ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF 2007 AND 2011 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NORTH-WEST GEO-POLITICAL ZONE

BY

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CERTIFICATION

This dissertation titled "Elections and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria: A study of 2007 and 2011 General Elections in North-West Geo-Political Zone'' by Abdullahi Yahuza Zainawa meets the requirements governing the award of Doctor of Philosphy (Ph.D) degree in Political Science, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DECLARATION

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my Children, Ibrahim Abdullahi, Bello Abdullahi and Aminu Abdullahi.

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ABSTRACT

In contemporary times, political systems are undergoing qualitative transformation from authoritarian to participatory regimes. This worldwide trend known as democratization has made the issue of election a crucial political imperative. Nigeria's experience with electoral politics has over the years been characterized by high incidence of electoral malaise manifesting in the prevalence of electoral rigging, violence and other forms of malpractices which tend to erode established electoral standards and defy the prospects of free, fair and credible elections in the country. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the relationship between politicians and challenges of conducting free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria with particular reference to 2007 and 2011General Elections. The location of this study is North-West geo-political zone which comprises of seven States but four states were sampled using a simple random sampling technique. The four selected states are: Kebbi, Kaduna, Kano and Zamfara States. In each of the selected states, a multi-stage cluster sampling procedure was used in sampling population for this study. First, clusters of local governments in each of the selected states were randomly selected. Secondly, clusters of political wards in each of the selected Local Government Areas were randomly selected. A total of six hundred questionnaires were distributed across all the selected areas to elicit information on the subject matter but three hundred and two were retrieved. Similarly, a total of twelve respondents were interviewed across the study areas to elicit data on the subject matter. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis are adopted in this study. First, descriptive statistical tools of tables and percentages are used and secondly qualitative analysis is also used. The major findings of the research are: most voters are induced with money by politicians both those in power and those seeking to be in power to influence voters' choice of candidate or political party in order to retain or capture political power during elections, the 2007 and 2011 general elections were to a large extent fraudulent as they did not largely reflected voters' choice due to inflation of election results figures, multiple voting especially during 2007 elections, falsification of election results, delay in commencement of voting, result manipulation and wholesale subversion of the will of people which were largely perpetrated by the incumbents. Also, the challenges of conducting free and fair elections in 2007 and 2011 general elections were to a large extent due to partisanship, partiality, and incompetence of the Independent National Electoral Commission. The study also found that the 2007 general elections have lower democratic quality and higher credibility deficit as compared to 2011 general elections. In addition there was high incidence of violence during and after the 2007 and 2011 general elections as well as intimidation of voters by massive deployment of police and armed forces which frightened and threatened voters and which consequently undermined the credibility of the elections. Lastly, the study also found that the level of voters turn out during presidential and national assembly elections is higher than during gubernatorial and state assembly elections which poses a challenge to democracy at grass root and the degree of rigging, malpractices and irregularities was higher in presidential and national assembly elections than in gubernatorial and state assembly elections.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AD- Alliance for Democracy

ADO- Assistant Divisional Officer

AG- Action Congress

APP- All Peoples Party

CD- Campaign for Democracy

CPC- Congress for Progressive Change

EU- European Union

ECZ- Electoral Commission of Zambia

FCT- Federal Capital Territory

FEDECO- Federal Electoral Commission

HRW- Human Rights Watch

ICG- International Crises Group

IFES- International Foundation for Election Systems.

INEC- Independent National Electoral Commission

IPC- Inter-Parliamentary council

IPPG- Inter-Parties Parliamentary Groups

IPU- Inter-Parliamentary Union

IRI- International Republican Institute

KANU- Kenya African National Union

MMD- Movement for Multiparty Democracy

M.Sc- Master of Science

NARC- National Rainbow Coalition

NCNC- National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon.

NDC- Niger Delta Congress

NDI- National Democratic Institute

NEPU- Northern Elements Progressive Union

NNA- Nigerian National Alliance

NNDP- Nigerian National Democratic party

NPC- Northern People's Congress

NPF- National Patriotic Front.

NPN- National Party of Nigeria

NRC- National Republican Convention

Ph.D- Doctor of Philosophy

PRP- People's Redemption Party

SDP- Social Democratic Party

TMG- Transition Monitoring Group

UMBC- United Middle Belt Congress

UN- United Nations

UNHRC - United Nations Human Rights Committee.

UNIP- United Nations Independent Party

UNPP- United Nigeria Peoples party

UPGA- United Peoples Grand Alliance

UPN- United Party of Nigeria

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Throughout the World today, political systems are undergoing qualitative transformation from authoritarian to participatory regimes. This worldwide trend, otherwise known as democratization (Elekwa, 2008:iv) has made the issue of election a critical political imperative.

Election as a democratic practice refers to the system whereby the citizenry (organized as electorate) consciously choose people into civic roles through a competitive selection process (Raymond, 2000:164). *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* vol.5 defines election "as a procedure of aggregating preferences of a particular kind". The two features of this definition are procedure and preferences. By procedure, the concept is used to describe a special way of doing something while preference connotes choice between alternatives.

Election can also be described as a procedure that allows members of an organization, community or a nation to choose representatives who will hold positions of authority within it. According to Givinn and Norton, (1992) election

is the formal process of selecting a person for public office or accepting or registering a political proposition by voting. They state further that an election is one of the means by which a society may organize itself and make specified formal decisions, adding that where voting is free, it acts simultaneously as a system for making certain decisions regarding the power relations in a society and as a method for seeking political obedience with a minimum of sacrifice of the individual's freedom. The essence of a democratic election is a freedom of choice. During elections, the electorate is given the opportunity to choose between alternative programmes of contestants. Elections also promote public accountability. The threat of defeat at the polls exerts pressure on those in power to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and take account of popular interests and demands when they make their decisions. There is no one accepted procedure of election. In ancient Greece, various types of procedures were used. These include voting by show of hands, written votes and ballots.

In the old Roman Republic, elections of principal officers were by a plurality of tribes. In the medieval church, the election of superiors was by a small electorate consisting of those next in rank. However, with the emergence of liberal democracy in the seventeenth and eighteenth century in Western Europe, the concept of election took new meaning anchored on the principles of consent

franchise and representation. In effect, election not only serves to provide the voter opportunity to exercise his choices or preferences on political leadership but also provides the basis on which elected political leaders assume legitimacy of their positions (Elekwa, 2008:6).

The place and vitality of election in democracy cannot be over-emphasized. In this regard therefore:

> *Elections have the potential to confer legitimacy, moderate dissent, engender compliance and heighten citizen efficacy. Elections are especially crucial for eliciting consent from those citizens who would prefer alternative rules and policies within the political process (Elekwa, 2008:7).*

Ideally, election is a means of determining the will of the people regarding their choice of political leaders and regime types. In essence, both the process and the outcome of the election should reflect the consent and aspirations of the people as organized electorate (Olu, 2003:18). This implies that apart from being a routine periodic democratic exercise, election must be competitive, transparent, free and fair as well as credible in order to live up to its democratic essence and merit.

In Nigeria, the issue of election has been a problematic endeavor over the years. Ironically, election in Nigeria has been bereft of democratic ideals, much as it

has been characterized by untoward circumstances. According to Ibeanu, (2007:3);

> *The Electoral process as currently constituted in Nigeria is psychologically alienating for the vast majority of the people who are largely outsiders and are only periodically inserted in the process when they cast votes. At the same time this alienation is underscored by the fact that even when these vote casters have completed the ritual of voting, the outcome bears little semblance to what they chose in their ballots.*

Besides, there have been problems of electoral violence and fraud, bulk of which may arise from the excesses of the politicians in their desperate bid to consolidate, capture or control state power. In the face of this therefore, electoral experiences in Nigeria so far have left much to be considered.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The centrality of competitive, credible, free, fair and acceptable elections in democracy cannot be over-emphasized. However contrary has been the experience in Nigeria as over the years elections were characterized by high incidence of electoral malaise manifesting in the prevalence of electoral rigging, fraud, violence, and other forms of electoral malpractices and irregularities which tend to erode established electoral standards and pose challenge to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections in the country. It is against this

background that this study examines the challenges of conducting free and fair elections in Nigeria. The study will investigate the challenges encountered during conduct of elections which do not augur well to democratic governance in the country. As election is considered to be a critical element of modern representative government which is closely linked to growth and development of democratic political order and as the most singular indicator of democracy. Elections also offer the electorate the freedom of choice, power to hold elected leaders accountable and to provide protection against perpetuation of arbitrary rule.

In effect therefore, the study will seek to provide answers to the following fundamental questions:

i) What is the nature and character of Nigeria's electoral politics?

ii) How do the politicians pose challenges to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria?

iii) What are the implications of these challenges for democratic consolidation in Nigeria?

iv) What is the way forward as regards mitigation of electoral malaise in Nigeria?

v) How can identified challenges be addressed?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study aimed at achieving the following grand objectives:

i) To examine the nature and character of Nigeria's electoral politics.

ii) To establish a relationship between politicians and challenges of conducting free and fair elections in Nigeria.

iii) To examine the role politicians played in the 2007 and 2011 electoral processes and outcomes in Nigeria.

iv) To establish the impact of these challenges on democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

v) To recommend ways of addressing identified challenges.

1.4 Justification for the Study

Nigeria's experience with elections over the years has thrown up a number of issues pertaining to the processes, conduct and outcome of election. So far, enough scholarly works have not been done to address these issues. Given the increasing relevance and topicality of election in Nigeria's current democratic dispensation, more researches such as this are certainly needed to examine challenges of conducting free and fair elections in Nigeria. In fact, the flawed general elections of 2007 and 2011 have threatened the fragile democratic

experiment in Nigeria due to irregularities associated with the elections. Here lies the rationale for this study. It is also expected that the salient issues raised and addressed in the course of this study will help to provoke further studies and academic discourse on relevant aspects of the subject matter towards cumulative advancement of knowledge.

1.5 Assumptions

The thrust of analysis in this study will be premised on the following assumptions:

i) The political office holders in Nigeria engender circumstances which make the realization of free and fair elections problematic.

ii) The character of people in government in Nigeria's elections detracts from democratic essence and merits.

iii) Political office holders impacted negatively on the 2007 and 2011 General Elections in Nigeria and particularly in North-West geo-political zone.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

This study addresses its subject matter within the confines of Nigeria's democratic dispensation with particular reference to the 2007 and 2011 General Elections. Within this context and timeframe, the study focuses on the impact and implications of political office holders as it relates to the question of free and fair elections in Nigeria. The need to concentrate on 2007 and 2011 General Elections alone is as a result of the concern to investigate a clearly delineated political situation which has a contemporary relevance.

It is pertinent to discuss some of the limitations of this study. One of the limitations of this study is the issue of accessibility. Some of the personalities selected to be interviewed proved difficult to get and elicit their views on the research. Secondly, it is that of paucity of financial resources which affect the journeys slated by the researcher in order to generate data and also conduct the field work. Lastly, is associated with the field work. The researcher administered questionnaires on the broad spectrum of Nigerians. And the retrieval of these questionnaires constituted a problem towards the completion of the research given the attitude of most Nigerians to research enterprise.

1.7 Working Definition of Concepts

Below are definitions of concepts in the context used in this work.

Challenges – means difficulties associated with conduct of acceptable, free, fair and credible democratic elections. These difficulties include issues like malpractices and irregularities, logistics, security, neutrality and independence of the electoral body, violence, inducement of voters etc (Musa, 2009:11). In a nutshell, challenges in the context of this work refer to the difficulties associated with free expression of will of people during elections.

The relationship between politicians in Nigeria and challenges of conducting free, fair and credible elections is that the politicians who are minority, powerful, influential, well respected and who control a lot of resources tend to influence elections in their favour which tend to erode established electoral standards and therefore defy the prospects of free, fair and credible elections in the country.

General Elections – means nation-wide elections to choose leaders and representatives at national and state levels. Such elections include Presidential Elections, National Assembly Elections, Gubernatorial Elections as well as State House of Assemblies Elections (INEC, 2007:37).

Geo-political Zone – means political divisions of Nigeria into zones to ensure relatively fair or equitable distribution of important national political offices and positions among various parts of the country. The geo-political zones in Nigeria are: Southwest Geo-political zone, Northwest Geo-political zone, South-south Geopolitical zone, North-central Geo-political zone, South-east Geo-political zone and North-east Geo-political zone (*Electoral Reform Network 2005:5-6*).

1.8 Outline of Chapters

This research study is arranged into seven chapters. Below are the chapter titles and contents.

Chapter One: General Background to the study

As a preliminary chapter, the chapter introduces the study, statement of the research problem, objectives of the research, justification for the study, assumptions of the research, as well as outline of chapters.

Chapter Two: Review of Relevant Literature and Theoretical Framework.

This chapter reviews relevant scholarly writings and debates on issues pertaining elections. A thematic approach is adopted in the review of literature in order to provide a clear and rigorous review of the ideas and opinions of scholars

on elections. Similarly, the chapter will provide the theoretical framework guiding the research study.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter will devote attention to research methodology used in carrying out this study. The chapter explains the methods and procedures that are followed in the conduct of the research. It encompasses the description of the study areas, types and sources of data used in gathering information on the subject matter, techniques or instruments of data collection, sampling procedures as well as method of data analysis.

Chapter Four: Challenges of Party politics in Nigeria

This chapter will provide an explanation on challenges of party politics and electoral politics in Nigeria.

Chapter Five: An Overview of General Elections in Nigeria

This chapter will provide an overview of General Elections in Nigeria which include pre-independence and post-independence elections in the country. The chapter will also provide statistics of election results in Nigeria showing performances of political parties and candidates.

Chapter Six: Data presentation and Discussion of Results.

This chapter presents, analyses and discusses both quantitatively and qualitatively data generated from questionnaires, interviews and discussions. Descriptive analysis using Statistical tools such as tables and percentages, will be adopted and utilized so as to analyse the challenges of conducting free and fair elections in Nigeria with emphasis on 2007 and 2011 general elections.

Chapter Seven: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations.

This chapter would provide summary, conclusion and general recommendations on the basis of the research findings. The chapter would also cover the references, appendixes and other concluding remarks.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Literature Review

This literature review explores some of existing works with a view to situating the study on sound, conceptual, theoretical and analytical premise. The thrust of the literature review is thematically prosecuted.. It is important to point out that the need to follow the thematic order in prosecuting the literature was informed by desire of the researcher to achieve a systematic presentation and organization of the study.

2.1 Conceptualising Elections, Free and Fair Elections and Democracy

2.1.1 The Meaning and Nature of Election

The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences volume 15 conceives election as a method of aggregating preferences of a certain kind. This definition among others sees election as a choice making activity.

According to Ujoh (2004:1):

> *Election can be described as a procedure that allows members of an organization to choose representatives who will hold positions of authority within it.*

The above definition emphasizes the ideas of popular choice making and representation. Ideally, these constitute the essence of election in contemporary democracies.

According to Gwinn and Norton, (1992), election is the formal process of selecting a person for public office or accepting a political position by voting. They added that an election is one of the means by which a society may organize itself and make specific formal decisions, adding that where voting is free, it acts simultaneously as a system for making certain decisions regarding the power relation in a society, and a method for seeking political obedience with a minimum of sacrifice of the individual's freedom. The essence of election is freedom of choice.

For Eya, (2003) election is seen as the selection of persons for offices by ballot and making choice between alternatives. Eya refers to electoral process as the system adopted in the selection of persons for political offices. He further sees electoral frauds or malpractices as improper, illegal, deceitful or immoral

behaviours and conducts which vitiate free and fair electoral process. This definition is instructive in the context of this discourse.

Onyeaka, (2002:29) elucidates what characterizes an election. For him, the basic objective of election is to select the official decision makers who are supposed to represent citizens' interest. He posits that it reinforces the concept of self-rule, celebrates it and legitimizes governmental power. Election according to Onyeka, extend and enhance the amount of popular participation in the political system; he added that electoral history started with restrictive voting based on property ownership and tax payment. The basic constituents of the electoral process according to Onyeka include: political parties, political opinion, pressure groups and the mass media. They all converge in the electoral process to determine whom the leaders would be and ensure that the officials will represent their constituencies effectively.

Dunmoye, (2010:3-5) defines election as the process of selecting one person or more for an office, public or private from a wider field of candidates. Thus, the public of a jurisdiction elects its highest officials, a democratic state elects its political leaders, a corporation's shareholders elect its board of directors and the members of a club elect their officials. He argued that election is a government administered process by which people, whether opposed or

unopposed seek a political party's nomination for, or election to public office. In contemporary world elections are the only legitimate way by which governments can claim the right to power. It is in the light of this that even totalitarian regimes and military dictatorships use elections to justify their hold on power and feign claims to legitimacy though the elections might be fraudulent and neither free nor fair. Elections constitute a critical power of the democratic process. In other words, there is an inextricable link between elections and sustainable democracy.

Dunmoye (2010:3-5) submits that elections have the following functions amongst others:

i) Provides a means of selecting office holders.

ii) Provides for popular control, ensuring that those who govern are within the constraints of the choices offered to the voters.

iii) It ensures legitimacy by guaranteeing that citizens support will be given to the elected government.

iv) Ensures political stability if conducted freely and fairly.

v) It allows for alternation of political power and public offices; and lastly

vi) It allows the electorate to know the programmes of the candidates through their political campaigns and manifestoes of their political parties.

For Bain, (1964:162) election is a formal process by which electorate selects officials and determines the issues submitted to it. It is therefore a procedure for choosing officers or making binding decisions concerning policy by the vote of those formally qualified to participate. Meanwhile, to vote is to make a decision. Thus, decision making precurses and underlies all forms of voting; hence when vote has finally been cast it among others, suggests that a decision or decisions have been taken by the voter(s). Therefore, in its most formal sense, election refers to "a procedure for choosing officers or making binding decisions concerning policy by the vote of those formally qualified to participate (*Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. 10, 1996*).

Akzin distinguishes between technical and social significance of election. In a technical sense, he conceives election as "the process by which an office is assigned to a person by an act of volition needing the simultaneous expression of opinion by many people". In its social sense, Akzin defines election as "the process by which a person is linked to an office with due provision for the participation of the people meant to come under the officer's authority". (Akzim, 1960: 706). The social aspect of election suggests the idea of ruling a society with the consent of the ruled. This tantamounts to democracy and differentiate election from appointment.

As a corollary to the above, elections are the formal procedure by which public offices are filled or specific policy measures are decided. They also help to determine periodic test of party's and or candidate's acceptance and popularity. Besides elections confer legitimacy on public office holders and subject public office holders and political parties to periodic assessment; by so doing, it enhances accountability and good governance. Thus, elections and voting are critical elements in a giving democracy. As a process of choosing public and/or political office holders, elections and the electoral process tend to confer legitimacy to the people's representatives and strengthen the validity of politics of participation. Nonetheless, participatory democracy becomes illusive when the electorates loose faith in the electoral system. In nascent democracies such as Nigeria, elections have come to be in terms of selecting and imposing political leadership on the people. However, the traditional role of election as highlighted above can be realized where the electoral system is just, fair and provides a level playing ground for political actors. By electoral system we refer to the institutionalized process of determining popular choice in direct and popular representation in indirect or representative democracies, the latter being dictated by the size and complexity of modern state systems (Igwe, 2002:132). Igwe equally added that for any democratic election to take place, an

independent electoral body must be set up to supervise the exercise; political parties must be freely organized and citizens must have the fundamental right of freedom of speech and association, with provisions for independent or non-party candidates.

Elections in the words of Diamond, (2002:353) "are the Litmus test of a democratic political system." This is such that to define liberal democracy in its essence, is to underline the centrality of elections. Of the three conditions listed as defining the character of a liberal democratic system, two are categorically elections based. These are:

a) Meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and organized groups for positions of government power.
b) A 'highly inclusive' level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies, at least three free and fair elections…, and
c) Civil and political liberties sufficient to ensure the integrity of political co petition and participation Diamond, (2002:353). As is obvious from (a) and (b) above, election serves to focus political competition and to channel mass political participation in a liberal democratic system. By those two basic purposes, election further serves two other important purposes of

accountability and charge without which liberal democracy will loose its character as a responsible and responsive political system.

Odofin, (2005:96) argued that election is considered to be a critical element of modern representative government, closely linked to the growth and development of democratic political order and as the most important singular indicator of the presence of democracy. He conceptualized it as the manner of choices agreed upon by the political community which empower them to select one or few competitors out of many to occupy one or a number of position of authority. In order to guarantee certain degree of fairness and justice to all concerned, the manner of choice usually involves rules and regulations. Election in democratic society is regarded as the major instrument for the recruitment of political leadership. Elections are the principal mechanism by which citizens hold government accountable both retrospectively for their policies and more generally for the manner in which they govern. Furthermore, elections reinforce party activities and intensifying political awareness of the people. Voters are educated through the process, foundations for representative are provided and legitimacy granted to government. It is observed that through elections, the political system display its degree of democracy.

The role of elections in democratic procedure varies across nation and depends upon a number of preconditions such as level of literacy, freedom of expression and tolerance and mutual respect in politics. However, the legitimizing function of election is held to be universal, it presents legitimate symbol "ritual of choice" and indeed a symbol of democracy (Nnoli, 1990).

Although elections are held in a wide variety of political systems, they assume special significance in liberal democracies. This is so because elections guarantee popular participation through which political representatives are chosen from the competing candidates and provide the opportunities for the citizens to play a role in the governance of their society. The electoral process aggregates various demands in society into a limited number of choices and assures the representation of diverse opinions in the policy-making-arena. Consequently, the process accords political leadership legitimacy in which to base their rule and their policies. Furthermore, elections also serve more strategic function, they decide which party and leaders achieve political power within the political system (Jackson, 1994:463).

Akinboye, (2005:295) argued that definitional consensus about election is a matter of intellectual supposition. However, elections generally represent a means through which political expression is measured and the exercise of state

power legitimized and accepted as being derived from the consent of the people. As Hugh Bone and Austin Ranney put it:

> *In a democratic nation…elections of executives and legislators constitute the principal institutional device for making sure that government shall derive its just power from the consent of the governed (Bone and Ranney, 1971:1)*

Elections, essentially, are a means by which the citizens choose their representatives in conformity with the dictates of modern democracy. Mackenzie alluded to this when he assets that elections are "rituals of choice" and that their binding character are derived from the participation of the individual as a chooser in a social act which confers legitimate authority on the person chosen" Mackenzie, (1968:59). Adejumobi situates the symbolism of elections within the context of popular sovereignty and the expression of social pact between the state and the people. To him, "It is the kernel of political accountability and a means of ensuring reciprocity and exchange between the governors and the governed" (Adejumobi, 1998:31).

The centrality of elections in a democratic polity cannot be over emphasized. Momoh and Adejumobi underscored this quite poignantly:

> *Elections occupy a central place in the democratic process through the animating force they provide for representative government. On the other hand, they serve as an instrument of legitimization for the state and those who manage the reigns of state power, while on the other hand they ensure political accountability to the people (Momoh and Adejumobi, 1999:142).*

Obi and Abutudu share the same view when they posit that "…elections offer the electorate the freedom of choice, the power to hold elected leaders accountable and provide protection against perpetuation of arbitrary rule" (Obi and Abutudu, 1999:285). Bratton perceptively submits that in spite of the clear distinction between elections and democracy, elections remain fundamental, not only for installing democratic governments but also more significantly as a necessary requisite for broader democratic consolidation (Bratton, 1999). Breytenbach's submission is similarly germane. To him, although elections are insufficient to guarantee democracies, their symbolism is quite powerful and they are crucially important in measuring public support (Breytenbach, 1997:57). Chukwu, (2005:357) contends that elections are properly regarded as the central institution of democratic governments. This is because in a democracy the authority of the government derives solely from the consent of the governed. The principal mechanism for obtaining and translating that consent into governmental

authority is the holding of genuinely democratic elections. Indeed, all modern democracies hold elections but not all elections are democratic. A democratic election would characteristically be competitive, periodic, inclusive, definitive and free and fair (Chukwu, 2005:357).

The concept of election has a multiplicity of dimension. In this respect, (Iyayi, 2007:10) observes that:

> *…elections are complex set of activities with different variables that act and feed on one another. It can be defined as a formal act of collective decision that occurs in a stream of connected antecedent and subsequent behavior. It involves the participation of the people in the act of electing their leaders…(Iyayi, 2007:10).*

The above citation captures the essence of election as an organized but dynamic process. This process entails a lot of cognate activities. In fact:

> *It encompasses activities before, during and after elections. It includes the legal and constitutional framework of elections, the registration of political parties, party campaigns, the activities of the electronic and print media in terms of access; it includes campaign financing, the activities of security agencies and the government in power. It includes the authenticity and genuineness of the voter's register; it includes the independence or lack of it of the electoral agencies and organs. It includes the liberalism or otherwise of the political process in the country and the independence of the adjudicating bodies of the election (Iyayi, 2007:11).*

The foregoing observations depict election as a process which involves an interplay of activities. The existing literature on the practice and science of election have identified the following as the components of the electoral process:

- Publication/announcement/declaration of transition programmes.
- Institutionalization of electoral bodies/organs.
- Appointment of electoral managers.
- Announcement of the electoral timetable.
- Registration of political parties.
- Registration of voters
- Voter education
- Voting/Balloting proper
- Electoral monitoring and observation
- Security and surveillance of the electoral process.
- Announcement/publication of the outcome (result) of the election.
- Adjudication of disputes arising from the conduct of the election (Ojo, 2004)

The significance of election in democracy cannot be over-emphasized. Elections offer the citizenry the opportunity to choose between alternative

programmes of contestant and promote public accountability in the process of governance (Dugard, 1997; Dundas, 1998). The correlation between public accountability and the concept of election has been brilliantly captured in the following assertion:

> *The threat of defeat at the polls exerts pressure on those in power to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and take account of popular interests and wishes when they make their decisions (Dundas (1998:13).*

The idea of election is core to democratic practice. Democracy has been defined as a system of government that meets three essential conditions namely: meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and groups (especially political parties) for all effective positions of government power; a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies at least through regular and fair elections, such that no major (adult) social group is excluded and a level of political liberties sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation (Diamond, Linz and Lipset, 1989:xvi).

Besides, democratic election guarantees smooth transitions, political stability as well as restores people's confidence in the government. In this way, elections properly conducted helps in mainstreaming legitimacy of governance.

Emphasizing on the relationship between elections and political legitimacy, Elekwan, (2008:7) points out that:

> *Elections have the potential to confer legitimacy, moderate dissent, engender compliance and heighten citizen efficacy. Elections are especially crucial for eliciting consent from those citizens who would prefer alternative rules and policies.*

In a similar vein, Abraham Lincoln stressed the strategic importance of election to the U.S polity when he opined that the greatest task of the American Republic since its foundation was:

> *to demonstrate to the world that those who can fairly carryout an election can also surpress a rebellion; that ballots are rightful and peaceful successor of bullets; and that when ballots have been fairly and constitutionally decided, there can be no appeal back to bullets (Lincoln in Brown, 1983:64).*

The consensus among scholars is that election constitutes the crux of democratic system. Diamond, (2002) for instance alluded the point to the effect that elections are the litmus test for democratic agenda. The democratic essence of elections lies in its place in revalidating political mandate which ideally stem from the people. It is against this backdrop that Robert Dahl in (Diamond, 2002:41) refers to election as a polyarchy entailing the right of the people to choose at regular interval among competing leaders and policies.

2.1.2 The Concept of Free and Fair Elections

In its simplest understanding, the notion of free and fair elections presupposes the election experience whose processes, procedures and outcome are transparent, credible and acceptable Olu, (2007:29-30). In fact, it refers to elections that fulfill their democratic essence and merit.

Scholars over the years have been concerned with the idea of free and fair elections within the broader context of democratic politics and governance. (Mackenzie, 1967) for instance identifies four basic conditions for free and fair elections to include:

(i) Independent judiciary to interpret electoral laws.

(ii) An honest, competent, non-partisan electoral body to conduct elections.

(iii) A developed system of political parties, well organized to put their policies, traditions and teams of candidates before the electorate as alternatives between which to choose; and

(iv) A general acceptance throughout the political community of certain rather than vague rules of the game which limit the struggle for power because of some unspoken sentiment that of rules are not observed, more or less faithfully, the game itself will disappear and wreckage the whole system.

However, above conditions pointed out by Mackenzie represents ideal types. In effect, they can hardly be realized in absolute terms in any democracy, yet existing systems can ideally be evaluated in relation to these grand conditions.

Similarly, Dundas, (1994) conceptualizes free and fair elections in terms of the 'best practice' of electioneering. From the standpoint of the common wealth document on election observation, Dundas formulated four basic questions that would enable one arrive at whether an election is free and fair. These questions are:

(i) Is the legal framework adequate to ensure that organization of free and fair multi-party elections be achieved?

(ii) Has the full potential to contribute to holding of free and fair multi-party elections been reflected in the provision of the constitution and those of the electoral law?

(iii) Have the courts been given fullest possible role in assisting aggrieved persons who complain about failure in the procedures of major election processes?

(iv) Are the elections safeguard satisfactorily balanced with the facilitation measures in place and aimed at delivering high quality election services at cost effective levels? (Ujo, 2004:3).

Considered properly, free and fair elections would imply transparency and integrity of the total electoral experience Dugard and Dundas, (1988). Transparency within the context of elections means openness in the election process, while integrity refers to the ability of the management body in charge of election to operate without any prejudice or interference that threatens to impair its independence and functional autonomy in organizing elections (Ujo, 2004:3-10).

Transparency and integrity of the electoral process correlates with the credibility and validity of its procedures and outcome (Olu, 2007:9). Conditions necessary for transparency and integrity of elections have been highlighted in the existing literature to include:

(i) The need for a 'level playing field' for the various contending parties.

(ii) Fixed dates for elections.

(iii) Independence of the electoral and boundary commissions.

(iv) Creation of subordinate entities to enhance transparency.

(v) Involvement of political parties in the election process.

(vi) The role of observers, opinion polls and the media.

(vii) The openness or otherwise of funding for political parties and their campaigns.

(viii) The effectiveness of limits on campaign expenditure to contain the impact of money on the electoral process.

(ix) The proper arrangement for the polls on the ground.

(x) Transparency at the counting place.

(xi) The prompt and correct announcement of the polls results.

(xii) A functionally autonomous electoral body with legally enforceable mandate as well defined jurisdiction and composition (Dundas, 1994, Ujo, 2004, Dugard and Dundas, 1997).

The global standards in respect of free and fair election have been enunciated in the Declaration on Criteria for free and fair election on the *Inter-Parliamentary Council (I.P.C)*. This document which came into being on March 26, 1994 represents a pioneering attempt to set out what was required by the concept of free and fair election, considered from the perspectives of international law and human rights, and in the light of the practice of states and international organizations (Guy, 2006:3).

The aforementioned document started by emphasizing the imperative for free and fair elections in any state. In this regard, it reads:

> *In any state the authority of the government can only be derived from the will of the people as expressed in genuine, free and fair elections held at regular intervals on the basis of universal, equal and secret suffrage (page 2).*

The document also considers the conditions and requirements for the conduct of free and fair elections under a number of sub-themes which include:

- Voting and Election Rights
- Candidature, party and campaign Rights and Responsibilities; and
- The Rights and Responsibilities of States (I.P.C, 1994).

For instance, on voting and Election Rights; the document highlights as follows:

(i) Every adult citizen has the right to vote in elections, on a non-discriminatory basis.

(ii) Every adult citizen has the right to access to an effective, impartial and non-discriminatory procedure for the registration of voters.

(iii) No eligible citizen shall be denied the right to vote or disqualified from registration as a voter, other than in accordance with objectively

verifiable criteria prescribed by law, and provided that such measures are consistent with the state's obligations under international law.

(iv) Every individual who is denied the right to vote or be registered as voter shall be entitled to appeal to a jurisdiction competent to review such decisions and to correct errors promptly and effectively.

(v) Every voter has the right to equal and effective access to polling station in order to exercise his or her right to vote.

(vi) Every voter is entitled to exercise his or her right equally with others and to have his or her vote accorded equivalent weight to that of others.

(vii) The right to vote in secret is absolute and shall not be compromised in any manner whatsoever (IPC, 1994:3).

Similarly, the IPC document outlines conditions pertaining to "candidature, party and Campaign Rights" inter alia:

(i) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of the country and shall have an equal opportunity to become a candidate for election. The criteria for participation in government shall be determined in accordance with national constitutions and laws and shall not be inconsistent with the state's international obligations.

(ii) Everyone has the right to join, or together with others establish a political party or organization for the purpose of competing an election.

(iii) Everyone individually and together with others has the right:

- To express political opinions without interference.
- To move freely within the country in order to campaign for election.
- To campaign on equal basis with other political parties, including the party forming the existing government.

(iv) Every candidate and political party for election shall have an equal opportunity of access to the media, particularly the mass communication media, in order to put forward their political views.

(v) The right of candidates to security with respect to their lives and property shall be recognized and protected, etc (Guy, 2006: vii-ix).

Furthermore, the Rights and Responsibilities of States with reference to the election process are identified to include:

(i) States should take the necessary legislative steps and other measures in accordance with their constitutional processes, to guarantee the rights and institutional framework for periodic and genuine free and fair elections, in accordance with obligations under international law.

(ii) In addition, states should take the necessary policy and institutional steps to ensure the progressive achievement and consolidation of democratic goals, through the establishment of a neutral, impartial or balanced mechanism for the management of elections.

(iii) States shall respect and ensure that human rights of all individuals within their territory are subject to their jurisdiction.

(iv) In order that the elections shall be fair, states should take necessary measures to ensure that parties and candidates enjoy reasonable opportunities to present their electoral platform.

(v) States should take all necessary and appropriate measures to ensure that the principle of the secret ballot is respected and voters are able to cast their ballots freely without fear or intimidation etc. Guy, (2006:ix-x).

The basic requirements put forward by the IPC Declaration as reviewed above constitute the universally acclaimed yardsticks for assessing the credibility of elections. In effect, they emphasize the best standards which the conduct of elections should fulfill in order to be considered free and fair.

From the perspective of the existing literature, the concept of free and fair elections is predicated on interplay of a variety of factors. In effect, Guy

(2006:113-158) highlights the constituent elements' of free and fair elections to include the following facets of the electoral process:

- Election law and system
- Constituency delimitation
- Right to vote (Franchise)
- Election management
- Voter registration
- Electoral Campaign
- Media access and coverage
- Voter information and civic education
- Balloting and monitoring
- Conduct of candidates, political parties and political organizations
- Complaint and dispute resolution etc.

Establishing the validity and credibility of elections has posed immense challenge to electoral monitors and observers over the years. This is in view of the apparent complexities and dynamism of the electoral process across states of the world. In this respect Guy, (2006:158) succinctly observes:

> *Determining whether an election is genuine and free and fair involves more than assessing whether electors turn up to vote; it requires a judgment on a dynamic and often evolving process, which itself often demands to be seen as a critical if somewhat imperfect step in the direction of representative democracy.*

The concept of free and fair elections ordinarily is susceptible to subjective apprehension. In this regard, Guy, (2006:93) rightly cautions:

> *Terms like periodic, free, fair and genuine (as they relate to elections), have no easily verifiable content, often being used subjectively in an appeal to those assumed to share basic values and outlooks. In practice, it may be easier to identify what is not free, fair or genuine election, by focusing on evidence of overt external influence, the lack of meaningful choice in a single candidate and single party systems or terrorization of the electorate.*

Among other things, the above citation underscores the imperative for the objective study of elections. This should emphasize presumptive or subjective assessments and strive to present a catalogue that is inductive rather than deductive towards the goal of scientific analysis that is capable of objective and empirical application.

The contemporary scholarly interest in free and fair election is global. According to Guy, (2006:4) the last decade or so has been a substantial and significant growth in the literature and the science of elections and democracy. Stressing further what underlies this trend, Guy opines:

> *Numerous elections have now been monitored by international observers, many of whom in turn have used their experience to flash out what it means to assess an election. The UN, regional organizations and especially non-governmental organizations have provided much practical, technical assistance in conducting elections and in constructing democracy developing with commentators and practitioners, a wealth of commentary and guidelines intended to reflect on lessons learned and finally, it can be done to nail down one and for all, what it means exactly to have a free and fair election.*

In his exposition, Diamond, (2002:354) highlighted four major variables on which the concept of free and fair elections rests. These are; the political parties, the individuals, the voting process and the election outcome. Starting with the political parties, he argued that in a multiparty democracy, for an election to be considered as free and fair, the:

> *parties must be free to compete, to organize, to recruit members, to articulate policies, to stage rallies and to solicit votes. The less the political system restricts opposing parties from the business of organizing and campaigning, and the less it systematically favours a particular party (typically the ruling party), the freer and fairer the election may be said to have been.*

By the same logic, for an election to be free and fair, the:

> *individuals must be free to participate in the political process-to join the party of their choice, to campaign for it, to seek political office on its platform and of course to vote for it or not to vote at all.*

Furthermore, on the voting process:

> *Each person should have one and only one vote, and each should be counted equally-no one who satisfies some limited set of conditions (such as minimum age and sound mind) should be refused registration, no registered voter should be prevented from voting, nor should anyone be allowed to vote more than once, nor should any votes be counted for a party except those of individuals legally cast, nor should any legally and properly cast votes be discarded or disregarded.*

And, on the election outcome, an election would be free and fair if the results are:

> *accurately reported and the legitimate victors allowed to assume office.*

When all the conditions germane to the four variables as defined above are observed in the process, conduct and outcome of an election, that electioin could be considered to be free and fair. It is possible as is often the case in reality that only some and not all of the conditions for freeness and fairness are met or observed. In this case the election would be considered to be partially free and fair depending on the gravity of its deviation from the defined standards (Omojuwa, 2005:589).

Related to free and fair elections are issues of transparency and integrity. Transparency means openness in the election process. It promotes public confidence in the electoral process and acceptance of election results.

On the other hand, integrity of an election process refers to the ability of an election management body to operate without any interference that threatens its independence and functions in organizing elections.

The independence of an election management body is crucial for its integrity. The election management body must be completely independent of the ruling political party. To this end, it must have a legally enforceable mandate and well defined jurisdiction, composition and terms as well as being fully empowered regarding the performance of its functions (Ujo, 2003:6).

2.1.3 Constituent Elements of Free and Fair Elections

At a certain level of abstraction, States are bound to conduct their internal affairs, so that 'the authority to govern shall be based on the will of the people as expressed in periodic and genuine elections' (James, 1968:141). The principle of effectiveness of obligations requires that States adopt laws and procedures or systems of internal organization which are conducive to and do not obstruct the attainment of particular goals established by international laws. This principle in

turn carries certain implications with respect to the choice of options in regard to free and fair elections. Indices for free and fair elections are nonetheless evident in the practice of established democracies and States in transition, considered in relation to the attainment or failure to attain the stated objective. For the purposes of the present study, the requisite activities and criteria have been divided into the following broad categories: Electoral Law and System, Constituency Delimitation, Election Management, The right to vote, Voter Registration, Civic Education and Voter Information, Candidates, Political Parties and Political Organization, Electoral Campaigns, Balloting, Monitoring and Results as well as Complains and Dispute Resolution

2.1.3a Electoral Law and System

Regional jurisprudence and recent United Nations General Assembly resolutions recognize ‘that there is no single political system or electoral method that is equally suited to all nations and their people and that the efforts of the international community to enhance the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections should not call into question each State’s sovereign right, in accordance with the will of its people, freely to choose and develop its political, social, economic and cultural systems, whether or not they conform to the preferences of other States. Moreover, ‘political systems and electoral

processes are subject to historical, political, cultural and religious factors'. Whether a State adopts a majoritarian voting system or one other system of proportional representation is thus a classic issue falling within the reserved domain of domestic jurisdiction.

State practice confirms the variety of available choices, and no system can be considered from an international law perspective, to be more valid than any other, provided it bears a reasonable relationship, in law and in practice, to the internationally prescribed objective. The IPU has noted the need, among others, to strike a balance between two essential considerations: that a legislative election above all must make it possible to designate a cohesive government responsible for conducting a national policy: and that the election primarily must guarantee representation at the national level of the country's political forces, and reproduce in Parliament as faithful an image as possible of their relative strength. The IPU has also stressed the importance of a reasonable link between the electors and the elected, reflecting those elements of proportionality which also characterize the governing principles of international law (Goodwin-Gill, 2006:114).

The chosen system, therefore, must facilitate the expression of the will of the people through periodic and genuine elections, conducted on the basis of

equal suffrage and secret ballot. ‘Periodic’ is yet another of those terms susceptible to varying interpretations, even among reasonable people. The Convention on Human Rights find that the intervals between elections should be neither too short nor too long, but rather in conformity with the normal practice of free States. Of the Rights of Man. Thereby showing how the principle of proportionality can be applied in a specific situation.

Periodic and genuine elections conducted on the basis of equal suffrage also means ‘equality of voting power’; in principle, no vote should carry disproportionately more weight than any other, but that does not necessarily require a system of proportional representation.

The choice of electoral system and its implementation may nevertheless have a direct effect on related political rights. Majoritarian systems tend to favour two parties. They are relatively straightforward, but in a multi-party situation they give stability the advantage over equity in representation; not only are small or newer parties disadvantages, but very large parliamentary majorities may be won on the basis of minor electoral victories, considered in percentage terms. Proportional representation systems aim to allocate seats to political parties proportional to their electoral strength; however, they can encourage the proliferation of parties, and require voting on the basis of party lists, so

distancing the voter from the elected and in turn limiting the opportunities for individual, non-party candidatures. Different formulae for the allocation of votes and seats can also significantly affect representation in the legislature, and may be adopted to ensure that no single party obtains a majority. To maintain an urban-rural bias, to ensure other 'balances' or to guarantee minority or sectional representation.'

The principle of equal suffrage nevertheless applies also to 'threshold' requirements, which can be and are used to deny representation to parties that fail to secure a prescribed percentage of the overall vote. Such criteria are commonly used to reduce the numbers of small or sectional interests in the legislature and to enhance the prospects for the formation of a viable government unless compensatory steps are taken. However, this technique can effectively disenfranchise substantial minorities. International standards nevertheless constrain and structure the choices available to States. The underlying obligation of result, combined with principles of equality, reasonableness and proportionality, can be used to mediate between the objective and the means chosen, and to show whether the system and its implementation in practice conform to what is required by international law.

The choice of system reveals a wide disparity, or even richness, of practice. In many cases, the choice is not so much the result of conscious legislative decisions, as the product of a particular historical and political evolution. As such, it is not necessarily a model to be emulated out of context, although the representation aims of individual systems may appeal to countries in transition, where popular consensus on the democratic approach to government is still lacking. The general and distant objective set by international law-genuine periodic elections guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors, which shall be the basis of the authority of the government-allows considerable room for variation. Whether an electoral system departs from the permissible range is most likely to be answered by reference to other peremptory international law principles, such as non-discrimination. Does the 'variation' have the intent or effect of disenfranchising or devaluing the voting power of particular sections of the population for reasons that ought to be irrelevant to the exercise of political rights, such as race, religion, national or social origin, sex, language, political or other opinion, association with a national minority, birth or other status? If so, then to that extent the electoral system is potentially in breach of international law. (Goodwin-Gill, 2006:117).

2.1.3b Constituency delimitation

Constituency delimitation, or 'districting', raises similar considerations with respect to purpose, intent and effect, in an area of some flexibility. 'Representation by population' is as central to the concept of democracy as is the notion of equality of voting power; the question is whether absolute or near-absolute equality is called for; or whether relative equality of voting power will suffice. The United States Supreme Court, for example, held that the equal protection clause rendered unconstitutional a state districting scheme for congressional elections, because it failed to provide for equality of voters in each district.

Other States are more pragmatic, recognizing the importance of population, but also the relevance of other factors. A 1986 decision of the French *Conseil constitutionnel*, for example, confirmed constituency delimitation criteria which included the principle that population differences within a single *departement* must not exceed 20 percent of the departmental average. In the United Kingdom, Boundary commissioners are required to draw constituency limits so as to come as close as possible to a regional average quota. A Canadian decision in 1989 considered constituency deviations in British Columbia, which has the effect of enhancing the power of the rural vote. The Court considered that

‘equality of voting power is the single most important factor to be considered in determining electoral boundaries’, but that ‘relative equality of the number of voters per representative’ was called for. The justifications put forward by the government on this occasion were held inadequate, however, and in some cases, ‘it was difficult to see how they could conform to the principle that population must be the primary criterion.’

Few States follow the U.S model of absolute equality, but seek instead to accord legislative seats roughly proportional to population. When setting constituency boundaries, the Electoral Commission was required to take three criteria into account: the availability of means of communication; the geographical features of the area: and the number of inhabitants. It was authorized to vary the strict application of the population quota where either of the other criteria justified such action.

While the principle of relative equality will ensure that votes carry more or less equal value, subject to objectively justifiable variations on the basis of local or regional conditions, clearly no rule prescribes the ideal ration of population to representative.

From an international law perspective, how a State delimits its electoral boundaries remains very much a product of its overall choice of electoral system.

The general aim remains the same, to translate the will of the people into representative government. Again, State practice and the very disparities between States themselves in terms of population, geography, distribution and resources, reveal the range of possible and permissible variations.

2.1.3c Election Management

In a free and fair election, an independent and impartially administered electoral process is essential. Experience shows that confidence is only likely where the election machinery is and appears to be impartial.

At a practical administrative and oversight level, the institution of an independent Electoral commission is now widely adopted as an important step in building traditions of independence and impartiality, and the confidence of the electorate and parties alike.

In practice, the election machinery can either be impartial, or in balance; if impartial members who enjoy the confidence of all parties cannot be found, then balance must be created by the appointment of party representatives. The institution of an electoral commission was not new, but its commitment to free elections and non-partisan.

Perhaps the most striking exercise in confidence-building occurred in South Africa, where the government appointed several international members of the Independent Electoral Commission, including individuals from Canada, Zimbabwe and Eritrea.

The ideal or most effective model will depend on the relative maturity of the national system. Where election administration previously was in government hands within a one-party or other authoritarian system with no opposition, voter confidence will only likely be inspired if opposition party representatives are co-opted into election administration. They may not be 'independent', and indeed will usually remain partisan, though ideally in balance with competing interests; at such moments, the issue is not so much independence as transparency and non-governmental involvement at national and polling district levels. Later, when other government institutions acquire a reputation for impartiality and integrity, for example, when judges are seen to stand for the rule of law and not the party line, then independence alone may be a credible criterion for electoral commission membership.

The National Election Commission's duties, to be performed directly or by supervision over the lower echelons, include supervising observance of the election law; organizing the preparation and conduct of elections; appointing

constituency election commissions; examining complaints against constituency election commissions; registering national lists of candidates; compiling and supervising the updating of voter registries; keeping constituency delimitation under review; establishing forms and standards for ballot paper and other official documents, establishing and publishing the results of elections and certifying those who are elected.

> 'The consolidation of democracy requires that the institution that manages the electoral process be independent, competent, and perceived as completely fair by all the candidates and parties participating in the process.'

Whether explicitly or implicitly endorsed, independent and impartial election management is nevertheless essential in the transition to and consolidation of representative democracy.

2.1.3d The right to vote

Formal constitutional or statutory recognition of the citizen's right to vote is common to most States and plays both a substantive and a confidence-building role. The right to vote is not absolute, however, and may be subject to reasonable restrictions which 'are not arbitrary and do not interfere with the free expression of the people's opinion'.

In its recent world-wide comparative survey, the IPU noted that 18 years is currently the voting age norm, adopted by some 109 states of the 150 surveyed. A residency requirement has been upheld by the European Commission on Human Rights, for a number of reasons: the assumption that a non-resident citizen is less directly involved or knowledgeable; the impracticability for candidates to present electoral issues to citizens abroad; the need to prevent electoral fraud, the risk of which is increased by postal voting; and finally, the link between representation and the obligation to pay taxes.

Some countries maintain residency requirements as a basic condition of entitlement to vote, but tend to be equally or more restrictive with respect to those suffering from mental disability or convicted criminals. Some countries also disqualify military personnel from voting, a practice particularly common in Latin America. Such limitations, provided they have a rational basis, remain proportional and are not used as a device to disenfranchise significant sections of the population, arguably fall with the margin of appreciation left to States. Discriminatory disenfranchisement, however, would violate general principles of international law.

The United Nations Human Rights Committee (HRC) has considered the principles of equality and non-discrimination in relation to access to public service under article 25 of the 1966 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

In resolution 46/137, the UN General Assembly reaffirmed that,

> *'The systematic denial or abridgement of the right to vote on grounds of race or colour is a gross violation of human rights and an affront to the conscience and dignity of mankind, and…the right to participate in a political system based on common and equal citizenship and universal franchise is essential for the exercise of the principle of periodic and genuine elections.'*

The principle of non-discrimination include religion, sex, social group, political opinion or other irrelevant consideration. An electoral system which denied the vote to minority populations, or which disenfranchised half the citizenry, for example excluding women, would be incompatible with international standards, and incapable of reflecting the 'will of the people'.

2.1.3e Voter Registration

Giving practical effect to the right of those eligible to vote raises more serious problems. Formally recognizing the right to vote is only part of the issue, for substantial opportunities exist to frustrate the exercise of that right, for

example, by obstructing access to the necessary documentation, or otherwise interfering with or discouraging registration.

The ‘electoral list’ is thus a crucial feature in the organization of free and fair elections. Such list must be designed to include all qualified citizens to prevent electoral abuse and fraud by individuals, special interest groups, political parties and governments; and be ‘widely accepted as an authoritative and legitimate means of cataloguing the electoral population and of settling disputes.’

Accuracy is important, especially so in proportional representation systems that employ multi-member constituencies, but how to ensure a credible registration system is no simple matter. Experience shows that involving political parties and special interest groups in promoting, monitoring and auditing the registration process is often called for, together with extensive civic education programmes, including training election officials, and getting the voting message across to the public, for example on how and where to register, and the rights and responsibilities of living in a democracy.

At a practical level, the process of voter registration requires clear eligibility criteria and their consistent application by trained officials. Electoral lists should be published promptly, and clear effective means should be available

for correcting errors, including omissions and cancellation of those deceased or who have moved.

Many elections have been criticized precisely because of deficiencies in voter registration.

Voter registration and the publication of verifiable lists of electors have an important part to play in building and maintaining the confidence of the electorate, and thereby contributing also to ensuring free and fair elections. Given the inherent opportunities for disenfranchising substantial portions of the population through manipulation of the registration process, transparency of the process called for.

2.1.3f Civic Education and Voter Information

Civic education and voter information, like other topics mentioned here, might at first seem to fall outside the strict purview of State responsibilities with respect to free and fair elections; in fact, civic education is part of the school curriculum in most established democracies. The Commonwealth Observer Group to the 1991 elections in Zambia considered that ‘an intensive and widespread voter education programme about the rights processes and implications’ of the change to a multi-party system was to have been expected. It

expressed its disappointment with the apparently limited impact of what had been done, and at the failure of the media in particular contribute to the education of voters. Experience in Ghana in 1992 provided a marked contrast. Posters were widely displayed, with instructions on how to vote, encouraging exercise of the franchise and promoting democratic ideals of tolerance and peaceful political activity. With financial support from foreign government and non-government agencies, education posters, radio and television programmes and booklets were produced and widely distributed, targeting not just voters, but also candidates and political parties; the Commonwealth Observer Group concluded that, 'Across the country, the average voter seemed to be extremely well-informed about the date of the poll, the hours of voting and the procedures to be followed.'

Again, the principle of effectiveness of obligations, supported by the actual practice of States in situations marked by deficiencies in this field, such as lack of experience with voting in a democratic environment with 'real' choices, shows how both civic education and voter information can be central in attaining the objective of a free and fair election. Election observation missions have repeatedly stressed the necessity for civic education, voter information and poll worker training. Confirming the necessity for active programmes in situations of

transition or change if the result is to be truly representative of the will of the people. As with voter registration, a passive government policy, leaving education to political parties, churches and NGOs, may not be sufficient to establish the basic conditions for the conduct of a free and fair election. (Goodwill-Gill, 2006: 120:134).

2.1.3g Candidates, political parties and political organization

By contrast with some of the other indices of free and fair elections, candidates, political parties and political organization fall more easily within traditional notion of human rights. Article 25 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, for example, provides that every citizen has the right, without discrimination, to take part in the conduct of public affairs, to be elected, and to have equal access to public service in his or her country. Those rights are not absolute, however, and may be subject to a variety of reasonable limitations. A State's choice of electoral system, for example, may directly affect the freedom of individuals to present themselves as candidates for election, otherwise than through a recognized political party. Threshold requirements can also limit the representation possibilities for parties that fail to obtain a certain percentage of the vote. Registration criteria may effectively prevent the formation of political parties, while State monopolies over certain resources, such as funding, meeting

places, transport, printing presses and the media may hinder even minimal political organization.

Article 25 of the 1966 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights confirms the entitlement of every citizen to take part in the conduct of public affairs, to vote and to be elected. State practice in turn confirms that this right is not absolute, but may be subject to reasonable limitations, and the criteria for individual candidature commonly follow those necessary for voting: minimum age, residence and absence of disqualification. The rationale for certain conditions such as age or residence is obvious: a sufficient level of maturity and connection to the community.

European jurisprudence recognizes a variety of conditions and exclusions, including penal detention and residence requirements, but provides generally that they shall be prescribed by law and reasonably necessary in a democratic society. They must also not be arbitrary or violate the principle of non-discrimination.

Democracy in practice, which requires choice between alternatives needs at least two competing political parties, although competition that is too divisive defeats its purpose. In situations of transition, political parties often face difficulties in establishing themselves, or in engaging in meaningful campaigns in face of monopolies of power and resources. Neither pubic nor external aid can

be ruled out as impermissible, provided that generally they contribute to healthy debate within a strengthening democratic process. Where they become substitutes for grass roots support and effective local organization, however, they may also cease to contribute to channeling the will of the people into genuine elections. Clearly, a free and fair election is less likely if the government denies financial resources to its opponents, while using all the resources at its disposal to put the opposition at a disadvantage. Equally, in theory at least, unlimited expenditure by any party can result in a distorted electoral process. The art is to find that balance which best accommodates the objective of allowing each party a reasonable opportunity to put across its message; this may well entail a combination of public funding with election expenditure controls.

2.1.3h Electoral Campaigns

Systems and legal guarantees are only a part of the equation that produces a free and fair election. How procedures are actually applied and what happens in practice will ultimately determine whether the people have been able freely to express their will.

A successful election does not depend solely on what happens on ballot day; the totality of the process must be examined, including preliminary issues such as the nature of the electoral system, voter entitlement, voter registration,

party organization and civic education. The indices of a free and fair election are especially important with respect to the conduct of the election campaign, at which point a number of fundamental human rights come into play, together.

Specifically, national and international observers will need to know whether freedom of movement, assembly, association and expression have been respected throughout the election period; whether all parties have conducted their political activities within the law; whether any political party or special interest group has been subjected to arbitrary and unnecessary restrictions in regard to access to the media or generally in regard to their freedom to communicate their views; whether parties, candidates and supporters have enjoyed equal security; whether voters have been able to cast their ballots freely, without fear or intimidation; whether the secrecy of the ballot has been maintained; and whether the overall conduct of the ballot has been such as to avoid fraud and illegality.

Given that a choice between government and policy alternatives is central to the democratic ideal, access to the media in modern society is self-evidently crucial to the dissemination of party platforms and programmes. No legal or administrative obstacle should stand in the way of unimpeded access to the media on a non-discriminatory basis for all political groupings and individuals

wishing to participate in the electoral process. Only if such facilities are available, will candidates effectively enjoy the right to express themselves freely, including by way of criticism, and electors take the benefit of the freedom to seek and receive information. Regrettably, the importance of these rights to the democratic and electoral process is only too well emphasized by the struggle to control media access, and by the abuse of such control, particularly in societies in transition, where broadcasting and newspapers have long been a government monopoly.

The principle of equal access to the media is widely accepted in established democracies. The formulae may vary, but the underlying premise is the same: those competing in an election should have a reasonable opportunity to get their message across. Danish radio and television guidelines, for example, assure *equal access* to all registered parties, and *equal time*, regardless of the size of the party.

In France, radio and television time is divided equally between majority and opposition parties. In the United Kingdom and Ireland, television and radio time is decided by committees comprising the broadcasting authorities and the parties. In the United Kingdom, candidates may take part in election campaign

programmes about their constituencies, only if all their rival candidates either also take part or agree that the programme can go ahead.

A recent review of election broadcasting proposes some guidelines, drawing on international human rights law and prevailing practice among established democracies. Among those classified as mandatory are the obligation of government media to inform the public, to grant access and accord unbiased coverage, to abolish or suspend restrictions on public comment, to refrain from censorship, to grant access on a non-discriminatory basis to all parties, to ensure balance and fairness, to provide education for voters, and to provide for judicial review of broadcasting-related decisions. A comprehensive and structured approach to such influential media is clearly called for, if electors are to understand the choices available. (Goodwin-Gill, 2006:147-151).

2.1.3i Balloting, Monitoring and Results

Although the fairness of any election is unlikely to be determined solely by reference to what happens on Election Day, the actual process of balloting deserves particular attention. Among other issues, balloting raises the question of the location of polling stations, and their accessibility for the population: the presence of competent officials, versed in the procedure; the presence of party representatives: secrecy of the act of voting and the security of the ballot box; the

integrity of the counting process and its translation into a genuine political result. Broken down still further, balloting also involves the organization and management of voting, including the opening and closing of polling stations at stated times: the arrangement of booths and the orderly movement of voters: the identification and verification of voters; an established procedure for objection and challenge; the issue of ballot papers to recognized voters; the marking of ballot papers out of sight of officials or other electors; the deposit of market ballots; and in the absence of other sufficient guarantees, the identification of voters, for example with indelible ink in order to prevent double voting. The counting process in turn requires measures to ensure that ballot boxes are empty before voting begins that they are secure when polling stations are closed or during any period of transit, and that votes are tallied in a process that inspires confidence in the electorate.

The fundamental rules relating to the exercise of electoral rights centre on non-discrimination, access to the poll and the act of voting, equal and universal suffrage, secret ballot and guarantees that the results of the vote shall reflect the free expression of the will of the electors.

The principle of equal suffrage requires that no vote shall have greater value than any other vote. This touches on constituency delimitation, but also has

practical implications at the polling station level, in that measures must be taken to guard against multiple voting, by scrupulously checking voter cards, marking voters with indelible ink, or both.

The secrecy of the ballot is one aspect of the process which permits of scarcely any qualification. Once considered just one of several 'equivalent free voting procedures', the secret ballot now stands alone and absolute, and is frequently elevated to the level of constitutional law or protected by other statutory rules.

International observers have repeatedly stressed the importance of monitors in building voter confidence and ensuring the integrity of the system. In addition, a non-partisan, civic organization helps to increase voter confidence. 'Domestic monitors are also an important key to the fairness of any election. They are a check against errors, misconduct and fraud…their very presence should limit opportunities for wrong doing.'

The duties of such monitors can build public confidence by ensuring that the polling station arrangement is correct and that the ballot box is empty and sealed before voting; checking against the impersonation of voters; checking that no one is denied the right to vote without cause; ensuring that the vote is truly secret; watching for unexpected problems; participating in decisions that require

a departure from the rules. For example, on the need for additional boxes; preventing campaigning and intimidation around polling stations and in queues; ensuring that the polling station is correctly closed and that no one is prevented from voting; observing the count and agreeing on or challenging difficult decisions, for example, with respect to void or damaged ballots; and receiving a singed copy of the count, as a check on any tampering with ballots or with the results between the polling station and the district centre. (Goodwin-Gill, 2006:152-156).

Effective local monitors, either party representatives or recognized impartial officials, appear more likely to satisfy national aspirations for a free and fair electoral system.

Finally, there is the *count* and, in appropriate cases, the transfer of power to the successful party in the election. Complementary to the principle of secret ballot is the integrity of the count, which looks both to ensure that the expressed wish of the elector is taken into account, and that the results declared corresponds with the totality of the votes cast. Sometimes, the ballots will be counted on the spot, and at others, the ballot boxes are transported to central counting stations. In either case, transparency of process is as valuable as accuracy in counting. Transportation of ballot boxes commonly gives rise to fear

of substitution, on the other hand, not to undertake central counting may lead, for example, to a small community being identified as having voted one way or the other, with a resulting possibility of prejudice in any later distribution of national resources. Again, confidence in the process can be enhanced by the presence of party representatives both at the count and during any interim period of transport.

2.1.3j Complaints and dispute resolution

A free and fair electoral system must also be able to deal promptly and effectively with the different types of complaint that will inevitably arise. These might include refusal of the right to stand as a candidate or to vote, attempts to suppress voter turn-out, alleged misinterpretation of the electoral laws or procedures, alleged violations of the criminal law, disputes regarding the accuracy of the count, or claims that the cumulative effect of such irregularities is so extensive as to invalidate the elections. Generally, what is at issue is either the validity of the result, or the penalization of those who have violated electoral laws. The right to a remedy for violation of human rights is itself a human right, while sanctions against those who infringe the provisions of the electoral law are implicitly required in any effective system of implementation. The integrity of the system requires not only that such issues be dealt with by an independent and impartial authority, such as the electoral commission or the courts, but also that

decisions be reached in a timely manner, in order that the outcome of elections not be delayed. As with other aspects of the electoral process, the availability of such procedures must be open and known to the electorate and the parties.

Part of the process for anticipating and dealing with complaints includes such practices as monitors and parallel vote tabulations. At the formal level, what is important is not so much the sanction, as the timeliness of the response. In cases of violence or intimidation, for example, what is needed is a prompt reaction, in order that continuing disturbances not interfere with the elector's essential freedom to choose. The tendency is for national systems also to try to deal expeditiously with errors of form, however. The ultimate objective remains that of establishing representative government, and the national interest is generally perceived as best met by the speedy resolution of potentially divisive issues (Goodwin-Gill, 2006:158).

2.1.4 Free and Fair Elections: The International Standards

The following are international standards for free and fair elections as printed by the *International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)* and published by the *Inter-Parliamentary Union*, *Geneva in 2009*:

Rights of Individuals and Political Parties

The state must recognize and make provision for:

- The right of the individual to vote, on a non-discriminatory basis in elections.
- The right of the individual to access an effective, impartial and non-discriminatory procedure for the registration of voters.
- The right of every eligible citizen to be registered as a voter, subject only to disqualification in accordance with clear criteria established by law that are objectively verifiable and not subject to arbitrary decision.
- The right of the individual whose right to vote or to be registered is negatively affected by an action or omission of the state or its officials to have access to a procedure competent to review such measures or to correct such errors promptly and effectively.
- The right of the individual to have equal and effective access to a polling station in order to exercise his or her right to vote.
- The right of the individual to exercise his or her right equally with others and to have his or her vote accorded equivalent weight to that of others.

- The right of the individual to vote in secret, which right should not be restricted in any manner whatsoever, and to respect for the integrity of his or her choice.
- The right of the individual to present himself or herself as a candidate for election.
- The right of the individual to join or together with others establish a political party for the purpose of competing in an election.
- The right to express political opinions without interference otherwise than as permitted under international law.
- The right to seek, receive and impart information and to make an informed choice.
- The right to move freely within the country in order to campaign for election.
- The right to campaign for an equal basis with other political parties, including the party representing the existing government.
- The right to have access to the media, particularly the electronic media in order to put forward their political views.
- The right of candidates, political parties and party members to security with respect to their lives and property.

- The right to the protection of the law and to a remedy for violation of political and electoral rights.

Responsibilities of Individuals and Political Parties

National legislation should recognize:

- The obligation of the individual and of political parties not to engage in or incite violence.
- The obligation of candidates, political parties and party members to respect the rights and freedoms of others.
- The obligation of candidates, political parties and party members to accept the outcome of a free and fair election.

Responsibilities of State

The state is obliged:

- To provide for the holding of elections at regular intervals.
- To establish a neutral, impartial and/or balanced mechanism for the management of elections.
- To establish an effective impartial and non-discriminatory procedure for registration of voters.

- To lay down by law clear criteria for the registration of voters, such as age, citizenship and residence and ensure that such criteria are applied without discrimination.
- To lay down by law the regulations governing the formation, registration and functioning of political parties.
- Where appropriate, to provide for or regulate the funding of political parties and electoral campaigns, with a view eventually to promoting equality of opportunity.
- To ensure the separation of party from a state.
- To establish the conditions for competition in elections on an equitable basis.
- To ensure that electors have a free choice by maintaining the viability of political parties e.g by public funding and or free time in the media.
- To ensure through national programmes of civic education, that the population become familiar with both election procedures and issues.

The state should establish a neutral, impartial or balanced mechanism for the management of elections. Such an agency should:

- Ensure that those responsible for the administration of elections are trained or act impartially.

- Ensure that the registration of voters, updating of electoral rolls and balloting procedures with the assistance of national and international observers as appropriate.
- Encourage parties, candidates and the media to accept and adopt a code of conduct to govern the election campaign and the polling period.
- Ensure the integrity of the ballot through appropriate measures to prevent double and multiple voting and fraud.
- Ensure the integrity of the process for counting votes.

In protecting the secrecy of the ballot, the state should ensure that:

- Voters are able to cast their votes freely without fear or intimation: the authorities should take such steps as are necessary to protect voters from threats or other violence.
- The secrecy of the ballot is maintained.
- The ballot is conducted so as to avoid fraud or other illegality and so ensure its own security.
- The integrity of the process is maintained and that the ballot counting is undertaken by trained personnel subject to monitoring and/or impartial verification.

Critical to the respecting and ensuring of human rights during elections, the state should ensure:

- That freedom of movement, assembly, association and expression are respected with particular reference to the holding of political rallies and meetings.
- That parties and candidates are free to communicate their views to the electorate and that they enjoy equality of access to state and public media which should also provide non-partisan coverage of election campaigns.
- That parties and candidates so far as practicable enjoy reasonable opportunities to present their electoral platform.
- That parties, candidates and supporters enjoy equal security and that authorities take the necessary steps to prevent electoral violence.

In protecting the rights and freedom of citizens, the state has the right and obligation to limit the rights and activities of those whose conduct incites violence or undermines the democratic process. In doing so, however:

- Election rights should only be subject to such restrictions of an exceptional nature which are in accordance with law and reasonably necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or

public order the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others and provided they are consistent with state's obligations under international law: and

- Permissible restrictions on candidature, the creation and activity of political parties and campaign rights should not be applied so as to violate the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Finally, a free and fair electoral system should ensure:

- That the complaints and challenges in electoral matters be determined by an independent and impartial authority such as an electoral commission or the courts that decisions be reached promptly within the timeframe of the election and that procedures be open and known to the electorate and the parties.

2.1.5 The Concept of Democracy

The term 'Democracy' has been in use in the tradition of Western political thought since ancient times. It is derived from the Greek root 'demos' which means 'the people'; 'cracy' stands for 'rule' or 'government'. Thus, literally,

democracy signifies ‘the rule of the people’. Abraham Lincoln’s definition of democracy is very close to its literal meaning. It reads ‘Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, and for the people.’ In short, democracy, democracy as a form of government implies that the ultimate authority of government is vested in the common people so that public policy is made to conform to the will of the people and to serve the interests of the people.

Several exponents of democracy have treated democracy chiefly as a form of government, John Austin (1790-1859), James Bryce (1838-1922), A.V. Dicey (1835-1922), A.L Lowell (1956-1943) and John Seeley are some prominent supporters of this view. Lowell, for instance, says that democracy is only an experiment in government. Seeley describes it as government in which everyone has a share.

Generally, democracy is a form of government in which citizens in a state have political investments of political participation and trust (Ayoade, 1998:1). It essentially has to dowith the ability of the people to control decision-making (Zack-Williams, 2001:213): which explains why Osaghae (1994) asserts that the central thing about democracy is to ensure that power actually belongs tot eh people. Democracy emphasizes freedom of the individuals in various aspects of political life, equality among citizens, justice in the relations between the people

and the government, and the participation of the people in choosing those in government (Nnoli, 2003:143).

The foregoing is in line with the "common good and the will of the people" thesis of democracy. For, according to (Schumpeter, 1950:250-238; 1976:153-188), democracy entails "institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions, which realizes the common good by making the people decide issues through the election of individuals, who are to assemble in order to carry out its will". The second side of democracy, according to (Schumpeter, 1950 in Quinton 1967:173), emphasizes the centrality of competition to the emergence of political leadership. In this sense, democracy is an "institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote."

What these general conceptions suggest is that democracy, as a system of government, stresses the sovereignty of the people (Zack-Williams, 2001:213-214; Osaghae, 1994). It is also reminiscent of Robert Dahl's two dimensions of democracy" (Dahl, 2000:35-40). The first dimension sees democracy as "an ideal, goal, aim, or standard, one that is perhaps unachievable but nonetheless highly relevant not only for classifying and judging political systems but also for fashioning strategies of democratization, designing appropriate political

institutions, and so on". An ideal democracy is therefore conterminous with "a political system that might be designed for members of an association who were willing to treat one another, for political purposes, as political equals" (Dahl, 2000:37). Such a system requires certain criteria for effective functioning. These criteria include a set of fundamental human rights of citizens, democratic political institutions to boost citizens' participation in electing representatives, to freedom of expression, inquiry, discussion, and so on. One important thing is that these rights and opportunities must not just exist as merely abstract moral obligations, but must be "enforceable and enforced by law and practice" (Dahl, 1989:106-131; 1999:35-43, 83-99; 2000:37-38).

This takes us to the second dimension of democracy. It has to do with democracy in practice, as opposed to its theory. This becomes the more pertinent because, as Dahl (2000:38) has also pointed out, "having rights and opportunities is not strictly equivalent to using them". The mere fact that a democratic society concedes certain rights, for example, to vote and be voted for, to their citizens, does not imply that all qualified citizens will participate in these activities. For example, empirical studies have shown that citizens do not put much value on actual participation in political life, as exemplified by the experience of the European Community as a whole. There, it was found out that "on the average

over the entire period, 1973-92, 17 percent said they discussed politics frequently, and 34 percent said they never did so" (Topf, 1995:61; of Dahl, 2000:39). Nevertheless, the defining characters of a democracy include pluralism and multipartism, including free and competitive politics; popular participation in the political process; rule of law and respect for human rights, and constitutionalism or respect for the "rules of the game" (Osaghae, 1999:Oche, 2004).

Odofin, (2005:94) argued that democratic theory is rooted in the ancient Greek polity, which classified government according to the number of participants in decision-making process. According him government is classified in a continuum ranging from rule by one person (monarchy), through rule by few (Oligarchy) and by many (democracy). The central focus is the locus of power and how power is exercised in the political system. He contended that the few individuals who controls a nation's key financial, industrial and communication institutions constitute the ruling elites a small group that governments modern society.

He further argued that democracy is complex and means different things to different people. Abraham Lincoln conceptualizes it is the government of the people by the people and for the people. This powerful and historic definition

suggest that democracy implies consensus government, freely chosen by the people for the pursuit of the ideals, aspirations, welfare, progress and interests of the people. Such government operates at the mercy of the people and held accountable to the people through periodic elections. It enable people to govern themselves through constant interactions and discussions of common issues, voting in elections and running for public office.

A democratic government is propelled or powered by the collective ideas, energy wisdom, understanding, knowledge and perceptions of the people rather than the mystical construct swinging and wriggling in the mind of his excellency.

In the context of the above, Dahl (as cited by Diamond) argued that democracy is:

> *A system of government that meets three essential conditions: an extensive competition among individuals and groups (especially political parties) for all elective positions of government power at regular interval, and excluding the use of force; a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies at least through regular and fair election so that no major (adult) social group is excluded and a level of civic and political liberties, freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation (Diamond, 2002: 14-15).*

Therefore, democracy requires institutional mechanisms, established procedures and organizations such as political parties, legislatures and interest groups through which public opinion is translated into government policy. The notion of government of the people, by the people and for the people is that through periodic elections, public officials could be held accountable for their activities and those whom are deemed not to have performed credibly are defeated at the polls. The threat of defeat at the polls are expected to motivate public officials (Janda et al. 1989:37).

The most important elements encapsulating the democratic agenda are popular participation, equitable representation and accountability. Thus democracy provides opportunities for citizens to have inputs in the policy process or contribute in the making of decisions that affect their lives and environments. It is also a means of creating political infrastructure through which diverse interests are represented in government and the institutionalization of mechanism to hold rulers accountable to the public will and providing the means for the removal of government from power without rolling out the military tanks. And finally institutionalizing the principles of accountability through which rulers are held accountable for their action in the public realm by

citizens acting indirectly through the competition and co-operation of their elected representatives (ROAPE, 1989:44).

Therefore, democracy consists not only in winning elections but also and more importantly in establishing organic elections with the people and allowing them to control their leaders by holding them accountable. This may sound abstract especially in Nigeria where the political gladiators who canvassed and begged for votes from electorates abandoned them as soon as they assume office by claiming that their elevation or appointment is divine and not challengeable by any human institution. In such circumstances, elections become ritualistic and formalistic which changes nothing. The ritual of elections cannot guarantee democracy to people who face undemocratic courts, police and bureacrats every day.Amuwo, (1992:6). These tendencies have continued to erode the significance of elections in Nigerian democratic project.

For democracy to be sustained in any society certain conditions are necessary. However, the economic condition is regarded as the most critical factor in determining the sustainability of democracy. It is claimed that political democracy and liberty become realities only when they are supported by economic and social democracy. Extreme differences in the distribution of wealth may impede the sustainability of democracy. Unless democracy is used as

means of responding to the acute needs of the people such as food, security, shelter and clothing, the people would not be strong enough to support democracy. Democracy makes sense only when it guarantees freedom, liberty and economic emancipation. The economic bases of the modern state and the system of distribution is critical to democracy. When democracy cannot be translated into tangible things that touch on the survival of the people, the apparent freedom and liberty that democracy purports to promote is exploited for violence. For example, it has been shown overtime that the material poverty of majority of Nigerians is at the root of sporadic outburst of ethno-religious conflicts crises in the country (Egwu, 20002:68).

The perspective of Linz, Lipset and Diamond (Cited in Abrahamsen, 2000:68) seems to be an elaborate conceptualization of democracy. Accordingly, they described democracy as a political governing system which must mandatorily meet three basic conditions.

Firstly, is meaningful and extensive competitions among individuals and organized groups (especially political parties) for all effective positions of government power at regular intervals and excluding the use of force. This implies that political competition is not restricted to political parties alone. Individuals who are so inclined can contests as independent candidates, even

when political parties exist as in the developed democracies notably in the United States. The use of coercive force, either with the instrumentality of legitimate force or thuggery and militancy constraints free choice of electorate based solely on their conscience or motivated by party programmes (manifestoes). Thus, political competition accompanied by force therefore erodes the principle of free and fair elections.

Secondly, is a high inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies, at least through regular and fair elections such that no major (adult) social group is excluded. This democratic criterion is an appeal for the liberalization of political participation in the democratic process. The inclusion of all willing political parties and associations in the electoral process without imposition of registration requirements such as fees, geographical spread with identifiable office locations and membership list. Conditional registration of political parties and groups are therefore considered anti-democratic. The Nigerian judiciary affirmed this position when it ruled against imposition of registration fees on political associations by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC0 before they could compete in the 2003 elections (Soniyi and Alli, 2002:2)

Thirdly, is a level of civil and political liberties-freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation.

Contemporary scholars on theories of democracy associate more with the procedural approach of democracy. The views of Weber and Schumpeter represent this analytical focus. Weber sees democracy primarily as a means of producing an effective political leadership in conditions of a modern bureaucratic society and apart from their ability to dismiss the ineffective leadership from office, voters are assigned little or not influence over decision-making (Abrahamsen, 2000:69). From this perspective therefore, electoral democracy is seen as confining on the electorate the power to 'hire and fire' political leaders. The 'firing' power borders on rejecting ineffective and unfit leaders at the polls. It also connotes election as a means of providing legitimacy and mass support for political leaders.

Schumpeter elaborated on the interpretation of democracy as a mechanism for legitimizing the authority of political elite for whom the role of the people in democracy was merely to produce government and not to choose politicians who execute their will. To put Schumpeter in correct perspective, he succinctly argues that democracy:

> *Does not mean and cannot mean that the people actually rule in any obvious sense of the terms 'people' and 'rule'. Democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them. Now, one aspect of this aspect may be expressed by saying that democracy is the rule of the politician (Schumpeter, 19500:48)*

(Nzongola, 2001:21) also contends that elections alone are not a guarantee of democracy. He sees democracy as a means of social transformation in the sense of meeting people's needs and welfare. It is within this utility value of democracy that (Obasanjo, 2004:24) opines that democracy is about people. He argued that:

> *Democracy is about people. It is about community and it is about truth, justice, co-operation and collective efforts at building and nurturing open societies and institutions in the interest of all (Obasanjo, 2004:24)*

Obasanjo further opines that:

> *Democracy is evidenced in the multiplicity of functioning political parties, periodic election and adherence to constitutionalism and that democracy is about protecting all in society, guaranteeing citizenship and participation and holding leaders that emerged from the democratic process accountable at all times as they serve the people (Obasanjo: 2004:24)*

In essence, democracy is about serving the people hence the elementary interpretation of democracy is about the people for the people. People elect representatives in government to be able to cater for their interests. It is on the

basis of this sacred mandate and the electioneering promises made to the electorate that political leaders are appraised and made accountable. The idea of governance is in fact measured by the amount of dividends of democracy enjoyed by the people.

In effect, from the above explanations of democracy it is basically on system that offers freedom to choose from among competing candidates, political parties, and/or programmes. It is furthermore about the equality of participation/representation. It also means the existence of an effective and functional rule of law as well as the conduct of routine and regular elections that must in themselves be credible to ensure the legitimacy of the government(s) constituted by them. In terms of features of the western liberal democratic system, if we may look at this in the first instance, one can say that it exudes the following characteristics: it is basically a constitutional government imbued with institutions and guided by laws. Structurally speaking, it also encourages a multi-party system even if fundamentally there would hardly be any difference programmatically and/or ideologically between and/or among the number of political parties in such dispensation. And lastly democracy is a form of government that allows for the widest spectrum of participation and which can only be objectively, meaningfully and practically ensured through the electoral

process. In other words, the electoral process is a t the heart of the democratic system such that without the electoral process. A system cannot really claim to be democratic. As the key to mass participation in democracy, the electoral process provides the platform through which the electorate exercises its will to ensure that certain ends are achieved in the political system. Therefore, the credibility of the electoral process cannot and should not be compromised.

2.1.6 Classical Origins and Foundations of Democracy

The modern conception of democracy has come a long way from its classical notion, as well as its practice, whose history can be traced to ancient Greece. This is in the sense that democracy is generally believed to have emanated from the attempts in the Greek city-state of Athens to reform, organize and manage its political community (*polis*) about two thousand five hundred years ago (Dunn, 1993).

Democracy, when it emerged in Athens during the time of Kleisthenes (508/507 BC) was such a simple but powerful and appealing idea. According to Dunn,

> *The power and appeal of the idea come from its promise to render the life of a political community something willed and chosen…to turn the social and political existences that human beings share into a texture of consciously intended common action. In a democracy, the people (the demos), its human members, decide what is to be done, and in so deciding they take their destiny firmly into their own hands. The power and appeal of democracy come from the idea of autonomy…of choosing freely for oneself (1993:vi).*

Kleisthenes initiated "an orderly and amazingly rapid sequence of reforms", which gave rise to "a system of participatory democracy" (Hornblower, 1993:2) in which the demos participated actively in conducting the affairs of the polis.

The context and condition for this, were the economic and social reforms introduced by Solon, which

> *Tended to move the emphasis away from the household or family and towards the polis or community. (1993:6).*

For example, Solon's economic reform was "a kind of emancipation of the serfs", which abolished the requirement of payment of one-sixth of the agricultural produce by "the many" to "the few". This "shaking-off of burdens", by Solon, "produced the mentality of an exclusive *citizen-elite*", which gave the citizens of Athens a distinct and yet binding identity. With time, the possession of slaves enabled the citizen-elite to acquire "the leisure for political discussion

and office-holding". Also, Solon introduced a council of 400 members (ekklesia), which prepared the business for the popular assembly. Then, he established a popular court, called the *heliaia*, to which appeals could be made against unjust decisions of magistrates. Lastly, he also made magistrates accountable given their enormous judicial powers, including that of entertaining appeals from the council and the assembly (Jega, 2007:4)

Kleisthenes replaced the old four tribes, or sub-divisions which existed under Solon, with ten new ones, based on residence and not just birth. The tribes were based on demes (constituencies), of which there were 140. And the demes supplied councilors to the council of 500, which replaced Solon's council of 400 members. The ten tribes each sent fifty councilors to the new council drawn from the demes in accordance with their population. As Hornblower observed, the council was the first institution consisting of a circle of men for whom the interests of the polis became of paramount concern.

Under Kleisthenes, the enlarged council was given definite functions and responsibilities in relation to the assembly. For example, it prepared the business of the assembly and served as a sort of an executive committee. The councilors served a year at a time and only twice in a lifetime. Again, as (Hornblower, 1993:9) noted, this

> *Complex council of 500 members, with its rotating membership and restrictions on re-election, succeeded in extending political participation in an organized way across the entire geographical sweep of Attica,*

The larger territory encompassing, the city-state of Athens.

On the other hand, the assembly under Kleisthenes may have a defined membership of a total of 30,000 with a quorum of 6,000 or one-fifth. Provision was also made for monthly meetings of the assembly "sitting down, on a hill called the Pnyx". Hornblower noted that in the next century and a half, meetings of the assembly increased to three to four times a month, but "at most forty times a year". In effect, the membership of the assembly consisted of all legally defined citizens of Athens, who were basically freeborn, property-owning adult males. It would seem that, one major criterium of defining citizenship is ability to fight in wars, which more or less automatically excluded women. Despite these restrictions, however, in comparison to political participation in modern times, the large number of participants in the assembly was indeed significant. All of which meant that, "in important positive ways democracy had arrived" inAthens (Jega, 2007:5).

This kind of participatory democracy involving all legally defined citizens was possible given the context of a small, self-regulating city-state of Athens and its surrounding territory. With the restricted definition of demos, the classical notion of democracy in Athens was that of a political system in which freeborn male citizens in the city-state collectively participated in the management of their common affairs. They could all meet together, deliberate, vote in regular assembly meetings and determine their affairs, which were then given practical effect by paid officials and a small council in which they were adequately represented. Thus, they participated in deciding what was to be done and they, literally, held their destiny in their own hands. This political arrangement, initiated by Solon and reformed by Kleisthenes, was improved upon in the next century by Ephialtes and Pericles, to make it more democratic, with the following additional reforms: reduction of the power of Areopagus (council of Elders); payment for those serving on the juries, in the council and the assembly, etc., which took away decision making from the hands of the better-off and increased mass participation of the commoners.

By 403 BC however, these additional reforms ensured that Athenian democracy had become "more efficient…but less democratic". When Athens became an imperial power as a result of the Persian Wars (490-479 BC), the

enabling conditions for the consolidation of its democracy were created. For example, the war situation gave the council and assembly important matters to deliberate upon. Tribute derived from the empire gave the resource base for the introduction of salary to political office-holders. Also, Athens' imperial power facilitated the export of Athenian democracy; and citizen-elite consciousness and identity were greatly increased.

However, it is significant to note an important point made by (Hornblower, 1993:12-13).

> *The Anthenian democracy was one of the most participatory of all time…if one focuses on the powers and privileges of those who were included in its operations. But the total of those excluded was large…slaves, women, subject-allies in the two periods of naval hegemony, metics…there were degrees of exclusion, and exceptions were made for occasional privileged groups. But a quorum of 6,000 voters was needed for citizenship to be conferred on an individual, and there were very heavy penalties for usurpation of citizenship.*

The subsequent political theories and philosophical works of Plato and Aristotle were attempts to grapple with the challenges of "political (and especially democratic existence", particularly the tension that existed "between personal and civic identity" in ancient Greece (farrar, 1993:18). For example, it was based on his experience with the conduct of democracy that Aristotle

> *argues that the best form of democracy is one which is the least democratic, that is, does not embody the defining characteristics of democracy: most of the people are not poor, the poor do not govern and they do not act as equals.*

After about two centuries, the idea of democracy was first suppressed by Macedon in 322 BC, and subsequently eliminated from the history of Greece and the world, until about two thousand years later, when it resurfaced in a reinvigorated manner and in different socio-cultural and political contexts, with varying degrees of refinement and institutional adjustments.

Some of the significant dramatic happenings occurred in the 11th century, with the emergence of the Italian city-republics

> *in defiance of papal as well as imperial suzerainty, and with ostensibly democratic structures, processes and institutions, although they never referred to their political system as a democracy (Skinner, 1993).*

For example, these city-republics, first appointed consuls and invested them with supreme judicial authority. Then, in mid 12th century, the Consuls were

> *Gradually replaced by a form of government centered on ruling councils chaired by officials known as podesta,*

Who were given supreme power

> *In executive as well as judicial affairs (Skinner, 1993:57)*

By mid 13th century

> *Many of the leading communes of Lombardy and Tuscany had thus acquired the status of independent city-states, with written constitutions guaranteeing, their elective and self-governing arrangements (Skinner, 1993)*

With fairly elaborate procedures and mechanisms for appoint public officials and managing public affairs in the republics.

These developments, in self-governance and political representation, as Skinner observed, were extraordinary in the context of the then prevailing "feudal and monarchical structures of western Europe". Later in European history, opponents of tyranny and absolutism drew inspiration from these Italian city-republics, in spite of the great instability, which characterized them, and the fact that this experimentation with republican governance was never referred to as "democratic" government.

Indeed, the term democracy became current only after Aristotle's book was translated into Latin in the middle of the 13th century as Demokratia, by Moerbeke. The major contribution of the Italian city-republics to modern democratic governance was in the sense that they provided post classical

literature from which a lot of arguments were drawn in favor of government by the people, as well as institutions, which increasingly made self-government no mere utopian fantasy, but capable of being turned into political reality.

The principles of popular sovereignty, elective offices, demarcated electoral districts, electoral colleges and limited tenure for holders of public offices were all derived from writings about the experiences of the city-republics in contrast to Monarchy (Jega, 2007:8).

2.1.7 Modern Foundations of Democracy

Modern notions of democracy evolved from attempts to address the question of absolutism and the assumptions of sovereign power of monarchs over their people and societies. The 17th century popular rebellion against the monarchy in England, led by Oliver Cromwell (1642) gave birth to a political movement which questioned absolutist monarchical rule and created the atmosphere within which the notion of popular sovereignty and representative government flourished. A political movement called the Levellers, arguably, helped to nurture and reinforce the modern notion of democracy based on popular sovereignty and representative government in the context of the English Civil War in the mid 17th century. Wootton, for example, noted that:

> *They are the first who want a written constitution in order to protect the rights of citizens against he state. The first with a modern conception of which rights are inalienable: the right to silence (torture to extract a confession was a normal judicial procedure over most of Europe) and legal representation; the right to freedom of conscience and freedom of debate; the right to equality before the law and freedom of trade; the right to vote and when faced with tyranny, to revolution. The Levellers are thus not merely the first modern democrats, but the first to seek to construct a liberal state (1993:71).*

The political reforms which followed in the wake of the civil war in England in the 17th century, and the success of the forces led by Cromwell against the monarchy made the evolving British political system, especially the British parliament, a model of representative legislatures and elected governments in Europe, of course, the phenomenon of industrial revolution provided the socio-economic context for the dramatic political changes that occurred, as the new propertied class-the bourgeoisie-began to assert itself, counter balance the powers of the monarchy and other remnants of the feudal establishment, and play decisive roles in politics and governance through elected representatives.

The American Revolution which culminated in the Declaration of Independence in 1776, and the establishment of a federal constitutional

democracy with a unique system of checks and balances of power as well as, the French Revolution of 1780, which displaced

> *The grandest and proudest of the monarchies of the Old Regime (ala Fontana 1993:107)*

And replaced it with a republican form of government, with a grand Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, provided the impetus for the spread and consolidation of modern notions of liberal representative democracy based on the ideology of free enterprise and capitalism.

By the end of the 19th century, every major European monarchy had adopted a constitution and given considerable power to the people, through elected representatives. The development of modern democratic institutions in the USA later became the key model for many nation-states and its version of liberal democracy became prevalent especially in the third world countries.

Discourses by political theorists of the 18th and 19th centuries on how best to protect individual liberties; whether it is possible to establish similar systems of popular sovereignty, as in the republican city-states, in large-scale territories covered by modern nation-states; and how to create a social contract binding citizens to the modern nation-state, provided the philosophical and theoretical contexts for the rise of modern western liberal conceptions of democracy. In

particular, political philosophers, especially, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Locke, Tocqueville, Burke and Mill, helped to foster the change from classical to modern notions of democracy. Thus, Moore observed:

> *The development of a democracy is a long and certainly incomplete struggle to do three closely related things: 1) to check arbitrary rulers, 2) to replace arbitrary rules with just and rational ones, and 3) to obtain a share for the underlying population in the making of rules (1966:414).*

In its classical formulation, democracy means broad-based and active participation of all those defined as citizens in the conduct of their public affairs in the polis. In the context of relatively small ancient Greek and Roman city-states, relatively large popular participation of citizens was possible, although governance still required some form of delegation of authority and representation.

However, in the modern contexts, where nation-states are large, covering extensive territories and population, and often ethnically and religiously plural, if not linguistically, modern formulations of democracy place less emphasis on direct popular participation, which was the major attribute of the classical notion. Instead, they place greater emphasis on personal liberty, popular sovereignty and

representative government, with entrenched checks and balances to eliminate/reduce arbitrariness and abuses of power (Jega, 2007:11).

In this context, all notions of democracy being rule of the people by the people for the people, seems very ambiguous and only relative, if not metaphorical. It would seem rather better to perceive western liberal democracy as, at best, a system of elected representation in which the representatives are supposed to be responsible and accountable to the people who elected them to represent them. That is, elected representatives, delegates, with mandates, whose mandates can be given or withdrawn during election is; representatives or delegates, so mandated, chosen through periodic elections, which are supposed to be free and fair; and elections based on affiliations of political parties on whose platform candidates canvass for support for election into public office. (Jega, 2007:11).

Indeed, the capitalist ideology, which underpins the western liberal conception of democracy, is antithetical to very broadbased popular participation. The history of the evolution of parliaments and representative governments all over Europe and the Americas has shown that participation was qualified by property or tax; certain groups were excluded; suffrage was restricted, for example, women did not vote until the 20th century. The dynamics

of the evolution of democracy has led some leading western scholars to define democracy as either ”the rule of politician” (Schumpeter, 1950) or as “polyarchy” (Dahl, 1971), to emphasize its real manifestations rather than its ideal conceptualization. Others, such as Michel’s “iron law of oligarchy”, or Mosca’s the “ruling class” have theorized on the elitist character of modern democracy.

2.1.8 Institutions of Democracy

From the ancient to modern times, the basic key institutions, which have accompanied the theory and practice of democracy, are those that discharge executive, legislative and judicial functions. These institutions were often embodied in a constitution which defines their roles and gives them legitimacy. In ancient Greece and in the Italian city-republics, there were distinct institutions, which have defined functions and responsibilities, be they executive, legislative or judicial. However, the definitions and specifications of functions are not so often very clear-cut, as in modern times. For example, the Solon and Kleisthenes Councils were essentially coordinative and executive, but they also have some sort of legislative roles, for example in the sense that the council also serve as a committee that prepared the business of the assembly. The magistrates

have clear judicial and appellate roles, in many respects similar to what obtained in the Italian city-republics.

In modern times, with few exceptions, these institutions and the constitutional framework, which define their roles and relationships, have subsisted. And, by and large, there is greater separation of powers amongst various levels and arms of government, especially between the executive, the legislature and judiciary. However, even in this context, the separation is more clearly demarcated in some countries than in others. For example, there is some sort of overlapping of functions between the executive/cabinet and the legislature/parliament in Britain, given the cabinet minister's membership of the House of Commons. On the other hand, in the USA, the Executive, the judiciary and the legislature have clearly defined and separated powers which are constitutionally and carefully defined and balanced against one another.

Macridis and Brown have noted that

> *The 19th century was the period of legislative supremacy in most western constitutional democracies,*

In the sense that parliament had tremendous powers of legislation as well as supervisory or oversight functions over the executive. But, by the 20th century,

> *The internal balance of the power between the three organs…executive, legislative and judicial…began to shift in favour of the executive,*

Essentially due to the nature of capitalist societies and other reasons, such as extension of suffrage and growth of political parties (1977:255-56).

Among the major democratic institutions, which emerged in modern times, without classical antecedents, are political parties which aggregate interests in the political terrain and seek to mobilize and rally support for the candidates they offer for election into public offices. As they emerged, operated and developed in the Anglo-American tradition, they evolved from parties of "individual representation" to those of "mass integration", from bourgeois interest aggregation and representation to mass, catch-all people participation (Kirchheimer, 1977). Although over time, political parties played different roles in different societies, essentially, they primarily helped to form broad coalitions of interest groups and narrow down the choices of policy and personnel for the electorate and "structure the vote". Political parties also serve as pressure groups, although their status as a platform for contestation for elective offices distinguishes them from ordinary run-of-the-mill pressure groups, such as professional associations, labour unions and other non-governmental organisations (Jega, 2007:14)

2.1.9 Typology of Democratic Regimes

There are two main models of democracy, along one of which many modern nation-states predicate their political systems, and which have dominated intellectual discourses and theorizing of democracy. These are: Liberal Democracy and Socialist Democracy.

(i) Liberal Democracy

The dominant model, historically and contemporarily, in terms of the number of countries who have used or are using it, is Liberal Democracy. It is predicated on the following principles: individual freedom; equality before the law; universal suffrage (voting rights); election and representation. Additional features include: popular sovereignty; popular representation; majority government; guarantee of freedom (basic); consensus and accommodation; peaceful resolution of disputes; capitalism/free enterprise; and free market.

Liberal democracy is also variously referred to as bourgeois democracy, elitist democracy, etc.

In conceptualizing liberal democracy, three categories of definitions can be identified:

1. Formal (procedural): define democracy according to rules and meaning of politics (Minimalist).
2. Substantive or "Real": define democracy in terms of outcome of politics (Maximalist).
3. Middle-range: define democracy as a balance of rules and outcomes (Jega, 2007:15)

According to Mainwaring (1992), formal or procedural definitions of democracy are derived from Schumpeter's early formulation:

The democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of competitive struggle for the people's vote (1943:50).

Most subsequent definitions modified Schumpeter's by, for example, adding universal suffrage which he neglected. Robert Dahl's (1971) conception of polyarchy illustrates this.

Another example of a formal definition of democracy by Holden is that it is:

> *A political system in which the whole people, positively or negatively, make, and are entitled to make, the basic determining decisions on important matters of public policy (Holden, 1988:5).*

Formal democracy obtains where the following, considered to be the minimal requirements exist:

1. Basic freedoms are guaranteed.
2. Universal suffrage exists.
3. Multiparty system operates.
4. Periodic, 'free and fair' elections are held.
5. Governance is based on Rule of law.

It does not matter who is elected, how narrow the electoral base is or how poorly government meets basic needs and aspirations. Once it can be said that these conditions exist, for the minimalists, democracy exists (Jega, 2007:16).

On the other hand, Substantive democracy, according to Martin:

> *Goes beyond the formal trappings of democratic political systems (such as multipartism and elections) to include such elements as accountability and genuine popular participation in the nation's political and economic decision-making processes (1993:7)*

In this conceptualization, a political system can be considered to be substantively democratic if it ensures socio-economic empowerment of the masses; if it is popularly-driven; in addition to having formal/procedural attributes.

In between formal and substantive conceptions of democracy falls what has been dubbed as middle of the range definitions of democracy. An example is Karl's definition of democracy as:

> *A set of institutions that permits the entire adult population to act as citizens by choosing their leading decision-makers in competitive, fair and regularly scheduled elections which are held in the context of the rule of law, guarantees for political freedom, and limited military prerogatives (1990:2).*

The middle of the range definitions have several dimensions, such as:

1. Contestation over policy and political competition for office.
2. Participation of the citizenry through partisan, associational and other forms of collective action.
3. Accountability of rulers to the ruled through mechanisms of representations and the rule of law; and
4. Civilian control over the military.

(ii) Socialist Democracy

Socialist democracy, in contrast to liberal democracy, is a conception of democracy based on Marxist/Leninist principles and popularized by the attempts of socialist countries to present/represent their political systems as the credible alternatives to the western liberal democratic model. There were as many versions of socialist democracy as were socialist countries, ranging from the soviet, to Chinese, Vietnamese, Cuban and Tanzanian varieties. Essentially, these conceptions of democracy sought to prove that democracy is not only rooted in western values and capitalist ideology but that it also has roots in the socialist and Marxist-Leninist ideologies. It sought to justify the differences between governance processes in capitalist and socialist countries on the basis of ideological differences.

A critical element in the theoretical formulation of socialist democracy is mass, popular participation and notions of equity in the distribution of societal resources. It seeks to counter the elitist aspects of liberal democracy and the material base of involvement in representative democracy. In practice, however, this was breached, if not negated by other central aspects of Marxist-Leninist ideology, such as *dictatorship of the proletariat* and *democratic centralism* and the Chinese concept of peoples Democratic Dictatorship. The politics of the cold

war era and the authoritarian dispositions of many socialist regimes led to excessive denials of personal liberties and freedoms and erosion of any forms of democratic conduct and governance in many of these countries. The gain made in social welfare and service provisioning was soon eroded by excessive suppression, oppression and systematic exclusion of minorities and *dissidents* from the political process in the so-called socialist democracies. Even the formal procedural elements, such as competitive elections, voting, membership of political parties and participation, became highly restrictive and citizens in many socialist countries became demobilized from political participation by either fear or apathy (Jega, 2007:18)

A review of some perspectives on challenges of conducting Free and Fair Elections in Nigeria

According to European Union (EU) report on 2007 Presidential, National Assembly, Gubernatorial and State House of Assembly Elections the 2007 State and Federal elections fell far short of basic international and regional standards for democratic elections. They were marred by very poor organisation, lack of essential transparency, widespread procedural irregularities, substantial evidence of fraud, widespread voter disenfranchisement at different stages of the process, lack of equal conditions for political parties and candidates and numerous

incidents of violence. As a result, the process cannot be considered to have been credible. Given the lack of transparency and evidence of fraud, particularly in the result collation process, there can be no confidence in the results of these elections. This is all the more regrettable since they were held in an improved atmosphere in which freedoms of expression and assemble were broadly respected during campaigning, the judiciary played a generally positive and independent role and the people showed remarkable commitment to democracy, eagerly positive and independent role process and waiting patiently to vote in often very difficult circumstances.

INEC, which was financially dependent on the executive, was responsible for administrative failure on a nationwide scale. It did not prepare well for the elections and experienced widespread lack of confidence among election stakeholders in relation to its capacity and impartiality. Deadlines were missed throughout the pre-election period and it lacked transparency in its decisions and conduct. INEC was selective and inconsistent in the application and enforcement of electoral legislation. Training of polling staff started late, was of poor quality and in some areas did not take place at all. Engagement with political parties and civil society was poor. Overall, civic and voter education was very limited and ineffective (*European Union, 2007*).

The voter registration exercise conducted by INEC was marred by delay to a lack of available direct data capturing machines, technical break downs and establishment of illegal vote registration centres. The quality of the final voter register was poor and included under age voters, double entries, missing and blurred pictures of voters. The voter register was not displayed at local level as required by the law and was only partly posted prior to Election Day for orientation purpose only. Permanent voter registration cards were not issued due to the publication of the final voter register *(European Union, 2007).*

The pre-election period saw a vigorous campaigning throughout the country, particularly in states where there was the prospect of a change in power. However, a lack of transparency and accountability in campaign spending, together with the misuse of state resources gave advantage to incumbent parties at the state and federal level, and meant there was an uneven playing field for candidates and parties. Payment to potential voters was both witnessed by, and reported to, EU observers. Violence was a major issue of concern and incidents increased as the election days drew nearer. Credible reports indicated that several people, including candidates and police were killed in election related incidents (European Union,2007). This is unacceptable not only with respect to right to life but also to the democratic process. The

continuing and widespread use of thugs by a number of' political parties created a significant degree of fear and intimidation. Despite welcomed and repeated messages from security agencies showing a tolerance zero policy towards political violence, the security agencies, INEC and political parties did not appear to take decisive steps to address the situation and hold perpetrators to account (*European Union*, 2007:28).

There is a vibrant and expanding media environment. Presidential contestants and their parties were given equal access to discussion programmes, aired on state as well as private broadcast media, facilitating informed choices of' voters. However, there was it failure to adhere to the legal requirements to provide balanced coverage by state-owned media which showed bias in favour of the incumbent party, and more generally by broadcast media, which focused on a small number of' parties only. Generally, journalists were able to operate in an environment of relative freedom, given the systematic weaknesses that characterise the media sector.

On election day for the state elections, polling started late throughout the country due to the late arrival of polling officials and materials, which were often incomplete. In several areas, polling did not take place at all. Polling stations were generally under-stalled with officials who were under-trained.

Procedures were often poorly followed and the secrecy of the ballot was not guaranteed in the majority of polling stations visited by EU observers. However party agents were seen in almost all polling stations visited with domestic observers present in close to half. Incidents of hijacking of ballot boxes were witnessed by EU observers, who reported widespread irregularities, including under-age voting, and significant evidence of fraud, particularly during the result collation process, which completely lacked transparency due to the fact that polling station results were not publicly displayed at any level of the election administration throughout the country. Following INEC's decision to order a complete re-run of the gubernatorial election in Imo State, it should have initiated investigations in a number of' other states and given serious consideration to ordering complete election re-runs where serious concerns were raised by political parties, civil society and the media about the conduct elections (*European Union,* 2007).

On Election Day for the Federal elections, polling materials, including ballot papers, again arrived late and incomplete at many of the polling stations observed, resulting in significant delays in opening. Several National Assembly elections had to be postponed due to the incorrect printing of ballot papers, and at times there were insufficient numbers of presidential ballot papers. Party

agents were again seen in almost all polling stations visited with domestic observers present in around half. A heavier security presence helped contribute to a reduction in violent incidents. Again, polling procedures were often poorly followed and the secrecy of' the vote was not guaranteed in the majority of polling station', observed. EU observers witnessed many examples of fraud, including ballot box stuffing, multiple voting, intimidation of voters, alteration of official result forms, stealing of sensitive polling materials vote buying and under-age voting. Despite assurances by INEC polling station result form were not displayed at polling stations or supervisor levels of the election administration. In a development that cast further doubt on the integrity of the results, at the time of the announcement of the result of the presidential election, some state presidential results had not been complied or transferred to the INEC headquarters in Abuja.

Several disputes refilling, in particular, to (i) the powers and functions of' INEC, and (ii) the nomination, Substitution and disqualification candidates brought lie judiciary into centre stage in the electoral process. Overall, the Judiciary, in generally acting impartially, were considered to have made a positive contribution to the election process. However, the lack of adequate procedures and time limits for initiation and adjudications of complaints and

appeals prior to election day resulted in a number of disputes being dealt with by the courts just a few days before the elections. Some remained pending until after the election. In a positive development the Court of Appeal established mechanisms to simplify and ensure timely determination of post-election petitions. However, the mechanisms have not proved as effective as hoped and at the time this report was issued, most election petitions remained pending before the election tribunals.

Civil society organizations mounted a comprehensive observation exercise. However, INEC unnecessarily delayed the accreditation of both domestic and international election observers which restricted the oversight role they could play. Most domestic observer groups only receive accreditation cards on the day before the state elections, and then in insufficient numbers. Screening of domestic observer organizations was undertaken by the State Security Services (*European Union*, 2007).

Despite strong commitments from INEC during the pre electoral period, significant efforts by civil society and measures by some political parties to wave nomination fees for female candidates, women remain underrepresented as candidates and within the electoral administration. The high levels of poverty, illiteracy and lack of access to basic needs, including education has an

impact on the conduct of elections. Reaching the Millennium Development Goals should therefore be a key aspect of the consolidation of democracy as well as contributing towards improving social justice and economic development. In addition, increased international support should be directed towards good governance and democratization, particularly through civil society organizations.

EU recommended that in order for the citizens of Nigeria to have trust and confidence in the political and electoral process, a comprehensive and transparent investigation should be undertaken into the conduct of the elections to ensure that those responsible for the chaos and irregularities are held to account. INEC should publish detailed results of the 2007 elections broken down to polling station level on its website and Publicly display these results at INEC offices so that an independent audit can be undertaken from the polling station level through to final aggregated results. Urgent remedial action by the relevant authorities and stakeholders is necessary to restore conditions for the holding of credible and transparent elections. In this context, detailed recommendations are included at the end of this report by way of assistance to the process of improving the framework for elections.

Kurfi (2005) wrote on *Nigerian General Elections (1951-2003): My Roles and Reminiscences* is a rich documentation of events that characterized the general elections held in Nigeria within the last five decades.

The book presents the reminiscences and highlights the roles of a participant and observer, who was involved in the organisation and supervision of most federal elections that were conducted during this period. It examines and explains electoral processes, procedures, practices and principles; highlights a plethora of problems encountered and proffers possible solution.

The final analysis is overview of Nigeria electoral process and its main features over a period of fifty years (1951-2004) during which elections were held at local, regional, state and federal levels. The strengths and weaknesses of the election processes and procedure were highlighted and proposals for improvement of the system were articulated to make it more credible and in tune with the modern democratic electoral practices world wide with a view to entrenching stability in the Nigerian polity through the adoption of a credible electoral process. Whatever improvements of the system are proposed and/or adopted in the final analysis, it is the stakeholder in the enterprise known as election,

that determine the success or otherwise of the project. The roles of electoral commissions in the management of the electoral process since 1951 have been determined by the various constitutional provision, acts and/or decrees establishing them which must give them latitude to operate freely as independent bodies without let or hindrance from the government of the day. The government, which established, staffed and funded the commissions must also provide them with the wherewithal for their operation. The political parties are supposed to be partners in progress with the commissioners must cooperate with the latter and not make things difficult for them. The structures, composition of the commissions as well as the calibre of their membership, staffing and funding must be adequately and guaranteed by legislation. State and Local Governments co-coperation and assistance must accorded to the commissions to enhance their performance.

All stakeholders in the election process must join hands to achieve the objective of successful management of the electoral process with a view to producing election results that will be accepted to the electorate, candidates, political parties general populace, civil society organizations and the international community.

The commission must be seen to be an impartial umpire officiating the political game in accordance with the laid down rules and regulations, with transparency, integrity, justice and fair play. To achieve this goal, it requires assistance and cooperation of other stakeholders such as government, security agencies, the media, the judiciary, etc. the proper management of the electoral process to INEC depends largely on how the principal stakeholders play their respective roles in the electoral game.

Their performance makes or mars the credibility, acceptability of the electoral process and ultimately, the stability of the policy. The after math of the elections in 1959, 1979, 1999 on the one hand, and the outcome of the election in 1964, 1983, 1993 and 2003 on the other hand, testified to this assertion. The 2003 election, which were adjudged by both domestic and foreign election observer groups to be flawed and marred with all sorts of malpractices and manipulations, clearly fell in the last category. The elections held in 1959, 1979 and 1999 were held during the twilight of departing rulers, colonial and military, while those held in 1964, 1983, 1993 and 2003 were held under the auspices of incumbent rulers who were bent on perpetuating themselves in office (Tazarce). The first sets of elections were generally free and fair while the second were not. For

Nigeria to have a credible election, incumbent rulers must not be allowed to handle its preparations, organisation and conduct.

Kurfi suggested that six months before the date of any general elections, incumbent rulers should vacate their seats (at local, state and federal levels) and be replaced by a council of trustees which should establish electoral commissions to conduct and supervise elections and perform other executive functions of governance. This proposed arrangements should subsist whether or not executive heads of governments are allowed a single term of tenure to avoid outgoing executive manipulating election processes in favour of his anointed successor from the same or other political party.

The 2003 general elections witnessed new dimensions in the perpetration of electoral malfeasance in Nigeria. In most states of the federation, elections were not held, yet fantastic election results were declared by the national and state electoral commissions which awarded scores of up to 100 percent to favoured candidates/political parties.

If, despite all the improvements which have been brought to bear on the management of Nigeria's electoral processes by successive electoral commissions and governments since 1951, the type of electoral

skulduggery and daylight robbery of electoral votes that occurred during the 2003 elections could manifest itself, one begins to wonder if it is not high time Nigerians jettisoned election and opted for selection of candidates in the traditional manner through kingmakers, council of selectors composed of a number of anointed wisemen backed by oracle or other sanctioned representatives of deceased ancestors. In the meantime, the search for an elixir or supposed remedy for all Nigeria's electoral ills continues until it is found here or in the hereafter.

According to Transition Monitoring Group (2007), the 2007 electoral process experienced a number of critical events. The first of which was the voters' registration exercise which was flagged in special centres on the 22nd of October 2006 and nationally on the 28th of October. The introduction of the Direct Data Capture (DDC) System in which the bio-data of registered persons including their photographs were taken using an electronic device was a controversial issue that led to debates in the National Assembly on the powers of INEC to introduce such a system and whether the country was ready for it or not. It is also important to mention the controversies generated by the vendors to supply the requested number of machines to cover the nation-wide exercise. A total of 33,000 DDC

machines were required for the exercise but barely 1,200 were available at the commencement of the exercise. There were also reported cases of failure of the machines due to battery failure and other mechanical faults; the machines in some cases rejected the thumb prints of certain persons (especially women in the northern region, of the country due to application of 'lalle' a local dye used for beautification by women).

Another notable event on the roadmap to the elections during the period was the release of the election timetable and schedule of activities by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on the 8th of November, 2006. The timetable as released by INEC posed the major challenge of the non-inclusion of the time for possible run-off elections. The timetable released by INEC in compliance with the Act further stipulated December 15 and 22 as the last dates for submission of lists of candidates for Governorship and Presidential Elections respectively. INEC had earlier registered additional political parties extending the list from 27 to 50 political parties, many of which had unclear manifestoes and were not known to the Nigerian public. These political parties throughout the months of November and December became busy with their nomination processes. The major parties with national outreach among the fifty were the PDP,

ANPP and AC. The party nomination processes ended with what many described as 'anointing processes' as many parties emerged with consensus candidates selected through the most undemocratic means. However, parties were allowed to change their candidates before February 14th, 2007. The process ended up with many female aspirants edged out of the contest as they were not anointed by godfathers and their economic powers limited their ability to fund party activity judged to be one of the criteria for consideration (T.M.G, 2007:31).

The political campaigns leading to the elections were characterized by heavy presence of thugs, violence, killings including assassination of prominent politicians and destruction of properties. The scope of violence changed from the usual flash point states to nationwide and also advanced in the use of weapons of destruction including the use of AK 47 machine guns and bombing particularly in the Niger Delta region and Southwest of the country.

There is no doubt that elections took place in Nigeria between April and May 2003. The National Assembly elections were ...generally peaceful in most parts of the country, though significantly marred by incidents of violence, intimidation and killing of voters in many states. For the Presidential and

Gubernatorial elections ... there were substantial flaws in some of the critical stages leading up to the elections which tended to undermine the credibility of the process. So the reality of elections is not in doubt. What's in doubt is whether the elections, viewed holistically, can be said to be genuine elections aggregating the expressed wish of the people of Nigeria.

The Presidential and Gubernatorial elections recorded higher incidents of electoral irregularities and malpractices. The Presidential and Gubernatorial elections in some of the States felt short of international and regional standards and did not in the main reflect the true voting pattern of the Nigerian people. The political parties did not trust that the people will make the right choices and even if they made the choices, would not give them the massive votes and figures they needed to show their popularity (T.M.G, 2007:23-31). While some of the governors would have won their elections with slim majorities, they proceeded to use state machinery to allocate obscene number of votes to themselves. While the President might have won his elections with simple majority of the votes, his campaign moguls and hired mercenaries did not want to leave anything to chance. In the end, we have an election that we are not sure reflects the genuine wish of the Nigerian people. The State House of Assembly elections defy characterization because as at the time of the elections, genuine

voters had abandoned the process leaving the stage for fraudsters. The State House of Assembly elections in most of the states were therefore flawed as genuine elections did not take place.

The above statements according to (TMG, 2007:24-38) present familiar stories about problem encountered in conducting elections in Nigeria. These include incidents of electoral irregularities and malpractices; incidents of violence, intimidation and killing of voters. The elections did not reflect the true voting pattern of the Nigerian people and therefore falling short of international and regional standards.

The 2007 general elections brought out vividly a number of lessons for our democratic transition and its consolidation. First, experience showed that political parties became autocrats in the political process as they observe no inner party democracy and more importantly they were disconnected from the people TMG (State House of Assembly Elections Report, 2003: 8). Second, politicians without peoples mandate continued to occupy the legislature and the executive arm of government. This affected the legitimacy and respects for such national institution. Third, the judiciary's handling of the electoral petitions protected incumbents thus violently destroying the basic tenets of democracy. Fourth, electoral violence helped in deconstructing the foundation

and the growing culture of tolerance that Nigerians had built. Fifty, the independence of the INEC to organise elections was compromised since candidates were declared winners in elections they did not win. (Sha, 2005)

Ajayi (2007:88 :) argues that INEC suffers a number of challenges in its preparations for the 2007 elections. Chief among them is securing public confidence in the transition process. Most members of the public have lost confidence in the process. Questions being asked in the process include: will the elections hold? Is President Obasanjo genuinely prepared to go on May 29th, 2007? Will the elections be free and fair considering the ruling PDP's influence on INEC in the 2003 elections? These mind agitating concerns are fuelled by President Obasanjo's quest for tenure extension for an unconstitutional third term. A bill to this effect was defeated in the National Assembly but the public believes that the president has not relinquished the ambition. INEC is believed not to be transparent in its handling of the transition programmer as it is alleged of working in tandem with PDP to asphyxiate other political parties (Ameh, 2007; Editor, 2007). The closeness of the commission to the presidency and the ruling PDP has robbed it of its being seen as impartial and transparent by the public and opposition parties.

Electoral apathy and civic irresponsibility constitute setbacks to the credibility of the elections. Most members of the public are not just interested in the electoral process. The most noticeable manifestation of these attitudes concerns INEC's voters' registration and validation exercise which commenced on October 25th, 2006. The exercise was ignored by the public as people did not turn-up at the registration centres (Oladesu, 2007). The problem was compounded by logistic hitches suffered by the exercise. The commission adopts the use of direct data capturing (DDC) machines for the voters registration. The exercise suffered shortage of DDC machines supplies all over the country. For instance, four weeks after the take-off of the exercise, of the 30,000 units required for the exercise (The Nation, 2007: May, 11) only 10,000 units had been supplied by contractors (Adesina, 2006). Even with two weeks to the end of the exercise, the machines are still not enough across the country (the Nation, 2007). As a result, the few willing eligible voters who had shown up at the designated registration centres were not attended to. In the few centres where the machines were available, many of many of them were malfunctioning due to technical hitches and lack of electricity of register all eligible voters before the expiration of the election days considering the continued deterioration state of the nation's electricity sector and poor technical know-how?

Arising from the failing registration exercise, two weeks to the end of the three-month exercise, INEC had registered only 40 million out of the estimated 60 million voters (Owete, 2007:126). The estimated 60 million eligible voters were based on the previous estimated 120 million population for the country and how that the nation's official population is 140 million, according to the 2006 census results, it implies therefore that the number of eligible voters would risen to about 80 million. Is INEC competent of registering the balance of about 40 million within the remaining two weeks that the exercise will last? The low turn-out of eligible voters has become worrisome to governments at all levels. Apart from the fact that the electorates are weary that rigging of votes by politicians, rather than their votes, would count in determining the outcomes of the elections, the poor materials conditions of the people have also motivated their apathy to the electoral process. Democracy as a facilitating political engine for human development and welfare is yet to be achieved by Obasanjo administration since 1999. The rate of poverty has accelerated rather than reduced. Only the ruling political elites are wallowing in stolen wealth. Official corruption has appreciated in spite the administration's anti corruption policy. Various attempts are being made the possession of voter's card compulsory for their civil servants and contractors (the nation, 2007b). Non possession of a voters card would deny

civil servants their salaries while contracts. Would no longer benefit from government contracts. In the same vein children whose parents cannot produce their voter's cards could be sent out of school while patients who cannot the cards may not enjoy government hospital's services. All these threats are undemocratic. Registration by eligible voters is supposed to be a voluntary civic responsibility. The use of intimidation and coercion will only make the exercise incredible and violates people's rights to register or not. Another problem that coercion may cause is that voters may shun the actual elections. Most states and the federal government have also declared public holidays for the exercise (Ikuomalo, 2007; The Nation, 2007c). This is a panicky measure which has also engendered panic for the electorates as they now forcefully and gradually embrace registering should in case voter's card would be required for their children's schooling, securing employment in government establishments or for any other future non- electoral purpose by the authorities.

The registration exercise also suffers the burden of credibility. INEC officials have introduced fraud to the exercise with the active connivance of politicians. Some INEC officials INEC officials have been caught registering voters illegally in the homes of prominent PDP politicians (Adeyemo, 2007) some DDC machines have been declared missing at registration centres (Isiguzo,

2007) while some INEC officials have been caught engaging in multiple registration (Editor, 2007b) contrary to the Electoral Act 2006. The corruption of the exercise by the officials calls to question, once again, the continued connivance of the officials with politicians to perpetrate electoral malpractice on elections cannot therefore be ruled out like they did in the 1999 and 2003 elections.

Other issues that could undermine a smooth poll are environmental factors. The first is the perennial fuel crisis. Like the poor performance of the electricity sector is hindering the smooth functioning of the voter's registration DDC machines, the lingering shortage of petroleum products could constitute logistic barriers to the polls. Movement of electorates of designated polling booths would be constrained by continued fuel shortage. Though it may not be hard to believe that the ruling PDP deliberately caused the artificial shortage so as to provide justifiable conditions for the postponement of the polls. Rumours of impending adjournment of the elections by the ruling PDP have become so rife that the National Assembly has to expressed trepidation on the issue (Bamus, 2007). The second worrisome aspect that can be inimical to an efficient and credible election administration was the state of internal insecurity nation-wide. Beside unabated armed robbery causes, political assassination and thugerry pose serious danger to

the electoral process. Notable political thugs on daily basis. The spate of assassination and bloody political clashes are encouraged by the large quantity of illegal small arms in circulation in the country (Editor, 2007c). If the situation remains unchecked, the polls may not be violent free and may therefore be boycotted by the electorates and thereby loading to low turn-out of voters.

The third environmental factor is the continues protests over the census 2006 results across the nation by state governments, sectarian ethnic groups and civil society groups (Editor, 2007d; Olaniyi, 2007). This also constitute problems for the election. It is the belief of critical political observers and opposition parties that President Obasanjo deliberately released the results at this critical time as a ploy to precipitate domestic instability that could be utilized as justification for the postponement of the elections (Ibrahim, 2007). Census like religion, is a very sensitive issue which usually triggers controversy and national crisis with deadly dimensions in most cases.

Finally is the screening of party candidates for the elections by INEC, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt and other related Crimes Commission (ICPC). In the first instance, screening of contestants by any official agency is illegal as there are no legal or constitutional provisions supporting it neither the 1999 constitution nor the

Electoral Act 2006 authorized screening or verification of candidates by EFCC and ICPC. Opposition parties believe that the ruling PDP under President Obsanjo is merely using the EFCC and ICPC to witch-hunt and disqualify political opponents (Madu-West et al., 2006). A step towards the validation of such belief is the pressure being mounted on INEC by the ruling PDP to disqualify the presidential flag bearer of Action Congress (AC) party, Atiku Abubakar, the incumbent Vice President, who has defected from PDP to AC because of the feud between him and President Obsanjo on the latter's third term agendas. PDP alleged that the Vice President has been indicted for corruption by EFCC (Odenyi, 2007). However, the EFCC indictment report has earlier been declared illegal by Lagos High Court. Besides, the insistence of INEC to even screen candidates illegally in collaboration with the EFCC and ICPC is believed to be a ploy to incite the opposition to institute litigations resulting in securing court injunctions restraining INEC from conducting the polls based on those illegalities like the Association for Better Nigeria (ABN) did in the June 12th 1993 presidential election which was invariably annulled by the Babangida regime based on the court injunction secured by the association against the conduct of the election. Already AC has instituted litigation against INEC on the screening exercise. Disqualifying and of the opposition contestants, particularly

Atiku Abubakar, contrary to electoral regulations, would create credibility crisis for INEC and would also undermine the transparency and fairness of the entire electoral process.

The Challenges of Free and Fair Elections in Africa: Observations from Zambia, Kenya and Nigeria

The future of democracy in Africa seems to be in serious jeopardy as governments characterized as democratic perform abysmally to the dissatisfaction of the people, yet the same dissatisfied people renew their mandates in supposedly free and fair elections. This absurdity indeed becomes more perplexing when international election observers and international community in general, like in the 2001 Zambian election, validate elections they openly admitted to have been rigged by the government. For instance, in the Kenyan election of 1992, these observers commented that Moi's party/government had influenced the conduct of election to its advantage, yet that election was accepted and aid to that country, which was suspended, resumed. This acceptance gives the impression that the elections were good, thereby weakening legitimate resistance and protests by opposition parties.

The oddity of this problem is plainly illuminated by several old and contemporary theories and studies. The rational choice theorists, for instance,

argue that during elections, voters compare benefits they receive from incumbent governments with what they hope to get from the opposition if voted to power and then vote for the party giving or promising greater benefits (Downs, 1957; Riker and Ordershook, 1968; Silberman and Durden, 1975). Naturally, voters are expected to reward governments at the polls if they performed well and punish them in the same arena if their policies are not beneficial to them (Tillman, 2007; Nooruddin and Chhibber, 2007). Thus, from this perspective, it becomes abnormal when democratic governments in Africa perform unsatisfactorily, yet they continually renew their mandates.

Some scholars have located this problem in competitions for political offices as avenues for accumulating private wealth, which is the reason elections are ferociously contested, rigged and manipulated, particularly, by incumbent governments (Ake, 1985; Diamond, 1988; Joseph, 1987). Studies also show that poltical elites combine rigging with patronage and ethnic solidarity to generate fraudulent and irrational electoral support for poorly performing governments (Barkan and Ng'ethe, 1998; Chazan, Lewis, Mortimer, Rothchild, and Stedman, 1999; Cowen and Kanyinga, 2002; Edie, 2003; Schraeder, 2000; Tordoff, 1997). The stakes are even higher in second elections and re-elections, which is the reason for extensive rigging to return incumbent rulers to power (Bratton, 1998;

Mbaku, 2003; Tordoff and Young, 2005). The successes of these incumbents in retaining power even when they perform poorly in office, necessitates the use of authoritarian strategies and manipulation of the constitution, like the situations in Cote d' Ivoire and Zambia. This is what Schraeder (2001) describes as "authoritarian-democratic paradox". As Adam Przeworski (1991: 26) would have liked to put it, democracy is not yet "the only game in town" as even the political elites defrauded democratic institutions.

In Sub-saharan African countries like Zambia, Kenya, Senegal and many others, incumbents prodigiously manipulate elections to remain in office despite serious charges of corruption, inefficient governance, poor economic and infrastructural development, and low standard of living of the people. The political elites understand fully the implications of losing such elections. First, it is an indication that the people have lost confidence in them, hence, an erosion of legitimacy. This perception deepens the problem further because instead of countering this declining legitimacy with improved performances to attract support of voters, political elites resort to rigging to make the electorate inconsequential to their stay in power. The depreciated value of voters in the calculations of political elites further vitiates accountability and intensifies the problem of legitimacy. Secondly, losing re-election bids by incumbents, most

importantly, means losing the main source of private wealth accumulation, which is the primary reason for seeking political offices (Ake, 1985). The problem now turns into a vicious cycle: the politicians' objective for seeking political power, which is private wealth accumulation, engenders corruption and inefficient performance of the government, which smothers and obfuscates accountability and in turn, generates enervated legitimacy for the government. This outcome, again, necessitates the rigging of elections by elites to win power, rather than depend on good performances for the support of the electorate, and the cycle continues.

The central issue here is that political leaders perform poorly in office and yet their citizens are unable to vote them out of office; almost all of them get re-elected, sometimes with very large majorities. Some scholars have argued that in Africa there is the tendency for people to vote for incumbent parties or governments because the legitimacy of opposition has not been fully accepted (Abbink and Hesselong, 2000).

This explanation does seem to capture the essence of the problem. While it is true that incumbent governments control the states' machineries of coercion; they have ample resources for more effective campaigns and can offer bigger pay-offs than the other parties, nevertheless, if their performances are not

satisfactory to the people, their legitimacy or mandates become questionable. Hence, the desire to team up with the opposition to vote the incumbents out will be strong. Whereas, if the performances of incumbents are satisfactory to the majority of the electorate, their legitimacy would increase and incumbents could easily be re-elected without having to rely on manipulations and rigging. African cases seem to demonstrate the two positions, but the first clearly dominates.

Zambia

Frederick Chiluba of the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) won the first multi-party election in Zambia, held in 1991, after 17 years interlude of one- party dictatorship. The rather resounding victory highlighted three factors upon which electoral successes of opposition parties in Africa have come to depend. First, the people were tired of Kaunda's long and corrupt leadership of the United National Independent Party (UNIP) that ruled the country since independence. Second, Zambians were full of expectations that Chiluba's government will strengthen the economy and solve other problems of the society, particularly corruption, following his campaign speeches "delivered with oratorical panache" (BBC Focus on Africa, January- March, 1992:16).

Indeed, popular expectations, according to Schraeder (2000:285) were so high that "a significant portion of the Zambian people believed a multiparty

system would serve as a panacea for the country's economic problems". Thirdly, winning of power from Kenneth Kaunda's UNIP by Chiluba-led MMD was possible because the election was free and fair.

On coming to power, Chiluba's government had to face the "crisis of legitimation" because its economic performance was poor. Charges of corruption and other administrative improprieties were common against the government, leading to mass disillusionment and disenchantment. Chiluba resorted to dictatorial strategies to suppress those who opposed his government (Fraser, 2003). Using emergency rule, the government arrested and detained several members of official opposition, the UNIP, without charges.

Consequently, Chiluba's popularity decline rapidly and this meant a weak legitimacy for his government, which would come under test in his 1996 re-election bid. His major opponent was the former president, Kenneth Kaunda, which he maneuvered out of the race through a new constitutional provision he masterminded. It was now required that parents of any presidential candidate must be Zambians by birth and Kaunda's parents came from Malawi. Chiluba actually threatened to deport Kaunda, which made him (Kaunda) to withdraw from the race (Schraeder, 2000: 286). With the major challenge removed and

with other manipulations put in place, Chiluba's re-election was a foregone conclusion.

Although the main opposition parties boycotted the election, nevertheless, it was still a re-election won fraudulently and upon which the government's claim to legitimacy depended. This position is consistent with the thesis that unpopularity and poor performances of incumbents are not enough for oppositions to win elections. Unpopularity of government and disillusionment of the people must combine with free and fair election before incumbents can lose elections. Indeed, if the Zambian elections of 1996 were free, fair and devoid of political elites manipulations, Chiluba would have lost.

In the 2001 election, although the incumbent president, Chiluba, did not contest, nevertheless, it still represented a re-election for the ruling party and evaluation of performance of the incumbent government, like that of Obasanjo in 2007 in Nigeria, would be significant in determining voters' choices. Besides, the MMD's candidate, Levy Mwanawasa, was Chiluba's choice. Mwanawasa, undoubtedly, possessed a good electoral appeal as an anti-corruption crusader, who resigned as the country's Vice-President in 1994 when charges of corruption against the government became widespread (ElSA, 2002).

However, this was not enough to erase the notoriety of corruption and inefficiency of the MMD government, upon which platform he stood to contest. To win this election, the MMD and the government resorted to massive rigging. According to European Union's Chief Observer for that election, Michael Meadowcroft (2002), ballot boxes were delivered late to oppositions' strongholds after many of their supporters were tired of waiting and had gone back home. Furthermore, there were brazen breaches of electoral commission's code of conduct by the ruling elites such as the use of government vehicles for campaigning; denying rally permits to opposition parties; biased state media coverage towards the ruling party and the use of District Administrators, who were civil servants, as MMD party agents. In a country with few resources available to the political parties, these abuses were of significant help to the ruling party" (Meadowcroft, 2002).

Besides, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) clearly identified itself as a government agency instead of an independent electoral body. The Commission's Chairman, Justice B. M. Bwalya, attempted severally to obstruct international observers; he warned the election monitors "the Government will not be happy with observers who do more than observe" (Meadowcroft, 2002).

In that election, Levy Mwanawasa of MMD polled 506,694 votes (29.15%), while his closest rival, Anderson Mazoka of UPND polled 472,697 (27.20%). This result suggests that but for intensive rigging by the government party and unhealthy fragmentation of opposition (10 of them); the MMD would have lost the election with a very wide margin (ElSA, 2002). However, the 2006 election was different.

The MMD government headed by Mwanawasa fought corruption vigorously and recovered stolen money from former state officers, including the former president, Chiluba, who was arrested and tried (Fraser, 2003). His economic policies also yielded some dividends as the Zambian economy had grown considerably. A large segment of the electorate was satisfied with the performance of the government, at least Mwanawasa's rating was higher than Chiluba's. Therefore, unlike Chiluba, Mwanawasa was not facing a dwindling legitimacy and so had no need to rely on rigging and manipulations to succeed.

The 2006 election was relatively free and fair; the incumbent president won with a wider margin than in 2001, even when opposition parties/coalitions had reduced to four (EISA, 2006; African Election Database, 2006) and the closest rival, Michael Sata of Patriotic Front, conceded defeat (Robertson, 2006). Thus, governments that perform well are not likely to face severe crisis of

legitimacy and hence, could win elections without depending on electoral fraud. However, this is not to push the argument that African governments that perform well do not manipulate elections to be perfectly sure of winning or retaining power. If this should happen, it could be rationalized by good performances; it is bad performances that have no justification.

Kenya

The first multi-party election in Kenya after 26 years of authoritarian rule held in December 1992. Kenyans had agitated for democratic government based on multi-party politics and like the Nigerians and Zambians, they were optimistic that such reform would engender responsible government and economic progress in contrast to "kleptocratic dictatorship and declining income", which they endured over the years (Barkan and Ng'ethe, 1998).

President Moi resisted all pressures for reform from internal democratic forces, arguing that multiparty democracy would lead to tribal conflict, as opposition parties would only foster tribal interests. However, things changed in December 1991, when international donors suspended US$350 million aid to Kenya. This forced Moi to accept, disingenuously, multiparty elections. According to Barkan and Ng'ethe (1998:33), Moi's acceptance of reform was purely tactical: his strategy was to have many parties, but continuously harass or

bribe the leaders of the new parties to cause splits or even defection of key members to the ruling party, Kenya African National Union (KANU).

In effect, "Moi would go on ruling much as before, but at the head of an emerging one-party dominant system with enough democratic trappings to satisfy the donors". Another constitutional amendment designed to strengthen Moi and his party was the requirement that to win the presidency, the candidate must win not only a majority of the popular vote, but also at least 25 percent in not less than five of Kenya's eight provinces. This provision ruined the presidential prospects of popular opposition candidates such as Mwai Kibaki, Kenneth Matiba, and Oginga Odinga, whose bulk of supporters came from their respective ethnic groups without much of national spread (Barkan and Ng'ethe, 1998).

Besides, the members of the Electoral Commission were Moi's loyalists, specifically handpicked by him. This severely compromised the independence and neutrality of the Commission. In addition, there was extensive manipulation of ethnicity, which led to numerous cases of ethnic violence, some of which the state sponsored to justify the fears of tribal conflict earlier expressed by Moi. Finally, as engineered by Moi, a largely divided opposition became even more

fractious, while several of their prominent members decamped to KANU shortly before the election (Barkan and Ng'ethe, 1998: 33).

From this background, it is obvious that the December 1992 election could not have been free and fair. The rigging was massive with opposition brazenly sabotaged and refused the use of public media for campaign (Holmquist, Weaver, and Ford, 1994:222). Moi's party, KANU, won 36% of the popular vote, which gave it a majority in the parliament and its leader the right to assume office as the president (Edie, 2003:98). Thus, the Kenyan election of 1992, although a transitional election, was a re-election for Moi and KANU, and it demonstrates, again, that with manipulated and rigged elections, a government, no matter how bad, can retain power irrespective to the wishes of the people.

Nothing exposed Moi's hypocrisy more than his reversion to semi-authoritarianism after the election, especially after the resumption of loan disbursement to Kenya by donor agencies. Indeed, both Moi and his party KANU, paid little attention to the opposition regarding their involvement in political and governmental matters; it was much like the old one-party system.

Furthermore, Moi continued to entice opposition to decamp and 12 of the 88 opposition members in the 200 member Parliament, had defected to KANU between 1993 and 1996, leaving them with only 76 members. Moi demoted or

dropped moderate cabinet ministers who supported increased democratic reform, while rewarding the hardliners that opposed further democratization (Barkan and Ng'ethe, 1998: 34). This was the shape of the political terrain as the country prepared for another election in 1997.

As in 1992, Moi personally handpicked the eleven- member Electoral Commission for the 1997 election, retaining seven of the old members. This was a signal to the opposition and the international community that the election would not be free and fair. The Commission confirmed this fear with its first assignment, which was the creation of 22 new constituencies. Most of these constituencies were in KANU's strongholds, while Nairobi, the capital city, with the largest population growth in the country, had none because KANU had won only one of its eight seats in 1992 (Throup and Hornsby, 1998: 178; Barkan and Ng'ethe, 1998).

Moi's repression of opposition increased as elections got closer; their leaders were harassed, their parliamentary candidates denied rally permits and sometimes, brutally assaulted by the police (Barkan and Ng'ethe, 1998: 35). As political leaders in both KANU and the opposition parties operated from ethnic support bases, widespread violence, most of which took the form of ethnic

clashes, claimed lives and Kenya's economy was also hurt in the process, particularly, the viable tourism sector.

Violence and refusal of the regime to undertake political reform then prompted international donors to suspend aid to Kenya. It was in attempt to resolve the crisis that moderate KANU MPs joined with some opposition MPs, to form a body known as Inter-Parties Parliamentary Groups (IPPG). This group pressed for a minimal programme of reform to change the constitution and electoral procedures as well as the general policy and administration of political practice (Barkan and Ng'ethe, 1998: 38; Cowen and Kanyinga, 2002: 29).

Even though the agreement reached did not change the constitutional landscape of Kenya significantly, nevertheless, it provided a more level led playing ground for the opposition, widened the democratic space, and provided a firmer springboard of free and fair elections, than was the case in 1992. Moi and KANU hardliners grudgingly accepted this reform, which the parliament enacted between September and November 1997.

In the election that followed, ethnicity was the major factor that determined candidates' electoral support. The frontline contenders such as Moi of the ruling party, KANU, Mwai Kibaki of Democratic Party, Ralia Odinga of the National Development Party, Kijana Wamalawa of Forum for the Restoration

of Democracy-Kenya and Charity Ngilu of the Social Democratic Party; all played the ethnic/regional cards (Cowen and Kanyinga, 2002). With the exception of Moi, due to long-standing patronage in Coast, Northeastern, and Rift Valley provinces and in addition to over-registration/over-representation in KANU strongholds, no other candidate won substantially outside their respective ethnic/home provinces (Throup and Hornsby, 1998).

There were, naturally, charges of rigging and logistic problems in some provinces, which affected both the ruling party and opposition equally, but overall, the election was freer and fairer than that of 1992 and was highly commended by local and international observers. Because of the wider democratic space, the opposition's electoral fortunes improved beyond their 1992 performance, despite their continued fragmentation. For instance, the strength of opposition against KANU in the Parliament was 88:188 in 1992, while it was 109:103 in 1997.

Indeed, Barkan and Ng'ethe (1998: 44) have rightly argued that if the parliamentary districts were proportional to the number of registered voters, the opposition would have defeated KANU by approximately 123 to 87. Their calculations show that the average number of voters in constituencies won by KANU was 36, 350, while the average for constituencies won by the opposition

was 53, 387. This, however, still amounts to 'institutionalized rigging', which if it had been checked, the ruling party would have lost power in the parliament.

In the 2002 election, the opposition, from the beginning, was operating in a freer environment secured by the 1997 reform agreement, hence, it was better prepared and organised for this election than in 1992 and 1997. The incumbent president, Moi, was constitutionally ineligible to run and his chosen successor was Uhuru Kenyatta, son of the first president of Kenya, who ran under KANU.

Apart from excessive appeals to ethnic solidarity, the major factors in election issues were massive corruption and increasing poverty in Kenya, for which the KANU government was culpable (Talbot, 2003). Thus, the campaign message of the opposition was eradication of corruption, which threatened general development as well as the flow of foreign aid in Kenya. A coalition of 10 opposition parties, the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) led by Mwai Kibaki won the presidential election with 63 percent of the vote, while Uhuru Kenyatta of KANU scored 31%.

In the parliamentary election also, NARC won 122 seats in the 210-seat parliament. Invariably, where poor performance of government, like the KANU-led government in Kenya, results in dissatisfaction and disillusionment of the populace, it generates widespread desires for change of government. If the

opposition is relatively strong and organized, like NARC was in Kenya and if the operating democratic environment guarantees freedoms and liberties, including free and fair elections, then the governing party is bound to lose power.

Thus, the wider the democratic space, the faster the rate of decline of the legitimacy of an unaccountable and unresponsive government, expressed in increased electoral support for the opposition. The 1992 elections opened the democratic space and the opposition gained legitimate existence; the 1997 elections widened that space and the opposition consolidated and with the growth and stabilization of that democratic space in the 2002 election, the opposition took over power.

Unfortunately the democratic space was shrunk again by the government of Mwai Kibaki in the December 2007 election through malpractice and violence. If the election was free and fair and in the face of a more united opposition, Kibaki would have lost his re-election bid because he reneged on his promise to fight corruption and tackle widespread poverty (Phombeah, 2007; Mynott, 2007). His rival, Odinga, had overtaken him in opinion poll two months to the election (BBC World News, October 1, 2007).

The findings in Nigeria, Zambia and Kenya seem to be consistent with elections and reelections in other African countries. In Senegal, for instance, the

constitutional reforms in 1976 and 1981 had allowed opposition parties to contest elections against the ruling party, Parti Socialiste (PS), which had controlled power since independence under the leadership of Leopold Senghor.

In 1980, Senghor stepped down and Abdou Diouf succeeded him and won the 1983 election. However, with poor performance of the PS government and loss of popularity, the government had to indulge in brazen malpractice in order to win the controversial 1988 election. The people were so disillusioned with Diouf's victory in the presidential election such that the turnout for other elections dropped drastically (Tordoff, 1997:138).

In the election of March 2000, the opposition was able to form a coalition, like NARC in Kenya in 2002 and acted vigilantly to ensure a free and fair election. President Abdou Diouf was defeated in that election by Abdoulaye Wade, who captured more than 60 percent of the vote as the head of coalition of opposition parties (Edie, 2003: 41).

In the Gambia, Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC) led by the incumbent president, Yahaya Jammeh, won the 1996 election. Although Jammeh came in as a former military ruler, the election presented an opportunity for legitimizing his rule and policies. Many Gambians did not consider this election fair and free and the electoral process lacked

credibility (Wiseman, 1998). Jammeh had even threatened that many of his opponents will not live to see the election (Mukwuzi, 2005:9).

While most of the cases considered so far support the thesis reversely, the Benin case demonstrates a direct positive correlation between electorate's dissatisfaction with government's performance, loss of legitimacy by the government, free and fair election and electoral victory for opposition.

Mathieu Kerekou's government ran into serious economic crisis which led to government's inability to pay the workers and general hardship. Donor agencies attached all forms of aid to economic and political reforms, which led to the national conference of 1989 and ultimately, the multiparty elections of 1991. Mathieu Kerekou ran to retain power as president but was defeated by Nicephore Soglo. As noted by Edie (2000:127), an electoral victory for the opposition confirmed mass disenchantment with Kerekou's regime and led to the emergence of new political leadership.

Much as people's disenchantment was important, the opposition succeeded because the incumbent, like Zambia under Kaunda in 1991, did not manipulate the election or repress members of the opposition parties. The 1996 election was also relatively free and fair without the government obstructing the opposition. When Soglo's popularity had also waned due to economic problems, he equally

lost his reelection bid to Kerekou in 2001 (Tordoff, 1997:240). It would appear as if the culture of free and fair election is institutionalizing in Benin because the guaranteed democratic space had also enabled Yayi Boni, a political neophyte, to win the 2006 presidential election (BBC News Africa, March 26, 2006).

What is evident in African cases studied here is that where incumbents allow free and fair elections, results reflect the preferences of the people, based principally on their evaluations of the performances of the governments or on expectations from the opposition. Governments that are less corrupt tend to perform more efficiently and are more likely to accept free and fair elections, whereas, overtly corrupt governments tend to perform poorly and are more likely to rely on rigging.

There is, however, the external pressure dimension to this position. The Benin and even Kenyan and Zambian cases tend to demonstrate that the severer the economic crisis, the more dependent the country is on aid and the greater the tendency for it to comply with donor agencies' electoral prescriptions. For instance, of all these countries, Benin has complied more with the rules of free and fair elections and its economic crisis and vulnerability were greater. In future elections, it will be interesting to observe the dominant position: whether it is

stabilization of the liberal democratic culture or adherence to directives of donor agencies to solve crucial economic crisis.

Nigeria

Of the three countries, Nigeria has the longest history of multiparty politics elections, as such; she has more cases of re-election under a multiparty arrangement. The 1959/60 election installed an indigenous government that took Nigeria into independence. Re-election was due in 1964 for the federal parliament, while the regional parliaments were due in 1965. There was so much corruption, nepotism, wastages, official high-handedness and lawlessness. However, important as these were in judging the performance of government, they were, most of the time, overshadowed by ethnic and regional considerations. The three major political parties in the three regions mobilized ethnic support and manipulated elections vigorously to retain control of their regions, while they attempted to make incursion into other regions.

The situation in the western region was typical. It was the only region with a government party, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) and a viable opposition, the Action Group (AG). The NNDP was a faction of the AG, which used federal government's support to gain control of political power in the

western region after the intra-party crisis of 1962. Meanwhile, the leader of AG, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, was imprisoned for treasonable felony.

The NNPC, led by Samuel Akintola, formed an alliance with the Northern People Congress (NPC), the party in control of the federal government, known as the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA), to prosecute the elections. The main wing of the AG also went into alliance with the National Council of Nigeria Citizens (NCNC), forming the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). Thus, the 1964/65 federal elections were fought under these alliances banners.

For both groups, as observed by Ikpe (2000), the 1964 election was very crucial. Akintola was conscious of his ephemeral legitimacy and his party's tenuous hold on political power in the region. As such, he needed these elections to rationalize his popularity and legitimacy. Action Group on the other hand, was so convinced that the elections would throw out Akintola and the NNDP from office, especially as the Yoruba saw Akintola as a traitor who betrayed Chief Awolowo, his boss.

However, as it turned out, the two elections were not free and fair. Akintola and his party, with the federal government's support develop a stupendously horrific rigging machinery, thuggery, obstruction and punitive control to give NNDP an overwhelming victory (Dudley, 1981:72; Post and

Vickers, 1973; Anifowose, 1982). The frustration of AG supporter being unable to vote out Akintola and the NNDP from office led to widespread violence in many parts of the region and the country, which culminated in the military take over of January 1966, which also ended the first democratic experience in Nigeria.

After 13 years of military rule, democratic rule returned with the Second Republic in October 1979. The national party of Nigeria (NPN) won the 1979 election and its candidate, Shehu Sagari became the President. However, the government's performance in the social, economic and political arena were poor. There was gross administrative inefficiency, massive corruption and galloping rate of inflation, while food and other essential commodities became very scarce (Diamond, 1988; Falola and Ihonvbere, 1985:207).

Meanwhile, state officers were busy accumulating private wealth from state resources, which made Richard Joseph (1987) to describe the regime as "prebendal democracy". The widespread dissatisfaction of the people made a change of government imminent, if the 1983 election would be free and fair (Falola and Ihonvbere, 1985:207). The NPN government resorted to tremendous rigging and violence to win that election and like the First Republic elections, its aftermath generated so much violence in the various state to rationalized the

military coup of December1983 and consequently, the demise of the second republic.

The military era ended in 1999 and the transitional election put Olusegun Obasanjo to power on the platform of the People Democratic Party (PDP). Nigerians were full of expectations in the new democratic regime for improvements in socio-economic conditions. The general consideration was that since Obasanjo was coming for the second time and having had an unjust prison experience, he would correct all the mistakes he and others had made in the past. However, Obasanjo's first term, 1999-2003, was tepid and unexceptional. The opposition cashed in on this, especially on the failure of his economic and energy policies and wanton corruption. The PDP understood it well enough that if the elections went of freely and fairly, they would lose power. Hence, they decided to rig the 2003 elections colossally.

The PDP Utilized all rigging strategies used in the past, while also developing its own peculiar strategy known as "carry go". This strategy had two applications. First, the PDP hierarchy decided that all their elected officers in 1999 should return in 2003 unchallenged in the primaries. This was to prevent defection of strong supporters due to dissatisfactions with the outcomes of the

primaries would have generated and to enable these people use their existing machineries of election rigging to ensure victories in the main elections.

Secondly, it involved thugs seizing election materials and escaping to hideouts to thumbprint the ballots, fill the records, and return them to the collation centres with the connivance of electoral and security officers. In addition, soldiers and police officers intimidated supporters of other parties, while the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) awarded some fake scores in favour of PDP candidates in many constituencies. With these, the PDP did not win the election, but extended its control from 21 states in 1999 to 28 states in 2003 (Tell of May 5, 2003).

The 2007 election was important in the history of Nigeria. This was the first time an elected president served out his term and handed over to another democratically elected president. Nevertheless, this election still constitute a re-election because the party that won the 1999 and 2003 elections was still contesting for the presidency in the 2007 election. Besides, the out-going president, Olusegun Obasanjo, after failing to secure an unconstitutional third-term, virtually hand-picked his successor, Yar'Adua and campaigned vigorously for his success. Hence, the performance of the incumbent government would (or ought to) influence the party's electoral fortunes.

Unfortunately, the performance of Obasanjo's government in the second term was even more disappointing. His anti-corruption crusade did not touch his supporters as sanctions by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) applied selectively, particularly against state governor and other politician that opposed the third-term. The economy was still very dependent, with no significant improvement in the level of domestic production. The power sector fared worse than when Obasanjo came into office. All these combined to make the Obasanjo and PDP government very unpopular with depreciated legitimacy. The party hierarchy knew quite well that the only way to win the 2007 election was to rig, which President Obasanjo himself described, and eventually executed, as "a do or die affair" (Tell, 30 April, 2007: The News, 30 April, 2007: Insider Weekly, 16 July, 2007:22-25).

2.3 Overview and Critique of Reviewed Literature

The foregoing literature review has among other things shed light on various aspects of the subject matter of this study. It provided scholarly insights into conceptualizing and contextualizing the notion of elections, free and fair elections, democracy as well as a review of some perspectives on challenges of conducting Free and Fair Elections in Nigeria.

In effect, the works reviewed above are vital to the general comprehension of the subject matter in proper analytical perspectives.

However, virtually all the works reviewed paid little or no attention to what actually constitute challenges of conducting free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria and those responsible for it. It is these apparent gaps in the reviewed literature that this study fills which would add to cumulative advancement of knowledge in the area of study.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

In order to ensure systematic and logical explanation of the subject matter a theoretical anchorage is needed to serve as guide to this research study. In this respect, this study adopts 'Elite Theory' as its theoretical framework.

The Elite theory stresses the concentration of political power in the hands of minority group which according to Mosca (1947:133) "performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings."

Elite theorists often emphasize differences in inherent abilities as a source of elites. All people are not created equal: some are stronger, more intelligent, more artistic, etc. those who have the most of a certain kind of ability constitute a

sort of elite. Of course, not all abilities lead to economic wealth or political power. However, those people who have the most of the particular abilities which a society rewards become the elites. In some societies, a talent for corruption maybe a prerequisite for entering the elite class. Abilities are distributed continuously; that is, there is no sharp division between the people who are at the top with respect to a given ability and those who are at the bottom. (Pareto, 1939:114) who was an elite theorist assumed that abilities were distributed on a smooth curve similar to the distribution of income. In his works on elites however, he divided societies into two discrete groups: the elites and the masses. This cannot be explained by his analysis of abilities. There are other problems with an analysis based on differences in abilities. It is difficult to measure abilities and even when there is some measure, it is difficult to show how that those with the most ability are to be found at the top. Frequently, entire ethnic, racial or sexual groups are absent from elite position. If one assumes that membership in the elite is determined by ability, then one can only explain this by arguing that the excluded groups are inherently inferior.

The Elite theory is used to describe certain fundamental features or organized social life in all societies, whether simple or complex, agricultural or

industrial needs authorities within the system and spokesmen and agents that maintains their values (Mannhein, 1940, in Agbo, 2007:22).

The basic assumptions of the elite theory include:

- Society is divided into the few who have power and the many who do not.
- Only a small number of persons allocate values for society.
- The few who govern are not typical of the masses who are governed.
- The Elites are drawn disproportionately from the upper socio-economic strata of the society.
- The movement of the non-elite positions must be slow and continuous to maintain stability and avoid revolution.
- Only non-elites who have accepted the basic elite consensus can be admitted to governing circles.
- Elites share a consensus on the basic values of the social system and the preservation of the system (status quo).
- Public policy does not reflect the demands of the masses but rather the prevailing values of elites.
- Active elites are subject to relatively little direct influence from apathetic masses.

- Elites influence masses more than masses influencing them (Sambo, 1999:13, Dye, 1987:22).

Applied within the context of this study, it is to be observed that the crisis of free and fair elections in Nigeria over the years seem to reflect the fundamental excesses of the elites who seem to influence electoral process to their selfish interests:

> *This minority social group therefore rules the society, while the group often flies democratic kites, their operationalization is antithetical to their flyer. Thus, their oligarchical conspiracy limits their trumpeted democratic competition and therefore shrinks political choice and alternatives (Adeyemi, 2004:41).*

The above scenario depicts the Nigerian context where activities of the elites seem to be the bane of free and fair elections and survival of democracy. This has been demonstrated in occurrences such as electoral violence, moneybags, godfatherisms, clientelism etc. all of which negate the value of conducting free and fair elections in Nigeria.

The adoption of elite theory in this study is informed by its aptness in providing a systematic explanation of the basic variables which this study interrogates. It should however be noted that the elite theory has been flawed by some scholars as been unnecessarily conspirational and provocative (Sambo,

1999, Orluwene, 2008). It is conspirational because it assumes functional consensus among members of the elite group; on the other hand it is provocative because it relegates the masses to the background in the scheme of things in society. Despite these inadequacies, the theory is still considered very relevant for the purpose of analysis in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a strategy employed to gather and analyze data needed for answering research questions or hypotheses formulated to direct the study (Jimoh, 1995:96). It underscores acceptable procedural steps that are systematically outlined and unambiguously put together to show the step-by-step approach in the investigation of phenomenon.

This chapter therefore explains the methods and procedures that are followed in the conduct of this research. Basically, it encompasses the description of the study areas, types and sources of data used in gathering information on the subject matter, techniques or instruments of data collection, sampling procedures as well as method of data analysis.

3.1.1 The Study Areas

The site location of this study is the North-West Geo-political zone which comprises of seven states: Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto as well as Zamfara States. All these states fall within the former Sokoto caliphate; an Islamic state and government that existed before the colonial period.

However, four states are sampled from the seven states that make up the North-West Geo-political zone using a simple random sampling technique. The name of each of the seven states in North-West Geo-political zone was written on a separate piece of paper. The paper containing name of each state is folded and squeezed and put into a bowl. The bowl was then shaken thoroughly after which the samples (slips) were selected from the bowl. The procedure was to pick, unfold and record the selected name of the states. After the name of a state is sampled and recorded it was folded again and put back into the bowl shake thoroughly and pick another slip until four different states were selected. First, a slip containing Kebbi State was picked, second Kaduna State was picked, third Kaduna State was again picked but folded back to the container and shake and Kano State was picked and lastly Zamfara State was sampled. Thus, Kebbi, Kaduna, Kano and Zamfara States are the randomly selected states to represent the seven states in the North-West Geo-political zone.

3.1.1.1 Kebbi State

Kebbi State is a state in north-western Nigeria with its capital at Birnin Kebbi. The state was formed from part of Sokoto State in 1991. Kebbi State is bordered by Sokoto State, Niger State, Dosso Region in the Republic of Niger and the nation of Benin and has a total land area of 36,800km^2(Bello, 2008: 13).

According to recent research based on local oral traditions, king lists on the Kebbi chronicle, the state of Kebbi was founded towards 600BC by refugees of the Assyrian empire conquered by Babylonian and Median forces in 612BC(Harris, 1981: 27). The state has a total population of 3,256,541 according to 2006 census.

The state has Sudan and Sahel Savannah. The southern part is generally rocky with the Niger River traversing the state from Benin to Ngaski local government area. The northern part of the state is sanday with the Rima River passing through Argungu to Bagudo local government area where it empties into the Niger (Bello, 2008: 56). Agriculture is the main occupation of the people especially in rural areas. Crops produced are mainly grains; animal rearing and fishing are also common. Islam is the dominant religion of the people. There are 225 political wards, 3000 settlements and 1036 hard to reach settlements in the 21 local government areas in the state (Bello, 2008: 21-22).

Kebbi State is divided into 21 local government areas four emirate councils (Gwandu, Argungu, Yauri and Zuru) and 35 districts. The local government areas are : Aleiro, Arewa-Dandi, Argungu, Augie, Bagudo, Birnin Kebbi, Bunza, Dandi, Fakai, Gwandu, Jega, Kalgo, Koko/Besse, Maiyama, Ngaski, Sakaba, Shanga, Suru, Wasagu/Danko, Yauri, and Zuru (Bello,

2008:29). Kebbi State is mostly populated by Hausa people with some members of Bussawa, Dukawa, Kambari, Fulanis and Kamuku ethnic communities. Religion in Kebbi State is mainly Islam and the nick name of the state is land of equity.

3.1.1.2 Kaduna State

Kaduna State was created in 1967 out of the former Northern region. It has a political significance as the former administrative headquarters of the North. The state shares boundaries with Niger State to the West, Zamfara, Katsina, and Kano states to the north, Bauchi and Plateau states to the east and FCT Abuja and Nassarawa to the south. The state occupies an area of approximately 46,053 Square Kilometers and has a population of more than six million (2006 Census). Kaduna State is divided into 23 Local Government Areas namely: Birnin Gwari, Chikun, Giwa, Igabi, Ikara, Jaba, Jema'a, Kachia, Kaduna North, Kaduna South, Kagarko, Kajuru, Kaura, Kauru, Kubau, Kudan, Lere, Makarfi, Sabon Gari, Sanga, Soba, Zangon Kataf and Zaria (Jatau, 2011:23). The state is mostly populated by Hausa, Gbagyi, Adara, Ham, Atyap, Bajjuu, Ninkyob, Kurama, Koro, Zango Kataf, Mada, and Agworok ethnic communities (Aminu, 2001:18). Agriculture is the main stay of the economy of Kaduna State with about 80% of the people actively engaged in farming. Cash and food crops

are cultivated and the produce include: yam, cotton, groundnut, maize, beans, tobacco, guinea corn, millet, ginger, rice, cassava and host of others. Another major occupation of the people is animal rearing and poultry farming. The animals reared include cattle, sheep, goats and pigs. A number of notable educational institutions in the country are located in the state. They are Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna Polytechnic, Federal Fishery Training Institute, Nigerian College of Aviation Zaria, Federal College of Education Zaria, Nigerian Defence Academy and host of others (Moses, 2009:13). The nick name of Kaduna State is centre of learning.

3.1.1.3 Kano State

Kano state is a state located in North-Western Nigeria. Created on May 27, 1967 from part of the Northern Region. Kano state borders Katsina State to the North-West, Jigawa State to the North-East, Bauchi State to the South-East and Kaduna State to the South-West. The capital of Kano state is Kano.

Historically, Kano state has been a commercial and agricultural state which is known for the production of groundnuts as well as for its solid mineral deposits. The state has a total land area of 20,131 kilometers square (Ibrahim, 2009:64). The state has 44 local government areas namely, Ajingi, Albasu, Bagwai, Bebeji, Bichi, Bunkure, Dala, Dambatta, Dawakin Kudu, Dawakin

Tofa, Doguwa, Fagge, Gabasawa, Garko, Garun Malam, Gaya, Gezawa, Gwale, Gwarzo, Kabo, Karaye, Kibiya, Kiru, Kumbotso, Kunchi, Kura, Madobi, Makoda, Minjibir, Nassarawa, Rano, Rimin Gado, Rogo, Shanono, Sumaila, Takai, Tarauni, Tofa, Tsanyawa, Tudun Wada, Ungogo, Warawa and Wudil. The state has 40 state constituencies and 24 federal constituencies (Ibrahim, 2009:36). According to 2006 census figures, Kano had a population totaling 9,383,682 ranking it the first most populous state in Nigeria. The state is mostly populated by Hausas and Fulani people who are also predominantly Muslims although several other tribes are also found and hence many Kano residents also practice Christianity. Most of Kano state populace engage in peasant farming although the state is also known for trading and commercial activities. Foreign investments and investors can be seen in many parts of Kano State. However, Kano's once booming manufacturing sector has been stagnant over the years largely due to epileptic power supply (Ibrahim, 2009:46).

3.1.1.4 Zamfara State

Zamfara State was created in 1996 by the Military Administration of Late General Sani Abacha where he detached Zamfara State from Sokoto State. With an area of 38,418 square kilometers it is bordered in the North by Niger Republic, to the South by Kaduna State. In the east It is bordered by Katsina

State and to the West by Sokoto and Niger States. Zamfara state is mostly peopled by Hausa Fulani who are predominantly Muslims. The state got its name from Zamfarawa, the traditional appellation by which the people of Anka, a town which had been the Headquarters of Zamfara Empire from ancient times had been called for ages. Zamfara State was one of the old Hausa city-states like Kano, Katsina, Gobir, Kabi and Zazzau. It extends up to the bend of River Rima to the North West and River Ka in the South West. During the colonial era and even after independence in 1960, Zamfara was still regarded as emic-autonomous by successive governments. This was why an Assistant Divisional Officer (ADO) was station at Gusau to take charge of the Sub-Treasury and other administrative zonal offices established in the town. Even the Sokoto Native Authority established Native Authority Branch offices to supervise the administration of Zone and Sir Ahmadu Bello the Sardauna of Sokoto and first Premier of the defunct Northern region was deployed to Gusau in 1938 to head and Supervise all the Native administration Branch offices in Gusau. The population of Zamfara state according to 2006 census is about 3,259,846. It has 14 local government areas namely: Anka, Bakura, birnin Magaji, Bukkuyum, Bundugu, Chafe, Gummi, Gusau, Kaura Namoda, Maradun, Maru, Shinkafi, Talata Mafara and Zurmi.

3.2.1 Types and Sources of Data

This study used the two major types and sources of data i.e secondary and primary data.

The secondary data were sourced from relevant existing literature on the topic under study from libraries with intent of eliciting information similarly, unpublished Ph.D and M.Sc theses, ‘Journals, conference proceedings, seminars, workshops, newspapers, journals, magazines were consulted. Also, official records (documents) from relevant establishments such as Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Political parties, Federal Ministry of Information, Federal Office of Statistics were also consulted in order to elicit information related to the study. All the aforementioned secondary sources of data were critically studied and relevant information derivable from them are used to complement the outcome of the primary data.

The primary Data on the other hand were sourced from use of structured (closed-ended) questionnaires and indepth personal interviews from respondents in the four selected states.

3.2.2 Instruments of Data Collection

Two major instruments were used in generating primary data use in this research work. These instruments include: administration of structured questionnaires and the conduct of indepth personal interviews from respondents in the selected states.

Administration of Questionnaires

Questionnaires were administered across the four selected states in North-West Geo-political zone. A total of six hundred (600) questionnaires were distributed across the selected states with one hundred (100) at Kebbi State, one hundred and seventy (170) at Kaduna State, two hundred and thirty (230) at Kano State and one hundred at (100) at Zamfara State respectively. The total number of questionnaires retrieved from various respondents was three hundred and two (302) with forty six (46) retrieved from Kebbi State, eighty three (83) retrieved from Kaduna State, One hundred and twenty two (122) retrieved from Kano State and fifty one (51) retrieved from Zamfara State. The difference in the number of questionnaires administered in the selected states is due to difference in population of the states.

Interviews

Structured oral interviews were conducted across four states (Kaduna, Kano, Kebbi and Zamfara states). Those interviewed consist of politicians, leadership of political parties, INEC officials, agents of political parties during 2007 and 2011 general elections as well as media correspondents who covered the elections. Attempts were made to interview security personnel particularly the police and state security service but proved abortive. The interviews helped in eliciting information which complemented the outcome of the questionnaires administered.

3.2.3 Population Sampling Techniques

The target population of this study was six hundred (600) adult Nigerians in the North-West Geo-political zone and a total of three hundred and two (302) responded.

A multi stage cluster sampling procedure was used in sampling the population of this research. Firstly, the clusters of the seven states (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara states) which make up of the North-West Geo-political zone were separately written on piece of paper. The paper containing name of each state is folded squeezed and put into a bowl.

The bowl was then shaken thoroughly after which the samples (slips) were selected from the bowl. The procedure was to pick, unfold and record the selected name of the states. After the name of a state is sampled and recorded, it is folded again and put back into the bowl shake thoroughly and pick another slip until four different states were selected. First, a slip containing Kebbi State was picked, Second Kaduna State was picked, third Kaduna State was again picked but folded back to the container shake and Kano State was picked and lastly Zamfara State was also picked. Thus, Kebbi, Kaduna, Kano and Zamfara States are randomly selected states to represent the seven states in the North-West geo-political zone. Similarly, in each of the selected four states, there are clusters of local government areas and two were sampled using same method in each of the four states. Lastly, each local government area consists of clusters of political wards and two were sampled from each selected local government using same method. Hence questionnaires were distributed to respondents across the selected political wards in the various selected states.

In Kebbi State, there are twenty one (21) local government areas. Two of these local government areas i.e Sakaba and Argungu local government areas are sampled using same method. In Sakaba local government area there are ten political wards (Dankulo, Doka/Bere, Fada, Gelwasa, Janbirni, Makuku, Maza-

Maza, Sakaba as well as Tudun Kuka). Two of these political wards i.e Janbirni and Sakaba are sampled using same method as above. Hence, a total of fourty (40) questionnaires were administered at Sakaba local government area with fifteen (15) questionnaires at Janbirni and twenty five (25) at Sakaba wards respectively. The total number of questionnaires retrieved from respondents at Sakaba local government area is eighteen (18) with seven (7) from Janbirni and eleven (11) from Sakaba political wards respectively. In Argungu local government area, there are eleven political wards (Alwasa/Gotomo, Dikko, Felandi, Galadima, Gulma, Unguwan Gyaga, Kokani North, Kokani South, Lailaba, Sauwa, and Tungar Zazzagawa). Two of these political wards i.e Kokanin North and Sauwa are sampled using same method. Hence, a total of sixty (60) questionnaires were administered at Argungu local government area with thirty five (35) questionnaires at Kokani North and twenty five (25) at Sauwa political wards respectively. The total number of questionnaires retrieved from respondents at Argungu local government area is twenty eight (28) with seventeen (17) from Kokani North and eleven (11) from Sauwa political wards respectively.

In Zamfara State, there are fourteen (14) local government areas. Two of these local government areas i.e Maru and Kaura Namoda local government

areas are sampled using same method. In Maru local government area, there rea ten political wards (Bindin, Bingi, Dangulbi, Dankurmi, Dansadau, Kanoma, Kuyan Bana, Maru, Mayanchi, and Ruwan Dorawa). Two of these political wards i.e Dansadau and Gulbi are sampled using same used method above. Thus, a total of sixty (60) questionnaires were administered at Maru local government area with thirty five (35) questionnaires at Dansadau and twenty five (25) at Gulbi political wards respectively. The total number of questionnaires retrieved from respondents at Maru Local Government Area is thirty three (33) with nineteen (19) from Dansadau and fourteen (14) from Gulbi political wards respectively. In Kaura Namoda local government area, there are eleven (11) political wards (Banga, Dan-isa, Gabake, Dangaladima, Kagara, Kunguri, Kurya madaro, Kyambarawa, Mafara, Sakajiki, and Yankaba). Two out of the eleven political wards i.e Mafara and Dan-isa are sampled using the same method. Hence, a total of fourty (40) questionnaires were administered at Kaura Namoda local government area with twenty five (25) questionnaires at Mafara and fifteen (15) questionnaires at Dan-isa political wards respectively. The total number of questionnaires retrieved respondents at Kaura Namoda local government area is eighteen with eleven (11) from Mafara and seven (7) from Dan-isa polical wards respectively.

In Kaduna State, there are twenty three (23) local government areas. Two of these local government areas i.e Igabi and Kaduna North are sampled using the same procedure. In Igabi local government area there are twelve (12) political wards (Afaka, Birnin Yero, Gadargayan, Gwaraji, Igabi, Kerawa, Rigachukun, Rigasa, Sabon Birnin Daji, Turunku, as well as Zangon Aya). Two out of the twelve political wards i.e Turunku and Rigasa political wards are sampled using same method. Thus a total of one hundred (100) questionnaires were administered at Igabi local government area with sixty (60) questionnaires at Turunku and fourty (40) at Rigasa political wards respectively. The total number of questionnaires retrieved from respondents at Igabi local government area is fourty six (46) with twenty four (24) from Turunku and twenty two (22) from Rigasa political wards respectively. In Kaduna North local government area, there are twelve (12) political wards (Badarawa, Gabasawa, Gaji, Hayin Banki, Kabala Costain, Kawo, Maiburji, Shaba, Unguwan Dosa, Unguwan Liman, Unguwan Sarki, as well as Unguwan Shanu). Two out of these wards i.e Hayin Banki and and Unguwan Dosa are sampled using same procedure. Hence, a total of seventy (70) questionnaires were administered at Kaduna North local government area with fourty (40) questionnaires at Hayin Banki and thirty (30) at Unguwan Dosa polical wards respectively. The total number of questionnaires

retrieved from respondents at Kaduna North Local Government Area is thirty seven (37) with twenty one (21) from Hayin Banki and sixteen from Unguwan Dosa political wards respectively.

In Kano State, there are forty four local government areas. Two of the local government areas i.e Dala and Garko local government areas are sampled using same procedure. In Dala local government area , there are twelve (12) political wards (Adakawa, Bakinruwa, Dala, Dogonnama, Gobirawa, Gwammaja, Kabuwaya, Kantudu, Kofar Mazugal, Kofar Ruwa, Madigawa as well as Yelwa). Two out of these wards i.e Bakin Ruwa and Madigawa are sampled using same procedure. Hence, a total of one hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were administered at Dala local government area with eighty (80) questionnaires at Bakinruwa and seventy (70) at Madigawa polical wards respectively. The total number of questionnaires retrieved from respondents at Dala local government area is eighty six (86) with fifty five (55) from Bakinruwa and thirty one (31) from Madigawa political wards respectively. In Garko local government area, there are ten (10) political wards (Dal, Garin Ali, Garko, Gurjiya, Kafin Malamai, Katumari, Kwas, Raba, Sarina, and Zakarawa). Two of these political wards i.e Sarina and Gurjiya are sampled using same method. Thus, a total of eighty (80) questionnaires were administered at Garko local

government area with fourty five (45) questionnaires at Gurjiya and thirty five (35) at Sarina political wards respectively. The total number of questionnaires retrieved from respondents at Garko local government area is thirty six (36) with twenty (20) from Gurjiya and sixteen from Sarina political wards respectively.

3.2.4 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected in this research is organized and analyzed critically, systematically and objectively. Hence, both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis are adopted for effective analysis and explanation of the data.

In the first place, the study uses descriptive statistical tool to analyse data on demographic information of the respondents. The main function of the descriptive statistical tool is to summarize our data in such a way that we understand better their characteristics, similarities, variations and trends. Thus, most of the data generated from questionnaires administration and personal oral interviews are analysed quantitatively using tables and simple percentages. Also, part of the data generated in this research is analysed qualitatively.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 CHALLENGES OF PARTY POLITICS IN NIGERIA

4.1 Introduction

Politics has variously been defined as the study of organized human society that deals primarily with the political aspects of the life of the community (Catlin, 1962:36); the study that deals with the political relation which spontaneously arise whenever men are brought together and thereby given an opportunity to act upon one another (Jouvenal, 1963:82), the authoritative allocation of values in the society (Easton, 1971:129). The major plank of the above definitions is the attention it draws to the ineluctability of politics in our daily lives. Aristotle had earlier emphasized this fact when he averred that 'man is by nature a political animal' as he strives to grapple with problems, using scarce resources out of a buffeted economy or convince and persuade others to accept his views on issues in spite of their initial position on the matter he is engaged in a given political exercise (Anifowose, 1999:1). In essence, politics is about pursuit of position. It is about getting power and influence as well as about exercising power. It could also be seen as the art of managing conflicts between different individuals or groups. Furthermore, politics is also defined as a wide range of activities which are directly or indirectly associated with the seizure of

state power, the consolidation of State power and the use of state power (Nnoli, 1992:7). Wide range of activities involved in politics may include, party formation, elections, manipulations, protest, coups etc.

At independence in 1960, Nigeria adopted parliamentary democracy. Elections were held and representative government instituted. However, the nature of the politics and democracy conducted in Nigeria was such that it could not be sustained. The process was marred by violence, thuggery and intimidation, and in some instances brutal political assassinations. The Nigerian state is a product of British imperialism. And the post colonial State generally, though essentially capitalistic but quite different from the state in advanced capitalist formations. While states in advanced capitalist countries function to maintain the economic and social relations under which bourgeois accumulation take place, in Nigeria the state through its several institutions and apparatuses is a direct instrument for accumulation for the elite class. Most of them are in power but lack the economic base. Therefore, for the elite class to transform themselves, they need to control the state power. Simply put in the Post colonial Nigerian State, political power has become a means to economic power. The state is the source of economic power as well as instrument of it. Thus, the state becomes very crucial in the process of primitive accumulation both for

international and the national bourgeoisie. And since the elite class which controls the machinery of government decides who gets what, when and how, in terms of contracts and projects location, competition for political power as a means of attaining these objectives among the various elites usually assumes a ware dimension (Ake, 1996:7-11). In elites' attempt to capture state power all kinds of sentiments such as regional, ethnic, tribal and religious are invoked. Accordingly, the struggle for power in Nigerian politics is so absorbing that everything else including development was compromised. Those who were out of power constantly worried about their exposure to every kind of assault by a state that was hardly subject to any constitutional or institutional restraints. The most important thing in this type of politics was the calculus of force, which tends to create divisions among the power elites. The out of power elites struggled constantly to put together incredible force to challenge those in power, or remained permanently in politics by all means to limit their vulnerability to harassment and abuse (Bangura, 1999:16). In short, due to centrality of state power in the process of primitive accumulation, electoral politics has remained volatile in Nigeria. Indeed, the elite class in Nigeria can go to the extent of subverting the entire system or even risked the stability of the federation when their interests are threatened or blocked. It is this type of politics and voodoo

democracy and the dangers it posed to national stability, integration and survival which provoked military intervention in the politics of the country.

4.2 Party Politics in Nigeria

Political parties are important institutional components of representative democracy and electoral politics. Political parties are associations that serve both as interest and pressure group performing important functions of recruitment of political actors, mobilization for the citizenry and provision of choice alternatives for the populace, organizing and campaigning for votes. Parties generally are regarded as agent of integration, providing the bridge of unity for people of diverse background (Isiaq, 2004:85).

The history of party politics in Nigeria predates its independence. It was dated back to colonial days. The development of party politics in the country came as a result of increased desire of the nationalists elites to have input in the public policy process.

The first modern party was formed by Herbert Macaulay in Lagos in 1923. Several such movements contended for power at the local level under the colonial regime, and a diverse nationalist movement emerged in 1944, under the leadership of Macaulay and Nnamdi Azikiwe, the National Council of Nigeria

and the Cameroons (NCNC). This organization advocated greater representation in the Nigerian colonial government. Chapters were established across Nigeria. However, when the British introduced a more democratic and decentralized constitution in 1951, the NCNC broke up along ethnic lines. The 1951 Constitution mandated indirect assembly elections in the three regions; Lagos was in the Western Region, where the Yoruba were in the majority. An opposition party, the Action Group (AG), emerged under the leadership of a young Yoruba lawyer, Obafemi Awolowo, with an initial organizational base in the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, a Yoruba cultural society. Although Azikiwe's NCNC won in multiethnic Lagos, the AG won the majority of seats in the Western Region. The NCNC won overall in the Eastern Region, where Azikiwe's own Igbo ethnic group was the majority (Onyeka, 2002:68).

From the beginning there were forces within both the NCNC and the AG arguing for movement in a multicultural, issue-based, cross-regional direction. The Action Group was especially split along liberal (cross-regional, pushing for quick movement toward independence) and conservative (ethnic-based, evolutionary) lines. Elected offices were first established regionally, and only later in (1957) at the national level, but it became clear that a regional power base was essential, and Azikiwe also was constrained to center his party on its

strength in the east. Thus the NCNC came to be identified with that region and the Igbo people. (Russel, 2006).

In the north, Britain's successful application of indirect rule had resulted in an alliance between the colonial administration and the traditional emirs that impeded the formation of modern political movements. Whereas in the south such movements had arisen among a Western-educated elite outside the control of any traditional authority, in the north the only youth to receive a modern education came from the families of the traditional elites. Although reformist political organizations were formed, notably the Northern Elements' Progressive Union (NEPU) under Mallam Aminu Kano, they operated only at the margins and tension points of the emirates. A more conservative movement, the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC), was taken over by the Sardauna (a traditional title) of Sokoto and a Hausa commoner, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. The NPC, the traditional emirates, and the preindependence administrative structure were intertwined such that young administrators could run successfully for public office, but only if they had the support of their administrative superiors and of the local traditional elite. This political structure grew up among a population that was not as educated (less than 15 percent were literate) as in the south, and that was much more loyal to their traditional authorities. In the 1959 Northern

House of Assembly, 24 percent of NPC delegates were sons of incumbent or former emirs, and over a third were blood relatives of emirs. The elite origins of the party's officers and candidates were de-emphasized through both communal (ethnic) and religious (Islamic) appeals to the electorate. Not surprisingly, the NPC did not give high priority in its program to achieving national independence. The NPC was challenged in northern elections, but with only occasional success. Unlike the NCNC and AG, neither the NPC nor their northern rivals even tried to obtain political support outside their own region (Robert, 1974).

When General Ironsi assumed power following the breakdown of political order in the Western Region and the first coup, one of his first moves was to abolish all parties and a large number of political associations. The country remained without formal parties from 1966 until the preparations for a return to civilian rule in 1979. General Yakubu Gowon (head of state from 1966 to 1975) had considered the creation of a one-party state in Nigeria, with himself as leader of a "national movement." Nigeria's diversity and the plurality of its power bases made that concept impossible to achieve: To northern leaders, it suggested southern domination, while to the politicians waiting for the return of civilian

rule it meant the end of their ambitions. Gowon was unable to decide on a course of action and was deposed before any plan had been adopted.

After taking power, Murtala Muhammed set in motion a process to return to civilian rule. The military regime established a Constitution Drafting Committee, and in his address to its opening session, Murtala Muhammed laid down several principles relating to parties. He encouraged them to "discover some means by which Government can be formed without the involvement of political parties," but otherwise that they should draft a plan to guarantee "genuine and truly national political parties," while striving to work out "specific criteria by which their number would be limited." The drafters responded with a constitution that was carefully crafted to promote national parties. It specified that to be elected president, a candidate would have to poll at least 25 percent of the votes cast in each of at least two-thirds of the states. Elections were to be controlled by a Federal Election Commission (FEDECO), with which all parties must register. Parties were to offer membership to any Nigerian, and party governing boards were to reflect the country's "federal character" – specifically, coming from at least two-thirds of the states. The Electoral Decree was published in 1978; in that same year political parties were again made legal, and they came in a flood-some 150 were formed.

The elections of 1979 and 1983 are difficult to analyze, because five parties competed for president, senate and house seats, and state assemblies with varying degrees of success. Looking at the Senate, House, and State Assemblies overall, most states were controlled by a single party. Awolowo's United Party dominated five of the 19 states, all in the Yoruba west and the Midwest (a "minority" area). Azikiwe's NPP carried three states, two of which were in the Igbo-dominated east. Aminu Kano's northern opposition party carried only its leader's own state, Kano, in the north. The GNPP won two states in the north-east, home region of its presidential candidate. However, the ethnic factor was complicated by the success of the NPN in building cross-regional alliances. The NPN controlled eight states; five of these were in the north, but three were in the southeast (Ukaije, 2001).

In order to participate in the elections of 1998 and 1999, parties were required to demonstrate a nation-wide organization. On the basis of the cases they submitted, nine parties were qualified to compete in the local elections of December 1998. The three parties that received the highest number of votes in the 774 local governments were then allowed to compete in the state and national elections of 1999. The People's Democratic Party (PDP) won in 389 local governments, the All People's Party (APP) in 182, and the Alliance for

Democracy (AD) in 100, with other parties winning in the remaining 103. As the presidential elections of February 1999 approached, the APP and AD negotiated to present a single candidate-in other words, the normal effects of a winner-take-all situation pushed toward the creation of a two-party system. There were ultimately just two candidates, Olusegun Obasanjo representing the PDP and Olu Falae leading the APP. Obasanjo won with 62.8 percent compared to Falae's 37.2 percent. The Independent National Election Commission (INEC) created by the Abubakar regime for this election declared Obasanjo the winner.

In 2003, Obasanjo ran for reelection. The APP, which had in the meantime renamed itself the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP), selected Muhammed Buhari, another former military ruler, as its presidential candidate. Despite the internal tensions in the PDP, the party increased its majority in both houses of Congress and won 28 out of 36 governorships. Obasanjo was reelected by a landslide, winning almost twice as many votes as Buhari. He and the PDP particularly improved their position in the Southwest, where they captured five governorships from the AD (Bello, 2008).

4.3 The Electoral Politics in Nigeria

Election is one of the basic ingredients that oil the machinery of governance especially in a democracy. It is the process for evaluating the political performance of the representatives of the people either for the purpose of returning back to political offices or replacing them with perceived better representation (Omodia, 2009). As a result, it is quite indispensable that for political representation to be more responsive in a democratic system there is need for the electoral process to be free and fair.

The conception of free and fair election here is seen as an embodiment of a chain process where the people are the driving force and determinant of political representation or the outcome of the electoral process. In other words, the conception here is not only for inter-party elections to be free and fair especially in new democratic states of Africa, but, the need for electoral activities to be centered on the people in such a way that it would aid the emergence of political leaders at the intra party level, aid informed political decisions at the polling booth and where the people's choice would be the major determinant of electoral contest.

In order to achieve the above, political parties are expected to effectively perform the function of political education, political candidates or parties are not

supposed to be restricted to access to mass media or any other functional means of political campaign, a candidate or party is not expected to be unduly financially advantaged through the use of state fund, the electoral body is also expected to be independent in such a way that it could effectively discharge the functions of transparent voter registration exercise, collation and declaration of electoral results among others.

Moreover, it is expected that there would be a hyphen and buckle between people's vote and electoral results. As a matter of fact, unfolding scenario especially in the Nigerian State of the fourth republic is such that, there has been a wide gap between people's electoral choice and electoral results declared by the electoral body (Zimako, 2009: Omodia, 2010).

Conversely, it is important to state that the reasons for the above ugly situation have been attributed to multi-factors such as: elitist manipulation, institutional fragility, poor political culture, excessive monetization of political offices among others (Omodia, 2007: Omodia, 2008; Bello, 2008). The perspective of this were however, is to unfold the challenges elites poses to free and fair elections in Nigeria with specific focus on the Nigerian fourth republic by synthesizing the nature of political contest, the purpose of political power, as well as the means of acquiring political power.

It is a known fact that interest is the main propelling force for the acquisition of political power (Varma, 2001:169-170). The question that then comes to mind is: to what extent is elitist interest synonymous with masses interest? This question is quite indispensable considering the fact that by the nature of politics, even in a democratic set-up, the elite tend to manipulate the unconscious mass class in favor of elitist hedonism. This shows that in most democracies including Nigeria, the quantity strength of the mass people have continued to count less because of the manipulative political skills of the elites.

In developed democracies, the skill of the politicians have manifested more in an integrative political machinery that accommodates the interests of the masses through inter-party electoral process which is mainly free and fair, internal party democracy no doubt reflects elitist dictate (Janda, Berry and Goldman, 1997). In the Nigerian state, just like most emerging democracies, the political skills of the elites have remained crude through the utilization of violence, thuggery, ethnicism, religious chauvinism and other negative factors in manipulating the masses for the acquisition of political power (Ukaeje, 2001; Oloso, 2004; Wilmot, 2007; Yamma, 2008; Idahosa, 2010: Okoh, 2010). This situation is worse-off considering the fact that these manipulations exist at both

the intra and inter party level of competition for political power which has led to a scenario where votes are designed not to count in the democratic process.

As a result, one could vividly state that in the Nigerian democratic experiment, undemocratic and unconventional devices are used as means for acquiring political power. This to a great extent explains for the fragile nature of Nigeria's democracy as a process which is not rooted in the people.

Although (Omodia, 2003:17) argued that this could be said to be a transformational process to an enduring democracy if democracy is nurtured to grow. The democratic scenario in the Nigerian state as witnessed in the 2007 General elections, suggests that although unconventional means were utilized by elites during the exercise, the exercise no doubt was a mark difference from the past.

While the utility of the above analysis is anchored on the understanding that the nature of political contest is generally between elites and the utilization of the masses for achieving the political end of elites, the matter as argued above in developed democracies, is an integrative process a the inter party level, where the votes of the masses are considered to be weighty in deciding who occupy political offices among the competing political elites (Janda, Berry and Goldman, 1997). In the Nigerian system, the nature of contest is a divisive

mechanism which often manifests the fragility of the Nigerian state (Omodia, 2010b).

Through, ethnicization was indicated in the nature of political contest leading to the termination of the first and second republic (Ademoyega, 1981: Kurfi, 1983), the present republic had sought to check such difficulty through zoning of political contest between the North and South (Nwachukwu, 2005: Omodia, 2010). It could be recalled that in the 1999 Presidential election for example, the contestants were Chief Olusegun Obasanjo of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Chief Olu Falae of the All People's Party (APP) both from the South Western part of the country. It could also be recalled that Chief Olusegun Obasanjo won and was re-elected in 2003.

In 2007, although candidates from the Southern part contested, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua a Northerner however emerged as the winner. This was like what happened in the 2003 election where candidates from the North contested and a Southerner won. The understanding was for the South to have a second term in 2003 and the North to also have a two term of eight years beginning from 2007 (Egwemi, 2007).

However, the demise of Yar'Adua on 5th May, 2010 and the election of Goodluck Jonathan, a Southerner, in the 2011 Presidential election is an

indication that the incumbency factor is a very important factor in understanding the nature of political contest in the Nigerian state. This factor is important considering the weak nature of democratic institutions in which political office holders are seen to be above party positions and are therefore not subject to party discipline (e.g. the manipulation of the zoning policy of the PDP to accommodate the political ambition of the incumbent Nigerian President).

In addition to the factors of ethnicization of political contest, incumbency factor is the factor of class contest. This indicates that of utmost importance to the elites is the survival of the elitist capitalist class. In other words, ethnicization and incumbency factor in political contest could be viewed as a utilizing tool for the survival of class survival or as factors that must be jettisoned if class interest is threatened.

This explains the reason why some elites even with mass support in their geo-political zone may not be supported by the capitalist elites in the same zone. A typical conception is the person of General Buhari who possesses mass support in the North but who has continually been viewed as a threat to the capitalist/aristocratic interest of the Northern elites. The implication is that even when political contest was narrowed to the North and South, with Buhari representing the North as the case in the 2011 presidential election, the Northern

capitalist elites expressed their preferences for the candidate from the Southern part of the country based on the conviction that he would uphold their interest rather than Buhari who is viewed as having interest that is antithetical to capitalist class orientation.

At this juncture, the question that comes to mind are:

i. Of what purpose is political power that it necessitated elitist utilization of undemocratic means for the acquisition of political power?
ii. What has been the elite's reaction to the threat created by the utilizing of undemocratic means to the survival of the Nigerian State?

On the first question, from the analysis above, one could deduce the following as the purpose for the utilization of undemocratic means for power acquisition:

a. The excessive monetization of political offices and the utilization of such offices for creating selfish economic base or for the protection of capitalist class.
b. The lack of or poor level of political ideas cum functional blueprint needed for socio-economic and political transformation of the Nigerian State. In other words, politics is not issue based, thus, the need to use unconventional means to acquire political power in a democratic setting

because there is simply no or poor developmental ideas to sell to the people by the political parties or the political contestants.

On the second question, elitist reaction has manifested itself especially in the present dispensation of the fourth republic on the need to emphasis more on elitist cohesion even at the expense of socio-economic transformation as a result of poor political leadership. This is because, most elites that found themselves in the corridors of power as a result of this arrangement were elites that were least prepared for the functions of political leadership. This could be said to be true of the mergence of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999 was viewed by political actors as an arrangement structured to pacify the South-Western part of the country over the annulment of the June 12, 1993 Presidential election that was purported to have been won by Chief Moshood Kashimawo Abiola was a son of the region (Opara, 2007).

The same could also be said to have been responsible for the emergence of Alhaji Musa Yar'Adua as President in 2007, who arguably was the least prepared aspirants among the contestants for the presidential candidacy of PDP and indeed the presidential seat. The implication no doubt was the snail speed work rate of the administration to the disadvantage of Nigerians in term of socio-economic development.

The above scenario therefore indicate the failure of political leadership in Nigeria as a result of elitist survival which have continually impacted negatively on free and fair elections in Nigeria. This is because the purpose of political power, the nature of politics and the means of power acquisition in Nigeria is not developmental in orientation and thus dysfunctional to the survival of the Nigerian state.

Thus, democratic activities and processes in the Nigerian state are antithetical to free and fair form of democratic representation because of elitist manipulation which throws-up political leaders that are not true representatives of the people. This no doubt constitute a major challenge to democratic survival in the Nigerian state which could be checked through informed political education on the part of the civil society, the academia and the citizens themselves through experience acquired in political participation that span over a period of time (Omodia, 2011: 144).

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1.0 AN OVERVIEW OF GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

Elections were introduced in Nigeria as aspects of institutional transfer, first as reform measures in reaction to demands made by the nationalists and later as a process of preparing indigenous political elites to take over political leadership from colonial masters. Constitutional reforms were the instruments through which elections were introduced and expanded during the colonial period (Ujo, 2003:7).

Before independence in 1960, Nigeria which existed as an amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates since 1914 had already witnessed different elections.

In September 1923, the first election took place in Lagos and calabar following the introduction of Hugh Clifford Constitution in 1922. The Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) led by Herbert Macauly won the three seats for the Lagos Legislative council while the Calabar Improvement League won the only seat for Calabar. Although voting was by direct election but it was based on limited Franchise as women were not allowed to vote and only those who had

minimum income of 100 pounds a year were allowed to vote and the geographical restriction to Lagos and Calabar disenfranchised many Nigerians.

In 1946, an Indirect system of election which filed seats in Regional and Central legislatures, following the introduction of Arthur Richards Constitution. The legislative council had 45 members for the entire country with 28 members who were Nigerians whom four were elected and the remaining nominated. Three political units emerged: the Northern, Western and Eastern Regions. By the Indirect Electoral System, adult males in each village chose a representative for the district level, who in turn chose a provincial representative. The provincial Electoral College elected by secret ballot the specific number of representatives to the legislature (Taiwo, 2001:9).

5.1.1 The 1954 General Elections

The Lytleton Constitution of 1954 appear to have no option but to formerly recognize political parties and consequently introduced party system. It provided for separate elections into the regional and central legislatures. But it continued the system of operating different electoral laws for the three regions. Thus, in the East, universal adult suffrage for persons over 21 years was stipulated; in the West, only adult males who paid taxes could vote; while in the North, voting was by the indirect college system and only for adult male tax

payers. In addition, there were certain citizenship and residential qualifications for both the elector and a person to be elected. To qualify to stand for election into the central legislature, the individual must:

a) Be a British subject or a British protected person of the age of 21 or more;
b) Be born in the region in which he was seeking election or his father was born in that region; and
c) Be resident in that region for a continuous period immediately before the date of election of at least three years in the case of the Northern region, or at least one year in the case of the Eastern and Western regions.

For the electors in the Eastern and Western regions, it was stipulated that he must be an indigene of the electoral division or district and resident there for not less than twelve months up to the date of the election. In the Northern region, he had to be an indigene of a specifically created primary electoral area, or must have resided therefore twelve months up to the date of the election to qualify to vote in the primaries. One likely effect of these stipulations, as Okafor (1981:218) observed was to make it very difficult for a candidate who was neither indigenous to an electoral area nor supported by a socio-political organization such as a political party or an ethnic movement indigenous to the area to win an election in that area.

It should be noted that the 1954 General Elections into Central Legislature was the first in the country. Table 4.1 shows the party affiliation of candidates who were elected according to the regions including Lagos. In the East, the NCNC won 34 seats out of 42; the United Nations Independent Party (UNIP) won 4; the Action Group, 3 while one seat went to an independent candidate. In the west, the A.G. won 18 out of the 42, the NCNC 22 and the Nigerian Commoners' Liberal Party one. Of the 92 seats allocated to the North, the NPC won 83, the NCNC two and the AG one. The party affiliation of 6 successful candidates is not clear. (Nnadozie, 2007:53)

From the foregoing, it is evident that the politicization of ethnicity and the regionalization of politics noted earlier would appear to have been generally entrenched. Hence, the three major political parties- NCNC, NPC and the AG- led by Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Alhaji Tafawa Balewa and Chief Obafemi Awolowo, respectively won the majority votes cast in their respective regionalhomelands except in the Western region. The NCNC defeat of the AG in the West could be described as an exception to the emerging electoral trend in the politics of the country; and even then could be attributed to the urbanized and highly volatile political environment of the region vis-à-vis the North and the East, the latter factor traceable perhaps to the internecine Yoruba conflicts in the

nineteenth century. More importantly perhaps was the fact that the free primary education programme of the A.G. controlled government in the region was running into serious financial problems which forced it to introduce a levy of N1.50 per taxpayer (Nnoli, 2006). This levy was very unpopular with the people and perhaps affected the electoral fortune of AG in the 1954 General Elections (Nnaadozie, 2007:54).

Table 5.1: Political Affiliation of Members Elected in the 1954 General Elections into the House of Representatives

Political Party	Eastern Region	Northern Region	Western Region	Lagos	Total
A.G	3	1	18	1	23
NCNC	34	2	22	1	59
NPC	-	83	-	-	83
UNIP	4	-	-	-	4
NCLP	-	-	1	-	1
Independent	1	-	-	-	1
No information	-	6	1	-	7
Total	42	92	42		178

(**Source:** Nnadozie, 2007:54)

5.1.2 The 1959 Federal Elections

The second general elections and the last under the direct supervision of the British colonial authorities before granting Nigeria her flag independence in 1960 took place in 1959. In the political campaign and activities preceding the elections, the NCNC and the AG while carrying out intensive mobilization of their respective ethnic homelands to ensure their monolithic support also campaigned vigorously in the minority ethnic areas in the regions under the rival political parties in order to break their monolithic electoral support and at the same time widen their political base. On the other hand, the NPC confined its campaign and activities in the North believing presumably that a total control of its homeland is enough to ensure at least a fifty percent control of the Federal House of Representatives.

The results of the elections showed that out of a total of 312 seats in the Federal House, the NPC won 134, the NCNC 81, the AG 73, Northern Elements' Progressive Union (NEPU) 8, the Niger Delta Congress (NDC) one and independent candidates 15 seats. In the East, the NCNC won 58 seats and the AG 14; while the NDC won a seat. In the West, the AG won 33 seats, the NCNC 21 and the independent 8 seats. In the North, the NPC won 134 seats, the AG 25, NEPU 8 and Independents 7 (See Table 4.2). the result revealed the decisive role

of ethnicity in Nigerian politics, particularly during elections. The seeds of ethnic and regional politics sown and nurtured by the Nigerian leaders and the British especially from the forties have now taken a firm root and begun to bear fruits. The three dominant political parties, especially the AG and the NCNC were able in this particular elections to win seats outside their regional bases only in the minority ethnic areas where they encouraged agitations against their governments for regional status. (Nnadozie, 2007:55)

Table 5.2: The Result of the 1959 Federal Elections into the House of Representatives showing Party Strength in the Regions

Political Party	Eastern Region	Northern Region	Western Region	Fed. Territory (Lagos)	Total
AG	14	25	33	1	73
NCNC	58	-	21	2	81
NPC	-	134	-	-	134
NEPU	-	8	-	-	8
NDC	1	-	-	-	1
Independent	-	7	8	-	15
Total	73	174	62	3	312

(**Source:** Nnadozie, 2007:56)

5.1.3 The 1964 General Elections'

The third general elections and the first since flag independence was the 1964/5 federal elections. This election, which had been described as "the most perilous display of brinkmanship" (KirkGreene, 1971:21) and during which the

country "tottered perilously on the brink of disintegration and bloodshed" (Anglin, 1965:173) saw a full display of all the centrifugal forces which had reared their heads in the forties and fifties. It should be stated here that the first half decade of Nigeria's flag independence (1960-65) saw the country reeling from one problem to the other with the leaders making a political somersault of each of them. These problems each of which was capable of bringing the country down on her knees and which have been characterized as "signposts to disaster' (Oyediran, 1988:12-22) included the AG crisis and the subsequent treason trial of its leaders, the census controversy of 1962-64, the Workers' General Strike of 1962, the Federal Elections of 1964/5 and the 1965 Western Election, among others.

The 1964/5 elections were therefore only one of the several litmus tests that faced the country in the first five years of her independence. In the face of these problems the Nigerian leadership both individually and collectively were only busy exploiting the situation to aggrandize themselves. Shortly before the elections the census controversy had put each of the dominant parties on its toes. The hope of the Southern faction of the dominant class in Nigeria to use the census figures to break the predominance of their Northern counterpart at the federal level has been dashed. The 1964/5 federal election presented itself as an

alternative to realizing this. It should be recalled too that the NCNC and the NPC had been in coalition at the federal level since the last general election. However,events in the country especially since the 1962-4 census controversy tend to point to the direction of a collapse of that alliance. (Nnadozie, 2007:57)

It should also be remembered that another party with the old name-NNDP-had been formed by the merger of Akintola's United People's Party with a wing of the NCNC in the West solely to protect Yoruba interests. Its leadership made the attack on Igbo leaders the focus of its campaign before the elections. The idea was to portray the AG, which was intending to form an alliance with the NCNC for the elections as a stooge of the Igbo people and an enemy of the Yoruba.

In the end, two major alliances were found to contest the 1964/5 elections-the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) made up of the NPC, the NNDP, the Mid-West Democratic Front and Dr. Chike Obi's Dynamic Party, on the one hand and the United People Grand Alliance (UPGA) made up of the NCNC, the AG, NEPU and the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) on the other. The NNA fielded candidates only in the North and the West where the two main parties in the alliance were in power, while the UPGA fielded in all the constituencies of the federation. The main campaign theme of the UPGA was the restructuring of

the country such as the creation of new states in order to strengthen the bond of unity. The NNA, on the other hand emphasized more on national unity through ethnic representation at the federal level, particularly through job opportunities. The political campaign was very bitter and acrimonious with each camp deploying everything at its disposal and employing both orthodox and unorthodox means to eliminate its opponents or at least prevent their success at the poll. Ethnic differences and sentiments were not only exploited but made the major platforms of the campaign. As a result, charges and countercharges of harassment and intimidation were made by opposition politicians in all the regions but more by the UPGA leaders who at a stage called for the postponement of the elections.

As a protest against the arrest and detection of the nominees for elections in the North and West, the UPGA boycotted the elections. While the boycott was a total success in the East (Which had 76 seats), and partially successful in the West (where NNDP won 36 out of 57) it failed completely in the North (where the NPC won 162 of the 167 seats allocated to the North). Mid-West and Lagos had 14 and 4 respectively. With this situation, a constitutional crisis had enveloped the country. The constitution had not only stipulated that elections must be held throughout the country on the same day at federal elections, which

had not been done but it was the duty of the president to appoint as prime Minister the leader of the political party that produced the majority in the House of Representatives, which the president refused to do. For three days, Nigeria had no government. After some brainstorming meetings and negotiations that went on day and night during which a truce, as it was reached, the President on January 4, 1965, reappointed Tafawa Balewa as Prime Minister. It was agreed that there should be a broad-based national government, fresh elections were to be held in all areas where there had been none, grievances were to be settled through the law courts and a commission was to be set up to review the constitution (Nnadozie, 2007:59)

After fresh elections were conducted in March 1965, the final results were NPC 162, NNDP 36, NCNC 84, AG 21. National Patriotic Front (NPF) 4 and Independents 5. In all these, including the boycott of elections and the formation of a national broad-based government it was the AG that lost most as it was neither considered nor included. With the benefit of hindsight, it might be observed here that the so-called resolution of this crisis never resolved any of the fundamental problems facing the country some of which had already been highlighted. It only took attempts at organizing another elections-the 1965 Western election-before the hypocrisy of Nigerian leadership at tackling the

problems of the country, or more appropriately its ineptness, set ablaze the first attempt at democratic experiment in the country (Nnadozie, 2007:59)

5.1.4 The 1979 General Elections

After thirteen years of military rule, Nigerians were once again allowed to exercise their franchise in 1979. When the ban on politics was lifted in 1978, the military-phased transition programme (1975-79) for a return to civil entered its apogee. As a result, about nineteen political associations emerged and applied to the Federal electoral Commission (FEDECO) for registration. Of these number, only five-the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), the Nigerian People's Party (NPP), the Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP) and the People's Redemption Party (PRP)-were adjudged by FEDECO as having met the criteria especially the one of having membership of at least two-thirds of the states of the federation and consequently registered. The idea was to ensure that political parties that emerged this time around were national in character (Nnadozie, 2007:61).

In comparative terms, it could be stated that contrary to the bitterness, boycotts and electoral malpractices, which characterized the 1964/5 federal elections, the 1979 general elections were held with minimum electoral violence and rancor. Though there were usual accusations and counter-accusations of

rigging and printing of ballot papers from political opponents, these were generally settled within the confines of law courts and election tribunals set up for the purpose.

The 1979 constitution marked a major paradigm shift in Nigeria's political experience. It evolved a presidential system of government modeled after the United States of America and effectively abandoning the Parliamentary system inherited from the British at independence in 1960. The constitution provided for the president as the chief executive of the nation, also had an assistant as a vice president, and governor as the chief executive of the state assisted by a deputy governor. Results of the elections in the states confirmed the ethnic colouration of the parties:

The NPN was dominant largely in the North; the UPN controlled the Yoruba South West while the NPP was the leading party in the Igbo states of Anambra and Imo. The PRP held onto its traditional NEPU stronghold of Kano and Kaduna while the GNPP made a statement in Borno and Gongola States in the North East more or less indicating Kanuri independence of Hausa-Fulani domination.

A break down of states controlled by the parties is given below:

Table 5.3: 1979 General Elections winning Parties in States

Party	States Controlled
NPN	Bauchi, Benue, Cross-River, Kwara, Niger, Rivers and Sokoto
UPN	Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo and Bendel
NPP	Anambra, Imo and Plateau
GNPP	Borno and Gongola
PRP	Kano and Kaduna

*(**Source:** FEDECO, Lagos)*

The pattern of voting was finally reflected in the presidential Elections. Of the 47,433,757 registered voters, 16,846,633 Nigerians voted in the 11 August, 1979 Presidential Elections:

Table 5.4: 1979 Presidential Elections Results

Candidate	Party	Votes Polled	Cast Percentage
Shehu Shagari	NPN	5,688,857	33.8
O. Awolowo	UPN	4,916,651	29.2
N. Azikwe	NPP	2,822,523	16.7
W. Ibrahim	GNPP	1,686,489	10.3
Aminu Kano	PRP	1,732,113	10.0

(**Source:** FEDECO, Lagos)

Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari, of the NPN was the eventual winner of the presidential Elections on 26 September 1979 after the Supreme Court had interpreted the provisions of the constitution on what constitutes two-thirds of 19

states, critical requirement to ascertain overall winner. The court's interpretation followed a legal challenge instituted by Chief Obafemi Awolowo of the UPN, challenging the FEDECO declaration on 16 August 1979 of Shagari as President-elect and claiming that Shagari could not have won the elections because he did not muster the 25 percent of votes cast in 13 states of the Federation.

Justice Fatai Williams swore in Shagari as the first Executive President of Nigeria on 1st October 1979. The reins of government were handed over to Shagari by Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo, out-going head of state (Joseph, 1984:41).

5.1.5 The 1983 General Elections

The Nigeria Advance Party (NAP) of Dr Tunji Braithwaite Joined the existing five political parties to contest the elections.

The NPN consolidated its hold on the polity, breaking into the traditional strongholds of the UPN and NPP. The gubernatorial election results provided the first indication that the NPN had transformed itself into a "Super-Power", as its new slogan indicated, albeit the other parties alleged the process was massively rigged.

Table 5.5: States Controlled by Parties in 1983 elections

Party	States Controlled
NPN	Anambra, Bauchi, Bendel, Benue, Borno, Cross-River, Gongola, Kaduna, Niger, Oyo, Rivers, Sokoto
UPN	Lagos, Ogun, Kwara, Ondo
NPP	Imo and Plateau
GNPP	Nil
PRP	Kano
NAP	Nil

(**Source:** FEDECO, Lagos)

In the Presidential Elections, Shehu Shagari of the NPN again emerged winner defeating Awolowo (UPN), Nnamdi Azikiwe (NPP), Aminu Kano (PRP), Waziri Ibrahim (GNPP) and Tunji Braithwaite (NAP).

Three months into the new Government, on 31 December 1983, another military *coupd'etat* again aborted Nigeria's journey in democratic governance.

5.1.6 The 1993 General Elections

It would appear that there was a genuine attempt to break out of the jinx in the use of the electoral process to elect ethnic and sectional leaders in the 1993 general elections. The preparation and process of the elections were midwifed by the Military Government of General Ibrahim Babangida in one of the longest

transition programme in Nigeria. After several cancellations of aspects of political transitional programme especially those dealing with the formation and registration of political parties, two parties- the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) which were contraptions of the military government-finally emerged and contested the elections (Nnadozie, 2007:67).

It is pertinent to make some observations about the voting procedure used in this particular election-the option A4-as it represented a great departure from the conventional voting procedure which has been in use not only in Nigeria but also in most liberal democracies in the world. The option A4 is an autochtonous invention and a unique voting process which required voters to queue up behind the photographs of the candidates and political parties of their choice and after which the counting of the votes for each candidate is done by the presiding electoral officer in-charge of the polling booth in the presence of everybody; with the result announced immediately on the spot in each of the polling booth. This is a voting procedure which in spite of its short-comings (such as exposing the identity of the voters) appeared to have taken care of most of the previously experienced electoral malpractices which has marred elections in the country. Moreover, the experiment appeared to be popular among Nigerians and therefore

generally accepted by the people. Perhaps this may partly explain why the 1993 general elections have been acclaimed by both national and international observers as the most genuine, freest and fairest in the history of elections in Nigeria.

Unfortunately, after the successful conclusion of the first and second phases of the elections which led to the inauguration of governments at the local and state levels, the collation and announcement of the result of the presidential election-the final phase of the seven-year transition programme-was aborted by the military president, General Babangida, when he annulled the results of election generally acclaimed to have been won by Chief M.K.O. Abiola, the flag bearer of the SDP. That singular act appeared to have set Nigeria and Nigerians back not only to the electoral drawing table in particular but also to the political drawing in general. (Nnadozie, 2007:68).

5.1.7 The 1999 General Election

After so many unfulfilled promises and political manoeuvring by the military and also following persistent and dogged campaign and struggle by the civil society to get the military back to the barracks, Nigerians were once again permitted to exercise their franchise in the 1999 general elections. Unlike its 1993 counterpart, the political transition programme which produced the Fourth

Republic is so far the shortest in the country as it took less than a year to be accomplished. The three political parties which contested the elections included the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the Alliance for Democracy (AD) and All People's Party (APP) later entered into an alliance for the presidential election which enabled them to present one candidate.

It must be stated that the 1998/99 general elections had so many things in common with the 1979 election including the constitutions under which they were conducted but more especially the lack of bitterness, boycotts, thuggery and other malpractices usually associated with electoral process in the country. The latter characterization of the 1999 elections can be attributed to several factors. The first was the general feeling or more appropriately agreement, even if unwritten, among Nigerians not to do anything that could be used by the military establishment not to vacate the political arena. The second factor was the fact that the two presidential candidates this time-Chief Olu Falae of the AD/APP accord and General Obasanjo of the PDP-were not only from the same geo political zone-the South West-but also from the same ethnic group-the Yoruba. This perhaps is why the country was speared the agony of the ethnic rancor and mudslinging usually associated with electioneering and elections in the country. Though there were the usual accusations and counter-accusations of rigging,

among others from both political camps, none was so serious as to threaten or disrupt the series of elections staggered between December 1998 and February 1999. All the petitions and complaints arising from the elections were quietly, even if not amicably, settled by the election tribunals set up for the purpose.

At the end of the day Chief Obasanjo of the PDP was declared winner of the presidential elections and sworn in accordingly on 29 May, 1999. The PDP not only swept the states where it won in twenty four out of the thirty six states of the federation but also had more than a comfortable majority in both Houses of the National Assembly (Nnadozie, 2007:69).

Table 5.6: 1999 National Assembly Election Results

	SENATE		**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**	
Political Party	No of seats	% of votes	No of seats	% of votes
People's Democratic Party	59	56.4%	206	57.1%
All People's Party	29	31.2%	74	30.5%
Alliance for Democracy	20	12.4%	68	12.4%
Vacant/Undeclared seats	1	-	12	
Total	109		360	

(**Source:** African Elections Database, 1999)

Table 5.7: 1999 Presidential Election Results

Candidate	Party (Coalition)	No. of Votes	% of votes
Olusegun Obasanjo	PDP	18,738,154	62.78%
Olu Fale	AD-APP	11,110,287	37.22%

(**Source:** African Elections Database, 1999)

5.1.8 The 2003 General Elections

The 2003 general elections presented yet another opportunity of a transition from one civilian government to another. The last two attempts were made in 1964 and 1983 both of which ended, in such areas as bitterness and rancor, thuggery, boycotts, threats and intimidation, manhandling, kidnapping and assassination of political opponents, manipulation of the electoral bodies and processes and the use of security personnel and agencies against political opponents, the 2003 general elections shared a lot with the 1964 and 1983 elections particularly the former.

It is said that those who discourage peaceful change encourage revolution. After initial hesitation, the Independent national Electoral commission (INEC) which supervised both the 1999 and the 2003 elections grudgingly registered

three more parties-the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA), the United Nigeria People's Party (UNPP), and the National Democratic Party (NDP)-before the supreme court ruling of 8 November, 2002 that INEC has no power to issue guidelines for the formation of political parties outside the constitutional requirements. This landmark ruling threw the gate open and brought the number of parties which contested the 2003 elections to a total of twenty nine (9) which is unprecedented in the history of elections in Nigeria. Barely two years into their first term, elected office holders starting from the President became consumed in what could be described as the 'second term mania'. Politicians did everything possible to ensure success including the kidnapping and assassination of opponents (Okorie, 2003:97-99). The ruling PDP exploited its incumbency to the fullest by mobilizing and deploying every available instrument of the state including the police and the military personnel before, during and after the elections to ensure its retention of power, in spite of its dismissal performance during its first tenure.

Again, the ethnic stigma, which has become a hallmark of elections in the country, was easily noticeable. The Yoruba controlled AD entered into an alliance with the ruling PDP but only for the presidential election in order to ensure the re-election of the incumbent president-Chief Obasanjo, a Yoruba. In

this wise the old scores against political opponents and perceived enemies among its different factions and groups were momentarily concealed. Under the circumstances, the future and survival of democracy and democratic institutions is anybody's guess as they are permanently sitting on a keg of gunpowder (Nnadozie, 2007:71)

Table 5.8: 2003 House of Representatives Election Results

Political Party	**No of votes**	**% of votes**	**No. of seats**
People's Democratic Party (PDP)	15,927,807	54.49%	223
All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP)	8,021,531	27.44%	96
Alliance for Democracy (AD)	2,711,972	9.28%	34
United Nigeria People's Party (UNPP)	803,432	2.75%	2
National Democratic Party (NDP)	561,161	1.92%	1
All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA)	397,147	1.36%	2
People's Redemption Party (PRP)	222,938	0.75	1
Others	587,082	2.01	-
Vacant	-	-	1

(**Source:** African Elections database, 2003.)

Table 5.9: 2003 Senate Election Results

Political Party	No of votes	% of votes	No. of seats
People's Democratic Party (PDP)	15,585,583	53.69%	76
All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP)	8,091,783	27.87%	27
Alliance for Democracy (AD)	2,828,082	9.74%	6
United Nigeria People's Party (UNPP)	789,705	2.72%	-
National Democratic Party (NDP)	459,462	1.58%	-
All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA)	429,073	1.48%	-
People's Redemption Party (PRP)	204,929	0.71	-
Others	641,535	2.21%	-

(**Source:** African Elections database, 2003)

Table 5.10: 2003 Presidential Election Results

Candidate	Party	No. of Votes	% of votes
Olusegun Obasanjo	PDP	24,456,140	61.94%
Muhammadu Buhari	ANPP	12,710,022	32.19%
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu	APGA	1,297,445	3.29%
Jim Nwobodo	UNPP	169,609	0.43%
Gani Fawhimi	NCP	161,333	0.41%
Sarah Jubril	PAC	157,560	0.40%
Ike Nwachukwu	NDP	132,997	0.34%
Christopher Okotie	JP	119,547	0.30%
Balarabe Musa	PRP	100,765	0.26%
Arthur Nwanko	PMP	57,720	0.15%
Emmanuel Okereke	APLP	26,921	0.07%
Kalu Idika Kalu	NNPP	23,830	0.06%

Muhammadu Dikko Yusuf	MDI	21,403	0.05%
Yahaya Ndu	ARP	11,565	0.03%
Abayomi Ferreira	DA	6,727	0.02%
Tunji Braithwaite	NAP	6,632	0.02%
Iheanyichukwu Nnaji	BNPP	5,987	0.01%
Olapade Agoro	NAC	5,756	0.01%
Pere Ajuwa	LDPN	4,473	0.01%
Mojisola Adekunle Obasanjo	MMN	3,757	0.01%

(**Source:** African Elections database, 2003)

5.1.9 The 2007 General Elections

The Nigerian general elections of 2007 were held on 14 April and 21 April 2007. Governorship and state assembly elections were held on 14 April, while the presidential and national assembly elections were held a week later on 21 April. The General Elections of April 2007 were historic and significant for the fact that was the very first time Nigeria would be successfully transiting from one civilian administration to another. The singular importance of this comes from the fact that attempts to do so failed both in 1966 and 1983(Joshua, 2010:16). The 2007 General Elections were adjudged as the worst Nigeria has ever witnessed. For instance, reports of International and domestic observers such as European Union (E.U), International Republican Institute (IRI), International Crisis Group (ICG), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), National Democratic Institute (NDI), Campaign for

Democracy (CD), Democracy Volunteers etc. that Nigeria experienced the worst elections in her post-independence history in 2007 as the elections have fallen short of basic International and Regional Standards for democratic elections. The elections were marred by poor organization, lack of essential transparency, widespread of procedural irregularities, lack of equal conditions for contestants, voter disenfranchisement at different stages of the process as well as significant evidence of fraud particularly during the result collation. Infact, European Union (E.U) concluded that any administration found on this fraud cannot have legitimacy which is her toughest ever statement on elections. It was thus concluded that the elections were not free, fair and credible as did not reflect the electoral choices of the Nigerian people.

Result of the Elections

At the end of collation of the results, the PDP won the Presidential election as well as 28 governorship contests (out of 36 states), 85 senatorial seats (in the 109 Upper House), 263 House of Representative Seats (in the 360 members lower legislative Chamber) and a total of 714 seats across the states out of the 990 seats in the State Assemblies in the nation. The party also won 5 Area Council Chairmanship in the Federal Capital Territory and 34 Councillorship in the FCT (out of the 62 seats).

The ANPP which came second in the Presidential race also won 5 governorship positions, 16 senatorial seats, 62 house of representatives seats and a total of 166 seats in the State Assemblies. The ANPP also won 1 Area Council Chairmanship in the FCT as well as 23 Area Council Councillorship. AC came third in the Presidential poll and also won 1 governorship seat, 6 senatorial positions, 33 House of Representatives seats, 96 State House of Assembly seats and 3 FCT Councillorships.

PPA won 2 governorship positions, 1 senatorial seat, 3 House of Representatives seats and 19 state House of Assembly seats. Accord party won 1 Senatorial seat, 2 state House of Assembly seats and 2 FCT Councillorships. Labour party won 1 House of Representatives seat and 10 seats in the State Houses of Assembly. One seat in the House of Representatives is still pending (INEC, 2007:14).

In Anambra state, the Supreme Court ordered the post-election judgement that the incumbent governor (APGA) should continue in office up till March 2010. That deducts from the final governorship position from the initial result won by the PDP.

Table 5.11: Summary of Performance of Political Parties in 2007 General Elections

(a) Result Of The Governorship Elections

PDP	28
ANPP	5
PPA	2
AC	1

*** Anambra State- The Supreme Court held that the incumbent (APGA) should continue in office up till march 2010.**

(b) Senatorial Election (109 seats)

PDP	85
ANPP	16
AC	6
PPA	1
A	1

(c) House of Representatives (360 seats)

PDP	261
ANPP	62
AC	33
PPA	3
LP	1

(d) State Houses of Assembly (990 seats)

PDP	683
ANPP	166
AC	98
PPA	19
LP	10
A	2
AD	1
DPP	10

- **Pending = 1 (1 seat in Dambata state constituency in Kano State)**

(e) FCT Area Council-Chairmanship (6 Seats)

PDP	5
NPP	1

(f) FCT Area Council-Councillorship (62 Seats)

PDP	34
ANPP	23
AC	3
A	2

(**Source:** INEC Official Report on 2007 General Elections, Page 38)

Table 5.12: Results of 2007 Senate Elections

Party

S/N	State	No.	AC	AD	ADC	ANPP	APGA	A	DPP	NDP	PDP	PPA
1	Abia	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
2	Adamawa	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
3	A/Ibom	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
4	Anambra	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
5	Bauchi	3	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Bayelsa	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
7	Benue	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
8	Borno	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	C/River	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
10	Delta	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
11	Ebonyi	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
12	Edo	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
13	Ekiti	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
14	Enugu	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
15	Gombe	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0

16	Imo	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
17	Jigawa	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
18	Kaduna	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
19	Kano	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	Katsina	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
21	Kebbi	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
22	Kogi	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
23	Kwara	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
24	Lagos	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	Nasarawa	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0
26	Niger	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
27	Ogun	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
28	Ondo	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
29	Osun	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
30	Oyo	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
31	Plateau	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	Rivers	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
33	Sokoto	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
34	Taraba	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0

35	Yobe	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0
36	Zamfara	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
37	FCT	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	109	6	0	0	15	0	1	0	0	86	1

Summary of Seats Won by Parties

PDP	86	78.90%
ANPP	15	13.76%
AC	6	5.50%
PPA	1	0.92%
A	1	0.92%

(**Source:** INEC Official Report on 2007 General Elections, Page 39.)

Table 5.13: Results of 2007 House of Representatives Elections

PARTY

S/N	State	A	AC	AD	ADC	ANPP	APGA	DPP	NDP	PDP	PPA	LP
1	Abia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	0
2	Adamawa	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
3	A/Ibom	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
4	Anambra	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	1
5	Bauchi	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	2	0	0
6	Bayelsa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0
7	Benue	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	10	0	0
8	Borno	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	C/River	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0
10	Delta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0
11	Ebonyi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
12	Edo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
13	Ekiti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
14	Enugu	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0
15	Gombe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
16	Imo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0

17	Jigawa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0
18	Kaduna	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	13	0	0
19	Kano	0	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	3	0	0
20	Katsina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0
21	Kebbi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0
22	Kogi	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0
23	Kwara	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
24	Lagos	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	Nasarawa	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0
26	Niger	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	7	0	0
27	Ogun	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
28	Ondo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
29	Osun	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
30	Oyo	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	0
31	Plateau	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	6	0	0
32	Rivers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	0
33	Sokoto	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0
34	Taraba	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
35	Yobe	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	0

36	Zamfara	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
37	FCT	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Total	0	32	0	0	62	0	0	0	263	3	1

SUMMARY OF SEATS WON BY PARTIES

PDP	263	73.06%
ANPP	62	17.22%
AC	32	8.89%
PPA	3	0.83%
LP	1	0.28%
Total	360	

(**Source:** INEC Report on 2007 General Elections, Page 41)

Table 5.14: Results of 2007 State House of Assembly Elections

PARTY

S/N	State	No	A	AC	AD	ADC	ANPP	APGA	DPP	NDP	PDP	PPA	LP
1	Abia	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	17	0
2	Adamawa	25	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	0	0
3	A/Ibom	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	0	0
4	Anambra	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	0
5	Bauchi	31	0	1	0	0	22	0	0	0	8	0	0
6	Bayelsa	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	0

7	Benue	29	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	25	0	0
8	Borno	28	0	0	0	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	C/River	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	0
10	Delta	29	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	0	0
11	Ebonyi	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	0
12	Edo	24	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	0
13	Ekiti	26	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	0
14	Enugu	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	0
15	Gombe	24	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	0	0
16	Imo	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	1	0
17	Jigawa	30	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	27	0	0
18	Kaduna	34	0	1	0	0	9	0	0	0	24	0	0
19	Kano	40	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	14	0	0
20	Katsina	34	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	0	27	0	0
21	Kebbi	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	22	0	0
22	Kogi	25	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	0
23	Kwara	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	0
24	Lagos	40	0	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
25	Nasarawa	24	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	21	0	0

26	Niger	27	0	2	0	0	11	0	0	0	14	0	0
27	Ogun	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	0	0
28	Ondo	26	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	9
29	Osun	26	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0
30	Oyo	32	0	4	0	0	11	0	0	0	16	0	1
31	Plateau	24	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	0	0
32	Rivers	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	0	0
33	Sokoto	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	22	0	0
34	Taraba	24	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	20	1	0
35	Yobe	24	0	0	0	0	19	0	0	0	5	0	0
36	Zamfrara	24	0	0	0	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	0
37	FCT	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	990	2	98	1	0	166	0	10	0	683	19	10

Summary of Seats won By Parties

PDP	683	68.99%
ANPP	166	16.77%
AC	98	9.90%
PPA	19	1.92%
LP	10	1.01%
A	2	0.20%
AD	1	0.10%

DPP 10 1.01%
Pending = 1
(**Source:** INEC report on 2007 General Elections, Page 43)

Table 5.15: Results of 2007 Presidential Election

Candidate	Party	No. of Votes	% of Votes
Umaru Musa Yar'adua	PDP	24,638,063	69.60%
Muhammadu Buhari	ANPP	6,605,299	18.66%
Atiku Abubakar	AC	2,637,848	7.45%
Orji Uzor Kalu	PPA	608,803	1.72%
Attahiru Bafarawa	DPP	289,224	0.82%
Chukwuemeka Ojukwu	APGA	155,947	0.44%
Pere Ajuwa	AD	89,241	0.25%
Christopher Okotie	FRESH	74,049	0.21%
Patrick Utomi	ADC	50,849	0.14%
Asakarawon Olapere	NPC	33,771	0.10%
Ambrose Owuru	HDP	28,519	0.08%
Arthur Nwanko	PMP	24,164	0.07%
Emmanuel Okereke	ALP	22,677	0.06%
Lawrence Adedoyin	APS	22,409	0.06%
Aliyu Habu Fari	NDP	21,974	0.06%
Galtima Liman	NNPP	21,665	0.06%
Maxi Okwu	CPP	14,027	0.04%
Sunny Okogwu	RPN	13,566	0.04%
Iheanyichukwu Nnaji	BNPP	11,705	0.03%
Osagie Obayuwana	NCP	8,229	0.02%
Olapade Agoro	NAC	5,752	0.02%
Akpone Solomon	NMDP	5,664	0.02%
Isa Odidi	ND	5,408	0.02%
Aminu Abubakar	NVP	4,355	0.01%
Mojisola Adekunle Obasanjo	MMN	4,309	0.01%

(**Source:** African Elections Database, 2007)

Table 5.16: Petitions brought before election tribunals in 2007 General Elections.

S/N	State	GOV	SEN.	REPS	SHA	Total
1	Abia	5	6	11	30	52
2	Adamawa	1	3	4	12	18
3	A/Ibom	2	2	4	3	11
4	Anambra	9	13	40	72	134
5	Bauchi	1	1	7	16	25
6	Bayelsa	2	2	1	22	27
7	Benue	4	4	9	13	30
8	Borno	1	4	3	2	10
9	C/River	2	2	4	11	19
10	Delta	4	3	13	35	55
11	Ebonyi	2	1	3	8	14
12	Edo	1	3	10	19	33
13	Ekiti	2	4	10	25	39
14	Enugu	8	6	2	38	54
15	Gombe	1	1	3	7	12
16	Imo	6	6	19	16	47
17	Jigawa		2	3	1	6
18	Kaduna	3	1	5	10	19
19	Kano	2	4	17	20	43
20	Katsina	2	4	15	23	44
21	Kebbi	2	7	7	11	27
22	Kogi	3	4	5	33	47
23	Kwara	3	5	49	21	78
24	Lagos	2	1	7	2	12
25	Nasarawa	1	5	6	12	24
26	Niger	2	5	5	36	48
27	Ogun	3	4	9	35	51
28	Ondo	4	9	17	34	64

29	Osun	1	3	10	25	39
30	Oyo	7	1	7	24	39
31	Plateau	1	4	2	21	28
32	Rivers	9	5	13	44	71
33	Sokoto	2	3	1	13	18
34	Taraba	4	3	3	12	22
35	Yobe	2	1	1	2	6
36	Zamfara	2	5	9	7	23

Abbreviation: SEN: Senate

REPS: House of Representatives

SHA: State House of Assembly

(**Source:** INEC Legal Services Department page 57-58)

5.1.10 The 2011 General Elections

The 2011 General Elections were the last elections held in Nigeria. The Elections were held on April 9, 2011, April 16, 2011 and April 26, 2011 respectively. National Assembly Elections were held on April 9, 2011 while Presidential Elections were held on April 16, 2011 and Gubernatorial and State Assembly Elections were held on April 26, 2011 (Oluwatobi, 2011:4). The 2011 General Elections were adjudged by foreign and domestic observers as fairly credible and better than the 2007 general elections.

Table 5.17: 2011 National Assembly Election Results

Party	Senate	House of Representatives
PDP	63	218
ACN	15	58
ANPP	10	32
CPC	12	39
Others	9	13

(**Source:** INEC, 2011)

Table 5.18: 2011 Presidential Election Results

Candidate	Party	No. of Votes	% of votes
Goodluck Jonathan	PDP	22,495,187	58.89%
Muhammadu Buhari	CPC	12,214,853	31.98%
Nuhu Ribadu	ACN	2,079,151	5.41%
Ibrahim Shekarau	ANPP	917,012	2.40%
Mahmud Waziri	PDC	82,243	0.21%
Nwadike Chikezie	PMP	56,248	0.15%
Lawson Aroh	PPP	54,203	0.14%
Peter Nwangwu	ADC	51,628	0.14%
Iheanyichukwu Nnaji	BNPP	47,272	0.12%
Christopher Okotie	FRESH	34,331	0.09%
Dele Momodu	NCP	26,376	0.07%
Solomon Akpona	NMDP	25,938	0.07%
Lawrence Adedoyin	APS	23,740	0.06%
Ebiti Ndok	UNDP	21,203	0.06%
John Dara	NTP	19,744	0.05%
Rasheed Shitta-Bey	MPPP	16,492	0.04%
Yahaya Ndu	ARP	12,264	0.03%
Ambrose Owuru	HDP	12,023	0.03%
Patrick Utomi	SDMP	11,544	0.03%
Christopher Nwaokobia	LDPN	8,472	0.02%

(**Source:** INEC, 2011)

Table 5.19: States won by parties in 2011 Gubernatorial Elections

Party	**States Won**	**Total**
PDP	Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bauchi, Benue, Delta, Ebonyi, Enugu, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kwara, Niger, Plateau, Rivers and Taraba.	18
ACN	Lagos, Ogun and Oyo	3
ANPP	Borno, Yobe and Zamfara	3
APGA	Imo	1
CPC	Nassarawa	1

(**Source:** INEC, 2011

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analyses and interprets the data collected or information gathered in the course of conducting the research work. In other words it presents explanation for the results obtained in the study. It also discusses the major findings of the research.

6.2 Discussion and Analysis of Results

A total of six hundred (600) questionnaires were administered across Kebbi, Zamfara, Kaduna and Kano States in order to generate responses in respect of challenges of conducting free, fair and credible elections with reference to 2007 and 2011 general elections in North-West Geo-political zone and out of this number a total of three hundred and two (302) were retrieved. In the course of questionnaire administration some problems were encountered. These include loss of questionnaire by some respondents, inability of some respondents to read and comprehend the questionnaires and hence had to be translated into vernacular as well as

incorrect filling of questionnaires by some respondents and thus discarded.

This section presents the data generated and also interprets the data.

6.2.1 Description of Personal data of Respondents

Tables in this sub-section provide a description of the personal information of the respondents in this study.

Table 6.1: Indicating respondents' gender Status

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Male	256	84.8
Female	46	15.2
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the table above, as earlier indicated that a total of six hundred questionnaires Were distributed and three hundred and two were retrieved. Out of this number 256 (84.8%) of respondents were male while 46 (15.2%) respondents were female.

Table 6.2: Indicating respondents' age Status

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
18-29	71	23.5
30-39	117	38.8
40-49	69	22.8
50-59	37	12.3
60 and above	8	2.6
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the table above, majority of the respondents fall within the age bracket of 30-39 which represents 117 (38.8%) respondents followed by those within the age bracket of 18-29 which represents 71(23.5%) . The category of respondents within the age bracket of 40-49 years is represented with 69(22.8%). Respondents within the ages of 50-59 represent 37(12.3%) and lastly those from ages of 60 and above represent 8(2.6%). Thus, most respondents of this study fall within the ages of 18-49 years.

Table 6.3: Indicating respondents' Occupational Status

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Farming	124	41.1
Civil Servants	17	5.6
Business	69	22.8
HouseWife	13	4.3
Students	32	10.6
Unemployed	47	15.6
Total	**302**	**100%**

(Source: Field Survey, June –August, 2013)

The Table above indicates the responses which show that the farmers are generally in the majority with 124(41.1%) respondents. The second category is those engaged in businesses 69(22.8). The third category of respondents is that of unemployed with 47(15.6%). The next category of respondents is that of students 30(10.6%) then followed by category of civil servants 17(5.6%) and lastly the category of housewives with 13(4.3%) respondents.

Table 6.4: Indicating respondents' Educational Qualification

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Tertiary Education	23	7.6
Secondary Education	57	18.9
Primary Education	85	28.1
Qur'anic Education	79	26.2
None of the above	58	19.2
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the table above, a total of 23(7.6%) of respondents have a tertiary education, 57(18.9%) have obtained a secondary school qualification or equivalent, 85(28.1%) have a primary school education, 79(26.2%) have qur'anic education and 58(19.2%) of the respondents have no education.

Table 6.5: Indicating whether respondents are registered members of any political party

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Yes	98	32.45
No	204	67.55
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June –August, 2013)

In the table above, 98(32.45%) of the respondents are registered members of political parties and a total of 204(67.55) are not registered members of any political party.

Table 6.6: Indicating whether respondents attend party rallies

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Yes	66	21.9
No	236	78.1
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the table above, 66(21.9%) of the respondents attend party rallies and a total of 236(78.1) of the respondents do not attend party rallies.

Table 6.7: Indicating whether respondents are registered voters

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Yes	233	77.15
No	69	22.85
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the Table above, a total of 233(77.15%) of the respondents are registered voters and 69(22.85%) of the respondents are not registered voters.

Table 6.8: Indicating whether respondents voted during 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Yes	161	53.3
No	141	46.7
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the Table above, 161(53.3%) of the respondents voted during the 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly elections, and a total of 141(46.7%) of the respondents did not vote during the 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly elections.

Table 6.9: Indicating whether respondents voted during 2007 presidential and national assembly elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Yes	216	71.5
No	86	28.5
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June –August, 2013)

In the Table above, 216(71.5%) of the respondents voted during the 2007 presidential and national assembly elections and a total of 86(28.5%) did not vote in the 2007 presidential and national assembly elections.

Table 6.10: Indicating whether respondents voted during 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Yes	173	57.3
No	129	42.7
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

Table 6.10 above indicates that 173(57.3%) answered affirmative that they voted during 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections and a total of 129(42.7%) of the respondents did not vote in the 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections.

Table 6.11: Indicating whether respondents voted during 2011 presidential and national assembly elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Yes	220	72.8
No	82	27.2
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the table above, 220(72.8%) of the respondents answered affirmative that they voted in the 2011 presidential and national assembly elections and a total of 82(27.2%) of the respondents did not vote in the 2011 presidential and national assembly elections.

Table 6.12: Indicating respondents' assessment on the credibility of 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly elections.

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Free and Fair	114	37.75
Rigged	156	51.66
Don't Know	32	10.59
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the table above, 114(37.75) of the respondents assessed the 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly elections as been free and fair, 156(51.66%) of the respondents assessed the 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly as been rigged while 32(10.59%) of the respondents don't know whether the elections were free and fair or rigged.

Table 6.13: Indicating respondents' assessment on the credibility of the 2007 presidential and national assembly elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Free and Fair	91	30.13
Rigged	203	67.22
Don't Know	8	2.65
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the table above, 91(30.13%) of the respondents assessed the 2007 presidential national assembly elections as free and fair, 203(67.22%) of the respondents assessed the 2007 presidential and national assembly elections as been rigged and 8(2.65%) of the respondents do not know whether if the elections were free and fair or rigged.

The position of respondents in tables 6.12 and 6.13 is supported by most respondents interviewed as 7(58.3%) of total number of those interviewed were of the view that the 2007 general elections were rigged.

Table 6.14: Indicating respondents' assessment on the credibility of the 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Free and Fair	133	44.04
Rigged	145	48.01
Don't Know	24	7.95
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In table 6.14 above, 133(44.04%) of the respondents assessed the 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections been free and fair, 145(48.01%) of the respondents assessed the 2011 gubernatorial and state elections as been rigged while 24(7.95%) of the respondents don't know whether the elections were free and fair or rigged.

Table 6.15: Indicating respondents' assessment on the credibility of the 2011 presidential and national assembly elections.

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Free and Fair	116	38.4
Rigged	167	55.3
Don't Know	19	6.3
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June - August, 2013)

In the table above, 116(38.4%) of the respondents are of the view that the 2011 presidential and national assembly elections were free and fair, 167(55.3%) of respondents are of the view that the 2011 presidential and national assembly elections were rigged and 19(6.3%) of the respondents don't know whether if the elections were free and fair or rigged.

The position of respondents in tables 6.14 and 6.15 was corroborated by 6(50.0%) of respondents interviewed to elicit information on the subject matter under study. They opined that both the 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections as well as the 2011 presidential and national assembly elections were rigged but that the level of rigging was higher in presidential and national assembly than in gubernatorial and state assembly elections.

Table 6.16: Indicating respondents' views on whether if voters were given money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during 2007 general elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Yes	177	58.6
No	96	31.8
Don't Know	29	9.6
Total	**302**	**100%**

(Source: Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

The Table above, provides the views of respondents on whether if voters were given money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during the 2007 polls. And 177(58.6%) of the respondents answered in the affirmative that voters were given money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during the 2007 elections, 96(31.8%) of the respondents were of the view that

voters were not given money while 29(9.6%) of the respondents don't know whether if voters were given money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during the 2007 polls.

Table 6.17: Indicating respondents' views on who gave voters money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during 2007 general elections.

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
INEC	8	4.5
People in government	89	50.3
People seeking to be in govt.	62	35.0
Political Parties	15	8.5
Security Agents	3	1.7
Total	**177**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June –August, 2011)

The responses in table 6.17 above indicates that 8(4.5%) of the respondents were of the view that INEC gave money to voters to influence their choice of candidate or political party during 2007 elections, 89(50.3%) of the respondents are of the view that people in gave money voters to influence their choice of candidate or political party during the conduct of 2007 elections, 62(35.0%) of the respondents are of the view that people seeking to be in government gave money to influence voters' choice of candidate or political party during 2007 polls, 15(8.5%) of respondents opined that political parties gave money to voters during 2007 elections and 3(1.7%) of the respondents are of the view that security agents gave money to voters to influence their choice of candidate or political party during the 2007 elections.

Table 6.18: Indicating respondents' views on whether if voters were given money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during 2011 general elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Yes	138	45.7
No	103	34.1
Don't Know	61	20.2
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June –August, 2013)

The table above provides views of respondents on whether if voters were given money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during the 2011 elections. And 138(45.7%) of the respondents were of the view that voters were given money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during the 2011 elections, 103(34.1%) of the respondents were of the view that voters were not given money and 61(20.2%) of the respondents don't know whether if voters were given money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during the 2011 general elections.

Table 6.19: Indicating respondents' views on who gave voters money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during 2011 general elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
INEC	5	3.6
People in government	71	51.5
People seeking to be in govt.	47	34.1
Political Parties	14	10.1
Security agents	1	0.7
Total	**138**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

The responses in table 6.19 above indicates that 5(3.6%) of the respondents were of the view that INEC gave money to voters to influence their choice of candidate or political, 71(51.5%) of the respondents are of the view that people in government gave money to voters to influence their choice of candidate or political party during the conduct of 2011 elections, 47(34.1%) of the respondents are of the view that people seeking to be in government gave money to influence voters' choice of candidate or political party during the 2011 polls, 14(10.1%) of the respondents opined that political parties gave money to voters during 2011 elections and 1(0.7%) of the respondents are of the view that security agents gave money to voters to influence their choice of candidate or political party during the 2011 general elections.

The position of respondents in tables 6.17 and 6.19 is corroborated by many respondents interviewed in the course of conducting this research. In fact, 8(66.7%) of the respondents interviewed were of the view that people in government and people seeking to be in government induced a lot of voters with money to influence choice of candidates or political parties during conduct of elections and which poses a challenge to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria.

Table 6.20: Indicating respondents' views on whether there was incidence of violence during the 2007 general elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Yes	185	61.26
No	89	29.47
Don't Know	28	9.27
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

The table above indicates that 185(61.26%) of the respondents are of the opinion that there was incidence of violence during the 2007 general elections, 89(29.47%) of the respondents of the respondents are of the opinion that there was no violence and a total of 28(9.27%) of the respondents did not know whether if there was violence or not during the 2007 general elections.

Table 6.21: Indicating respondents' views on who was responsible for violence during 2007 general elections

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
INEC	16	8.6
People in government	66	35.7
People seeking to be in govt.	57	30.8
Political parties	31	16.8
Security agents	15	8.1
Total	**185**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

Table 6.21 above indicates that 16(8.6%) of respondents believe that the violence during 2007 general elections was caused by INEC, 66(35.7%) of the respondents were of the view that people in government were responsible for violence during 2007 elections, 57(30.8%) of the respondents are of the view that the violence was caused by people seeking to be in government, 31(16.8%) the respondents are of the view that the violence was caused by political parties and 15(8.1%) of the respondents opined that security agents were responsible for violence during the 2007 general elections.

Table 6.22: Indicating respondents' views whether there was incidence of violence after the 2007 general elections

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Yes	144	47.7
No	127	42.1
Don't Know	31	10.2
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

The table above shows that 144(47.7%) of the respondents are of the view that There was incidence of violence after the 2007 general elections, 127(42.1%) of the respondents opined that there was no violence after the elections and a total of 31(10.2%) of the respondents did not know whether if there was violence or not after the 2007 general elections.

Table 6.23: Indicating respondents' views on who was responsible for violence after the 2007 general elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
INEC	9	6.25
People in government	52	36.11
People seeking to be in govt.	42	29.17
Political parties	34	23.61
Security agents	7	4.86
Total	**144**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

Table 6.23 above indicates that 9(6.25%) of the respondents are of the view that INEC was responsible for violence after 2007 general elections, 52(36.11%) of respondents were of the view that people in government was responsible for violence after the 2007 general elections, 42(29.17%) of the respondents are of the opinion that people seeking to be in government were responsible for the violence, 34(23.61%) of the respondents believe that political parties were responsible and 7(4.86%) of the respondents opined that security agents were responsible for the violence after the 2007 general elections.

Table 6.24: Indicating respondents' views on whether there was violence after the 2011 general elections

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Yes	206	68.2
No	79	26.2
Don't Know	17	5.6
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the table above, 206(68.2%) of the respondents answered affirmative that there was violence after the 2011 general elections, 79(26.2%) of respondents are of the view that there was no violence after the elections and 17(5.6%) of the respondents did not know whether if there was violence after the 2011 general elections or not.

Table 6.25: Indicating respondents' views on who was responsible for violence after the 2011 general elections

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
INEC	33	16.0
People in government	91	44.2
People seeking to be in govt.	63	30.6
Political parties	12	5.8
Security agents	7	3.4
Total	**206**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the table above, 33(16.0%) of the respondents are of the view that INEC was responsible for the violence after 2011 general elections, 91(44.2%) of the

respondents were of the view that people in government were responsible for the violence after the 2011 general elections, 63(30.6%) of the respondents were of the opinion that people seeking to be in government were responsible , 12(5.8%) of the respondents believed that political parties were responsible and 7(3.4%) of the respondents were of the view that security agents were responsible for the violence after the 2011 general elections.

The position of respondents in tables 6.21, 6.23, 6.24 and 6.25 is corroborated by most respondents interviewed in the course of conducting this work. In fact, 9(75%) of the respondents interviewed in the course of doing this work are of the view that people in government, people seeking to be in government , INEC, political parties and security agents were collectively responsible for the challenges of conducting free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria in both 2007 and 2011 general elections.

Table 6.26: Indicating respondents' assessment on voter turn out during 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
High	93	30.80
Average	127	42.05
Low	44	14.57
Don't Know	38	12.58
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

Table 6.26 above shows that 93(30.80%) of respondents assessed the voter turn out during gubernatorial and state assembly elections as high, 127(42.05%) of the respondents assessed the voter turn out as average, 44(14.57%) of the respondents assessed the voter turn out as low and 38(12.58%) of the respondents did not know the level of voter turn out during the 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly elections.

Table 6.27: Indicating respondents' assessment on voter turn out during 2007 presidential and national assembly elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
High	137	45.4
Average	112	37.1
Low	20	6.6
Don't Know	33	10.9
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

In the table above, 137(45.4%) of the respondents assessed voter turn out during 2007 presidential and national assembly elections as high, 112(37.1%) of the respondents assessed the voter turn out as average, 20(6.6%) of the respondents assessed the voter turn out as low and 33(10.9%) of the respondents did not know the level of voter turn out during the 2007 presidential and national assembly elections.

Table 6.28: Indicating respondents' assessment on voter turn out during 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
High	153	50.7
Average	121	40.1
Low	17	5.6
Don't Know	11	3.6
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

The table above shows that 153(50.7%) of the respondents assessed the level of voter turn out during 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections as high, 121(40.1%) assessed the voter turn out as average, 17(5.6%) of the respondents assessed the level of voter turn out as low and 11(3.6%) of the respondents did not know the level of voter turn out during the 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections.

Table 6.29: Indicating respondents' assessment on voter turn out during 2011 presidential and national assembly elections

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
High	197	65.2
Average	86	28.5
Low	13	4.3
Don't Know	6	2.0
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

Table 6.29 above indicates that 197(65.2%) of the respondents assessed voter turn out during 2011 presidential and national assembly elections as high, 86(28.5%) assessed the voter turn out as average, 13(4.3%) of the respondents assessed the voter turn out as low and 6(2.0%) of the respondents did not know the level of voter turn out during the 2011 presidential and national assembly elections.

Table 6.30: Indicating respondents' views whether the results of 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly elections reflected voters' choice

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Yes	121	40.1
No	135	44.7
Don't Know	46	15.2
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

The table above provides views of respondents on whether the results of 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly elections reflected voters' choice. And 121(40.1%) of the respondents were of the view that the results of the elections reflected voters' choice, 135(44.7%) of the respondents were of the view that the results did not reflect voters' choice and 46(15.2%) of the respondents did not know whether if the results of 2007 gubernatorial and state assembly elections reflected voters' choice.

Table 6.31: Indicating respondents' views whether the results of 2007 presidential and national assembly elections reflected voters' choice

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
Yes	126	41.7
No	147	48.7
Don't Know	29	9.6
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

The table above reflects the views of respondents on whether the results of 2007 presidential and national assembly elections reflected voters' choice. 126(41.7%) of the respondents believed that the results of 2007 presidential and national assembly elections reflected voters' choice, 147(48.7%) of the respondents were of the view that the results of the elections did not reflect voters' choice and 29(9.6%) of the respondents did not know whether the results reflected voters' choice or not.

Table 6.32: Indicating respondents' views whether the results of 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections reflected voters' choice

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Yes	136	45.0
No	143	47.4
Don't Know	23	7.6
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

The table above reflects the views of respondents on whether the results 2011 gubernatorial and state assembly elections reflected voters' choice. And 136(45.0%) of the respondents answered in the affirmative that the results of the elections reflected voters' choice, 143(47.4%) of the respondents were of the view that the results of the elections did not reflect voters' choice and 23(7.6%) of the respondents did not know whether if the results of the elections reflected voters' choice or not.

Table 6.33: Indicating respondents' views on whether the results of 2011 presidential and national assembly elections reflected voters' choice

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Yes	136	45.0
No	151	50.0
Don't Know	15	5.0
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

Table 6.33 above indicates responses of respondents on whether the results of 2011 presidential and national assembly elections reflected voters' choice or not. 136(45.0%) of the respondents believed that the results of 2011 presidential and national assembly elections reflected voters' choice, 151(50.0%) of the respondents were of the view that the results of the elections did not reflect voters' choice and 15(5.0%) of the respondents did not know whether if results of the elections reflected voters' choice or not.

The views of respondents in tables 6.30, 6.31, 6.32, and 6.33 were to a large extent buttressed by respondents interviewed in the course of this study as 8(66.7%) of the respondents interviewed were of the view that the results of 2007 and 2011 general elections did not to a large extent reflected voters' choice because of voters inducement and intimidation, partisanship of INEC, inadequate election materials, multiple voting manipulation of election results, violence, late commencement of the elections, and sometimes no elections held at all, declaration of winner as loser and loser as winner as well as inducement and intimidation of election officers and sometimes snatching and theft of ballot papers and boxes.

Table 6.34: Indicating respondents' views on challenges encountered during 2007 general elections

Responses	**Intimidation of Voters**	**Multiple voting**	**Late commencement of elections**	**Inadequate voting materials**	**Partisanship of INEC**
Yes	181 (59.9%)	156 (51.7%)	167 (55.3%)	147 (48.7%)	195 (64.6%)
No	83 (27.5%)	98 (32.5%)	103 (34.1%)	126 (41.7%)	87 (28.8%)
Don't Know	38 (12.6%)	48 (15.8%)	32 (10.6%)	29 (9.6%)	20 (6.6%)
Total	**302 (100%)**	**302 (100%)**	**302 (100%)**	**302 (100%)**	**302 (100%)**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June –August, 2013)

The responses of respondents in table 6.34 above indicate that the challenges encountered during the 2007 general elections include intimidation of voters, multiple voting, late commencement of the polls, inadequate voting materials as well as partisanship of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Table 6.35: Indicating respondents' views on who was responsible for challenges encountered during 2007 general elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
INEC	79	26.2
People in government	137	45.4
People seeking to be in govt.	51	16.9
Political parties	26	8.6
Security agents	9	2.9
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

The table above provides views of respondents on who was responsible for challenges encountered during the 2007 general elections. 79(26.2%) of the respondents were of the view that INEC was responsible for the challenges encountered in the conduct of 2007 general elections, 137(45.4%) of the respondents were of the opinion that people in government were responsible for the challenges, 51(16.9%) of the respondents believed that people seeking to be in government were responsible, 26(8.6%) of the respondents were of the view that political parties were responsible and 9(2.9%) of the respondents opined that security agents were responsible.

Table 6.36: Indicating respondents' views on challenges encountered during 2011 general elections

Responses	**Intimidation of Voters**	**Multiple voting**	**Late commencement of elections**	**Inadequate voting materials**	**Partisanship of INEC**
Yes	154 (51.0%)	77 (25.5%)	151 (50.0%)	141 (46.7%)	163 (53.97%)
No	137 (45.4%)	162 (53.6%)	133 (44.0%)	137 (45.4%)	131 (43.38%)
Don't Know	11 (3.6%)	63 (20.9%)	18 (6.0%)	24 (7.9%)	8 (2.65%)
Total	**302 (100%)**	**302 (100%)**	**302 (100%)**	**302 (100%)**	**302 (100%)**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June –August, 2013)

The table above provides views of respondents on challenges encountered during the 2011general elections which include intimidation of voters, late commencement of elections, inadequate voting materials and partisanship of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Table 6.37: Indicating respondents' views on who was responsible for challenges encountered during 2011 general elections

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage(%)**
INEC	86	28.5
People in government	144	47.7
People seeking to be in govt.	47	15.6
Political parties	17	5.6
Security agents	8	2.6
Total	**302**	**100%**

(**Source:** Field Survey, June – August, 2013)

The table above indicates views of respondents on who was responsible for challenges encountered during the 2011 general elections. And 86(28.5%) of the respondents were of the view that INEC was responsible for the challenges encountered in the conduct of 2011 general elections, 144(47.7%) of the respondents were of the view that people in government were responsible for the challenges, 47(15.6%) of the respondents were of the opinion that people seeking to be in government were responsible, 17(5.6%) of the respondents believed that political parties were responsible and 8(2.6%) of the respondents were of the view that security agents were responsible for the challenges encountered during the 2011 general elections.

The views of respondents in tables 6.34, 6.35, 6.36 and 6.37 were to a large extent supported respondents interviewed in the course of doing this work.

In fact, 9(75%) of the respondents interviewed were of the view that people in government, INEC, people seeking to be in government, political parties, and the security personnel were largely responsible for virtually all challenges encountered before, during and after the 2007 and 2011 general elections.

6.3 Summary of Research Findings

This section provides the summary of the main research findings of this study on challenges of conducting free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria with specific emphasis on 2007 and 2011 general elections in North-West geo-political zone.

First, it is interesting to observe that from the result of our investigation it is clear that most voters were induced with money by politicians both those in power and those seeking to be in power to influence their choice of candidate or political party in order to retain or capture political power during elections and which therefore poses a challenge to the conduct of free and fair elections in Nigeria.

Secondly, the 2007 and 2011 general elections were to a large extent fraudulent as they have not largely reflected voters' choice due to inflation of

election result figures, multiple voting especially during 2007 elections, falsification of election results, delay in commencement of voting, result manipulation and wholesale subversion of the will of people which were largely perpetrated by the incumbents.

Thirdly, the challenges of conducting free and fair elections in 2007 and 2011 general elections were to a large extent due to partisanship, partiality and incompetence of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as it in most times favoured government in power and compromised electoral standards.

Fourthly, the 2007 general elections had lower democratic quality and higher credibility deficit as compared to 2011 general elections as it generated more petitions and litigations several times bigger than all petitions received on all the conducted general elections in Nigeria.

Fifthly, is the high incidence of violence during and after the elections during and after the elections as well as intimidation of voters by massive deployment of police and armed forces which frightened and threatened voters and which consequently undermined the credibility of elections.

Sixthly, the level of voter turn out during presidential and national assembly elections is much higher than during gubernatorial and state assembly

elections which poses a challenge to democracy at grassroot and the degree of rigging, irregularities and malpractices is much higher in presidential and national assembly elections than gubernatorial and state assembly elections which makes it extremely difficult to defeat incumbent party or candidate during the elections.

Lastly, the findings, of this research have agreed with assumptions upon which this study was premised that political office holders in Nigeria engender circumstances which make the realization of free, and fair elections problematic, the character of people in government in Nigeria's electoral politics detracts from democratic essence and merit as well as political office holders impacted negatively on the 2007 and 2011 general elections in Nigeria and particularly in North -West Geo-political zone.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Summary

This research study was conducted to evaluate the challenges of conducting free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria with a particular reference to 2007 and 2011 general elections in North-West geo-political zone.

The first chapter is the preliminary chapter which developed the statement of the research problem, the meaning, origin and relevance of elections, the objectives of the study which expound goals that the research aimed to achieve, justification for the study, assumptions upon which the study is premised on as well as the outline of chapters which stated the number and contents of chapters in the research work.

The review of relevant literature in the area of free and fair elections, democracy and a review of some perspectives on challenges of conducting free and fair elections took the centre-stage in chapter two. The review of literature was conducted on the basis of thematic approach examining the numerous conceptual clarifications as expounded by scholars. The chapter equally examines the meaning and nature of elections, components of electoral process,

conditions necessary for transparency and integrity of elections, constituent elements of free and fair elections, international standards for free and fair elections, conceptualizing and contextualizing democracy, classical origins and foundations of democracy, modern foundations of democracy, institutions of democracy, typology of democratic regimes as well as overview and critique of reviewed literature. The theoretical framework which ensured systematic and logical explanation of the subject matter and which serves and guide to the study also forms part of chapter two. The 'elite theory' is used as a guide in this research because of its aptness in providing a systematic explanation of the basic variables which the study interrogates.

Chapter Three contains the research methodology. The chapter explains the methods and procedures that are followed in the conduct of the research. It basically encompasses the description of the study areas, types and sources of data used in gathering information on the subject matter, techniques or instruments of data collection, sampling procedures as well as method of data analysis.

The Fourth chapter is on party politics in Nigeria. And Party Politics as well as electoral politics in Nigeria are discussed.

In the fifth chapter, an overview of General Elections in Nigeria is made. The chapter started with introduction of elections as aspects of institutional transfer, first as a reform measures in reaction to demands made by the nationalists and later as a process of preparing indigenous politicians to take over political leadership from colonial masters. The chapter provides overview to both pre-independence and post-independence elections in Nigeria. The chapter also provides results of general elections in Nigeria.

The crux of chapter six hovers around data presentation, analyses and discussion of summary of research findings. The chapter presents and analyses data generated in the course of conducting the research quantitatively with the use of descriptive statistical tool using tables and simple percentages. In addition, part of the data generated is also presented and analysed in qualitative content analysis. The chapter also reveals the summary of the research major findings where the main findings are discussed.

The seventh chapter provides the concluding chapter of the research with summary of the work, recommendations and conclusion. Lastly, bibliography of the reference materials and the appendices listed in the study.

7.2 Conclusion

The place and vitality of elections in democracy cannot be over-emphasized. Ideally, election is a means of determining the will of the people regarding their choice of political leaders and regime types. In essence, both the process and the outcome of election should reflect the consent and aspirations of the people as organized electorate. This implies that apart from being a routine periodic democratic exercise, election must be competitive, transparent, free and fair as well as credible in order to live up to its democratic essence and merit. In Nigeria, the issue of election has been a problematic endeavor over the years. The electoral process in Nigeria is psychologically alienating for the vast majority of the people who are largely outsiders and are only periodically inserted in the process when they cast their votes. At the same time this alienation is underscored by the fact that even when these vote casters have completed the ritual of voting, the outcome bears little semblance to what they chose in their ballots. Besides, there have been problems of electoral violence, fraud and irregularities bulk of which to a large extent arose from the excesses of the politicians in their desperate bid to capture, control or remain in power. This erode established electoral standards and defy the prospects of free, fair and credible elections in the country. The 2007 and 2011 general elections

have been particularly disastrous because they were defined by rigging, ballot box stuffing, stealing and snatching of electoral materials eliminating opponents and false declaration of losers as winners. In fact, it was established by reports of International and domestic observers such as European Union, International Republican Institute, International Crises Group, Human Rights Watch, Transition Monitoring Group, National Democratic Institute, Campaign for Democracy etc. that Nigeria experienced the worst elections in her post-independence history in 2007 as the elections have fallen far short basic international and regional standards for democratic elections. Infact, European Union concluded that any administration founded on this fraud cannot have legitimacy which is her toughest ever statement on elections. Although many reports documenting the 2007 and 2011 general elections have been published there is still a need for a definite study of those elections based on profound field evidence to understand what makes them perculiar and this is why this research is carried out. It is interesting to observe that from the results of this research that politicians are associated with the challenges of conducting free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria with the use of money and other forms of instruments of manipulation including violence and intimidation to pervert the course of democracy and capture power. Similarly, it is found that the 2007 and

2011 general elections were fraud of kind that has been experienced in the history of Nigeria as it was characterized by falsification of election results, stuffing of ballot boxes, announcing results in places where no elections were held, inflation of figures, illegal possession and thumb-printing of ballot papers, delay in commencement of voting, compilation of fictitious names on voters' lists, results manipulation and wholesale subversion of the will of people all of which were perpetrated largely by political office holders which posed challenge to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections in 2007 and 2011. The result of our investigation also reveals that crises of elections in 2007 and 2011 were partly due to partiality, incompetence and partisanship of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as it compromised the electoral processes. The study also found that the 2007 and 2011 general elections have credibility deficit as they generated petitions and litigations. The study also discovered that the processes of conducting 2007 and 2011 general elections were characterized by harassment and oppression of persons by the political office holders to those belonging to the opposition parties or considered to be critical of their mismanagement of electoral process with the use of law enforcement agencies. There was massive deployment of police and armed forces which frightened and threatened voters. This widespread militarization of

the society by those in power during elections undermined the credibility of the elections. In essence, the incumbents control and manipulate the electoral system to their advantage which eroded the credibility of 2007 and 2011 general elections. An equally important finding from the outcome of this study is that, the electoral malaise have implications for democratic consolidation in Nigeria as democratic stability cannot be super-imposed or predicated on a shaking, unstable and unpredictable crises-ridden social and political environment as the chances that Nigeria's democracy with flourish are undoubtedly becoming slimmer and slimmer after each elections due to post-election violence in protests of irregularities which may not only affect the legitimacy of government but also the citizens' affection or believe in democracy as a suitable model of government.

7.3 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this research, the following recommendations are proposed which will help to address some of the issues raised in the course of the research undertaking.

Politicians in Nigeria should imbibe genuine democratic culture and learn to relegate their personal interests to supreme national interest which is peace, political stability and economic development by allowing popular expression to

decide who should be in control of political leadership during conduct of elections. For democracy to thrive and for Nigeria to continue to enjoy international legitimacy, their value orientation must change. Election must no longer be seen as the end of everything.

There should be announcement and publication of the entire results at each polling stations level including the number of registered voters immediately after elections are concluded and votes counted.

The mass media needs to play a more significant role in promoting and strengthening the credibility of the electoral system. Three main points are important in this regard; first, the need to encourage proliferation of privately controlled media as opposed to those controlled by governments. Privately-owned media houses are more likely to give better coverage to opposition political parties. Secondly, Nigeria needs to explore the possibility of community radios which are far less expensive to establish. Third, we have not made adequate use of the information super highway offered by the internet and electronic e-mail as a means of reaching out and putting information in the public domain concerning elections. The possibilities of using the internet for national and international advocacy in securing free and fair elections should be developed.

Government at all levels should deal with issues of mass poverty and unemployment. As long as people remain poor and lack access to basic means of livelihood, they will remain susceptible to all kinds of manipulations by politicians, including being used to ferment violence during and after elections which pose challenges to credible, free and fair elections in the country.

The caliber of INEC's leadership is crucial. A mechanism for choosing people with both competence and integrity is essential if INEC is to develop as a functional institution that can improve its capacity to deliver free and fair elections.

On electoral offences, a very powerful incentive for continuous breaches of the land and for electoral fraud seems to be that those who violate the Act are never punished. It is recommended that in any petition once a criminal allegation is proved beyond reasonable doubt, the offender should be sentenced to part of the consequential decision of the court. What is more, the law is that once there is a criminal imputation it must be proved beyond reasonable doubt. This will send a strong signal to all that it cannot be business as usual.

The need to encourage the culture of opposition politics is of crucial importance to the future of Nigerian democracy. It is widely known most Nigerian politicians always prefer to be on the winning side and would therefore

prefer to strike deals with the winning party. It is defeatist attitude. It would serve the course of democracy better if opposition parties remain steadfast, build strength and capacity around their programmes and manifestoes to provide the electorates with credible alternatives in future elections.

There should be a comprehensive electoral reform in which all stakeholders including civil society organizations and international funders and observers should ensure that the quality and credibility of elections in Nigeria are not compromised in order to ensure the epitomic expression of popular choices.

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APPENDIX I

A SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE ON CHALLENGES OF FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF 2007 AND 2011 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NORTH-WEST GEO-POLITICAL ZONE

Dear Respondent,

This research questionnaire is an opinion Survey Intended to generate information on challenges of conducting free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria with particular reference to 2007 and 2011 General Elections in North-West Geo-Political Zone.

It is a Part of Research Dissertation which forms one of the requirements for the award of a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) degree in Political Science by Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Be assured that all your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and be used for the purpose of this study only.

Instructions: Tick (√) the correct answer among options provided.

SECTION 'A': BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

1. Gender
a. Male ( )
b. Female ( )

2. Age
a. 18-29 ( )
b. 30-39 ( )
c. 40-49 ( )

d. 50-59 ( )
e. 60 and above ( )

3. Occupational Status
a. Farming ( )
b. Civil Servant ( )
c. Business ( )
d. Student ( )
e. House Wife ( )
f. Unemployed ( )

4. Educational Qualification
a. Tertiary Education ( )
b. Secondary Education ( )
c. Primary Education ( )
d. Qur'anic Education ( )
e. None of the above ( )

SECTION 'B': OPINION ON CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED TO CONDUCT FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS DURING 2007 AND 2011 GENERAL ELECTIONS

5. Are you a member of any registered Political Party?
    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )

6. If answer to question '5' above is Yes do you attend Party rallies?
    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )

7. Are you a registered voter?
    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )

8. Did you vote during 2007 Gubernatorial and State Assembly Elections?
   a. Yes ( )
   b. No ( )

9. Did you vote during 2007 Presidential and National Assembly Elections?
a. Yes ( )
b. No ( )

10. Did you vote during 2011 Gubernatorial and State Assembly Elections?
a. Yes ( )
b. No ( )

11. Did you vote during 2011 Presidential and National Assembly Elections?
a. Yes ( )
b. No ( )

12. What is your assessment of the credibility of the 2007 Gubernatorial and State Assembly Elections?
a. Free and Fair ( )
b. Rigged ( )
c. Don't Know ( )

13. What is your assessment of the credibility of the 2007 Presidential and National Assembly Elections?
a. Free and Fair ( )
b. Rigged ( )
c. Don't Know ( )

14. What is your assessment of the credibility of 2011 Gubernatorial and State Assembly?

a. Free and Fair ( )
b. Rigged ( )
c. Don't Know ( )

15. What is your assessment of the credibility of 2011 Presidential and National Assembly elections?

a. Free and Fair ( )
b. Rigged ( )
c. Don't Know ( )

16. Do you think voters were given money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during 2007 elections?

a. Yes ( )
b. No ( )
c. Don't Know ( )

17. If answer to question number '16' above is Yes who do you think gave money to the voters?

a. INEC ( )
b. People in government ( )
c. People seeking to be in government ( )
d. Political Parties ( )
e. Security Agents ( )

18. Do you think voters were given money to influence their choice of candidate or political party during 2011 elections?

a. Yes ( )
b. No ( )
c. Don't Know ( )

19. If answer to question number '18'above is Yes who do you think gave money to the voters?
    a. INEC ( )
    b. People in government ( )
    c. People seeking to be in government ( )
    d. Political Parties ( )
    e. Security Agents ( )

20. Was there violence during the 2007 General Elections?
    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )
    c. Don't Know ( )

21. If answer to question number '20' above is Yes who do you think was responsible for the violence?
    a. INEC ( )
    b. People in government ( )
    c. People seeking to be in government ( )
    d. Political Parties ( )
    e. Security Agents ( )

22. Was there violence after the 2007 General Elections?
    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )
    c. Don't Know ( )

23. If answer to question number '22' above is Yes who do you think was responsible for the violence?
    a. INEC ( )
    b. People in government ( )
    c. People seeking to be in government ( )
    d. Political parties ( )
    e. Security Agents ( )

24. Was there violence after the 2011 General Elections?
    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )
    c. Don't Know ( )

25. If answer to question number '24' above is Yes who do you think was responsible?
    a. INEC ( )
    b. People in government ( )
    c. People seeking to be in government ( )
    d. Political parties ( )
    e. Security Agents ( )

26. What is your assessment of voter turn out during 2007 Gubernatorial and State Assembly elections?
    a. High ( )
    b. Average ( )
    c. Low ( )
    d. Don't Know ( )

27. What is your assessment of voter turn out during 2007 Presidential and National Assembly elections?
    a. High ( )
    b. Average ( )
    c. Low ( )
    d. Don't Know ( )

28. What is your assessment of voter turn out during 2011 Gubernatorial and State Assembly elections?
    a. High ( )
    b. Average ( )
    c. Low ( )

d. Don't Know ( )

29. What is your assessment of voter turn out during 2011 Presidential and National Assembly Elections?
    a. High ( )
    b. Average ( )
    c. Low ( )
    d. Don't Know ( )

30. Do you think the results of 2007 Gubernatorial and State Assembly elections reflected voters' choice?
    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )
    c. Don't Know ( )

31. Do you think the results of 2007 Presidential and National Assembly Elections reflected voters' choice?
    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )
    c. Don't Know ( )

32. Do you think the results of 2011 Gubernatorial and State Assembly elections reflected voters' choice?
    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )
    c. Don't Know ( )

33. Do you think the results of 2011 Presidential and National Assembly elections reflected voters' choice?
    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )
    c. Don't Know ( )

34. What do you think were the challenges encountered during the conduct of 2007 General Elections?

a. Intimidation of Voters Yes ( ) No ( ) Don't Know ( )
b. Multiple Voting Yes ( ) No ( ) Don't Know ( )
c. Late Commencement of Elections Yes ( ) No ( ) Don't Know
d. Inadequate Voting Materials Yes ( ) No ( ) Don't Know ( )
e. Partisanship of INEC Yes ( ) No ( ) Don't Know ( )

35. Who do you think was responsible for all or some of the challenges encountered in question number '34' above?

a. INEC ( )
b. People in government ( )
c. People seeking to be in government ( )
d. Political Parties ( )
e. Security Agents ( )

36. What do you think were the challenges encountered during the conduct of 2011 General Elections?

a. Intimidation of Voters Yes ( ) No ( ) Don't Know ( )
b. Multiple Voting Yes ( ) No ( ) Don't Know ( )
c. Late Commencement of Elections Yes ( ) No ( ) Don't Know
d. Inadequate Voting Materials Yes ( ) No ( ) Don't Know ( )
e. Partisanship of INEC Yes ( ) No ( ) Don't Know ( )

37. Who do you think was responsible for all or some of the challenges encountered in question number '36' above?

a. INEC ( )
b. People in government ( )
c. People seeking to be in government ( )
d. Political Parties ( )
e. Security Agents ( )

APPENDIX II

Interview Questions

Introduction

This interview is designed to elicit information from respondents on challenges of conducting free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria with particular reference to 2007 and 2011 general elections in North-west geo-political zone. It is part of a research dissertation which forms one of the requirements for the award of a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) degree in Political Science by Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. All your responses will be treated with confidentiality and be used for the purpose of this research only.

Q 1. What is your assessment of on the credibility of 2007 and 2011 general elections?

Q 2. Do you think the results of the elections reflected voters' choices?

Q 3. What challenges do you think were encountered during the conduct of 2007 and 2011 general elections?

Q 4. Who do you think was responsible for the challenges?

Q 5. How do think the challenges of conducting free and fair elections in Nigeria can be overcome?

Thank you

APPENDIX III

LIST OF RESPONDENTS INTERVIEWED IN THE COURSE OF THE RESEARCH

S/N	Name of Respondents	Designation	Place of Interview	Date of Interview
1.	Hon. Lawan Safiyanu Gogori	Member, Kano State House of Assembly Representing Shanono/Bagwai Constituency.	Kano	16/6/2013
2	Alhaji Adamu Aliyu Sumaila	State Chairman, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Kano State	Kano	24/6/2013
3	Alhaji Munkaila Abdullahi	Kebbi State Resident Electoral Commissioner	Birnin Kebbi	03/7/2013
4.	Alhaji Ahmadu Bawale	State Chairman, All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) Kebbi State	Birnin Kebbi	06/7/2013
5.	Mohammed Umar	Kebbi State Radio Correspondent who covered Jega local government during 2011 governorship and state assembly elections.	Birnin Kebbi	08/7/2013
6.	Kamilu Saminu Zawachiki	Freedom Radio Correspondent who covered Madobi local government during 2007 general elections	Kano	14/7/2013
7.	Dahiru Suleiman	ANPP agent at Makarfi 'A' polling station during 2011 elections	Kaduna	19/7/2013

8.	Hon. Dauda Umar	Kaduna State House of Assembly Contestant under platform of Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) during 2011 elections at Chikun/Kajuru constituency	Kaduna	22/7/2013
9.	Usman Muhammad	Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) Kaduna Correspondent who covered Igabi local government during 2007 general elections	Kaduna	27/7/2013
10.	Alhaji Ibrahim Zarewa	Resident Electoral Commissioner, Zamfara State	Gusau	06/8/2013
11.	Bello Aliyu	Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) agent at Gusau ward during 2007 general elections	Gusau	08/8/2013
12.	Sani Magaji Anka	Zamfara State Radio Correspondent who covered Tsafe Local government during 2007 general elections	Gusau	11/8/2013

APPENDIX IV

List of Political Parties in 2007 and 2011

Accord	A
Action Alliance	AA
Action Congress	AC
Advance Congress of Democrats	ACD
Allied Congress Party of Nigeria	ACPN
Alliance for Democracy	AD
African Democratic Congress	ADC
African Liberation Party	ALP
All Nigerian Peoples Party	ANPP
All Progressive Grand Alliance	APGA
Action Party of Nigeria	APN
African Political System	APS
African Renaissance Party	ARP
Better Nigeria Progressive Party	BNPP
Congress for Democratic Change	CDC
Community Party of Nigeria	CPN
Citizens Popular Party	CPP
Democratic Alternative	DA
Democratic Peoples Alliance	DPA

Democratic Peoples Party	DPP
Fresh Democratic Party	FRESH
Hope Democratic Party	HDP
Masses Movement of Nigeria	MMN
Movement For The Restoration and Defence of Democracy	MRDD
National Action Council	NAC
Nigeria Advanced Party	NAP
Justice Party	JP
Liberation Democratic Party of Nigeria	LDPN
Labour Party	LP
Movement for Democracy and Justice	MDJ
National Conscience Party	NCP
New Democrats	ND
National Democratic Party	NDP
Nigeria Elements Progressive Party	NEPP
National Majority Democratic Party	NMDP
New Nigeria Peoples party	NNPP
Nigeria Peoples Congress	NPC
National Reformation Party	NRP
National Solidarity Democratic Party	NSDP
National Unity Party	NUP
Progressive Action Congress	PAC

Peoples Democratic Party	PDP
Peoples Mandate Party	PMP
Progressive People Alliance	PPA
Peoples Progressive Party	PPP
Peoples Redemption Party	PRP
Peoples Salvation Party	PSP
Republic Party of Nigeria	RPN
United Democratic Party	UDP
United Nigeria's Party	UNPP