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Historical Antecedents of Democratisation Process, Party System and Challenges in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (1960-2015)

Moshood, Saka
Department of Political Science & Public Administration
Al-Hikmah University
Ilorin, Nigeria

Abejide TS,
Department of History and International Studies
Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin

Abstract

The article explores the evolution of democratic experience in Nigeria from the political independence in 1960 to 2015. It focuses on the democratization process through the party system and its shortcomings after democracy was instituted. Part of the shortcomings have been the successive military coup detat in an attempt to gain political power of the country. The aims and objectives of the study is to explain the unending coups of military regimes frustrated as well thwart the deepening of democracy for decades. Consequently, the expected civic duty was not fulfilled in the era of the military regimes and this changed the democratic orientation of the people across the country. Apart from this, the Electoral Commission was incapacitated in the effort to conducting credible elections into various levels of governments due to military engagement in politics. In view of this, the article argues that Nigeria was bereft, and in search of democracy between 1967 and 1998. Within this period, the transition to democracy in 1979 was the period the military regime under the control of President Obasanjo handed over power to Alhaji Shehu Shagari successfully. Afterward, the Second Republic was terminated by Major General Buhari and Brigadier General Tunde Idiagbon coup of 1983. Thereafter, democratization came alive again between 1990 and 1993 when a general election was conducted by General Ibrahim Babangida but the final results did not see the light of the day, hence became inconclusive as the military government failed to announce the pre-summed winner Chief M.K.O Abiola in 1993. The method employed in this study include qualitative and primary documents which extract information from all available data sources. The findings of this article examines the endless struggle of the pro-democracy groups after the inauguration of the Interim National Government (ING) in the country following inconclusive results. After this period, the civil society groups such as NADECO and Pro-democracy groups fought the military junta to hand over power to the winner of the June 12 election. The death of the pre-summed winner and General Abacha in 1998 added to that struggle. The Fourth Republic was thereafter inaugurated in 1999 following the successful election of the local government, state, presidential and national assembly.

Keywords: Democratisation, June 12 Election, Party System, Military regime and Civil Society Groups.

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Introduction

Re-democratisation in Nigerian politics of 1979 then was considered as the second thought when the Second Republic accommodated political changes under various themes. First, the electoral system transformed from the parliamentary system to presidential type in that era. Second, game of multi-party system started with more political parties, third, the Constitution modified the electoral system into federal character upon 25 percent of the 19 states of the federation, that each party must score 2/3 in each state before declare as winner. Lastly, the chairman of the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) takes new leadership. However, the government of President Shehu Shagari between 1979 and 1983 was crystallised on pattern and model of the First Republic political practices with regards ethnicity, corruption, and mismanagement. Hart (1993)[1] reiterated the 1979 general elections under the presidential election with which federal character became the order and condition of election in Nigeria. This development acknowledged the 25 percent of the nineteen states of the federation. In view of this system, the NPN narrowly won the election. In another connection, the 1983 presidential elections, National Assembly and Gubernatorial and State House of Assemblies elections were respectively confronted with procedural legitimacy. That is, democratic consolidation of the Second Republic was greeted with electoral rigging which resulted in deep violence in the federation. This condition in the country exasperated the military coup de'tat led by Brigadier General Muhammad Buhari and Brigadier Tunde Idiagbon Abdulkadir et al (2012)[2].

The electoral administration in Nigeria had witnessed ups and down in terms of leadership selection in the party system, meeting the 2/3 condition of electoral character, and registration of the political party based on national reflection. These national issues have become new chapter in the electioneering in Nigeria. In this respect, five political parties contested for 1979 election and one party was not registered but was registered in 1983 making six parties competing for the seats in 1983 general elections. These parties include National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), Nigeria People's Party (NPP), Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP), People Redemption Party (PRP), and Nigeria Advanced Party (NAP). Virtually, democratisation and political development started from party system, particularly in a plural society which is traditional in primordial background gain commitment in democratic relations. This sociology will constitute practice in the distribution of power in post-colonial society of Nigeria. In a nutshell, this political practice was emasculated at premature stage by the military cabal in an interest of national unity and political order in December 1983Abdullahi (2014)[3].

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[1]Hart, C. (1999). The Nigerian Elections of 1983.*Journal of the International African Institutes,*63(3):397-418.
[2]Abdulkadir, M.S, Jayun, A.A & Zaid, A.B. (2012). Issues and Strategies in Promoting Democracy and Good Governance: Nigerian and Malaysian Examples.*Journal of Asian Social,*8(1), pp. 259-267.
[3]Abdullahi, I. (2014). Independence of the Judiciary in Nigeria: A Myth or Reality.*International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research,*5(7): 55-66.

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Interim National Government (ING) and the Civil Society

In another case tabled in the course of evolution in Nigeria particularly, liberalisation and transformation to democracy between 1991 and 1993. The military regime led by General Babangida promised to leave power by founding elections (first) to various seats in the federation of Nigeria. Ihonvebere (1996)[4] aptly admitted that the promise was actualized by conducting founding elections but were watershed because the military refused to disengage from power by annulling June 12 presidential election that was a mandate of chief MKO Abiola. Thus, Interim National Government (ING) was replaced to resolve the political crisis. Despite this attempt, the country received receipts of violence and agitation for restoration of the annulled election filled political atmosphere. In another vein, liberalisation for democratisation gains its momentum from the civil society. The Pro-democracy group was established from the axis of Campaign for Democracy [CD], and the members are: Gani Fawehimi, Wole Soyinka and others led the operation for defend of democracy in the country. In this stance, ING was replaced with the General Abacha coup in 1993Adegbabiri and Chuks (2015)[5].

This putsch magnified the worse situation in the history of Nigerian politics. The pro-democracy group struggle for transformation to democracy after the emergence of dictator into power. More so, Abacha did worse in his leadership, for example, constitution was suspended, Ken Saro Wiwa and eight other were executed as violation of human rights. Saka (2014)[6]concluded that the regime of Abacha was despicable to human life and was rejected by the pro-democracy group. The performance of National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) in the soil of the South West (Yoruba) was much accountable in success. Many prominent people were arrested and detained. Not only this observation, the collection of professional in the civil society smoothly fought the autocratic regime of the military. Subsequently, the Oodua People Congress (OPC) declared the government as 'Abacha must go" saga. In this scenario, the immoral dictator died in 1998 and this paved the ways for his second in command, General Abdulsalam Abubakar to design electoral time table for the founding election (first) which generally took place between 1998/1999 as well brought many electoral leaders into democratic seats, vis-a-vis National Assembly, State House of Assemblies, presidential, local government and gubernatorial elections were conducted in the federation of Nigeria Alumona (2010)[7].

[4]Ihonvebere, J.O. (1996). Are Things Fall Apart? The Military and the Crisis of Democratisation in Nigeria.*The Journal of Modern African Studies,* 34(2): 19-46.
[5]Adegbabiri, M.N. and Chuks, U.O. (2015).Party Politics and Democracy: The Role of Civil Society and Struggle for Democratisation in Nigeria.*American International Journal of Social Sciences,*4(6): 17-43.
[6]Saka, M. (2014). Democratisation and Political Development in Nigeria under the Fourth Republic.*Ontario Canada: Journal of Sustainable Development,* 07(11): 110-122.
[7]Alumona, I. M.(2010). The politics of Democratisation in Nigeria: Are the People Involved? *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa.* 12(7):109-136.

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Background and Evolution of Nigeria Democratisation 1960-1998

Once upon a time Nigeria as the largest democracy in Africa attained political independence in 1960. This political achievement often accommodated the space with democratisation through the constitutional arrangements from the British. During the colonial rule, the British took the ultimate position in the country particularly, after the amalgamation of 1914. The nationalist started to agitate for reform that will benefit them in the political system then. Fwatshak (2009)[8] stated the nationalist effort for participation in the colonial administration, political reform and self-rule and independence during the Clifford Constitution. All these were tabled as it was fulfilled in 1923 elections into Legislative Council which specify 46 official members, 27 officials, 16 un-officials, of which 4 must come from the Africa, particularly municipal of Lagos and Calabar. These elections have kindly prepared Nigeria for political development. Certainly, the political party then include: Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP), Union of Young Nigeria (UYN), and People's Union (PU). In this event, (NNDP) dominated the political scene until it changed to Nigeria Youth Movement (NYM) in1938 election, and (NCNC) surfaced in 1944Animashaun (2010)[9].

Before the independence, the country organised the founding elections in 1959 under the federation of three regions, the west, south and north, indeed, Nigeria eventually became a republican country in 1963 at the aftermath of Queen of England as well created additional region as the mid-western province. Awa (1960)[10] stated the aftermath of the 1959 elections as successful with regard to robust preparation that circulated sociologically among the various tribes in the country. In view of this, representative government was formed by the NPC, AG, and NCNC. This political action reflects the people as uprightly dedicated to civic education despite the fact that education system was imbalance in the country. In the justification of this scenario, the Yoruba from the Western and Ibos from the Eastern both have the highest education orientation over the Northern region which had the lowest education. Conversely, the Northern had the highest population advantage over the other regions Basir (2012)[11].

Concepts of Democratisation

Democratisation practice is justifiable when accurate political parties are crystallised with multiparty system in Africa regarding multinational groups. This ideal is real when the political elite and the electorate are both disciplined to democracy. In view of this consideration, Omotola (2010)[12] admitted

[8]Fwatshak, S.U. 92009). Economic and Political Environment of Elections and Expectation of Nigerians from Elections.*Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria,*18(12):5-26.
[9]Animashaun, K.(2010). Regime Character, Electoral Crisis and Prospect of Electoral Reform in Nigeria.*Journal of Nigeria,*1(1):346-378.
[10]Awa, E.O.(1960). Federal Elections in Nigeria 1959, the India Journal of Political Science, 21 (2):101-113.
[11]Basir, S.A.(2012). Interrogating StatenessDemocratisation Nexus in Nigeria: Issues and Contentions. *Journal of Conflictology,* l4 (1): 14-23.
[12]Omotola, J.S. (2010). Political Parties and the quest for Political Instability,*Taiwan Journal of Democracy,* 6(2): 125-145.

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historically that democratisation in Nigeria failed because of the party system which reflected political rivalry. In considering this evidence is to link it to the persistent democratic instability in the country where elite foist for power at all costs Obakhedo(2009)[13].

Theoretically, democratisation of democracy is a branch of democratic consolidation because it provides essential framework for the procedural performance of a democratic government. The provision of avoiding democratic breakdown or avoiding democratic erosion, institutionalising democracy, completing democracy, and deepening democracy, as the inherent view of Andreas Schedler. Therefore, democratisation process only recognises structures and factors which act as vigorous effort in mobilising politics for the interest of the public. This is determined by the serious attitude of the elites to inform and offer basic socio-economic and political agendas for the construction of sustainability of democracy. Meanwhile, the governing elites should tolerate opposition in the recognistion of non-governing elites as agents of reform because power is not permanent but rotational in the polity (Enjeti 2011)[14].

At this juncture, the future of African democracies is recognised by electoral system which maintains the action and character that will sustains democratisation. However, sustainability interludes with actions and characters both are associated with political sociology and economic interaction. These embodiments are certain when the supreme principles of democratisation adopts in the political system. In this sense, political regime claims large part in the public policy when the elite in power is committed to applying new reform that will command socio-economic development. Apparently, the fundamental target of the political structure lies on executive, legislative, judiciary and other agencies as it remains the consent of the people. The consent of the people rotates between vertical and horizontal models. The vertical model represents vital interest of the government in power to demonstrate its political skills by addressing situation in the country. The horizontal consent emerges from the corporate citizens making demands for improvement in their lives Enjeti (2011)[15].

In this study, the theories of democracy, democratisation and democratic consolidation respectively translates to common goals (gain) for common people. The attribute of aforesaid themes focuses on the susceptibility of democratisation and standard of good living by virtue of moral as the inspiration which drives these goals to the expectation of the actual people. The objective will be maintained by the hierarchy of procedural legitimacy as one good turn deserves another, that is, one regime leaves power for another regime. The interpretation is that, democratic gain or democratic consolidation in the political system of a country is certain. Political system is susceptible to

[13]Obakhedo, N. O. (2009). Obstacles to Democratic consolidation in Nigeria: The Imperative of Electoral Reform.*University of Benin: Department of Political Science and Public Administration,* pp. 1-40.
[14]Enjeti, Y. (2011). Democracy and Democratisation: Processes and Prospects World (Review).*The International Journal of Higher Education and Democracy.* l2 (13):173-176.
[15] Ibid 27

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alternation of power among political parties. This reflects that electoral system [political party] act as catalyst in the process of democratization Esposition and Piscatori (1991)[16].

Challenges to Democratisation in Nigeria

More importantly, Diamond (2004)[17] faulted the military intervention in the history of democratisation. Perhaps, every political violence and electoral misappropriation in Nigeria, the excuse is military coup. Not only these political attitudes manifested in the environment of the country, other things magnify from the trail of public service. That is why, this theory suggested that Nigeria was in search of democracy of democratisation, and military coup is unending as regard the character of the governing and non-governing elite on the issue of power and legitimacy. Furthermore, this theory aptly stated that:

> "In fact, corruption in Nigeria has grown more widespread and brazen with each regime, and was more out of control than ever under the last one. To some extent it is true that the civilians only applied more intensively and perfectly devices that had long been in operation, in particular the pervasive inflation of contracts to cover the costs of kick-backs to ministers and parties and of commissions to politically connected agents"

The elites generally are the agents of democratisation and the electorate are the vehicles which drive the political space in accordance with the principles. Certainly, challenge is one of these democratic impediments which translate to weakness of the political system. In view of this fact, elite in Nigeria are neither discipline nor democrat in their action toward nation building and national development. Why this? Since the attainment of the political independence in 1960, the country is peculiar with synonymous unhealthy politics obviously from elite and translates to political violence Innocent (2012)[18].

Additionally, Aremu and Omotola (2007)[19] canvassed the failure of political stability from the perspective of violence since the transformation to democratisation in 1998-99. Furthermore, political party was partially national looks but takes leverage at the state level where it processed. The trajectory in the opposition parties are neither constructed adequately nor the ruling party accepting the operation for a watch-dog. Paradoxically, Nigerian politics upon the opposition often coins from thuggery as it becomes pervasive and obvious in assassination, for example, Funsho Williams of Lagos State was assassinated

[16]Esposition, J and Piscatori, P.J. (1991). Democratisation and Islam.*Middle East Institute.*45(3): 427-440.
[17]Diamond, L. (2004).Nigeria in Search of Democracy.*Centre of Foreign Affairs,* pp. 1-34.
[18]Innocent, A.P. (2012). Party-Politics and Intra-Party Democracy in Nigeria: A Historical and Contemporary Perspective.*Journal of Social Science and Policy Review,* 4(5): 78-102.
[19]Aremu, F. Omotola, J.S. (2007). Violence as Threat to Democracy in Nigeria under the Fourth Republic, 1999-2005,*Journal of African and Asian Studies* 6 (1-2): 53-79.

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at Dolphin Estate Phase Two before the PDP primary election for gubernatorial candidate Ikpe (2000)[20].

The character of Nigerian elections was also justified by the conventional wisdom of scholars. Therefore, the study of democratisation in Nigeria has been to emphasise the challenges to emerging democratic structures and practices. Among these are the problems of shortcomings in elections manifested from the character and action of the governing elites over the opposition party and the parading disunity in the party system in the country. The failure of elections in Nigeria can be attributed to many contingency factors. Ugwu (2008)[21] emphasizes electoral violence which since independence, has always been part of the political process. Anifowose and Babawale (2003)[22] added the assessment that the 2003 general elections were rigged by the elites in power. Ojo (2008)[23] and Okotie (2008)[24] are of the view that the 2007 general elections were the worst in the history of election administration in Nigeria with both international and local observers concluding that they were badly flawed. Awopeju (2012)[25] claimed that low participation in the 2007 and 2011 presidential elections was due to loss of confidence by the people in electoral processes. Rawlence and Albin-Lacey (2007)[26] characterise Nigerian elections in terms of stolen 'rights' because they were marred by extraordinary displays of rigging and intimidation of voters in many areas throughout the 36 states of the country. In many states, very little voting took place as ballot papers were diverted to the offices and homes of government officials and participants to be filled with fake results. The overall explanation of elections is that democracy obviously relies on fundamental principles. These principles should commensurate recipient electoral forces. Consequently, Nigeria as a typical example in Africa is struggling to meet the international benchmark since the inauguration to democratisation in 1999.

[20]Ikpe, B.U.(2000). Patrimonialism and Military Regimes in Nigeria.*African Journal of Political Science,* 5(1):146-168.

[21]Ugwu, C. (2008). Godfatherism and Democracy in Nigeria: Lesson from the Old Testament, *Journal of Bassey Andah,*2(1): 23-49.

[22]Anifowose R. and Babawale T. (2003). 2003 *General Elections and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria.* Lagos: Frankad Publishers.

[23]Ojo, E. (2008).Nigeria's General Elections and succession Crisis: Implication for the Nascent Democracy.*Journal of African Elections,*14(13): 442-470.

[24]Okotie, V.H. (2008). *Dividends of Democracy and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria.* Ilorin Nigeria: Faculty of Business and Social Sciences, University of Ilorin.

[25]Awepoju, A. (2012). 2011 Presidential election and the Political Participation in Nigeria.*Canadian Social Science.* 8(2): 96-103.

[26]Rawlence, B. and Albin-Lackey C. (2007). Nigeria's 2007 General Elections: Democracy in Retreat.*African Affairs Journal,*106(424):497-506.

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Democratisation of Culture under the Fourth Republic 1999-2015

The significance of democratisation is pre-determined by loosely political terminology as the scholars stepped to coin explanation in various perceptions. In this way, the theory which dissects the principles on the platform of sociology of culture was relatively skewed to Mannheim (1960)[27]who believed in the theme that democratisation is characterised by change in various aspects, such as, cultural, structure, art, philosophy and religion. In another wing, decision and problem conflate with political reality where the political action interacts particularly, in a plural society. Ideally, the principle requires attitude of mind which cross carpet in the pipeline of political forces in essence of creating homogenous and heterogeneous democratic society. This shows that the practice lies on the two scales of behaviour between authoritarianism and deepening of democracy. For example a society may be a democracy but under the umbrella of one party system where opposition is less guaranteed (homogenous rule). The elite in this action demonstrate political propensity towards reversal of the political system through crisis which could undermine the progress of democratisation. This makes the theory to suggest these elements are: (1)The mode of selection by which elite are recruited from the mass. (2) The inner structure of various elite groups, their mutual relationships, and their relation to society at large. (3) Their self-interdependence and self-evaluation, and their assessment by the outsiders [electorate]. (4) The social distance between elite and mass, understood primarily as the function of elite consciousness. (5) Lastly, The cultural ideals produced by various elite groups Mannheim (1960)[28].

In this connection, democratisation of culture in Nigeria originated from the trails of sociology tabled under process and practice of the Fourth Republic. Basically, the study of democratisation in this country reflects from the discourse of Diamond's (2004)[29] observation that democracy is dead in the country after the political erosion of the Second Republic in 1983. The annulment of the presidential election of 1993 also became a peculiar case to political transformation. Apparently, the transformation to a civil rule in 1998-1999 gained a perennial advantage in the practice of democratisation as the citizens have confidence to make a choice of representation. Of course, this political liberalisation witnessed a gargantuan political action and character of political parties within electoral system in play. However, Carter Centre (1999)[30] succinctly observed the preparation for transition which ranged from political parties identification, (PDP, AD, and ANPP), campaign, political prisoners were vindicated, electoral time table was fixed, and various elections were monitored in accordance with the constitution. Afterward, local, gubernatorial, presidential, senatorial, and house of representative elections were organized respectively by non-violence. The assessment of the polling

[27]Mannheim, K. (1962). *Essays on the Sociology of Culture.* London: Routledge& Paul Limited.
Diamond, L. (2004).Nigeria in Search of Democracy.*Centre of Foreign Affairs,* pp. 1-34.
[28] Ibid, 35
[29]Diamond, L. (2004).Nigeria in Search of Democracy.*Centre of Foreign Affairs,* pp. 1-34.#
[30]Carter Centre (1999). Observing the 1998-99 Nigeria Elections, *National Democratic Institution for International Affairs, Washington DC,* pp. 1-56.

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resulted in irregularities, low turnout and abuse of electoral process regarding ballot stuffing, inflation of results, and voter's intimidation in the federation. All these political animations accounted for the de-democratisation of the Fourth Republic Carter Centre (1999)[31].

Election and Party System in the Fourth Republic

In the same manner, Nigerian Bar Association (2007)[32] supported this trail of argument with a view that democratisation involves transfer of power from the electorate to a legal few to account for their actions. This characters manifested in 1999 general elections to various seats as it flared into political potholes with marred elections was also obvious in 2003 and 2007 general elections respectively. These characters engendered from the past democratic practices of the First and Second Republics were aborted by the military regimes between 1966 and 1985. In connection to empirical democratic practice of Nigeria, Le Van et al (2003)[33] acknowledged from the presence of 2003 general elections which arose in the federation as the first democratic consolidation with a civilian government succeeding another. In addition, the President Olusegun Obasanjo's party PDP won excessively in the National Assembly and States House of Assembly elections. This resulted in opposition parties challenging and questioning the outcome at the electoral tribunal level. Before the elections, there were shortcomings ranged from party primaries, voters registration and party mobilisation. Subsequently, Human Rights Watch (2004)[34] reported the political scene as tantamount to 2003 polls in the federation of the country as excessive violence aggravated the local, presidential, gubernatorial and state house of assembly elections. EU (2003)[35] justified the 2003 polls with the actions of irregularities which manifested in some states of the federation as it undermined the electoral processes of the country.

The sustainability of democratisation in Nigeria was attributed to far-reaching electioneering situation; particularly opposition parties make public criticism. International Crisis Grouping (2007)[36] enunciated the 2007 elections with the peaceful transfer of power between President Olusegun Obasnajo and President Umar Yar' Adua both actalised their power through PDP and this make the country as a one party replication at the National Assembly and states level of the federation as it accorded with legislative seats. In another vein, Monica

[31] Ibid, 19
[32]Nigerian Bar Association (2007). Reform of Nigerian Electoral System, *Nigerian Bar Association NBA,* pp. 1-46.
[33]Le Van, A. Pitso, T. Adebo, B. (2003). Election in Nigeria is the Third Time Charm.*Journal of American Elections,*2 (2): 36-82.
[34]Human Rights Watch (2004). Nigeria's 2003 Elections: The Unacknowledged Violence, pp. 1-28.
[35]EU. (2003).Nigeria President and Gubernatorial Elections 2003 also Covering the Delay and Repeated National Assembly Polls, pp. 1-54.
[36]International Crisis Group (2007).Nigeria Failed Elections, Failing State? *Africa Report No.* 126-30 May, pp. 1-37.

(2012)[37] stated the principal political parties such as People's Democratic Party (PDP), Alliance for Democracy (AD) and All Nigerian People's Party (ANPP). Apparently, these parties contested in 1998 nationwide polls, but in 2003 and 2007 polls, the political parties heightened to thirty expanding to huge multiparty after a court verdict in favour of the opposition against the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) which vowed not to register more parties. As a result of this outcome, in 2011 polls, the number of political parties rose to fifty for political competition in the country.

The preparation for 2011 general elections at the national and states level both find the interest of political practitioners and scholars to evolve sustainability of democratisation as the pipeline toward democratic consolidation. Practically, Okotie (2008)[38] revealed the Nigerian politics as clash of the titan where political elite in power in 1999-2007 frustrated the political climate in connection to who to succeed who in power. The clash between President Olusegun Obasnjo and Deputy President Atiku Abubakar was obvious in recognition for holding power under the People's Democratic Party (PDP). In connection to the political mafia in the institutional sector, the elections were projected as multifaceted with irregularities. The presidential elections are faced with massive electoral tribunal which culminated in nullifying some results including states gubernatorial elections. Therefore, 2011 elections also suffered of overwhelming distrust in the electoral process. Aniekwe and Kushie (2011)[39] both conceded this situation with the nationwide elections of the south-south, south west, south east, north central, north south and north west. The federation of Nigeria was more significantly in electoral violence in 2011 which ranged from registration, pre-election period, campaign period, election day violence, and post electoral results conflict.

Certainly, democratisation in Nigeria was transfixed with hard and soft practices, particularly at the process of 2015 elections. The pervasive action which surrounded the political atmosphere was party/regime disunity in the federation of the country. Thus, People's Democratic Party (PDP) witnessed internal turbulence which magnified to party ground coalition. Before this event, Oluwaseun (2012)[40] subscribed that People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Action Congress of Nigeria (CAN) both political parties are domineer in the politics of Nigeria as they contributed to major political crises. Afterward, this political alliance was formed among four political parties, among of these are: PDP, ACN, CPC and ANPP. Consequently, the left wing of the PDP was maintained by the President Goodluck Jonathan and the right wing compromised the elite not in support of the president second tenure but

[37]Monica, A. (2012). The Role of Political Party in Democratic Governance of Nigeria: A Case Study of PDP. *Caritas University Enugu: Faculty of Management and Social Science Department of Political Science,* pp. 1-37.
[38]Okotie, Ibid, 7-8
[39]Aniekwe, C, C. Kushie,J. (2010).Electoral Violence Situation Analysis: Identifying Hot Spot in the 2011 General Elections in Nigeria, *National Association for Peaceful Elections in Nigeria,* pp. 1-50.
[40]Oluwaseun, O.F. (2012). Leadership and Political Parties Crisis in Nigeria's Fourth Republic Parties: A Study of PDP and ACN,*Asia-Pacific Journal of Social Sciences,* 4(1): 1-20.

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defected to the APC. These political variations co-exist in 2015 federation elections across the thirty six states and Abuja Momodu and Ika (2013)[41].

Behaviour of Political Parties in Nigerian Context

The origin of political party in Nigeria could be traced to the transition programme of General Abdulsalam Abubakar. This process was preoccupied by electoral activities which ranged from registration of political party through registration of the electorate to political campaigns, etc. The character of political environment was informed by multi-party system where different political parties were formed. Egwemi (2009)[42] observes that the 1998 local government elections were contested under nine accredited parties which had attracted modest participation and competition. However, the presidential, gubernatorial, National Assembly, and state elections were conducted in 1999. Thus, the major parties are: People Democratic Party (PDP), All People Party (APP), and Alliance for Democracy (AD) officially contested for the aforementioned electoral seats. These parties filled the political atmosphere of the federation Nkewede et al (2014)[43].

Political parties paved the way for organizing the societies to set collective ideology. Omotola (2009)[44] recognises party ideology as something important in a democratic process but in the case of Nigerian practice this values disappeared. The factor for this predicament was that the origin of the formation was blurred. The formation and recruitment of leadership compromised undemocratic features under the PDP and the ANPP. The party members were from the military and civilian colleagues who want to continue with power at all cost. The AD does not have national recognition according to the constitution because it had power in the South West. In addition, the manifestoes of the three parties were identical during the 1999 electoral campaigns. Apart from this stance, there was no electoral ideology in the process of party system in the country. The concept of electoral ideology recognises the responsibility of the parties to have electoral values before competing for power of the state and after. In addition, the electorate should have ideology and the electoral organisation (INEC) of a country should have ideology as well Omotola (2009)[45].

In this explanation, Dode (2010: 188-189)[46]emphasises on the character of the Nigerian political parties under a multi-party system. The argument is that the PDP has been winning elections successfully without opposition parties contending in power of the country between 1999 and 2015. In afterwards, the

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[41]Momodu, J.A and Ika, M.G. (2013). The Implication of Intra-Party Conflicts on Nigeria's Democratisation, *Global Journals Inc,*13(16): 19-30.
[42]Egwemi, V. (2009). *A Decade of Democracy in Nigeria, 1999-2009, Issues Challenges and Prospect of Democratic Consolidation.* Nigeria: Aboki Publishers.
[43]Nkwede, J.O. Aloysius, I.S. and Oliver, N.U. (2014).Political Godfatherism and Governance in a Developing Democracy: Insight from Nigeria. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies,* 3 (4): 117-123.

[45] Ibid, 12
[46]Dode, O.R. (2010). Political Parties and the Prospects of Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria: 1999-2006,*African Journals of Political Science and International Relations,*l4(5): 188-194.

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APC took the political power in 2015 elections because of the party disunity in PDP Thus, this competition maintains one-party system under a multi-party competition. Therefore, it is difficult for the country to consolidate her democracy in this practice. Oluwaseun(2012)[47] admits that there was no clear difference between the preceding Republic parties and the current Fourth Republic parties. Both have the common features in the area of formation, recruitment of elites, and crisis it facilitates during competition for power. Jinadu (2011)[48] opines that the inter-party relations should be a focus to understand Nigerian party system. However, the fact is that, the incumbent party and the opposition parties have not paved the way for inter-party dialogue that is why, the country had witnessed large scale electoral crisis since 1960 and aftermath.

Election and the Third Wave Democratisation

The emergence of the third wave of democratisation portrays the significant progress of some countries across the world transforming from the authoritarianism to democratic regimes. This evolution highlights the ideas of Huntington (1991)[49] that the elections are the ways democracy operates before and after the occurrence of democratisation. The value of election was attached to the process of democratisation because it ends and weakens the authoritarian regimes. In addition, elections not only serve as the goals of democratisation but also serve as the vehicles which promote democratisation. Subsequently, the elites are the authoritarian rulers that deliberately organise elections for one reason or another. Therefore, the lesson of the third wave is that elections are not only the life of democracy; they are also the death of dictatorships either the military, monarch or any form of authoritarian rules.

Furthermore, it is argued again that elections are managed in a pattern that favours the elites. Therefore, the elites that venture into participation may also handover democratic power to the same elites. Not only these, the same elites sponsor elections in order to favour their candidates and this prolongs the authoritarian rule under democratic regimes. Huntington (1991)[50] accepted this fact that the rulers that venture into elections are sometimes disappointed when they occupy the electoral seats, after few years. Other elections are held in order to continue with the same system but the serving elites lost or did very poorly in the regime sponsored elections. The outcome of these elections often surprises the opposition parties. We also maintain this argument in this threshold; the elections of 2015 in Nigeria were quite different from the preceding elections because a ruler was changed at the presidential seat through the formation of the grand coalition.

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[47]Oluwaseun, O.F. (2012). Leadership and Political Parties Crisis in Nigeria's Fourth Republic Parties: A Study of PDP and ACN,*Asia-Pacific Journal of Social Sciences,* 4(1): 1-20.

[48]Jinadu, L. A. (2011).Inter-Party Dialogue in Nigeria: Examine the Past, Present and Future:*Lead Paper at Inaugural DGO Political Parties Dialogue Series, held on October 4, at Bolingo Hotel Abuja,* pp. 1-34.

[49]Huntington, P.S. (1991).*The Third Wave. Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

[50] Ibid, 54

The experience of Africa in the management of elections remain a complex task after a democratic transition. The account of Bratton and Van de Walle (1997)[51] rose to explain the rationale of the founding elections of the newly transition to democratisation in Africa. The concept of founding elections connotes the first democratic election that takes place in the new transitions. The reflection of this in Africa was characterised by unhealthy animation because it involves a lot of electoral fraudulence, such as, gerrymandering, repression, intimidation and personal recognition. Furthermore, the study contends that the elections of Africa were never completed in a standard form in terms of free and fair elections. For example, in Nigeria, elections are conducted under the ethnic cleavage, political violence, rigging of election, religion favouratism, stuffing of ballot papers in the past republics as well as the Fourth Republic which started in 1999. These segment alluding to non-completion of democracy at the start-going in Nigeria. However, the founding elections also make sense in the area of political liberalisation of a country that join the league of democratic nations. Therefore, founding election defines the prospect of democratic consolidation, that is, when it starts with democratic characters. Another mechanism of elections is the regard for the opposition parties in a competitive democracy under a multi-party system. This opportunity is trivialized in African context because the dominant party pushes forward a strategy that would maintain state power at every election Bratton and Van de Walle (1997)[52].

Elections are important processes with many mechanisms and stakeholders. Election often rises to the task of decision-making process in an organised political system. These attributes became a global plan in the mainstream of free and fair elections. Goodwin-Gill (1994) offered various mechanisms and agents that are fundamental to the ethic of elections. These factors are mentioned such that it complements as well as promotes free and fair elections. These factors are: the rule of law, funding of political parties, political parties, candidates and candidature, campaign activity and fair campaign practices, the role and responsibility of the media, election administration and polling including the role of independent or impartial commissions, and of domestic and international observers, dispute resolution, and results. These areas have continued to receive much attention after the third wave of democratisation. More so, elections become internal affairs so that the legitimacy to govern shall be based on the consent of the active people as expressed in open and periodic elections Toyin (2014)[53].

This study argues that the promotion of democracy in the global world often defines the interest of the international organisations, such as the United Nations (UN), the African Unions (AU), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) respectively. However, the significance of promoting democracy reflects a universal action by the advanced countries of the world. This task also connects the civil society groups and the non-governmental organisations to champion the administration of elections in Africa under the

[51]Bratton, M. and Van de Walle, N. (1997). *Democratic Experiment in Africa Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[52] Ibid, 64
[53]Toyin, O.S. (2014). Party Conflicts and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria (1999-2007).*International Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences,* 4(11): 172-197.

code of free and fair electoral outcome. Therefore, election was a unit of study as it becomes a barometer for the public opinion and the political legitimacy of the ruling party as well as the electorate. African countries have been observed in different electoral administrations but the outcome was daunting due to large scale political impediments which filled the political environment. Therefore, elections are monitored, observed and analysed on the character it engendered under this platform (free and fair). The electioneering process in the federation of Nigeria captures up and down as it starts from the registration of the political party, registration of the voters, collection of voters card, identification of polling stations, conduct of elections, counting of elections, collation of results, and declaration of the winners after these electoral activities. These embodiments are managed and control by the electoral power of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

The question is that: INEC is neither independent nor conducting free and fair elections in the federation of the country Vargas-Cullell (2012[54]).

According to the United Nations Development Programme (2009)[55], elections simply give voice to the active people in the participation as well establishment of the government. Electoral processes offer much after transition to democracy, predictable, open method for reconciliation political and socio-political disagreement through the selection of representatives or the definitive resolution of agenda before the community through referendum election. Thus, when elections are credibly conducted and managed, they accord the government with legitimacy acquired by the consent of the active people, improving the capacity of the state to ensure community representation through legitimate authority under the rule of law, and to improve levels of democratic development through effective governance. Credible elections create legitimate governments that enjoy popular support for programmes and policies of the state United Nations Development Programme (2009)[56].

Conclusion

The significance and prospects of democratisation both are fundamentally attribute of democracy. This is because the old and recent democracies are crystallised on the globalisation networks which made it more universally principles on the state-building and state-formation, particularly for the developing countries that are federally divided. There is no universally acceptable definition of democratisation because it is obviously nebulous and loosely used with regards to scholar's perceptions. However, there are departing points and converging areas based on the pragmatic horizons of analysts and political practitioners viz: socio-economic, people, legitimacy, etc. Thus, improvement of the citizens cannot be over emphasised on the elite's common interest but to turn these primary interests into national interest through the public policy intervention as well as opinions of the mass consent.

[54]Vargas- Cullell, J. (2012). Democracy and Democratisation: O'Donnell's Critique of Procedures Legitimacy.*Draft Paper Subject to Change Buenos Aires.Journal of Latin American Studies,* 10(13): 19-37.
[55]United Nations Development Programme. (2009).Elections and Conflicts Prevention: A Guide to Analysis, Planning and Programming,pp. 101-128.
[56] Ibid, 65

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Democratisation in this era of Africa practice ideally relates with struggle for sustainability of democratic consolidation. The response of Nigeria in this practice translated to change of government as General Muhammed Buhari defeated the incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan in 2015 polls. For this fact, the 2015 Nigeria general elections represented a milestone in the country's democratic development. For the first time in Nigeria's history the main opposition candidate, General Muhammadu Buhari won the presidential elections defeating incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan who conceded defeat and congratulated Buhari on his victory.

Nigerian politics was organically associated with controversies and this became an aberration as well engendered from the elite who paraded the scene not only capturing power but to maintain it for patrimonial leverages. This evolution stemmed since the attainment of political independence of 1960 as obviously between 1999 and 2015 politics. This political culture sustained the environment with potential challenges which obstruct the process of democratisation.

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