors may also shape public perception.

Transparency, as the second factor, received a mean score of 2.70, with 32.5% strongly agreeing and 31.25% agreeing. This suggests that Electoralates value openness in governance and see it as a significant determinant in assessing a leader’s commitment to campaign promises. However, 36.25% (D + SD) of respondents express doubts about the extent to which transparency influences their perceptions, indicating that while it is important, other contextual factors may also play a role.

The role of communication in shaping voter perception scored 2.83, with 35% strong agreement and 33.75% agreement. This indicates that electoralates believe that effective communication from governors about policy progress and challenges significantly influences their judgment. However, 31.25% (D + SD) of respondents disagree, suggesting that communication alone may not be sufficient to convince the electoralates that promises have been fulfilled.

The fourth factor, socioeconomic conditions, received the lowest mean score of 2.52, with 30% strong agreement and 27.5% agreement. This suggests that while electoralates acknowledge that economic and social realities influence their perception of government performance, this factor may not be as influential as governance effectiveness, transparency, or communication. The relatively high 42.5% (D + SD) disagreement indicates that many electoralates may evaluate campaign promise fulfillment independently of broader socioeconomic challenges.

Empathy with the masses, the final factor, received the highest mean score of 3.18, with 40% strong agreement and 32.5% agreement. This suggests that electoralates highly value leaders who demonstrate concern for the struggles of ordinary citizens. The relatively lower 27.5% (D + SD) disagreement further reinforces the notion that emotional connection and responsiveness to public concerns play a crucial role in shaping voter perceptions.

The grand mean of 2.81 indicates that, on average, electoralates agree that governance effectiveness, transparency, communication, socioeconomic conditions, and empathy all contribute to their perception of campaign promise fulfillment. However, the variations in individual mean



scores suggest that some factors such as empathy (3.18) and communication (2.83) are perceived as more influential than others, such as socioeconomic conditions (2.52).

The findings highlight that while governance effectiveness and policy outcomes are important, electorates also place significant emphasis on how leaders engage with the public, communicate progress, and demonstrate empathy. Political leaders aiming to strengthen public trust should prioritize transparency, maintain open communication channels, and ensure that their actions reflect genuine concern for the well-being of the electorates.

Table 5: Influence of Campaign Manifestos and Post-Election Performance on Voting Behavior and Future Political Participation

S/N	Influence on Voting Behavior and Participation	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Interpretation
21	The party's performance in office has influenced my likelihood of voting for them in future elections.	170 (42.5%)	140 (35%)	60 (15%)	30 (7.5%)	3.64	Agreed
22	The party's manifesto and campaign promises have had a significant impact on my voting decisions.	160 (40%)	145 (36.25%)	65 (16.25%)	30 (7.5%)	3.59	Agreed
23	I feel more engaged and motivated to participate in the political process as a result of the party's actions in office.	155 (38.75%)	140 (35%)	75 (18.75%)	30 (7.5%)	3.56	Agreed
24	The party's transparency and accountability have influenced my trust in the political system.	165 (41.25%)	140 (35%)	65 (16.25%)	30 (7.5%)	3.61	Agreed
25	I am more likely to	150 (37.5%)	135 (33.75%)	70 (17.5%)	45 (11.25%)	3.36	Agreed



actively participate in future elections (e.g., volunteering, campaigning, voting) due to the party's performance.

Grand Mean	3.55	Agreed
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Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2025

Table 5 examines the influence of campaign manifestos and post-election performance on voting behavior and future political participation. The grand mean of 3.55 suggests a general agreement among respondents that both campaign promises and post-election performance significantly impact their voting behavior and political engagement.

The first statement, assessing whether a party’s performance in office influences the likelihood of electorates supporting them in future elections, received 42.5% strong agreement and 35% agreement, resulting in a mean score of 3.64. This indicates that a party’s governance record plays a major role in shaping voter preferences for subsequent elections. Only 22.5% (D + SD) of respondents expressed disagreement, suggesting that most electorates make future electoral choices based on a party’s ability to fulfill its promises.

The second statement focuses on the impact of campaign manifestos and promises on voting decisions, with 40% strongly agreeing and 36.25% agreeing, leading to a mean score of 3.59. This suggests that electorates consider pre-election commitments when making electoral decisions, emphasizing the importance of well-crafted and credible manifestos. The 23.75% (D + SD) disagreement suggests that while manifestos are influential, some electorates prioritize other factors, such as candidate appeal or party reputation.

The third statement examines whether the party’s actions in office have led to greater political engagement and motivation among electorates. With 38.75% strong agreement and 35% agreement, this factor has a mean score of 3.56, indicating that governance outcomes significantly influence political participation. However, 26.25% (D + SD) of respondents do not feel more engaged, suggesting that for some electorates, political apathy persists despite government performance.

The fourth statement assesses whether the party’s transparency and accountability have influenced trust in the political system, with 41.25% strong agreement and 35% agreement, leading to a mean score of 3.61. This suggests that openness and honesty in governance positively impact public trust. However, 23.75% (D + SD) disagreement highlights that a segment of the electorates remains skeptical of political transparency efforts.

The final statement explores whether the party’s performance has made electorates more likely to actively participate in future elections, including volunteering, campaigning, and voting. With 37.5% strong agreement and 33.75% agreement, the mean score of 3.36 suggests that governance outcomes influence political activism. However, 28.75% (D + SD) of respondents remain indifferent or disengaged, indicating that performance alone may not be sufficient to drive higher electoral participation.

The grand mean of 3.55 confirms that electorates generally agree that campaign manifestos and post-election governance significantly shape their political behavior and participation. However, differences in individual mean scores suggest that performance in office (3.64) and transparency/accountability (3.61) have a slightly stronger impact on voter engagement than campaign manifestos (3.59) or general political participation (3.36).



The findings highlight that political parties must not only make compelling campaign promises but also deliver on them transparently to maintain voter support. Effective governance, trust-building, and accountability remain crucial in shaping future voting behavior and enhancing political participation.

Analysis of Findings from Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussion was conducted among twelve (12) civil servants. In addition to the survey findings, the focus group discussion provided diversified perspectives as follows:

1. Widespread Skepticism toward Campaign Promises

One of the most prominent findings is the deep-rooted skepticism among electorates regarding campaign promises. Participants consistently viewed campaign manifestos as rhetorical instruments aimed primarily at winning elections rather than as sincere policy commitments.

2. Repetition of Unfulfilled Promises across Electoral Cycles

The FGD revealed that many campaign promises are recycled from one election cycle to another with little evidence of progress or completion. Participants emphasized that core development issues such as employment creation, infrastructure development, improved healthcare, education, and economic empowerment remain persistent campaign themes without corresponding long-term outcomes.

3. Manifestos Perceived as Unrealistic and Economically Unviable

Another major finding is the perception that many campaign promises are economically unrealistic. Participants questioned the feasibility of pledges such as free education, free healthcare, and mass employment without clearly articulated funding strategies.

4. Weak Accountability and Absence of Consequences for Non-Performance

The FGD strongly indicates that the lack of accountability mechanisms is a central factor undermining trust in campaign promises. Participants consistently noted that politicians face no meaningful consequences for failing to fulfill their pledges.

5. Mixed Record of Post-Election Performance

The data reveal a nuanced assessment of post-election performance. Participants acknowledged that some governors fulfilled certain campaign promises, particularly in areas such as infrastructure development and social welfare policies in education. These achievements were seen as tangible, visible, and impactful, demonstrating that manifesto-driven governance is possible.

6. Persistence of Unfulfilled Commitments in Critical Sectors

Despite isolated achievements, participants identified several key areas where campaign promises remained unfulfilled. These include irregular salary payments to civil servants, abandonment of projects initiated by previous administrations, inadequate job creation, and weak youth empowerment initiatives.

7. Lack of Policy Continuity across Administrations

A major structural finding from the FGD is the tendency for successive administrations to abandon projects initiated by their predecessors. Participants viewed this practice as wasteful and politically motivated, prioritizing personal or party recognition over long-term development.

8. Economic Conditions as the Primary Measure of Governance Performance

The findings show that economic realities strongly shape how electorates assess promise fulfillment. Participants consistently evaluated government performance based on their ability to meet basic needs, secure stable income, and cope with rising living costs.

9. Media Influence and Distorted Perceptions of Performance

The FGD highlights the influential role of the media in shaping perceptions of campaign promise fulfillment. Participants noted that media coverage is often polarized, with outlets emphasizing either successes or failures depending on political alignment.

10. Transparency Deficits and Poor Government Communication



Another key finding is that limited transparency in governance fuels public suspicion. Participants argued that when government actions, budgets, and project progress are not openly communicated, electorates assume non-performance.

11. Decline in Trust in the Political System

The cumulative effect of broken promises, weak accountability, and economic hardship is a significant decline in trust in political institutions. Participants expressed a growing belief that politicians prioritize personal interests over public welfare.

12. Shift in Voting Behavior toward Performance-Based Evaluation

Despite declining trust, the findings indicate an emerging shift toward more pragmatic voting behaviour. Participants reported increased reliance on candidates' past performance, credibility, and integrity rather than campaign rhetoric or party loyalty.

13. Rising Voter Apathy and Political Disengagement

One of the most concerning findings is the rise in voter apathy. Many participants reported disengagement from voting due to the belief that elections do not lead to meaningful change.

14. Strong Demand for Institutional and Structural Reforms

The FGD data reveal strong public demand for reforms aimed at restoring trust and accountability. Participants emphasized the need for mechanisms to track campaign promises, strengthen electoral regulations, enhance civic education, and introduce legal consequences for deliberate misinformation.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed persistent skepticism among electorates regarding the feasibility and implementability of campaign promises, particularly in relation to budgetary clarity and project timelines. This aligns with research showing that political manifestos in emerging democracies frequently suffer from issue ambiguity and personality-driven campaigning rather than clear policy platforms, a pattern that weakens post-election accountability mechanisms (Okolie, Enyiazu, & Nnamani, 2021).

With respect to the alignment between manifesto promises and post-election performance, respondents expressed mixed perceptions. While some governors were acknowledged for fulfilling specific commitments, particularly in infrastructural development—significant shortcomings persisted, including irregular salary payments and abandoned projects. These findings resonate with broader analyses of Nigerian electoral politics that highlight the dominance of vote-seeking over issue-based campaigning and the failure of elected officials to translate party manifestos into concrete governance outcomes (Okolie et al., 2021).

Several factors were found to shape voter perceptions of promise fulfillment. Empathy and perceived responsiveness emerged as important influences, suggesting that electorates value leaders who demonstrate attentiveness to citizen welfare. This finding is consistent with studies indicating that political communication and campaign messaging significantly shape voter expectations and retrospective evaluations of governance performance in Nigerian elections (Bratton, 2008).

Economic conditions also emerged as a critical determinant of voter perception, with financial hardship frequently overshadowing developmental achievements and leading to negative evaluations of governance performance. Empirical studies have shown that in contexts of economic strain, voters are more likely to base political judgments on material conditions and immediate welfare outcomes rather than abstract policy commitments (Lewis & Bratton, 2000; Bratton, Mattes, & Gyimah-Boadi, 2005).

Media influence played a significant role in shaping public perceptions of governance performance. Politically aligned media coverage contributed to polarized interpretations of political outcomes, while misinformation complicated voters' assessments of political promises and delivery. Research on media framing and political communication in Nigerian electoral contexts supports the conclusion that media representations significantly influence public perceptions of political actors and governance credibility (Oso, 2012).



Transparency and accountability were identified as essential for fostering trust between political leaders and the electorate. Participants emphasized that open communication regarding governance challenges enhances public confidence, whereas opacity reinforces suspicion and perceptions of unfulfilled pledges. Related literature on democratic accountability in Nigeria similarly underscores the centrality of transparency and institutional accountability in building public trust in governance and electoral processes (Okibe, 2020).

An emerging pattern identified in the study is the growing prioritization of performance outcomes over manifesto content in voter decision-making. Repeated unmet expectations were found to contribute to voter cynicism and political disengagement. Empirical work on accountability and governance suggests that when electorates perceive a persistent gap between political rhetoric and tangible outcomes, trust in democratic institutions declines and citizen participation diminishes (Schedler, 1999).

Despite widespread skepticism, manifesto documents were found to retain some relevance, particularly among voters seeking policy clarity or political change. However, electoral decisions were increasingly shaped by candidate credibility, past performance, and party identity rather than detailed manifesto provisions. This finding aligns with existing scholarship indicating that Nigerian voting behaviour often reflects personalistic, ethnic, and identity-based considerations over issue-based voting (Lewis, 2007; Bratton, Bhavnani, & Chen, 2012).

The cumulative effect of unfulfilled promises and weak accountability mechanisms has adversely affected citizen engagement, contributing to voter apathy and posing challenges to democratic legitimacy. Consistent with recommendations in political science literature on democratic governance in Nigeria, strengthened accountability frameworks, such as transparent tracking of political promises and enhanced civic education are necessary to restore public trust and reinforce democratic participation (Diamond, 2008; Norris, 2011).

Conclusion

The study concludes that there is a significant positive relationship between electorates' assessment of gubernatorial campaign manifestos and the fulfillment of the promises therein. Post-election performance of governors in Ekiti State is strongly linked to the fulfillment of their campaign promises. Additionally, governance effectiveness, transparency, communication, and socioeconomic conditions significantly influence electorates' evaluation of promise fulfillment. Strengthening accountability mechanisms, promoting transparency, and enhancing civic education are essential for restoring public trust and improving the credibility of electoral manifestos.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- i. Political candidates should develop manifestos that are realistic, achievable, and grounded in clear policy frameworks. Manifestos should align with the state's economic and governance realities to ensure that campaign promises are practical and can be effectively implemented.
- ii. Politicians and policymakers should regularly update citizens on the progress of campaign promises through public engagements, media briefings, and digital platforms. Consistent communication helps manage public expectations and facilitates constructive feedback from electorates.
- iii. Civil society organizations and electoral bodies should intensify voter education programs to enable citizens to critically evaluate campaign manifestos and make informed electoral choices.
- iv. Electorates should place greater emphasis on policy proposals, governance track records, and candidates' demonstrated performance rather than relying solely on party affiliations or short-term material incentives.
- v. Civil society groups should collaborate with the media to fact-check campaign promises, monitor government performance, and report findings to the public.



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