



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

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**ELECTORAL FRAUD AND THE TRANSITION PROCESS IN EKITI
STATE, NIGERIA (2007- 2015)**

By

Olalekan Ismaila Adisa

Student No: 214583270

Submitted in Fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in Political Science, School of Social Sciences University of
KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, Durban.

Supervisor: Professor Suzanne Francis

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DECLARATION

I, **Olalekan Ismaila Adisa**, declare that:

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to the glory of God Almighty, the beginning and the end. It is also dedicated to the memory of my late parents, Alhaja Aminat and Pa T. A. Adisa, who labored to give me the foundation leading to this academic height, and to my dear wife, Olushola, and kids, Olatomiowa, Teniola and Toluwanimi who had to cope with the realities of my absence throughout this programme.

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ABSTRACT

The conduct of elections has, in modern times, been debated. This is particularly so as it concerns the question of the credibility of the results and fairness of the process. Many African elections have been criticized due to non-adherence to democratic tenets and procedures. It has however been observed that the intermittent truncation of the democratic process in Nigeria between 1960 and 1999 was as a result of the inability of the political class to manage democratic transition effectively. It is in this context, and as a scholarly contribution of the third wave (Huntington, 1993), that this thesis explored the impacts of electoral fraud in the transition process in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

The study explores the country's challenges of transitioning from one democratic administration to another by using the Democratic Elite Theory and the Differential Association Theory as the explanatory theoretical framework. The study examined the role of political elites who use their wealth and influence to dictate political decisions and policies, and the transmission of criminal behaviors from one generation to the other as the major predisposing conditions for electoral fraud in the study area. While the former typified the Democratic Elite Theory, the latter was adopted as a corollary of the Differential Association Theory.

The study adopted a mixed method research framework that combined interpretivism research philosophy, inductive research approach and both the descriptive and survey research designs. Analytical methods employed were both qualitative and quantitative. Findings showed that political elites and the executive arm of government, particularly the incumbent governments, exerted great influence on electoral outcomes in the study area through their promotion and support for electoral fraud and their stance of winning elections at any cost. Further, the study showed that the prevailing level of poverty in the study area led to a cultural reorientation that placed premium of financial inducement and 'stomach infrastructure'. The perception of political stakeholders in the State on electoral fraud and democratic transition was also examined and recommendations to restore the sanctity of the electoral process and stabilize democracy in the study area, and Nigeria at large, were suggested.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACN:	Action Congress of Nigeria
AD:	Alliance for Democracy
AFRC:	Armed Forces Ruling Council
AG:	Action Group
ANPP:	All Nigeria Peoples' Party
APGA:	All Progressives Grand Alliance
APP:	All People's Party
CIDA:	Canadian Agency for International Development
CPC:	Congress for Progressive Change
EFCC:	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
ERC:	Electoral Reform Committee
EUEOM:	European Election Observation Mission
FEDECO:	Federal Electoral Commission
FESTAC:	Festival for Arts and Culture
GNPP:	Great Nigeria People's Party
HRW:	Human Rights Watch
IFES:	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
I-IDEA:	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
INEC:	Independent National Electoral Commission
LP:	Labour Party
MDF:	Midwest Democratic Front
MDF:	Movement for Democratic Front
NAP:	Nigeria Advance Party
NCNC:	National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons
NDC:	National Democratic Congress
NDI:	National Democratic Institute
NECON:	National Electoral Commission of Nigeria

NEPU:	Northern Elements Progressive Union
NGF:	Nigeria's Governors Forum
NGO:	Non- Governmental Organisation
NIPSS:	National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies
NJC:	National Judicial Council
NNA:	Nigerian National Alliance
NNDP:	Nigerian National Democratic Party
NPC:	Northern People's Congress
NPF:	Northern Peoples Forum
NPN:	National Party of Nigeria
NPP:	Nigerian Peoples Party
NRC:	National Republic Convention
NYM:	Nigerian Youth Movement
NYSC:	National Youth Service Corps
PDP:	People's Democratic Party
PRP:	Peoples' Redemption Party
REC:	Resident Electoral Commissioner
SDP:	Social Democratic Party
SMC:	Supreme Military Council
TMG:	Transition Monitoring Group
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UPGA:	United Progressive Grand Alliance
UPN:	United Party of Nigeria
WAI:	War Against Indiscipline
WANEP:	West African Network for Peace Building

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

This is a study about democracy in Nigeria, but speaks to bigger issues about democracy as an idea, ideal and practice. The word ‘democracy’ originated from the Greek word ‘*demokratia*’ which simply means ‘rule of the people’ (Noah, 2006). It is also often associated with the Greek words ‘*demos*’ which means people and ‘*kratos*’ for rule (Oche, 2004). A former President of the United States of America, Abraham Lincoln, described democracy as the government of the people, operated by the people and for the people (Waldt, 2014). Democracy has been examined from a classical context which gives an analogy of what was obtained in the small city of Athens in Greece and allowed all adult males to participate in making decisions in the interest of all inhabitants (Karim, 2014). Despite these old roots, modern democracy can be traced to the 19th century. It is a system of government in which representatives are chosen through elections. This type of vote-based system was first initiated in Britain and United States from 1860 to 1890 and emulated in other European nations and other parts of the world, including in Africa, in the 20th century.

This contemporary context of democracy is a function of the growing complexity of modern state where everybody can no longer come together for decision making process, and therefore requires an expression through people chosen by the majority to represent their interests (Banwo, 1997). Hence, Schumpeter (1950) contends that the democratic method is that 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. This emphasizes the procedural norms

through which people choose their leadership as a minimal conceptualization of democracy. Karl (1986) expands upon this and argues that a democracy must meet three procedures; competitive elections, broad adult citizenship, and guarantees of traditional civil liberties for all.

Oche (2004) contends that the vote-based system has three essential faculties in contemporary utilization. These are; (i) a type of government where the privilege to settle on political choice is practiced by all of the entire stakeholders, acting under strategies of larger part rule, often referred to as direct democracy; (ii) a type of government wherein the citizens practice similar right through agents; and (iii) a type of government, generally a delegate vote-based system, in which the opinion of the majority is practiced within a structure of established limitations. It is intended to ensure all participants' happiness regarding certain aggregated rights. Such rights include the right to speak freely and the choice of religion. It is commonly known as liberal or constitutional democracy. When such reference is given to the electorate, it is viewed as the capacity of the electorates to select openly, all the time, between contending individuals or groups for potential leaders who can guide and direct the affairs of the state (Aremu, 2004).

Studies on democracy suggest that existing democracies could be regarded as representative in nature because of their strong institutions while some are classified as delegated due to an important interaction effect (Guillermo, 1994). Agbaje (2012), cited in Karim (2014), stresses that democracy affords people the capacity to express and take control of their affairs through an avenue that ensures overall participation. Emphasis has been placed on the essential characteristics of a democratic society to include fundamental human rights among others

(Karim, 2014). Anifowose and Enemuoh (1999) emphasized on equality, sovereignty of the people and respect for human life, the rule of law and liberty of individuals.

Though there is a universal definition and description of democracy, there is no consensus on the theoretical perspectives of democracy. The two main perspectives are the minimalist and maximalist principles. While the minimalist principle tries to maintain the norms and traditions of democracy and centers on democracy, the maximalist centers on democratization. The minimalist focuses on transition while the maximalist focuses on consolidation. The minimalist principle believes in regular elections, multi-party political system, government succession by electoral procedures, and rule of law (Valenzuela, 1990). The maximalist orientation tries to expand democratic principles and culture and lays more emphasis on the pillars of democracy including:

- Social justice
- Human rights
- Popular participation
- Re-distribute social economic reforms
- Promotion and Protection of minority rights
- Civil-military relation

Different levels of compliance to democratic tenets have been recognized as a tool of measuring adherence to democratic processes. These are broadly classified as transitional democracy and democratic consolidation. The concept of transitional democracy can best be described as a process in which fragile democratic regimes or governments in the world go through the process

of solidification. It is called transitional democracy because the democratic revolution is still a recent phenomenon. Transitional democracy is characterized by authoritarian leadership and the concept originated from Latin America (Smith, 1991). It was noted that after the transition to democratic rule in Latin America, no democratic government survived long enough to transit to another democratic government without being interrupted by political uprisings.

The concept of transitional democracy believes that as democracy matures, authoritarian rulers lose their effective hold of power and their capacity to unilaterally determine the rules and procedures of governance. Transitional democracy describes the transition to a consolidated democracy. However, the concept of consolidated democracy is usually ascribed to sustain a democratic society which has gone through a long-term process of adopting the norms and a guaranteed principle of good governance (Young, 1993). It is regarded as such systems which guarantee a continuous replication of democratic exercises that make it stronger over time (Adebisi, 2012). Asiwaju (2000) characterizes democratic consolidation as the process of entrenching popularity-based culture and the standardization of majority rule by a nation that has effectively set out on a vote-based political system.

There is a notion that transition to consolidated democracy can be achieved through a transition from prebendalism to institutionalism where the rule of law functions with effectiveness and constrained behavior (Diamond, Linz and Lipse, 1989). While power assumes greater complexity and dynamics as consolidation progresses, this view contends that actors must be of great consciousness for the consolidation process not to lapse and to enhance the profits of

democracy. In addition, since consolidation is about sustaining the democratic polity, it also connotes establishing and upholding the ethics of democracy.

O'Donnell (1992) asserts that because party structures and party operations are also germane to democratic consolidation, the intricacies of party politics also diffuse into the electoral system. He further highlights certain elements of consolidated democracy to include the rule of law, civil liberty, party enlistment, democratic awareness, free and fair elections and institutionalized government. These elements ensure that democracy survives and that consolidating elections take place in a peaceful atmosphere. A regular trouble associated with consolidating elections is the upsurge in the quest for power among the political actors and increased rate of rivalry among party gladiators.

Gunther (1995) believes that the democratization process is made up of three phases namely: the fall of the authoritarian regime, consolidation, and enduring democracy. Based on the experience of Latin American Countries, O'Donnell (1992) on his part sees it as a two-way process. The first is the height of hostility, when the return to civilian government is accompanied by setbacks. The second stage is that in which hostility between important factions begins to subside, and the actors grow accustomed to the rules of democratic game (Monga, 2002). A germane indication of consolidated democracy is asset redistribution because there are little or lesser elite disunity when asset is redistributed favorably. Political and economic elites will have little to gain if they promote an overthrow of power in such atmosphere and therefore stability in the polity is more likely. Anticipation of asset redistribution usually creates upheavals but when widely distributed, the tension subsides. When the economy is highly vibrant, coups and

overthrows are less likely as political and economic elites consider their investments losses in cases of political unrest.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

More recently, democracy is viewed as a product of constant interaction between political elites and the masses. The notion that democracy is only the government of the people is no longer empirical, rather it now depicts a collective representation by a few within the entire population. While there is a consensus on the emergence of democracy and what constitute the attributes of a democratic system, the practice and level of adherence to its principles vary from one society to another (Obasi, 1988, karim, 2014). Some researchers have drawn a linkage between the challenges of democratic transitions and the contending roles of elites in the society (See O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Lopez-Pintor 1987; Malloy 1987 for instance). There have also been views that democracy is less stable in a presidential system of government as the system concentrates power in the hands of the few executives compared to the unitary system. Linz (1978) particularly argues that the practice raises the stakes of the political game. This implies that the power seekers would do whatever it takes to gain political powers, including perpetrating or promoting / supporting electoral fraud.

Electoral fraud is one of the major issues confronting the democratic process in Nigeria since independence. The country has experienced a lot of political instabilities, constitutional crises and electoral challenges which have made elections a volatile venture and political transition and democratic consolidation very difficult. Politicians in Nigeria have over the years, become more

desperate and daring in taking and retaining power and more intolerant of opposition, criticism and efforts at replacing them (Electoral Committee Report, 2008). Dudley notes that once a politician recognizes or knows ‘the profitability of having power, the party (and the individual member) naturally use the same governmental machinery to stay in power. The leadership becomes a self-recruiting oligarchy and no self-recruiting oligarchy has been known to tolerate opposition to itself’ (Dudley, 1965).

The Political Bureau Report, cited in Etannibi (2011), noted that politicians and parties rigged elections “in a most blatant fashion ... violence, corruption, arson, and brigandage were employed in the mad desire to win and retain power both in the regions and at the center” (Report of the Political Bureau, 1987:25). The EUEOM in its report on the 2007 election in Nigeria observed that the election fell short of required standards for democratic elections and could not be considered credible considering the levels of irregularities and incidence of violence. Agbor, Okoro and Adams (2011) corroborate this observation and report that elections have been characterized by widespread fraud and irregularities in Nigeria. They argue that such elections have been underscored by massive fraud, the intimidation of political opponents and controversy (2011).

Electoral fraud in Nigeria can be linked to the scramble for the control of state resources amongst the ruling elites. Onapajo (2014) buttresses this point by highlighting the overt presence of a powerful political class which gives undue advantage to preferred candidates during elections. These elites often use their resources to dictate the emergence of preferred choices who will execute policies in their favor. This act was further described by Adetula (2008) as a

consequence of the unregulated use of money in politics. This, he attributes to the incessant issues of bribery and vote buying during the electoral process to ensure the emergence of preferred candidates in the electoral contests. This perpetuates a clientele-based system in which politicians and elites only wish to maximize the returns from their investments in the candidates / political parties. Further, the intimidation of electoral officers and various other forms of vices have been reported, all geared towards ensuring electoral results are manipulated by various political actors (Odebode & Oni, 2010). Onapajo, Francis and Okeke-Uzodike (2015) describe the trend of electoral fraud by asserting that “it is popular for parties to bribe electoral officers for them to manipulate votes in their favour”.

With the 2007 elections in Nigeria widely acclaimed as being far from credible, including the intimidation of the Resident Electoral Officer in Ekiti State during the by-elections which saw her resigning her appointment midway into the collation of election results owing to several threats on her person to manipulate election results in favour of a candidate (Odebode & Oni, 2010), understanding the impacts of electoral fraud in democratic transition becomes imperative. According to Samuel P. Huntington’s position on democratic consolidation in his book ‘The Third Wave’ (Huntington, 1993), the concept of democratic governance can be properly assessed and evaluated after two successive administrations have successfully transitioned after the initial foundation election. Nigeria returned to democratic governance in 1999 and has conducted general elections every four years since then. Considering that the truncation of democratic governance in the country in republics prior to 1999 was hinged largely on the consequences of electoral frauds and contestations over transiting governments, the successful democratic

transitions in Ekiti State, twice after the largely flawed 2007 elections, in 2011 and 2015 require a deep empirical understanding in the context of the Huntington's hypothesis.

Ekiti State is one of the most economically deprived States in Nigeria. The bulk of the population are civil servants and farmers. In the federal system of government operated in Nigeria, States get the largest share of their monthly revenues from the Federal government. According to the Nigerian constitution, population sizes of States and the values of natural resources derived from the States determine each State's share of the monthly allocation from the federal purse. That Ekiti State ranks among the States with the least allocation points to its relatively lower population size, and more importantly, its paucity of natural and economic resources. This situation suggests the preponderance of a largely impoverished population whose only sources of income are the monthly salaries from the civil service and / or the sales of agricultural produce. In the former, the average monthly income is the equivalent of \$120 while in the latter, where more than 70% of the adults are employed (Abbas et al, 2018), it could be as low as \$28.

With the elites' interests in determining who governs, the unregulated use of money in Nigerian politics, and the widespread poverty, Ekiti presents a ground where the bribery of electoral officials, security agencies and other actors in the electoral process, vote buying, voters' inducement, intimidation of electoral officers and other features of electoral fraud can affect electoral outcomes. This study therefore evaluates the processes that characterized the Ekiti elections, the role of the government in power as at the election period, the role of the political

elites and the voting population in the elections and how, despite the general acclamation of being flawed, the 2007 elections in Ekiti have led to two successful transitions.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study aims to examine the phenomenon of electoral fraud in Ekiti State of Nigeria and its consequences for democratic transition in the State. To achieve this aim, the specific objectives are:

- To examine the role of political ideology in promoting electoral fraud in Ekiti State
- To examine how the cultural attributes of Ekiti people played a part in the State elections in the context of widespread poverty in the State
- To investigate the role of political elites in electoral fraud and the transition process in Ekiti State
- To assess the perceptions of political actors on the conduct of Ekiti State elections
- To examine the implications of electoral fraud in the transition process of Ekiti State since 2007
- To contribute to the broader theoretical literature on electoral fraud by providing insights from a specific case study of electoral fraud in a transitional process

1.4 Research Questions

- What is the role of political ideology in the promotion of electoral fraud in Ekiti State?
- How do the cultural attributes of Ekiti people played a part in the State elections in the context of widespread poverty in the State?

- What is the role of political elites in electoral fraud and the transition process in Ekiti State?
- What are the perceptions of political actors on the conduct of Ekiti State elections?
- What are the implications of electoral fraud in the transition process of Ekiti State since 2007?
- What lessons can be learned about electoral fraud in the transition processes in Ekiti State that will contribute further to our theoretical understanding of the subject?

1.5 Clarification of Key Concepts

The concepts examined in this section are cognate to the discussions in this dissertation and the understanding of the subjects of democracy, electoral fraud and political transition. The concepts are elections, electoral fraud, transition process, political parties, politicians, biometric registration, electioneering, political process, democracy, electoral act, political violence, and god fatherism.

1.5.1 Elections

Elections are the most important events and activities in a democratic system. Animashaun (2010) describes elections as “the heart of representative democracy” and a requirement to confer legitimacy on government. It is one of the features that distinguishes the democratic system from other forms of governance/ rule. It allows people to determine those they want to rule them for a specified period of time. Agbaje and Adejumobi (2006) contend that an election is not only for deciding who leads, but mostly it is for ensuring that those selected to lead remain truly accountable to the people. When those in power fail to deliver as expected, election serves a

medium of choosing among alternatives. Omonijo (2007) argues that an election is the process of selecting public officers and delegating responsibilities to serve as representatives, relaying the opinions, requests and grievances of the people over a specified time frame. Elections can therefore be described as a procedure that allows members of a society to select officials that will represent and serve as agents for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and management of divergent interests. An election creates an avenue for the people to transfer their sovereignty to their preferred candidates to govern the state on their behalf.

1.5.2 Electoral Fraud

This refers to the activities of manipulation of the electoral process through various forms. This can be done before, during and after the elections (Ibrahim, 2006; Onapajo and Uzodike, 2015). It depicts a deliberate attempt to influence and characterise an electoral process with irregularities which undermines the credibility of the process (Fafchamps and Vicente, 2012). It therefore explains a situation of gaining electoral victory through an unfair and manipulated process which does not represent the overall decision of the electorate. Electoral fraud comprises immoral, deceitful, and illegal behaviours that undermine the electoral process and leads to questions about the legitimacy of government.

1.5.3 Transition Process

A transition process is a movement from one regime type to another in a process that reflects democratic tenets. Huntington (1991) maintains that democratic transition processes include the capacity and will to promote democratization and to sustain it. The process of democratization is the most universally accepted types of government today according to Dahl (1998). He

emphasizes that its competitors have either disappeared or comparatively less desirable. Dahl (1998) further states that the application of the essential principles in the process of democratization will lead to democratic consolidation. Democratic consolidation in the view of Fernandez (2006) combines the knowledge of the workings of a system; and the formal and informal acceptance of the populace of the institutional and political rules and practices.

1.5.4 Political Parties

Ogundiya and Baba (2007) describe political parties as an association of people who usually come together to contest elections having a common view on how to eventually govern when they have political power. The political parties through the control of government also seek governmental and sub governmental appointments and serve as a machinery towards policy influence (Storm, 2016). Therefore, they provide platforms through which nominated candidates can be presented for elective positions and serve to represent the interest of the larger society. Political parties are often distinguished by ideologies even though their emergence could be historical, reactionary or evolutionary (Walle and Butler, 1999).

1.5.5 Politicians

Politicians operate in a democratic arrangement by targeting the electorate based on their perception of what is required by them. It is presented in the form of policy packages that seek to benefit them (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007). The needs and aspirations of the populace are usually presented in the form of manifestos by the politicians who pledge to implement when elected into office. The changing role of governance have also led to debates in liberal democracies as meta governing politician is faced with new dynamics (Sorenson, 2006).

1.5.6 Biometric Registration

This refers to a technological process whereby a sensor acquires human unique identities which can be associated with individuals and particular users (Yun, 1996). Biometric registration is the process of using fingerprints as a method of identifying voters during elections in order to guarantee credibility by avoiding multiple voting and registration (Alebiosu, 2015).

1.5.7 Electioneering

This is the sum of activities by politicians to canvas and win votes for their candidates or political parties. This involves every activity used by the incumbent, and the opposition party to wrestle power. Okoye (1996) describes electioneering as the active process of taking part in a process with the goal of being elected into office. It is a push to convince or discourage imminent voters in trying to increase factional advantage in the electoral process (Bassey, 2013).

1.5.8 Electoral Process

This refers to the system implemented in the selection of persons for political offices. An electoral process must be synonymous to democratic principles as it is the pivot of consolidated democracy. It involves delineating electoral constituencies, registration of political parties, registration of eligible voters, conducts supervision, declaration of results, and the judiciary (Nwabueze and Chukwu 2005). Election and electoral process serve as a veritable tool for civic education and contribute to peace or they can be catalysts of conflicts (UNDP, 2009). A successful electoral process is often linked with democratic sustainability and consolidation (Fatai and Adisa, 2017).

1.5.9 Democracy

Democracy is a political method by which politicians are elected through competitive vote (John and Paul, 2009). Democracy can also be viewed as an arrangement whereby options among competing individuals exists in the society;

- i. Those who rule (minority),
- ii. Those that are ruled (majority).

Femia (2001) contends that the certainty of individual rule makes democracy a dream and those individuals can be responsible to the society. Mosca and Michels (1939) opine that vote based systems can never be more than rivalries between elites who significantly limit voters' decisions and grossly control voters' interests. Democracy however provides a platform for a consistent and periodic test of popularity which is determined by the majority of eligible adults.

1.5.10 Electoral Act

This is a function of the lawmaking body made under the authority of the constitution. It contains the tenets of constitutional provisions about the elections of a country. It stipulates the processes, procedures, and activities to be carried out to initiate a change of government. A badly structured Electoral Act can serve as the beginning of fraud in the electoral process as it stipulates the guidelines with which to administer political decisions. Errors of omission, or errors of commission could promote violence during elections.

1.5.11 Political Violence

Violence is a human activity planned and calculated to express and react to certain societal conditions. Violence can be physical or psychological and both are calculated to inflict discomfort to the other party. Iyayi (2003) classifies physical violence to include injury, harm, assassination, arson, destruction of lives and properties but describes psychological violence as the other distinctive dimension of violence. Psychological violence according to him includes injustice, intimidation, blackmail, wrongful acts, threats of physical injury, unpopular policies, extravagant lifestyle designed to exploit the people. Mental trauma hurts more than physical violence. Snyder (200) identifies violence as a function of nation-building or reaction to issues of manipulations.

Political violence at the pre-election stage usually appears in the form of clash between opponents, assassinating political enemies, destroying electoral materials, attacking campaign rallies, campaign trains, vicious propaganda, inflammatory speeches, and threats of violence. During elections, the most common act of violence is the grabbing of ballot boxes from polling units, thugs intimidating opponents, and murder of electoral officers. Post electoral violence involves all forms of physical, mental, and emotional disturbances that follow an election. It may include protest, destruction of properties, lies, and violent rhetoric (Burchard, 2015).

1.5.12 God-Fatherism

Godfathers are regarded as political party bosses who have interpersonal relationships with party candidates of their choice in order to improve their bargaining power. They exist in the political arena to benefit financially and use their position as the incumbent's godfather to exert influence (See Hoffman, 291). Olarinmoye (2008) classifies a godfather as having the capacity to enforce

voter compliance based on an understanding of the voting pattern for his economic benefit. These figures and their influence build on the theories used as they may be both political elites and suggest the theoretical aspects of differential association theory as they help transmit political culture that supports corrupt behaviour discussed below under theoretical framework.

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is presented in eight chapters based on the themes addressed. In the first chapter, I presented the background to the study with a discussion of democracy. I traced the evolution of the word ‘democracy’ and highlighted its basic features. I further discussed its contemporary meaning and the role of elections in modern democracy. The chapter also contained the statement of research problem and a discussion of key concepts germane to the understanding of the subject of electoral fraud and democratic transition. The research aim and objectives are also included in the introductory chapter.

The second chapter contains a review of relevant literature and a discussion of the theoretical framework for the study. I employed the elite and the differential association theories for the theoretical framework. Elite Theory was succinctly analyzed to reflect the behavior of the elites in the power game of the society. Elite Theory points to the overbearing influence of the elites while the Differential Association Theory gives an analogy of the process of transmitting criminal behavior in the society. Differential Association Theory also lays credence to the role of peer influence, which ultimately becomes and forms a pattern of negative behavior in the society. The third chapter focused on the research methodology employed for the study.

In chapter four, I introduced the evolution of democratic governance in Nigeria and also discussed the main features of the democratic experience in Nigeria since independence in 1960 that are relevant to the understanding of electoral frauds in the Nigerian political landscape. The latter formed the fulcrum around which discussions in chapter five centered.

The fifth chapter also contained an analysis of the types, causes, patterns and impact of electoral fraud in Nigeria. To achieve this, the chapter reviews the literature on the nature of electoral fraud and violence in Nigeria. The effects of electoral fraud and violence on the transition process in Nigeria are also examined.

Chapter six dwelled the political history of Ekiti State. This chapter then answers the bulk of the research questions by focusing discussions and literature on political violence and elections on Ekiti itself.

Chapter seven focuses on the perception of political stakeholders in Ekiti on elections, electoral fraud and the transition of government in the State. The chapter discusses the findings from the field research and adds empirical evidence to theoretical claims and bolsters findings and assisted in creating my recommendations in the final chapter.

The last chapter, eight, summarizes the study and its key findings, and made appropriate recommendations on the subject of electoral fraud and democratic transition in Ekiti State and Nigeria in general. Here I summarise my theoretical contribution as it suggests both why corrupt

behavior is perpetuated and why those involved continue it. I then also suggest how some of these problems may be ameliorated.

1.7 Limitations

Insufficient fund is majorly an impeding factor in the research process. The same impedance affected this study. The data collection phase involved a lot of financial commitment from the process of recruiting research assistants, traveling from one location to another, and data transcription and interpretation. Further, access to some key participants in the study was a limitation. Some of the personalities selected to be interviewed proved difficult to access. The researcher had to reschedule appointments severally before some of them could be reached while meeting others did not materialize due to their inability to turn up each time. In all however, the limitations were not substantial enough to affect the quality, integrity and outcomes of this study. I was ultimately able to interview and survey enough of my participants to obtain meaningful data for the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on a review of relevant literature on electoral fraud, especially the Nigerian situation, and a discussion of the theoretical framework employed for the study. In the latter sense, this study attempts a theoretical integration of the Democratic Elite Theory and the Differential Association Theory to shed light on the phenomenon of electoral fraud in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The combination of the two theoretical models was necessary to complement, rather than contradict, each other in the explanation of a wide array of variables that engender electoral fraud in the Nigerian society.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1. Electoral Fraud

The concept of credible elections, and the conditions required to classify one as such, are widely debatable. While scholars have contributed to various issues relating to the conduct of elections universally, it has been generally agreed that for elections and electoral process to be considered fair, they must have some basic structures, rules and provide avenues for settlement of disputed outcomes (Oddih, 2007). Inokoba and Kumokor (2011), while addressing the importance of elections, conclude that elections can be said to be the only vehicle through which democratic societies can change or elect their leaders. Dowse and Hughes (1983) see elections as a process

which facilitates the conferment of authority upon a group of individuals governed by rules and regulation to undertake responsibilities on behalf of the whole population.

Elections bring order to a democratic system and create a system for managing elite rivalry that could otherwise lead to political instability. While election serves as a medium of transition, it however does not guarantee sustainable democratic transitions. Schedler (2002) identifies a process of electoral authoritarianism which can also be used to perpetuate a government in power. It can be used to disguise a transition that transcends authoritarian rule where the individuals have no meaningful option (Adejumobi, 2000). In this case, elections may not lead to a consolidated democracy, but there can be no democracy without regular and periodic elections. The plausibility of elections yielding a successful transfer of power depends on an impartial administration of elections (Mozaffar and Scheduler 2002). The people's preference in choosing their leaders is necessary to sustain democracy. The electoral system is the foundation of national politics of any nation and also plays a vital role in the peaceful co-existence and general development of the society (Nnaa, 1985). However, electoral fraud undermines this important function in many new democracies, often at the hands of firmly networked groups of political elites.

Electoral fraud can be described as any deceitful process which does not conform with generally accepted standards aimed at obtaining desired outcomes against the outlined processes and procedures (Bariledum, 2013). Succinctly, electoral fraud consists of two components; election and fraud. The former indicates a procedure of choosing representatives or leaders while the latter is a criminal act or false way of getting things done which is more of an impropriety. Electoral fraud then means a fraudulent method of choosing representatives, political leaders, and government executives. It involves activities of manipulation of the electoral process

through various forms which can be done before, during and after the elections (Ibrahim, 2006; Onapajo and Okeke-Uzodike, 2015). It depicts a deliberate attempt to influence and characterise an electoral process with massive irregularities which do not conform to expected standards and cannot be regarded as credible (Fafchamps and Vicente, 2012). From the Marxian political economy approach, electoral fraud is a function of the country's operation of a liberal economy which serves as the implant for class distinction, poverty and inequality. Economic giants are comfortable when political decisions favour them, therefore capitalism is sustained by politics (Okolie, 2009).

Edoh (2003) contends that incidents of violence, stuffing of ballot boxes, obstruction and intimidation of opponents were reported all over during the British-supervised 1959 elections in Nigeria. However, the adoption of rigging as an instrument of electoral advantage became a noticeable venture during the 1961 regional elections, and then developed towards a gradual integration as a permanent feature (Edoh, 2003). The first sight of electoral violence in the independent Nigeria was in 1966 when United Progressive Ground Alliance (UPGA) violently prevented Nigeria National Alliance (NNA) from making nominations to vie for positions in its domains (Mackintosh, 1966). The famous "operation wetie" in the southwestern region in 1965 started as a protest to widespread rigging (Olaoye, cited by Omotoso, 2007). In the 1979 and 1983 elections, the electoral commission (FEDECO) was also accused of aiding and abetting electoral fraud (Onafagoro, 1981; Kurfi, 1983).

During the electioneering in 1983, violence was elevated to an unbelievable level. It was such that the state supported hooligans, arsonists and professional killers whom greatly terrorized rivals and voters (Abe, 2008). The aborted third republic, according to Olaoye (2004), was described and adjudged by over 3000 independent, local and foreign observers to be the fairest

and the best in Nigeria's political history. The annulment of the election midway also led to debates on the intention of the ruling military government. The subsequent elections in the fourth republic have been criticized as much more indicative of electoral fraud being perpetrated in Nigerian Elections. The Nigeria's Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) observed those polls and concluded that "it is doubtful whether [...the] elections can only be considered to be reflective of the will of the people" (quoted in HWR, 2004: 11). In the report of the European Union Electoral Observation Mission (EUEOM), the 2007 elections fell 'far short of basic regulation and international standards for democratic elections' (The Guardian, April 30, 2007).

In spite of the provision of sub-section 1 of section 144 of the 2006 electoral laws, that a candidate on the INEC list can only be removed by a judicial pronouncement, the 2007 elections witnessed the removal and installment of many candidates. This rule was ignored by both the political parties and the electoral umpire. Over-voting has been a regular incident in the Nigerian elections. However, the law states that where the votes in any constituency are more than the number of registered voters, the votes in that constituency will be cancelled. The electoral umpire does not comply with this law as over-voting has been the norm in several elections conducted in Nigeria (EUEOM, 2003).

In many ways election in Nigeria was classified as been akin to war (Olaniyan and Amao, 2015). In an extremely close election, a little amount of fraud can affect election result, it can also reduce voters' confidence. Electoral fraud is an extremely difficult phenomenon and can be described as an advanced strategy which includes all manners of manipulation (Adejumobi, 2006; Onapajo, 2014). Electoral fraud in Nigeria can be ascribed to the weakness of the pillars of democracy which is evident in the attacks on all institutions facilitating the electoral process (Jega, 2012).

The legitimacy crisis is a product of electoral fraud and could hinder acceptability in the process. The quality of election plays a major role in its categorization as legitimate or “flawed elections” (Electoral Integrity Project, 2012). Ebirim (2013) sees electoral malpractices as a process by which the rule and regulations that govern the conduct of election are manipulated to favor specific interests. Bamisaye & Awofeso (2011) define electoral malpractices as the reflection of the determination of politicians, political actors, and political parties to capture power by all means and at all cost. Election rigging, according to Nwabueze (2005 cited in Ibrahim, 2009), alludes to electoral influences which are obvious illegalities perpetrated with a corrupt, deceitful, or sinister intention to impact a political decision in favor of a competitor.

Critical to literature review is the concept of democracy. Schumpeter (1942) sees democracy as the act of filling governmental offices by elections. It is believed that democracy is a regime in which leaders are selected through free and contested elections. From the forgoing, it has therefore become impossible to imagine democracy without elections (Nnadozie, 2007). The scholarly submissions above therefore lay credence to the role of elections in a democracy and transition. Successful democratic transitions depend on economic evolution, cultural change, and the rise of civil society (Przeworski and Limongi 1996). Huntington (1991) argues that consolidation is the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability. It can be defined as the implementation, cultivation, and sustaining democracy and her social manifestations. Therefore, consolidation of democracy is about fulfillment of the goals and consistent adherence to democratic practice.

The term democracy comes from the term *kratia* meaning rule, and *demo* meaning by the people (Oche, 2004). It has been equally summarized that democracy means responsibility as well as rights. Responsibility to respect diversity, to fight inequality, and to show solidarity (Ozor, 2010). Democracy is socially responsible and a collective self-determinant for the good of the society. Therefore, international experts also posit that democracy should have benefits contingent upon assessment of democratic conditions (Noah, 2006). The concept of representative democracy has been described as a process whereby individuals serve the overall interest of the people (Houkpe and Gueye, 2010). This has led to questions in other societies where the people are not directly involved in deciding their leaders. Democracy as a system allows for selection among alternatives which therefore afford the electorates the opportunity to make choices on who gets their vote as convinced through manifestoes or political affiliations (Eya, 2003).

Differing interests emerged in the Nigerian body politics in 1938 when the group led by Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe, and another group led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo sponsored different candidates to the imperialist legislative house (Okoye, 1991). The bitterness that resulted from this split led to the fall of the democratic movement known as the Nigeria Youth Movement (NYM) and led to the formation of different political parties such as the NCNC, AG, and NPC (Nwanegbo, 1995). This was the beginning of unhealthy competition among the Nationalists.

After independence, the 1963 population census was alleged to have been manipulated to favour the Northern region (Ezeah, Iyanda, Nwangwu, 2013). The same population count was used for the 1964 general elections and the subsequent disaffection over the numerical dominance of northern elected representatives and their handling of governance led to the first military coup by

Major Kaduna Nzeogwu in 1966. According to Esua E.E, the then head of Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) cited by Nnaa (1985), in the elections, electoral fraudsters and party agents did not only tamper with ballot boxes, they went to FEDECO offices and radio stations to announce fake results to the electorate.

In the Second Republic, there were reports of registration fraud and insufficient materials in areas where the opposition was perceived to have a strong base. The appointment of FEDECO Chairman, Justice Onome Ovie-Whiskey was believed to be an act of political favour rather than merit. The manipulation of voters list such that the number of registered voters exceeded the total population, as the case with old Rivers State, (Daily times, Saturday 5th November, 1983), was another sore point in the dimensions to electoral fraud in the 1979 elections. In the Third Republic, cases of electoral fraud were not so pronounced as much as money politics. M.K.O Abiola's victory at the presidential poll in 1993 was captioned by Tell Magazine (April 12, 1993) as the "Triumph of Money". Mohammed (2008) further argues that the conduct of the highly monetized June 12, 1993 election made it difficult to declare it as the most free and just election in Nigeria. Nonetheless, the fourth republic has witnessed a very high level of electoral manipulations (Jinadu, 1997). There have been reported cases of incumbency factors in the determination of voting choice and electoral victory as against voters' choice (Onwuzuligbo, 2015). The process has entrenched and promoted the winner takes all syndromes.

2.2.2. Election Management

A stable political system guarantees the conduct of regular elections and the ability to sustain effective transition process becomes its major characteristics. However, considering the numerous challenges associated with the conduct of elections in many countries and the question

of credibility; the attitude of various stakeholders constitutes a test of integrity of the process and the procedures (Adisa and Asuelime, 2020). The fact that even developed democracies have had challenges occasioned by unconventional and various forms of manipulations of the electoral process is a great pointer to the dynamics of problems associated with the conduct of elections globally. While such instances have undermined the integrity of elections in advanced democracies, the case of the developing nations has been even more critical (Ajayi, 2007). The level of misconduct and its aftermath has been a major impediment to peace and development in many third world countries (Animashaun, 2010).

The growing concern over what constitute the electoral process in Nigeria is often associated with several factors when analysing its deficiencies. While the political elites constitute a group of bourgeoisie who depend on the state resources for survival; The struggle for power and resources of the state for the purpose of creating personal wealth and influence has over the years been associated with the political class (Ikpe, 2009). Therefore, the desire to use all avenues to sustain and maintain the trend is usually pursued through a form of clientele relationship. This development has created a situation whereby purposeful leadership is often eroded and sacrificed at the detriment of the general populace.

Another area of great concern is the process and methods of financing elections which has also constitute a major challenge to the electoral process. The arbitrary use of money without control portends a great danger to the democratic sustainability and encourages corruption in the system (Animashaun, 2010). While guidelines are designed to regulate political funding and finance, it also helps in combating corruption towards ensuring financial transparency in the political system (Ojo, 2004). However, those provisions in Nigeria are either flouted or completely ignored as events leading to elections witnessed the emergence of corporate sponsorships which

is a breach of section 38(2) of the Companies and Allied Matters Act; and in some cases, amounts in excess of the regulations were expended against the provisions of the electoral Act 2010 (as amended). The failure to ensure unhindered access to the disclosure of sources of funds, adherence and proper monitoring of activities have been a major impediment to effective compliance to election funding regulations.

Poverty has been identified as a major factor which has constituted a major challenge to effective electoral management in Nigeria. According to the 2019 poverty head count rate in Nigeria, 40.1 percent of the population lived in poverty which translated to the numbers whose gross income is less than approximately 134 thousand naira (equivalent of \$361) annually (Statista, 2020). The population has also been on the increase from just about 17 million in 1980 to over 200 million within four decades (Asuelime and Adekoye, 2015). It is therefore obvious that population growth has not translated to equivalent opportunities for the people. Unemployment and poverty have become dominant and critical issues ravaging most inhabitants and economic situation controls choice of candidates in elections as money exchanges for votes (Ake, 1996). This is a clear violation of the principles of liberal democracy as conceived and does not guarantee a “level playing field” for all candidates (Uzodike and Onapajo, 2019). This direct consequence of poverty on the electoral process according to Ake

In developed countries, civil society organisations play prominent roles in shaping the political space. However, in Nigeria there seems to have been a decline in activities since return to civil rule compared to their operations under the military regimes. Ogaba maintained and submits that “...while having played a central role in the process leading to the transition, the aftermath of the transition has witnessed the retreat of civil society organizations into an apparent lethargy” (2003:19).

The civil society organizations' role in sustaining the democratic system and ensuring they serve as a check has diminished. Larry Diamond offers a broad critical assessment of the virtue of civil society in the context of democratic transition and consolidation. He analysed the role of the civil society in prevention of misuse of state power, averting the extension of power by autocratic regimes, advancement of all-inclusive citizen participation and scrutinizing of the state by the public as very important in the process of consolidating democracy. He asserts that "a vibrant civil society is probably more essential for consolidating and maintaining democracy than for initiating it" (Diamond, 1994:7). However, the people have lost their trust in the political system, they have developed nonchalant attitude and general apathy towards government policies resulting in a weak civil society (Okolo, 2016).

Arguments have also been advanced for the adoption of technology in the electoral process in order to address the various shortcomings and challenges of election management in Nigeria. While the successes recorded by such ventures in other democratic societies makes it desirable, there are also fears relating to the application and capacity of the Independent National Electoral Commission (Onapajo, 2015). Biometric technology as a function of technology seeks to authenticate voter's unique features and characteristics through a "coordinated computer system (Anderson, 2016))." As a mechanism for advancing electoral integrity, it is designed to check several illicit activities ravaging the electoral system (Fatai and Adisa, 2017). Though, some scholars argued and stressed the possibility of manipulation of data through technology, the fact that it is very important in socio-political and administrative process cannot be ignored.

Security is another major challenge to the electoral system in Nigeria. The system is often characterized by a winner takes all syndrome, which results in the use of violence and all forms of actions to outsmart the opposition (Jega, 2013). While security personnel are constitutionally

empowered to protect lives and properties, there have been questions of professionalism and neutrality in the discharge of responsibilities during the exercise (Mgba, 2017). It is even more worrisome when cult groups have been engaged by politicians; and in some cases, security have been compromised to favor certain preferred candidates. (Ajayi 2006). These factors among others undermine credibility and fairness of the electoral system.

The electoral system in Nigerian can be situated within the arguments of Larry Diamond who posits that nature and character of the state will continues to shape electoral outcomes and therefore play a prominent role in shaping the political culture of the people.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

2.3.1. Democratic Elite Theory

The democratic elite theory can be viewed through the classical form of theorizing by Pareto and Mosca (1935), and the more radical form associated with C. Wright Mills (1956). Apart from the roles of elites, the classical form also analyzed the role of power and the emergence of oligarchic tendencies in states classified as democratic (Higley, 2008). Kifordu (2011) observes that theoretical perspectives on political elites focus on the dispersion of power within the elites, as well as the concentration, cohesiveness and inclusiveness that exist in the society. It adds that elite theory holds that a representative democracy is not really based on the will of the people, but identified the existence of a relatively small cohesive group that makes almost all the important decisions.

Dahl (1971) claims that democracy begins to emerge when a relatively small circle decides to accept the existence of diversity and wage their conflict through democratic procedures. This often leads to an “institutional arrangement” which requires means of competitive struggle for people’s vote” (Bottomore, 2006). The struggle therefore leads to vote buying or clientelism

which fractionalizes the political power of the poor in the society. The unity of elites in democratic transitions can however determine if a democracy will be consolidated or backslide. A unified elite can produce a more stable democracy which may lead to a modern democracy such as the U.S, and Great Britain. Numerous researchers have indicated the unity and solidarity of national elites as one of the most significant of the system structures that serve as determinants of regime forms (e.g., Pareto 1935; Mosca 1939; Aron 1950; Castles 1974; Putnam 1976; Huntington 1984). However, some substantial socio-cultural factors have been found to override elite theory, they include regional, ethnic, cultural, religious biases.

There are three basic types of national elites and they are (1) the "pluralistic" or "consensually unified" type that exists in most western social orders today and that existed in a few of them in earlier times; (2) the "totalitarian" or "ideologically unified" type in nation-states organized along communist, fascist, or theocratic lines and; (3) the "divided" or "dis-unified" elite of many past and contemporary nation-states (Aron, 1950; Dahrendorf, 1967; Putnam, 1976; Welsh 1979; Burton and Higley 1987). Elite theory is based on the belief that every society has a ruling minority, a group that is in control of power. Elites are involved in the blockage and accessibility of power. They also find ways to get involved in the ruling game through many mechanisms of elite recruitment. The interactions between elite's behaviors, activities, transitions, and the state outcomes form the basis of elite theory. Elite theory is deeply rooted in classical sociology of Weber (Pareto, 1935 and Mosca, 1939).

Elite theory is grounded in classical elite theory and these theorists are considered to be the founding fathers of elite theory. Elite theory is based on the assumption that elite behavior and actions have a causal effect on society and state relationships. Elite theory has been regarded in many quarters as a social class theory, an opposing ideology to the Marxist school of thought and

an opposing ideology to the communist and socialist schools of thought (Codato and Perissinotto, 2009). Classical elite theory believes in the inevitability of elite rule, and they use this premise to counter the Marxist and socialist view of liberalism and a classless state respectively. It believes the society is ruled by the elite. The majority is ruled by a class group comprising of a minority. The principle of elite dissemination holds that elites exchange power either peacefully or through violent competition. Pareto (1935) sees this as the law of elite circulation.

A unique feature of the theory is the emergence of power from diverse sources, which means there are dissimilar independent groups of individuals. These are referred to as elite sectors and they do not share the same amount of power (Olson & Carrol 1992). Elites emerge from different organizations and movements. There can be political elites and business elites (Boschi & Diniz, 2004), military elites (Sanowitz, 1964), media elites (Davies, 2003) state administrative elites (Putnam 1977) and religious elites (Olson & Carrol, 1992).

2.3.1.1. Elite Theory (Gaetano Mosca, 1858)

Mosca emphasized ways in which minorities and oligarchs put together strong organized systems, and strategies that outperformed the majority. Mosca believes political elites have certain qualities such as royalties that includes material, intellectual, or moral superiority above those they govern. In visible societies, elites are those that are successfully using the instrument of political supremacy which includes political rule, force, and persuasion. Moreover, they also, for example, acquired through riches and family association.

Consensual elites are people with authority and influence to assume distinct positions on community affairs. They easily transcend their divergent ideologies into conflict. In elite association, power is distributed in manners that all or most members can benefit through political decisions and resources that can make them abort their plans to seize governmental power by force. Ideologically united elites emerge in transitions and revolutionary periods and they have specific ideology or inclination to supplant previously existing elites (Russia 1917-1921, Italy 1922-1925, Germany 1933-1934, North Korea 1946- 1948, China after 1949, Cuba 1959-1961, Iran 1979-1981). Elite settlement involves warring elite camps sheathing their swords, abolishing major disputes, and establishing basis for trust (Burton and Higley, 1998). The first instance of elite settlement occurred in England's Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689. Due to colonial dependency and agitations, consensually united elites also conspired towards the independence of the state to abolish colonialism.

Nigerian society can be divided into an upper class, and the lower class. People in the upper-class control and dominate the political system. According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, "Elites are selected groups that are superior in terms of ability and qualities to the remaining members of a group or society". They are a group of persons exercising major share of authority or influence within a larger group or society. According to Menges (1968), the "elite is a descriptive term designating those who hold high positions in a society". Societies have several special elites depending on many values widely cherished by the society. People that have special knowledge, authority, and wealth are also regarded as elite. These elites are those who are most skilled at ruling, forcing and persuading citizens through the system of political

rule. They also have the capacity to save, invest, and generate technology, creativity, knowledge, wealth, and systems above the average population.

Kifordu (2001) describes elite circulation as the recurrence of elite members drawn from the same and similar social groups. He argues that political positions and influence are shared within the national political executives and they take advantage of all changing political contexts. He also identifies dynamics such as a change of regime and increased state resources to protect their personal interest. Generally, circulation of the elite in a political system is such that new people from more extensive social orders are accepted into government offices to deal with policy issues (Zuckerman, 1977). Keller (1963) contends that elite circulation involves a positional change whereby people either gain access or lose their hold on elite positions. Political elites are those that have decision making powers in the state as a result of their statutory or institutional positions or those who have influence on policy decisions due to their status in a ruling coalition (Bariledum, 2013). Political elites largely influence governance through enabling or inhibiting the achievement of political consensus. Andres and Diego (2010) affirm that elites are germane to social stability, property right, organized private sector investment, and economic development.

Economic elites or bureaucratic elites are individuals, private companies, and / or multi-nationals, whose ability to participate in policy making and implementation depends mainly on their technical and professional credentials (Barijedum 2013). A critic of the process is the creation of avenues to divert state resources and gross misappropriation of government funds (Obiora, and Nwafor, 2014). It has been argued, however, that economic elites transfer

investment, technology, new products, and ideas across the world (Andres, and Deigo, 2010). The process has been termed elitist hegemonic project; its basic feature is to seek economic dominance by a combination of political and economic elites (Ojukwu and Shopeju 2010).

2.3.1.2. Elite Theory: A Critical Approach

Elite theory tries to explain the various power relations in a society. It posits that minorities consisting of members of the economic and political elites, and members of policy planning networks that hold the highest supreme power are independent of a state democratic election. It means that certain set of people directs the affairs of the society, and their children takeover and administer this power after them. This set of people directs the affairs of electioneering and determines who wins the election. They also play a great role in policy incubation, implementation, and sustenance. Elite theory believes that the political system is divided into two set of people referred to as the political entrepreneurs. These two groups are referred to as the elites, and the citizens (masses). These groups are called the apolitical clay. While the elites possess ideological interests, the masses are less aware of the political intricacies of governance.

According to Walker (1996), Joseph Schumpeter argued that “the democratic method is that 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”. To the elites, democracy is a procedural term for administration and policy implementation which also gives allowances for responsiveness to popular opinion. The core of elite theory is that active participation of elites in a typical democratic system is detrimental to a democratic process. This is because elite driven democracy will only consider the interests of the few, and the interests of the masses will be neglected as they are considered as average citizens. Elite theory believes that

activities of citizens in a democracy will essentially be passive. The basic component for the strength of the democratic order therefore rests on the competence of the stakeholders and their influence in the society.

Dahl (1973) posits that true democratic “legitimists” are the political leaders that have the right mindset of the way a system should operate. This power and leadership knowledge allow them to manipulate and influence the system in their favor. Elite circulation ensures they separate themselves from the larger members of the society and replace themselves within their society. This system makes it impossible or rather difficult for non-elite to be involved in active politics or government.

2.3.1.3. Laws of Elite Theory

Laws of elite theory can be expatiated in two major folds;

1. The Law of the small number

It states the inevitability of elite rule. The theory states that in socialism, communism, communalism, democracy is impossible to achieve because the society is elite driven. The theory states that elites can only be substituted by another set of elites. The majority is ruled by the minority.

2. Law of Elite Circulation (Pareto, 1935)

This theory is premised on the assumption that elites dominate power and also alternate power as a result of peaceful or violent competition. While different groups of elites compete for power which leads to regime overthrow, it rather ushers in new set of elites. He asserts that society is always governed by elites except for short period of time. To him, history of men is the history of the continuous replacement of certain elites as one ascends, another declines (Pareto 1968).

Elites are people that possess to a marked degree quality of intelligence, character, and capacity of any kind. Pareto classify social stratum into upper class and lower class. The upper class is made up of the elites while the lower class is made up of non-elites.

The elite stratum can be further divided into governing elite, non-governing elite and political elite that effectively exercise political power. Social class are not homogeneous, they are distinct, they defer from each other, especially where class circulation is rapid in modern democracies or society (Pareto 1968). New elites emerge and take the place of old ones frequently in what is referred to as the law of circulation of “Elites” by Pareto. In addition, elites or aristocrat do not stand the test of time as they live or take position in a particular time and often undergo rapid changes when elite’s member composition changes. There are instances when the descendants of elites do not have such qualities required and it gives opportunities for non- elites to move up the ladder. He identified two signs that show elites are declining:

1. They become softer, milder, humane, and less apt to defend its own power.
2. The loss of capacity and the greed for the goods of others.
3. They tend as much as possible to increase unlawful appropriations, they indulge in major usurpation of national resources (Pareto, 1968).

2.3.1.4. Mosca – Ruling Class Law

There are always two classes of people; a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The former contains a few numbers of people who possess all form of power and privileges. The latter consists of a large number of people subjected to the rule of the former and provides essential instrument for political organization (Mosca, 1939). There is always a leader of a political organization in a ruling class who is not necessarily visible and there is consistent pressure of the masses to the ruling class and her policies. A ruler or elite must be sensitive about the feelings of

the masses. Because elites have the ability to be organized and effective, they can overcome the threats to power from the majority.

According to Pareto, the ruling class tries to reproduce itself through domination of political and economic forces like power and wealth. They always make use of heredity - descendants of ruling class have a higher life chance with traits necessary to be a ruling class member (Mosca 1939). Mosca believes that all ruling classes have two classes of strata and cannot sustain power unless they are supported by the second stratum. The second stratum is larger than all other strata in number and in size and consists of all of the capacity of leadership. Mosca concludes that all political systems need the second stratum to survive (Mosca 1939). He further contends that members of the ruling class should be recruited from the dominant members or the majority in society to avoid an uprising. This rule also applies when there are considerable differences in the culture and customs of the ruling class and subjects (Mosca 1939). He identifies fragmentations in the society and affirms that it makes new groups to arise while recognizing revolution as another source of replacing the ruling class. Mosca concludes that the middle class have a responsive attitude to social change but that the level of civilization determines the character of the ruling class.

2.3.1.5 Iron Law of Oligarchy

This law sees elites' inevitability as a natural law in the early 20th century and elitism as anti-democratic because of the law of numbers. The notion is premised on the perception of the domination of the "elected over the electors" and "delegates over the delegators" (Michels, 1966). Michels opines that irrespective of ideological alignment, all types of organizations have oligarchic tendencies. Michels' major concern is how oligarchic tendencies can be explained in

socialized and democratic parties which they declared war against. He advances his argument on analyzing that bureaucracy, nature of human beings and leadership are major pressures for the thriving of oligarchical tendencies in organizations.

According to Michels, the masses accept the guidance of elites. In the opposite, oligarchs have a natural greed for power (Michels 1966). He asserts that leadership is a necessary phenomenon in every form of society and compatible with the most essential aspects of democracy. Leaders have personal qualities that make them successful as members of the ruling class. These qualities are: the force of will, knowledge, strength of conviction, self-sufficiency, goodness of heart and disinterestedness (Michels 1966). Furthermore, he believes leadership functions and organizational structures are symbiotic, and that they strategically rely on each other. They are tactical and technical necessities which result from the consolidation of every disciplined political aggregate (Michels 1966). He submits that bureaucracy can only succeed under an oligarchic structure and any attempt to destroy this state oligarchy brings down a number of smaller oligarchies in the society but does not eliminate them (Michels 1966).

2.3.1.6. Domination Law

Max Weber was considered to be the founding father of elite theory because of his domination theory. Weber affirms that social classes are not social actors and serve as the foundation of elite theory today. Elites can also be characterized as actors controlling assets, occupying key positions and relating through power systems (Yamokoskiys and Dubrow, 2008). Weber contends that power is the capability to implement one's will, even against the will of others. Power can however be achieved through material or symbolic resources. Elite theory agrees that elite may originate from anyplace as long as they locate fundamental instruments to exercise

power. Higley & Burton (2006) posit that persons occupying top posts of powerful organizations and movements are capable of affecting political outcome, substantially and regularly.

2.3.1.7. Types of Elite Bargaining

- **Elite settlement:** This is very rare in the history of communities but it's a situation in which previously opposing or confronting elites choose to negotiate a new political order, recognizing each other as legitimate political actors (Higley & Burdon, 2006). Elite settlement leads to democratic rule, full democracy, electoral or pseudo- democracy.
- **Elite convergence:** This is a type that follows elite settlement. Elite settlement results in unstable democracy. Elite convergences occur when politically organized anti-system elites abandon radical opposition and decide to negotiate with the ruling elites to enhance and increase their chances of electoral gain. It is more of a coalition and alliance strategy in which previously radical elites accept the rules of the game. They therefore converge with the ruling and governing elite in legitimizing democracy and the rule of law. Elite convergence is associated with transitions from unstable democracy to a consolidated democracy. In a consolidated democracy no elite group will significantly challenge the regime. The New elitist model argues that sustainable democracies are the result of elite consensus. However, economic resources, political resources and a war situation can determine elite unity or disunity. Elite settlement occurs when non-elite threatens elite positions and interests, and consensually united elites determine lasting democracy while disunited elite leads to an unstable democracy.
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Robinson (2000) argues that social democratic regimes are the result of elite's threats and perceptions. He contends that elite prefer to include the masses in the political game, so they can prevent political and economic threats, and revolution posed by non-elites. Stevens (2006) argued that threatened elites may adopt authoritarian rule and values so as to pose a counter power to those threats.

2.3.1 Differential Association Theory

The differential association theory is considered by most sociologists as the best formulation of a general theory of criminality which explains the fact that criminality is learned through interaction within society (Cressy, 1952). Gomme (2007) cited in Buttle, Davies & Meliala (2015) observes that crime happens more often in areas lacking social organization and institutions of social control. He noted that once high rate of crime is established in a particular environment, the pattern reoccurs with the younger generations sustaining this trend of behavior. Sunderland was thus interested in explaining how such a cross-generalization transmission of delinquent values occurs (Cullen & Messner, 2007).

Sutherland introduced the term 'differential association' in his textbook 'Criminology' in 1939. The key terms in this theory are "excess" and "differential". In his analysis of differential association, Sutherland (1959) argues that criminal behavior is a result of a process of socialization during which criminal behaviors are not only transmitted but also learned through social interactions with intimate groups. Sunderland argues that differential association attempts to relate past behaviors with the present in trying to explain crime in terms of the immediate situation confronting an individual (Gisbons, 1981).

Rose (1988 cited in King, Massoglia & Macmillan, 2007) also notes the role of objective opportunity and alternative behaviours in the immediate situation confronting an actor. Sutherland (1939) posits that there are two pre-conditions for a person to become an offender or criminal. The first is the learning of values and attitudes of offenders. Second, they need to learn specific criminal behaviors. Friends, family, and peer groups carry on different behaviors that excite or inhibit crime in children. Sutherland believes if the child observes more behaviors that reinforce crime, such children regard crime as acceptable. The tendencies of crime have also been noticed to have genetic bearing. Forty percent of sons from criminal fathers have exhibited criminal behaviors before the age of 18. Sutherland posits that criminality is a result of peer group socialization as offenders are socialized in families where there are pro-criminal norms.

Blackburn (1993), in his appraisal of the theory, suggests that because the data are correlated, it is also likely that adolescents with deviant behaviors seek out criminal peers. Sutherland did not explain in clear terms how pro-criminal attitudes that a person exhibits can be measured with precision. He did not talk much on how pro-criminal attitudes that outnumber lawful attitudes turn people into offenders or serial criminal. It did not also explain in clear terms why some adolescents raised in persistent contact with “criminogenic” behaviors do not go on to commit crime. Crime however has been recorded to reduce with adulthood as 40% of crime is committed by people under the age of 21. Half of males and one third of females have reported to have committed at least one offence before the age of 25 (Newburn, 2002). The assumption surrounding differential association theory is that criminality is learned from observations of definitions, activities, and interpretations favorable to law violation.

Criminals are made when behavioral and attitudinal definitions that favor law violation outweigh the one that is unfavorable to violation (Short, 1957). The fact that crime as a behavior is heterogeneous means it can occur in different forms, at different times, by different people and at different venues. Compulsive behavior or crime might develop in a social context but it is difficult to desensitize. This theory believes that crime can be traced to peer-group pressure because there is a very close relationship between differential association and adolescent's crime. However, differential association explains male crimes better than female crimes (Thomas Antwi, 2010). This is a learning theory that explains that these activities are learned from intimate communications, with intimate groups.

Differential association theory came under a school of thought called the Chicago School. This School was recognized for advancing nine principles of differential association theory for the explanation of criminal behaviors in human society. These principles are:

1. Criminal behavior is learned, not inherited.
2. Criminal behavior is learned in interaction with others through communication.
3. Learning occurs in intimate groups.
4. Learning includes techniques for committing crime.
5. Motives and drives are learned from definition of legal codes as unfavorable and favorable.
6. A person becomes criminal because of excess of favorable definition.
7. Differential association theory varies in frequency duration, priority and intensity.
8. The process of learning criminal behavior involves the same mechanism involved in

other learning.

9. Both criminal and non-criminal behaviors are expressions of the same needs and values.

Furthermore, differential association theory posits that crimes are perpetrated in groups whose norms, values, believe are unique to aggregated code of behavior or culture (Short, 1957). These crime-inclined individuals have their conformity to the norms, values, culture of sub-cultural groups interpreted by conventional society as deviant. This group of adolescents sees law abiding values as middle-class values. They mostly carry out activities that are viewed as normal by the lower class but these activities are viewed by the middle and upper class as abnormal. Most times they have high morals as they belong to groups that provide them status and belonging. They are verbally and physically violent because their conception of violence is that it is a problem solving and control mechanism. Deviance is normal socialization within a group that has adopted criminal values but society is not uniform in values as groups of people have more than one set of values (Eve, 1978).

The process of learning criminal behavior involves the same mechanism as in all forms of learning. Both criminal and non-criminal behaviors are expression of similar needs, and values. Glasser (1960) says differential appropriation theory should be more appropriate and accurate than differential association in terms of the name given to it. Favorable definition to law violation largely relies upon the connection between the giver and the beneficiary. Modeling in differential association can also be reinforced by the prestige exhibited by the donors. Followers and peers can be motivated by material possession and acquisitions of the group leaders. This group is the adolescent's primary source of motivation. They spend the majority of their time in this group. It could be a school, workplace, club, church, and / or neighborhood.

Miller posits that delinquent behavior is endemic in lower class culture. It implies that delinquencies of lower-class boys are independent of the commission of the demonstration by other members of the assembly. The career oriented delinquent individual in the classification scheme is oriented towards the adult criminal world and maintains contact with adult criminals. The largest group of delinquents are peer oriented and are usually directed in their goals and behavior. Peer-oriented delinquent achiever and non-achiever are divided into white-collar and blue-collar jobs based on the father's occupation. Motives and drives are learned as definitions of legal codes that are either favorable or unfavorable to law violation.

Subcultural groups refer to groups that their values, norms and behaviors are distinct enough to set members off from mainstream culture. Adjustment to rules, values, and standards of eccentric subcultural groups is deciphered by conventional society as deviant, and criminal. Merton's influence posits that people strive for cultural goals. In subcultural groups, adolescents strive for status recognition, especially at school. Lower class adolescents are at a disadvantage in competition over recognition and status as they have poorer communication skills, less commitment to education, less emphasis on delayed gratification, self-reliance, respect for other peoples' property, and good manners. For more lucid explanation on this, the Cohen's Low-Class Adaptation theory was fashioned (1955).

2.3.2.1. Cohen's Lower-Class Adaptation

- **Corner Boys**

They have minor delinquencies, but not defining characteristics. They are aware of their inability to achieve high moral and valued standards of the middle class; they simply give in to the lower class values.

- **College Boys**

They strive hard to overcome structural, sub cultural and class divisions. Adolescents with academic promise have a better chance of overcoming delinquencies.

- **Delinquent Boys**

They reject the high standard and moral and cultural values, and replace it with reaction formation. They are comparable with those from the middle class but with inferior cultural values.

Lone offenders at a point in time had allies that display this conduct. Reprobate conduct is a component of learning wrongdoing through relationships with reprobates through association. Shaw, and Mckay demonstrated that the modular size of culpable gatherings usually comprises of two or three members, and not all gathering criminal acts is submitted by efficient groups (1969). Short characterized the power of a relationship as a subject's impression of the misconduct of his closest companions and infers that among these are operational measures of differential affiliation. This proportion of force is most reliably and emphatically identified with the misconduct of youths.

The homophily speculation holds that one is probably going to choose a closest companion whose qualities and conduct are like one's own. Coalition theory posits that taking everything into account, limitations on individuals who stray from the desires of the gathering leads to their

acting in concert with these standards. Behavioral homophile holds regardless of social class. Shaw, and McKay believe that stealing is more likely to be a group offense than offences against the home, and school (1969). Companions were present in 100% of boys' first involvement in gang fights. Companions were present in 56% of boys running away from home. Sociological theories of delinquent subcultures postulate that members of delinquent subcultures become highly dependent upon one another particularly for status gratification.

Cohen's general theory of delinquent subcultures holds that sub cultural delinquent groups should be homogenous in behavior for a variety of delinquent offences against property, and persons. Miller observed that reprobate conduct is endemic in lower class culture. It infers that delinquencies of lower class boys are autonomous of the commission of demonstrations by other members of the group. The career oriented delinquent, is the most delinquent person on the classification schema. He is orientated towards the adult criminal world, and keeps communication with adult criminals. The largest groups of delinquents are peer oriented; they are coordinated in their objective and conduct. In real life situations this group of people has feelings of entitlement to other people's goods, and properties which ultimately leads them into crime such as robbery and murder. They can be isolated and can exist in a sub cultural group.

Differential association theory has been influential in uniting sociology, and criminology. Simply put, it's the sociology of criminology, but can be drawn upon in political science, where political behavior constitutes a key area of political action. Differential association involves learning definitions favorable to violations of law much more than definitions unfavorable to the violations of law. Association with people that engage in criminal behavior increases the

likelihood of becoming delinquent, and the victim have the probability of remaining so. Frequent association impacts behavior more than infrequent association.

Associations that appear early in a person's life have greater influence than those that appear last. Associations have higher weight if they occur early in a person's life, if they come from significant persons in their life and if they are frequently exposed to them over a long period of time. The content of what is learned include techniques of committing crimes, attitudes, and motivations. There must be frequent and long period of communication among peers. Peers play a critical role in the development of values and believe. Relationship or working in the same organization creates opportunity for intensive communication. Intensive interaction may help to recognize the motivation and rationalization of crime.

2.3.2.2. Modification

Robert Burgess and Ronald Akers tried to modify Sutherland's theory. The focus of their modification is that individuals have the ability to evaluate definitions that may influence their behavior during communications in social interaction. Their version says that:

- 1) Criminal behavior is learned according to the principle of operant conditioning.
- 2) Criminal behavior is learned both in non-social situations that are reinforcing, discriminative, and through social interaction in which the behavior of the other persons is reinforcing or discriminative for criminal behavior.
- 3) The principal part of the learning of criminal behavior occurs in those groups that make up the individual's major sources of reinforcement.

- 4) The learning of criminal behavior (techniques, attitudes, and avoidance procedures) is a function of effective and available re-enforcers and the existing reinforcement contingencies.
- 5) The specific class of behaviors that are learned and the frequency of occurrence are a function of the re-enforcers that are effective and available rules or norms through which these re-enforcers are applied.
- 6) Criminal behavior is a function of norms that are discriminative of criminal behavior, the learning which takes place when this behavior is highly reinforced than non-criminal behavior.
- 7) The strength of criminal behavior is a direct function of the amount, frequency, and probability of its reinforcement. These interactions rely on norms, attitudes, and orientations.

A criticism of this version includes:

- 1) It omits the consideration of free will.
- 2) It is based on a psychology assuming rational deliberation
- 3) It does not explain the origin of crime
- 4) It ignores the roles played by the victims
- 5) It does not define terms such as systems excess
- 6) It does not take biological factors into account
- 7) It has little or no value to “practical men”.
- 8) It is not inter-disciplinary
- 9) It is not an allied of other sociological theory and conventions
- 10) It is too comprehensive as it applies to non- criminals as well

- 11) It assumes that all persons have equal access to criminal and anti-criminal behavior patterns.

Differential association involves all the mechanisms that are involved in any other learning. Learning is different from imitation. People confronted with violations of the law ask themselves what will their mother, father, wives and /or family think. Sutherland used his theory specifically to explain white collar crime. White collar crimes are those in which the violators use their positions of economic power, influence, or trust in legitimate economic or political institutional order for the purpose of illegal gain, or to commit an illegal act for personal or organizational gain. Violators are white males of moderate social status. Living beyond ones means predisposes persons to embezzlement.

Someone's class or social status can affect or determine crime, its frequency, typology, and techniques. White collar offenders insist on trial by the judiciary than other types of offenders. The higher the individual status, the higher the likelihood the individual will get imprisoned. Offenders do show serious discrepancies between their resources and their commitment. New Information Technology means that opportunity to get involved in crime is rising. Many organizations have structures that motivate crime and criminal tendencies.

Specialization also promotes and hides crime. Accountants are more prone to fraud. Marketers can cover or hide sales records and proceeds. According to Edward Gross, all organizations are criminogenic; prone to committing crime. Gross asserts that because of organizational reliance on the bottom line they can invite fraud as a means of obtaining goals. Organizations recruit and

attract similar individuals. Rewards go to those with characteristics of the company man. Loyalty is encouraged through retirement and benefit. Specialized job skills discourage personnel from seeking other employment. They use formal and informal rewards with punishment. They link employees' needs and goals to company's success. Where the interest of the individual and the organization coincide, personnel may commit crime for the organization.

Charles McCaughey posits that profit compels organizations to engage in industrial deviance. Price fixing, misrepresentation of a product, destruction of competition, and targeting rivals' resources are examples. The delinquency in product is for profit, to satisfy shareholders, to maintain the payroll, and to ensure organizational survival. Living beyond means and financial difficulties are red flags. Whether one becomes criminal or not depends on the patterns of behavior to which one is exposed (Sutherland and Cressey, 1978). Definitions can be favorable depending on the relationship between donors and recipient (1978). Virtually every study that includes a peer association variable finds it to be significantly and strongly related to delinquencies, alcohol, drug use, abuse, crime, other forms of deviant behavior (Akers 1998). Apart from one's own deviant behavior, the predictor of the continuance or the resistance of criminal activity is differential association with law violating peers (Akers, 1998). It is the most fully substantiated and replicated findings in criminological research. There can be little or no study of crime that relates to law violations by political, economic and corporate elites. Akers claims that differential peer association, that is peer norm quality, is the strongest predictor of adolescent delinquency.

Criminals and delinquents learn both techniques, motives, associations, rationalization, and attitudes favorable to the violation of law (Sutherland). A subculture based on conflict, countervailing, or contradictory to values and norms is antithetical to middle class culture. There is evidence that delinquent often feels guilty and shameful. Delinquent respects law abiding citizens. There is enough evidence that delinquent draws a sharp line between those that can be victimized and those that cannot. Delinquents make use of techniques of neutralization or defense mechanisms. They include:

1. Denial of responsibility
2. Denial of injury
3. Condemnation of condemners
4. Appeal to higher loyalties.

Criticisms against Sutherland theory include:

- It is virtually impossible to count definitions that are favorable or unfavorable
- It cannot determine the ratio of learned behavior patterns with specifications.
- This theory fails to give an adequate description of what an excess of definition favorable to law violations or unfavorable to law violation are.
- The theory has been charged with oversimplifying the process by which criminal behavior is formed.

2.4 Conclusion

The Elite and Differential Association theories adopted as the theoretical framework for this research were discussed in this chapter alongside a review of related literature. While the elite theory describes the role of the elites and their influence in dictating for the larger population due

to their status and wealth in the society, the differential association theory was adopted for this work because it gives a clear picture of the transmission of behavior in the society. Both theories are applied to explain the Nigerian situation in relation to the role of god-fathers and other political elites and the criminal tendencies that underlie electoral fraud in the study area.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the research methodology employed to achieve the objectives of this study. In addition, the chapter highlights the various approaches to, and the role of scientific research to investigations in political science studies. It also reflects on the various approaches to scientific research in the discipline of political science. There are many possible ways to explore election fraud and the elites' role in elections. The theoretical framework informs both the discussion here and the selection of an appropriate methodology.

3.2 Research Philosophies

Research conventions began in classical Greek times with Plato and Aristotle in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This can be described as a set of beliefs and views which influence the process or yardstick for researching or reinvestigating the concepts of existing knowledge. It therefore determines the process, designs, strategies and techniques of investigation (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009; Atiku, 2015). Oakley (1999) describes it as an intellectual orientation which guides the way and procedures of “breaking down the complexity of the real world” and a competing alternative to social reality. He further contends that a research can only be conceived, understood and interpreted in terms of how it is conducted when aligned with the approach and philosophies that is adopted. This gives credence to the fact that research in political science is to support or challenge assumptions and to prove they are realities.

3.1.1 Positivism

This philosophy holds the view that visible and accessible epistemological perspectives can be generalized as true knowledge (Atiku, 2015). Guba and Lincoln (2005) cited in Blaxter, Hughes

and Tight (2014) describe it as the most commonsensical way of intellectual enquiry. This can be described as a form of research usually ascribed to be scientifically objective due to its procedures which mirrors that of the natural sciences. It involves the collection of data which is targeted at observable reality in the search for regularities in order to make generalization of causal relationships (Saunders et al, 2009). Asserting further, Saunders et al (2009) affirm that research strategy under positivism could be based on the use of existing theory to generate hypothesis or the generation of new theories entirely. The ability to test, confirm, accept or refute hypothesis leads to the development of other theories.

Popular positivists include Bacon, Descartes, Mill, Durkheim, Russell, and Popper. Positivists accept that the truth is steady and can be monitored and depicted from an objective perspective (Levin, 1988). They argue that events ought to be isolated and findings should be repeatable. Research that does not employ positivist thoughts are discarded as non-scientific and invalid (Hirschheim, 1985). There has been a strong link between positivism, physical, and natural sciences. Positivist paradigm is mostly used, and suitable for social science research. Positivists believe in objectivity, observable measurable facts, causes, effects, laws, rules, and generalization. They use scientific method; they make use of large samples to test for a pattern. Their approaches are well structured, and they engage basically in quantitative analysis.

3.1.2 Pragmatism

Pragmatism is classified as a branch of research philosophy which relies on actions, situations and consequences in contrast to other research philosophies (Cresswell, 2009, Atiku, 2015). It is a process which recognizes the need for different ways of interpreting and understanding a research process (Saunders, 2009). The pragmatists give an analogy for multiple methods of

carrying out a research in order to provide a wider opportunity for different perceptions approaches and assumptions. This will give room for enhanced data collection, analysis and interpretation of data towards presenting outstanding and reliable outcomes (Cresswell, 2009). This has been attributed to the emergence of mixed method in solving social problems (Hay, 2011, Atiku, 2015). They are problem solver, outcome seeker, and a jack of all trade. They manage, organize, process experiences, practices, they are complex, and rich. They like to implement ideas to test realities. They find testable ways of applying knowledge. They propound theories that can be tested. They find solutions to problems; they make use of mixed research method. They use cyclical and flexible techniques to arrive at results. They combine induction and deduction procedures in postulating approaches to a problem. They believe we should not focus on posing inquiries about reality and the laws of nature.

3.1.3 Interpretivism

Interpretivism emphasizes the need to understand the differences between humans in our roles as actors (Saunders, 2009). It therefore gives distinction between a research process which involves human being and those of non-living things. Interpretivism is usually seen as an application of positivism as it relates to research in the natural sciences (Atiku, 2015). It is a research process which helps to gain insightful meaning and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This helps to avoid a situation whereby the researcher's opinion or perception influences/dominates discussions leading to conclusion (Saunders, 2009). The two intellectual traditions of Interpretivism are phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Phenomenology refers to the way human beings sense the world around them while symbolic interactionism refers to the continuous interpretations of the world around us which leads to an influence upon us (Saunders, 2009).

Popular interpretivists include Kant, Hegel, Marx, Freud, Polanyi, and Kuhn (Hirschheim, 1985). Interpretivists study phenomenon in their natural environment. They contend that there might be numerous elucidations of the real world. In their opinion, these perceptions are in themselves part of the data being investigated. They are subjective meaning makers, storytellers, empathizers; they seek for norms, perceptions, and interpretations, world view. They make use of environmental phenomenon, and natural activities and they seek solutions to problem that occur naturally in the environment. They embark on qualitative studies. They are radical in their approach and solutions to phenomenon.

3.1.4 Realism

According to Crotty (1988), cited in Saunders (2009), this research paradigm holds a philosophical position about the existence of a reality independent of the human mind. The two types of realism have been identified to make a clarification on collection and understanding of data – direct and critical (Saunders et al, 2009). The direct realism holds the notion of portraying what we see as accurate and therefore a true reflection of things. However, critical realism hinges on the existence of sensations which could influence the senses to assume things which could be an illusion (Atiku, 2015). They seek for physical and social facts about relationships, culture, and organizational reality. They look for historically situated facts and stories, causal explanation and believe underlying causal mechanism determines what happens on the surface. It involves conducting valued research through objectivity and avoiding biases in methods and explanation.

3.1.5 Postmodernism

Postmodernists are skeptical about events, relationship, culture, behaviors, and problems around them. It is a process which seeks to upturn power, authority, and legitimacy and expose the inadequacies of previous theorist. The focus is to search for hidden voices that have silent, repressed meanings (Atiku, 2015).

3.1.6 Social Constructivism

This approach focuses on the interaction among individuals and the patterns of interaction among individuals. They also try to elucidate the context under which individuals live and work in order to comprehend the historical and social settings of the respondents. The objective is to give meaning to other people's view about their world. This approach was developed by Mannheim, Berger and Luckman (1967). This approach posits that people seek an interpretation and understanding of the world in which they exist. They develop subjective explanation of their life events, situations, and daily activities. This method uses questions and interview to derive responses from samples or subjects. Qualitative researchers use open ended questions so that participant can feel free to express themselves (Atiku, 2015).

3.1.7 Advocacy / Participatory Knowledge Claims

Those who share this view believe knowledge can only be espoused through an advocacy participatory approach. The approach was in reaction to the positivist theorist. Some writers and researchers felt undermined and marginalized and developed their own approach. The foremost proponents were Marx, Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas, and Freire (Neuman, 2000). Their approach is that inquiry into social and individual life needs to be combined with politics and political agenda. They believe research approaches should posit remedies for people's problems.

They advocate a blueprint by researchers, they believe issues of empowerment, inequality, oppression, domination, suppression, and alienation should be brought into the spotlight.

3.1.8 Ethnography

This refers to methodologies that observe the social systems, culture, behaviors and social norms in the society. Any method that targets directly at human life and their day to day activities as well as relationships is described as ethnography (Atiku, 2015).

3.1.9 Phenomenology

This method is used to study human emotions, attitudes, thoughts and meanings. It is used to study the pre and post experiences of a phenomenon. It studies how people experience phenomenon (Atiku, 2015).

3.1.10 Research Philosophy for this Study

After a careful analysis of the various philosophies, Interpretivism was considered the most appropriate for this study. This is because the understanding of the world in which our respondents live is very important as a very major factor in the issue to be investigated. In addition, the continuous understanding and interpretation given to actions and inactions, which have promoted the trend of behavior leading to electoral manipulations can be evaluated deeply by adopting this process.

3.2 Research Approaches

This refers to the extent of clarity in a theory which influences the design of the research (Saunders et al, 2012). Ketokisi and Mantere (2010) identify the way and manner conclusion is derived logically from a set of premises which gives an assertion of validity in a situation

whereby both premises and conclusion align as deduction. They further explain and highlight that induction occurs when a gap in the logic of argument between conclusion and premises influences the manner of judgement.

3.2.1 Deductive Approach

It is a product of the positivist philosophy and is usually associated with the natural sciences (Saunders et al, 2009). It is usually based on a standard of evaluation of a phenomenon in which result can either be accepted or rejected which leads to a re-examination (Bryan and Bell, 2011; Atiku, 2015). The deductive research is credited for being highly objective and therefore requires a justification of approach which leads to rigorous hypothesis towards ensuring adequate verification (Saunders et al, 2009). A deductive approach is aimed at testing a theory. They always begin with a hypothesis because it's scientific. Deductive approach is mostly used for quantitative study, but can also be used in qualitative study. They make use of objective statistical method of testing and validating hypothesis. Deductive approach sets out to test whether data align with assumptions, theories, and hypothesis.

3.2.2 Inductive Approach

This approach is rooted in an interpretative philosophy as an alternative to the positivist approach in the scientific methods (Thomas, 2006; Kelliher, 2011). It recognizes the need for an in-depth investigation in carrying out a research towards giving firsthand information on a particular study (Atiku, 2015). It is used only for new projects, it is not use for existing hypothesis, but in forming new hypothesis. They use broad and generalized observations; they get insider experience on the subject matter. In inductive approach, “evaluators wish to describe actual programme effects, not just planned effects” (Scriven, 1991). An inductive approach illuminates all side effects of the study. The benefits of the inductive approach include;

- It helps to summarize raw data into a brief format.
- It helps to establish a link between evaluation, research objectives and findings.
- It helps to develop framework for processes that are evident in the data.
- It is reliable and valid.
- It is simple, and straightforward.
- It applies focused evaluation questions.
- It allows for flexibility and simplicity in analysis
- It is referred to as general inductive approach (Bryan & Burgess, 1994; Dey, 1993).
- Make use of detailed reading of raw data to derive concepts.

3.2.3 Approach Adopted

The study adopted the inductive methodological approach because of its alignment with the interpretivist philosophy which had earlier been identified as the most appropriate for the research.

3.3 Research Design

This refers to all the methods used in gathering and collection of data in order to ensure a realistic application and deduction (Azika, 2008). Atiku (2015) stresses that research methodology is carried out using different types of research designs. Maylor and Blackmon (2005) cited in Atiku (2015) defined research design as a strategy employed to espouse a particular phenomenon by translating “methodology into methods such as techniques, instruments and tools”.

3.3.1 Explorative Studies

Exploratory study adopts expansion as a strategy. It undertakes comprehensive analysis of a phenomenon. It is described as a research process embarked upon to expand the frontier of knowledge on a particular phenomenon (Sekaran and Bougie 2009, Atiku, 2015). It is further categorized as a research process which has little or no previous engagement towards providing insight to the issue under investigation (Atiku, 2015). It is therefore characterized by familiarity with the subject matter to gain deep knowledge before initiation of hypothesis (Sekaran and Bougie, 2009). Saunders et al (2009) identify basic steps such as examining literature, interviewing to obtain deep information from key individuals and adoption of focus group interviews as requirements for conducting exploratory studies.

Exploratory studies are used to explore new phenomenon and they help to determine the best method to be used in subsequent studies. They are also used to identify key variables in a study. In exploratory research, objectives must be clearly defined as the method is broader in focus. Exploratory study is the most useful in new areas of research and often used whenever there is high level of ignorance or uncertainty about a subject matter. It aims to identify the boundaries of the environment, the problems, opportunities, events, and situations that may reside.

3.3.2 Descriptive Study

It is a research which gives a description of the features of variables or groups in the phenomenon of interest (Sekaran and Bougie, 2009; Atiku, 2015). It gives a comprehensive discussion on phenomenon and provides an avenue to consolidate on previous exploratory studies (Saunders, 2009). It gives full and precise description of an observed phenomenon. It gives accurate description of a population of study at any point in time. Descriptive study gives

factual description of the variables involved in the study. It tries to describe factors that are germane to the research questions. It is a highly structured method more than the exploratory design.

3.3.3 Explanatory Study

According to Cresswell (2009), it is a study which shares the principle of the qualitative and quantitative process of analysis (mixed methods). Sekaran and Bougie (2009) further argue that the study relies on using hypothesis as a measure of ascertaining the relationship between two or more variables in a study. It can also be called analytical study. It can likewise be called an investigative examination. It intends to identify causal connections among factors and variables that yield outcomes in the research problem. It is a highly structured research.

3.3.4 Experimental Design

Sekaran (2003), cited in Atiku (2015), categorizes experimental designs into those performed in artificial environment and the field experiments which are regarded as the natural environment of events. In this case, the researcher manipulates and identifies a treatment group and compares with the control group in order to identify and make observations. The manipulation of the independent variable according to Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009) is to establish a cause-effect on the dependent variable. This approach tries to explain and extrapolate the relationship. It gives meaning to the nature of certain relationships.

3.3.5 Quasi Experimental Design

The existence of social situations sometimes makes it difficult for the researcher to subject either the treatment or control group to manipulation (Bryan and Bell, 2011; Atiku, 2015). The inability to manipulate groups is a major difference between experimental design and quasi experimental design. They both measure the cause –effect between associated variables (Atiku, 2015).

However, lack of scientific procedures in quasi experimental design makes it one of the weakest in evaluating cause-effect relationship (Maylon and Blackmon, 2005). Quasi-experimental design is a less rigorous experiments (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). Quasi-experiments use nonrandomized designs (Keppel, 1991).

3.3.6 Survey Design

Surveys are often used to generate primary data from a large population. In conducting a survey, a researcher needs to determine the overall population. A survey may be carried out using a questionnaire or an interview. Survey can take place using the post or telephone; it can also be a field approach. However, a survey may require assistance of the research team to interpret the questions. Longitudinal survey is use to gather information over time so as to analyze differences in response according to time. (Atiku, 2015) Longitudinal survey determines the relationship between factors, and examines how these factors changes over time. Cresswell (2009) argues that interviews have different types depending on the complexity or appropriateness of the study objectives. The types include:

- Loosely structured interview
- Highly structured interview
- Open interview
- Closed interview
- Face to face interview
- Telephone interview
- Oral interview
- Internet interviews

- Focus group discussion
- Panel study
- Elite interview.

3.3.7 Research Design Adopted

This study adopted a mix of both the descriptive and survey design methods. The descriptive method complements the interpretivism research philosophy and the inductive methodological approach. With the descriptive research design methods, a researcher is able to give a comprehensive account of the issue of electoral fraud in the study area and provide explanations for observations recorded on the subject matter. To further interrogate the observed phenomena, I employed a survey design to elicit narratives from political stakeholders in Ekiti State. These narratives were collected in face to face interviews using a semi-structured survey with open-ended common questions. The sample size was small but purposefully selected for better representation across Ekiti State. Therefore, the study employed a mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure that any findings and observations are corroborated with mixed methods.

3.4 Population and Sampling

Ekiti State is one of the 36 States in Nigeria. As Nigeria operates a presidential system of government, each of the States has an executive cabinet led a governor. These governors are elected through popular votes for a renewable term of four years. Since the return to democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999, general elections have been holding every four years at both the federal and state levels to elect the president and governors respectively. The governorship elections in Ekiti State constitute the population of study. For the fact that this study is interested in electoral

fraud however, a sample of the governorship elections in the State was chosen. The 2007 elections were adjudged as largely flawed and yet, the elections have birthed two successful transitions; a situation described by Huntington (1993) as a test of democratic consolidation. For this study therefore, the 2007 – 2015 governorship elections in Ekiti State constituted the sample. For the survey aspect of the research, selected stakeholders with key information relevant to the subject of investigation were purposively selected as the study sample.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

The approach of this dissertation is based upon an interpretative meta-theory of the social sciences. The study employs an interpretative understanding of the environment towards ensuring a clear understanding of meanings attached to various actions and interactions. This aids our understanding of human actions regarding non-detectable implications, goals, beliefs and self-understanding which people hold regarding action(s) and situation(s). The study adopts a mixed method approach comprising two key methods of investigation to interrogate the phenomenon of electoral fraud in Nigeria. Firstly, there was collection of documentary analysis (such as debates of parliament, government publications, press releases and policy briefs). Secondly, interviews were conducted to source deep contextual specific information from stakeholders in the electoral process using the method of semi structured interviews.

Interviews are discussions between some individuals and an interviewer meant to gather information about different topics. Semi-structured interviews are often referred to as qualitative research interviews (King, 2004). This is to allow for flexibility in the questions asked depending on respondent, and organization. Semi- structured interviews are used to find out the why or the real cause of an event. This system will prompt interviewees to explain and build on their former

responses so as to give a clearer in-depth analysis of events. This technique is widely used in policy research and can give answers to researcher's questions.

As the aim of this research is to explore electoral fraud in Ekiti State, purposeful sampling technique was utilized to recruit participants for the study. Using geography and political districting, three participants were chosen from the north, central and southern divisions of the three political districts in the State. The selected key informants were staff of the Independent Electoral commission, community leaders and members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) who served as ad hoc staff in the elections. Two independent electoral observers were also purposively selected for the interview. In all, the respondents were 29. The collected data from the documentary analysis were subjected to thematic content analysis (TCA) while the responses from the interview were coded for a quantitative analysis. A structured number matrix was constructed to give a frequency distribution of each variable in the interview. This allows for a more descriptive representation of qualitative data that helped the conceptualization and analysis of the research findings.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

Sekaran and Bougie (2009), cited in Atiku (2015), identify some unethical practices and conduct in research as follows:

1. The use of force on individuals to participate in experiments
2. Adopting mental tasks which gives respondents challenges in making independent opinions
3. Deliberately misleading participants on the purpose of the research

4. Making the participants vulnerable to stress which could be mental or physical in nature
5. Not allowing participants to determine if they want to continue to participate or otherwise
6. The use of such research in a way which the interests of the participants are not protected
7. Failure to guide participants on the process and procedures to be followed in the research
8. Failure to protect respondents from hazardous, dangerous and unsafe environments
9. Failure to ensure accurate information are sourced from the participants at the end of the research
10. Not ensuring confidentiality and privacy of information from participants

As this study was essentially a documentary review, these unethical practices were avoided in this study. With respect to the 29 respondents interviewed, a clear understanding of the purpose of the interview was made available to them and each of them gave their informed consent to participate in the interview. They are all granted anonymity here in the thesis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DEMOCRACY, ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL TRANSITION IN NIGERIA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the overview of democracy in Nigeria, its features and the general democratic experience in the country prior to its independence in 1960. The discussion also focused on the key highlights of the first, second, third and fourth democratic republics in Nigeria. A brief highlight of elections and their characterization under the four republics are also shown in this chapter.

4.2 Overview of Democracy in Nigeria

The parliamentary system of government was adopted by Nigeria after independence. The system features a Prime Minister who is the leader of the party that wins the majority of seats in the parliament. He is also regarded as the head of government and controls the affairs at the federal level while the President is just a ceremonial leader (Kifordu, 2013). Odo (2015) notes that political elites who were handed power after independence had the duty of institutionalizing a democratic process and developing a political culture that supported those inherited from the British colonial authority. He corroborates his claim by asserting that Nigeria was ready for the growth of democracy and consolidate on the experiences under colonial rule.

Unfortunately, the future of democracy in Nigeria witnessed a drastic decline which led to a coup d'état in January 1966. The military aborted the process of democracy in a bloody coup d'état, due to the corrupt practices of the politicians in power (Ajayi, 2007). The cultural

diversity¹ of the Nigerian population accounts for its unique socio-political settings in Africa. The distinct cultural groups have different history, social orientation and political systems. The sustenance of this unique feature accounted for the system of administration introduced by the colonial administration as a model of operation (Odo, 2015). The 1914 amalgamation² of different nations into one country, without any form of consultation from the people involved, is believed to be the foundational problem of integration. This has transcended decades and created a rift which is a threat to integration. It therefore leaves a lack of trust and understanding among the people which are the basic ingredients for good governance (Omoiya, 2002).

Odo (2015) observes that the quest for consolidated democracy in Nigeria has been a major challenge since independence. It has remained an elusive aspiration which ultimately undermines development³ and the desired transformations.⁴ These challenges are not limited to leadership failure, but also includes a lack of political will, corrupt practices and issues of accountability in governance (Anazodo, 2015). In the opinion of Chime (2009), three major factors were responsible for leadership failure in Nigeria - a lack of ideology, the salience of ethnicity, and the pervasiveness of corruption.

¹ Cultural diversity: Nigeria as a nation is made up of 527 languages (seven are extinct), 1150 dialects and ethnic groups (Wikipedia).

² 1914 Amalgamation: This explains the coming together of the Northern and Southern protectorates after the naming of Nigeria. Previously the protectorates had separate systems of government operating and the Colony of Lagos also had its own government. They all came together under one government in 1914 to make governance easier for the colonial government (Joseph Omotayo, The 234 project)

³ Development: It refers to a combination of human development index and subsequently the multidimensional poverty index towards evaluating its impact on people by not measuring just income but more generally in terms of their choices, capabilities, freedoms and how this reflects on the general population (Centre for Global Development).

⁴ Transformation: It refers to a drastic change in the general character and operations which takes a clear and specific distinctions from what was previously in place towards achieving /targeting a level of effectiveness (Business Dictionary).

The democratic system in Nigeria is questioned about transparency of the electoral system, independence of the judiciary and obedience to the rule of law (Enweremadu, 2011). The conduct and activities have also been characterized by several incidences which depict an environment likened to a war zone (Fatai and Adisa, 2017). However, Lewis (2011) espouses that the Afrobarometer survey still indicates a preference for a democratic regime in Nigeria but emphasized a general discontentment with the decline in adhering to its principles and applications.

Democracy became popular in Nigeria following the rise of nationalist movements that fought for the Nation's independence from British colonial rule. This created a room for the emergence of various political parties and the indication of interest to contest for political positions by their candidates (Chime, 2009). In 1922, the first colonial Governor in Nigeria created a constitution that gave room for elective principles that consisted of three legislative seats in Lagos and one in Calabar. This act led to the creation of a political party in 1923 known as the Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP)⁵ by Herbert Macaulay (Aremu, 2014). The formation also led to more political parties springing up before Nigeria gained independence in 1960 under a democratically elected government.

Aremu (2014) opines that democracy in Nigeria has come a long way over two decades with four transitional elections and over 10 million registered voters. He further observes that on May 29, 1999 the country restored democratic rule after a long military rule that lasted for more than

⁵ NNDP: Nigerian National Democratic Party: The first political party in Nigeria formed by Herbert Macaulay. It was able to coordinate various interest groups and competed politically to take advantage of the Clifford Constitution. It was able to secure three seats for the Lagos Legislative Council elections in 1922 (Wikipedia).

three decades. There have been a lot of efforts to avoid issues which accounted for the truncation of the previous governments (Oni, Erameh and Oladejo, 2017). All efforts from past successive civilian governments to consolidate democracy in the country were unsuccessful and often resulted in military interventions. Despite the exertions made for democracy to be sustained in Nigeria with its return to civilian rule, democratic instability continued to characterize the state, which in turn has dashed the hopes, optimism and great expectations of the citizens (Yagboyaju, 2011).

Elaigwu (2011) explained that Nigerian's experience, which has endangered the democratic experiment since independence, could be ascribed to the itemized contending issues among others:

- There is usually non-adherence to provisions of rules and such is usually responsible for the polluted political system which often leads to anarchy;
- The position of authority is personalized, leading to biased political and economic decisions. The allocation of resources also faces a challenge due to favoritism and nepotism;
- The system also erodes individual rights and freedoms;
- The voting population does not get the required attention as voting power is derived from rigging rather than the people;
- The politicians protect their interests and their cronies through policies which hardly conforms with the needs of the electorates; and
- The powers of the regional government at independence were excessively used to create a division rather than a united country for the citizens.

All the aforementioned factors weakened the fabrics of substantive democracy at inception and thus became a factor which necessitated prolong military rule and subversion of democratic rule in Nigeria.

4.3 Democratic Republics in Nigeria

4.3.1 The First Republic (1960-1966)

The 1922⁶ Clifford constitution gave Nigerians only four seats in the house, with three representatives from Lagos, and one from Calabar. Even as politics was restricted to two cities, the political consciousness was high even though the people were disenfranchised (Reed, 1982). The introduction of elections into Nigeria was based on income-based male suffrage. Only male adults with gross national income of not less than one hundred pounds were allowed to vote. In the same vein, voters' registration must take place within their municipal areas and voters feared that the registration would be used for further levies and taxes. However, the 1954 constitution⁷ introduced liberalism to Nigerian elections with better conditions than the 1922 Clifford Constitution (Ayo, 2011).

The electoral process in the first republic after independence can be said to have been influenced by the pre-colonial Nigeria political atmosphere and activities of the political elites in relation to elections. The dominant parties during the first republic were the Northern People's Congress (NPC)⁸, Action Group (AG)⁹ and National Council of Nigerian Citizen (NCNC)¹⁰. These parties

⁶ Clifford Constitution: It was the first constitution under colonial rule and it give birth to the first elective opportunity to Nigerians.

⁷ 1954 Constitution: The Lyttleton Constitution of 1954 paved the way for the establishment of the federal principle and Independence.

⁸ Northern People's Congress: Northern People's Congress is a political party in the pre-independence Nigeria and the first republic. It was formed in June 1949 and the party held considerable influence in the Northern Region from

were largely regional based in orientation and strength. The NPC controlled the North; the AG had its stronghold in the West, while the NCNC had its dominancy in the East. The quest of these political parties to control the centre at all cost led to the formation of political alliances and the emergence of two political party blocs after independence namely; Nigeria National Alliance (NNA)¹¹ and the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA)¹². Ayo (2011) while quoting I-IDEA (2000) states that the AG, NCNC and the Northern Peoples Forum (NPF)¹³ formed the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) on June 3, 1964 while the NPC, the National Democratic Congress (NDC)¹⁴ and the Movement for Democratic Front (MDF)¹⁵ formed the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) on August 20, 1964. (Ayo, 2011).

At independence, there was no party that could be described as national in its reach and membership base (Osaghae, 2002). The NPC and the NCNC went into a coalition to form a federal government after the 1959 elections (Akinsanya, 2005). The sharing of ministerial portfolio between the two parties led to more upheavals and resource allocation among federating units became a bone of contention. The AG belonged to the opposition and they were

the 1950s until the military coup of 1966. After the Nigerian Civil War of 1967, the NPC subsequently became a minor party.

⁹ Action Group (AG): The Action Group was a political party established in Ibadan, western Nigeria on March 21, 1951, by Chief Obafemi Awolowo.

¹⁰ National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC): The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons, was a Nigerian political party from 1944 to 1966, during the period leading up to independence and immediately following independence.

¹¹ Nigerian National Alliance (NNA): The party was formed in 1964 to contest the first National elections held 30 December 1964 and was led by Sir Ahmadu Bello, the premier of Northern Nigeria.

¹² United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA): The party was formed to contest the National election of 1964 and was led by Michael Okpara.

¹³ Northern peoples Forum (NPF): The party was formed in 1954 and contested the 1954 and 1956 elections. It later merged with the opposition to form the United Party. It was led by Mumuni Bawumia.

¹⁴ National Democratic Congress (NDC): The party was formed by Ahmadu Bello in June 1949 and won the majority to form government at Independence.

¹⁵ Movement for Democratic Front (MDF): The party was a small political Association in Midwest Nigeria and formed Alliance with others to form UPGA.

less included in the scheme of things as the opposition party at the centre (Ajayi 2007). NCNC believed that their alliance with NPC was preferable than AG and, in a bid, to limit the power and control of AG, the federal house of representatives passed the motion for the creation of new mid-western region to be carved out of western region (Adigwe,1985). This practice paved way for more rancour in Nigeria because it was only the Southwestern region that was split while all other regions remained. Following the rift and chaos that occurred between the deputy (and later premier) of the old western region, Late Chief Samuel Akintola¹⁶, and the premier of the western region, Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo¹⁷ in May 1962 which partly accounted for the widespread violence in the region, the central government declared a state of emergency and appointed an administrator in the western region. The appointment of Dr. Moses Majekodunmi¹⁸ was resisted by the AG and her supporters. This led to antagonising investigations on the AG which resulted in 104 of its members including Chief Obafemi Awolowo charged for treason and were consequently pronounced guilty and jailed in 1963 (Gberevbie and Oni, 2014). Following this persecution AG lost her grip on the region while her members defected to other parties bringing representatives in the House of Representatives¹⁹ from 75 to 13. However, the NPC got an additional 7 seats in the House of Rep and automatically became the majority party.

¹⁶ Late Chief Samuel Akintola: He was the deputy leader of Action Group and premier of Western region. He later formed the Nigerian National Democratic Party. He died during the military coup of January 15, 1966. He was engaged in a long battle with the AG and its leadership for the control of the western region after leaving the party to form his own.

¹⁷ Late Obafemi Awolowo: He was the Leader of the Action Group and first premier of Western Region. He contested and lost the 1979 and 1983 Presidential elections.

¹⁸ Dr Moses Majekodunmi: He was a federal Minister and former Administrator of Western Region. He was appointed as an Administrator of the western region by the Prime minster due to the declaration of a state of emergency in the region between 29th June 1962 and 31st December 1962.

¹⁹ House of Representatives: The federal legislative Arm of government in Nigeria during colonial administration.

In the 1964 General elections, the AG in Southwest and the NCNC in southeast formed an alliance christened the United Progressive Grand Alliance. The south was still not devoid of internal rancour and revolutionary strive as the NNDP formed by Chief Ladoke Akintola formed an alliance with NPC, under the Nigerian National Alliance. However, the NPC restricted United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) from extending their campaigns to the north. This led to a grave civil disturbance and a subsequent boycott of the 1964 elections by the opposition (Akinsanya, 2005). Elections into the western house of assembly on 11 October, 1965 increased the rate of violence experienced across the country. The decline in order, massive destruction of property, and a total breakdown of law and order precipitated the military to hijack governance through a coup on 15 January 1966 (Okoli, 2014).

4.3.2 The Second Republic (1979-1983)

The second republic was ushered in by the return of power to civil rule by the General Olusegun Obasanjo led military government in 1979 (Ugoh, 2004). The presidential election of 1979 was contested by five political parties namely, the United Party of Nigeria (UPN)²⁰, Peoples' Redemption Party, (PRP)²¹, National Party of Nigeria (NPN)²², Great Nigeria People's Party, (GNPP)²³ and the Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP)²⁴. The 1979 election was believed to have been influenced while the 1983 election was seen to be massively rigged by politicians who have

²⁰ United Party of Nigeria (UPN): The party was formed in 1978 and was the dominant party in the western Nigeria. It was led by Obafemi Awolowo who contested for the presidency on the platform in 1979 and 1983.

²¹ Peoples Redemption Party (PRP): It was formed in the build of to the second republic elections in 1978 and led by Malam Aminu Kano. It was seen as an incarnation of the Northern Elements Progressive Union of the first republic.

²² National Party of Nigeria (NPN): The party was formed on September 20, 1978 and became the dominant political party in the second republic.

²³ Great Nigeria People's Party: It was one of the six political parties that contested elections in the second republic. It was a splinter group from the Nigerian People's party and led by Waziri Ibrahim.

²⁴ Nigerian peoples Party: It was one of the major political parties that contested elections in the second republic. It was made up of three major groups: Lagos progressives, Club 19 and Nigerian Council of Understanding.

mastered the act of electoral manipulation (Ayo (2011)). The subsequent election in the second republic witnessed the registration of one additional political party known the National Advanced Party²⁵.

The 1979 election and subsequent 1983 produced President Shehu Shagari²⁶ whose administration was already experiencing dwindling resources due to corruption and wasteful spending. The election was characterised by allegations and counter allegations of fraud and violence between the political parties. Kurfi (1983) argues that the allegations ranged from the intimidation of voters, falsification of election results, kidnappings and even the conniving by the ruling party with the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO)²⁷ in order to perfect the manipulation of election process and results. These actions in 1983 elections resulted in a situation whereby the ruling parties had their candidates returned in almost all the electoral positions contested (Okoli, 2014). These actions were met by agitations by the opposition parties at all levels and the continuous agitation led to widespread violence in several parts of the nation cumulating into yet another return of the military in December 1983. The coup brought in General Muhammad Buhari²⁸ and his regime was totalitarian with his anti-corruption stance which led to the establishment of the War against Indiscipline (WAI)²⁹ programme. His government jailed quite a number of Nigerian politicians. Many civil servants were sacked for

²⁵ National Advanced Party (NAP): The party was a progressive party in the second republic. It was led by Tunji Braithwaite and was the only new political organization allowed to field candidates for the 1983 elections.

²⁶ President Shehu Shagari: He served as President in the second republic after the hand-over by the military in 1979. He earlier served as a federal minister and federal commissioner between 1958 and 1975.

²⁷ Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO): It was the electoral body constituted in 1978 by the regime of Olusegun Obasanjo to conduct the 1979 elections.

²⁸ General Muhammadu Buhari: He was Nigerian Head of state after a coup which ended the second republic from December 31 1983 to August 27 1985. He won election as a civilian president in 2015 and was recently elected for a second term.

²⁹ War Against Indiscipline (WAI): A military government-controlled mass corrective response under the military administration of General Muhammadu Buhari (1983-1985).

indiscipline, insubordination, and sabotage. Buhari's regime was noted for Decrees 2 and 4 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which suspended fundamental human rights of the Nigerian citizens. The disciplinary effort of Buhari was considered harsh and led to a coup by General Ibrahim Babangida³⁰ who became the next military head of state in August 1985.

4.3.3 The Third Republic (1992-1993)

General Babangida established his cabinet called the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC)³¹.

Babangida started his administration with more liberal policies, opened up the political space and loosened up press restrictions. Following the recommendations of the Political Bureau formed by his government in 1986, a two-party structure comprising of the National Republican Convention (NRC)³² and the Social Democratic Party (SDP)³³ was adopted for Nigeria. This was in a bid to curtail the excesses of the political participants in the electoral process as evident in the first and second republic. Okoli (2014) observes that the military established the National Electoral Commission (NECON) which until its dissolution, conducted 1990 Local Government elections, 1991 Gubernatorial and National Assembly elections and 1993 presidential elections.

The 1993 General Election was acclaimed by many to be the freest and fairest election in Nigeria's political history (Vanguard 8th June, 2013). Siollun (2008) argued that the SDP candidate, Chief Moshood Abiola³⁴ received over 8 million votes, and won in 19 states and the

³⁰ General Ibrahim Babangida: He was military President of Nigeria between August 27 1985 and August 26 1993.

³¹ Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC): The supreme decision making body with both executive and legislative powers in Nigeria under the military government of General Ibrahim Babangida

³² National Republican Convention (NRC): The party was established by the military government of General Ibrahim Babangida. It party was under the leadership of Chief Tom Ikimi. The party contested in elections in the aborted third republic.

³³ Social Democratic Party (SDP): The party was established by the military and had his first leadership under Babagana Kingibe in 1990. The party contested elections in the aborted third republic.

³⁴ Chief MKO Abiola: A business man and politician who contested the Presidential elections under the platform of the SDP in 1993. He was presumed to have won the elections before it was annulled.

Federal Capital Territory while the NRC candidate Alhaji Bashir Tofa³⁵ received over 6 million votes and won in 10 states only. From this result, the SDP candidate was the acclaimed winner of the election and should have been returned elected as president. The military government of General Ibrahim however annulled the election stating several grounds including a huge array of electoral malpractices in virtually all the states of the federation before the actual voting began. He also alluded to allegations of electoral malpractices against NEC staff and party agents, financial inducements, as well as evidence of conflict in the process of authentication and clearance of credentials of the presidential candidates (Vanguard News, 8th June, 2013).

The annulment provoked violence in all parts of the country, especially in southwest Nigeria. It also generated numerous mass protests against the annulment and against the military government of General Ibrahim Babangida. The continuous internal and international pressure on the government led to General Ibrahim Babangida stepping aside for an interim government led by Chief Ernest Shonekan³⁶. However, the interim government was overthrown through a palace coup and led by General Sani Abacha³⁷, marking the end of the third republic and a return to military rule (Ajayi, 2007).

To quell the post-election violence, late General Abacha clamp down on many politicians, civil right activist, and many socio-political organizations. Citizens were reported missing, and murdered in mysterious circumstances. He committed an internationally reputed crime by the

³⁵ Alhaji Bashiru Tofa: A business man and politician who contested the Presidential elections under the platform of the NRC in 1993.

³⁶ Chief Ernest Shonekan: He is an industrialist who was appointed to head the interim government after General Ibrahim Babangida resigned under pressure due to the annulment of June 12 presidential election and the clamor for a return to democratic government

³⁷ General Sani Abacha: He was a military officer who served as Head of state between 1993 and 1998.

execution of environmental right activist Ken Saro-Wiwa³⁸. He was called upon globally to reinstate the June 12, 1993 mandate of Chief M.K.O Abiola. Abacha broke the country into six regions or zones which became the medium of power sharing and rotation in Nigeria. The events of June 1993 took its toll on the political scene and the post-election violence that followed led to the unity of pro-democrats, and the revolutionist, with the help of international experts who opposed Abacha's plan to succeed himself as elected president. The five political parties during the transition adopted him as consensus candidate until his sudden death in 1998 (Ajayi, 2007). General Abdulsalam Abubakar³⁹ who was the next in command took over the reins of power. Mysteriously, M.K.O Abiola, before being released from the prison, was also reported to have had a heart attack and died. The pro-revolution and anti-establishment forces became more organised leading to the fourth republic.

4.3.4 The Fourth Republic (1999-Date)

The transition to the fourth republic commenced after the demise of General Sani Abacha and the eventual transfer of military governance to General Abdulsalami Abubakar. The military government commenced a program of transition to civilian rule which climaxed in the general election of 1999 which ushered in Nigeria's fourth republic. As opined by various scholars on elections, the elections in the fourth republic were similar in characteristics and configuration to the elections in the previous republics (Okoli, 2014; Ayo, 2011; Ajayi, 2007; Abebisi and Loremikan, 2013; Awopeju, 2011; Olurode, 2013, Olurode, 2014, Omodia 2012, Luqman, 2009;

³⁸ Ken Saro-Wiwa: A Nigerian human rights activist who protest against the military government due to environmental degradation and poverty ravaging his people in Ogoniland. He was found guilty of murder by a military court under the government of Sani Abacha and sentenced to death by hanging.

³⁹ General Abdulsalam Abubakar: He was a Nigerian army General who became Head of state as a result of the death of Gen Sani Abacha. He ruled between 9th June 1998 and 29th May 1999 and adopted the multi-party system. He handed over to the civilian administration leading to the fourth republic.

Aliyu, 2015). The elections were, in fact, more manipulated as practitioners in the electoral process had mastered the game and tricks of electoral fraud. Massive rigging, the use of thugs to harass opponents, kidnaping, snatching of ballot box, intimidation of voters, use of money were more evident in all the elections starting from the 1999 election.

Ayo (2011) posits that the 2003 election was characterised by similar issues associated with the previous elections. According to him, it was described by the Human Rights Watch (HRW) as an “abject failure” as the elections were grossly manipulated even beyond what transpired in the 1999 election (Ayo, 2011). This election, as with the 2007 and 2011 elections were met with widespread violent agitation and clamours across the country by people and political party supporters who felt short changed by the candidates who won in the elections.

While the conduct of elections in Nigeria is far from the standard they should be, Nigeria’s Fourth Republic has also witnessed the most peaceful handover of an incumbent government to an opposition in its history. The Fourth Republic had been the only time Nigeria had four general elections that have been held concurrently with an elected government transferring power to another. The 2015 general election was the first transition in Nigeria’s democratic history that a ruling government would hand over power willingly to an opposition party. Nigeria witnessed her most consolidated democracy in the fourth republic and this was affirmed by the Bureau of Statistics report that states that Nigeria witnessed economic growth rate of 10% in 2003 (Igbuzor, 2005).

4.4 Highlights of Elections and Electoral Violence (1960-2015)

4.4.1 Highlights

As shown in Table 1, the 1964 general elections witnessed the coming together of the various parties to form two major alliances. The two mega alliances contested elections and there were reports of non-adherence to rules and procedures which led to boycott in some areas. The opposition accused the ruling party of using its position to influence the outcome of the elections and it led to crises especially in the western region where reports of murder, arson and kidnapping were rampant. All these, amongst others, led to the end of the First Republic as the military overthrew the civilian government in 1966.

The 1979 election was contested by five major political parties and the outcome of the presidential election was contested by the UPN as a result of the provisions of the constitution and some identified irregularities. The Supreme Court ruled in favour of the NPN and its candidate (Alh Shehu Shagari) was declared returned and elected president. The 1983 election had six political parties contesting and was marred by reported violence and irregularities channelled to favour the incumbent government. This situation led to the breakdown of law and order and military intervention. The military disbanded all political activities and arrested politicians who have been accused of diverting state resources for personal use.

The Third Republic witnessed the introduction of the two-party system in Nigeria. The transition process was postponed several times by the military government leading to the elections at the state and federal levels. The presidential election was annulled after the candidate of the SDP was coasting to victory based on the number of states announced. This led to crises and the introduction of an Interim National Government. The Fourth Republic witnessed the emergence

of three parties to multi-party system. A trend of violence and irregularities were observed during elections in 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015. While there was an uneasy transition from military to civilian rule in 1999, it was a case of controversy for the PDP succeeding itself in 2003 and 2007. However, there were reports of post-election violence in the Northern part of the country in reaction to the conduct and outcome of the elections in 2011. The opposition party won the presidential election for the first time in the history of democracy in Nigeria in 2015.

The glaring nature of electoral fraud in the fourth republic was such that some states recorded 100% turn out of registered voters, with the 100% voters voting for the incumbent party as was the case of Rivers state in 2003 (Omotola, 2010). In 2007 elections in Warri North witnessed the same pattern, those that voted were more than the registered voters and they all cast their votes for PDP (IFES, 2007). Nigerian politicians have turned election, democratization, and development to an alibi with which they rhetorically entice the electorate giving them different promises of possible developmental stages. Elections vested sole ownership of state resources on the politicians. The monopoly of state resources provides avenues for politicians to misappropriate these resources and funds. Politicians have turned Nigeria elections to a political alibi with a do or die attitude to woo electorate. The state and her institution are also culpable (Bamidele, 2011). The politicization of the judiciary has also hindered development as there have been numerous instances of questionable tribunal judgements which have been reviewed to have political influence. This situation has also led to forceful retirement and retrenchment of sitting tribunal judges after they have been found guilty of manipulating judgement in favour certain political parties (Onapajo, 2013).

Table 1: Highlights of the Character of General Elections in Nigeria (1960-2015)

ELECTION	POLITICAL PARTIES	NATURE /CHARACTER	OUTCOME(S)
1964 Federal Elections	2 mega alliance parties: NNA and UPGA	Irregularities and boycott by the opposition	UPGA Controversy and crisis ultimately leading to military take-over in 1966
1979 General Elections	5 parties: NPN, NPP, UPN, PRP	UNPP Irregularities and violence	Controversy resolved by the Supreme Court in favour of NPN
1983 General Elections	6 parties: NPN, NPP, UPN, PRP, GNPP, NAP	Structural violence and manipulation of the electoral processes in favour of the incumbent	Controversy leading to military take-over in 1983, Dec, 31.
1992-93 General Elections	2 parties: NRC, SDP	Arbitrary post-postponements, cancellations and state interference	National crisis arising from the annulment of the June 12, 1993 Presidential elections
1999 General Elections	3 parties: AD, PDP, APP	Irregularities and violence	Uneasy transition to civil rule, led by PDP
2003 General Elections	50 parties prominent among which are AD, APP, PDP, APGA, LP	Violence and irregularities	Controversial self-succession by PDP
2007 General Elections	62 parties prominent among which are: ACN, ANPP, PDP, APGA, LP	Violence and irregularities	Controversial self-succession by PDP
2011 General Elections	62 plus parties prominent among which are: ACN, ANPP, PDP, APGA, LP	Violence and irregularities	Post-election violence; regime perpetration by PDP
2015 General Elections	62 plus parties prominent among which are: APC, ANPP, PDP, APGA, LP	Violence and irregularities	Regime change by APC upon victory at the polls

Source: Okoli, and Iortyer (2014); Nnamani, 2014; Aliyu, 2015

4.4.2 Electoral Violence

4.4.2.1. The 1965 Violence

The declaration of results in favour of the NNDP was the beginning of the violence. A total number of 153 Nigerians were declared dead with 64 killed by the police. Observers put casualties at over 2000 deaths with many seriously injured (Anifowose 1982: 220-221). NNDP loyalist were the most affected, while electoral officers, Obas and Chiefs, chairmen of local government, and party agents were not spared (Anifowose 1982: 240).

After the 1966 coup led by five Major Kaduna Nzeogwu and four other majors, General JTG Aguiyi Ironsi⁴⁰ was appointed within the military circle to head the new military government. Aguiyi Ironsi announced the unification decree for Nigeria and introduced a single government. This coup did not go well with the northerners as it was viewed as an anti-northerner war or coup. This led to a reprisal coup led by Major General Yakubu Gowon⁴¹ who took over the reigns of power in a period when the political stability and unification of Nigeria was deteriorating. Due to inter-ethnic rivalries in the military, the easterners felt this second coup was deliberately targeted at them. They made grievances and violence based on their perceived marginalization and later ordered all their easterners living outside the region to return home. They thereafter declared an independent republic of Biafra and a thirty-month civil war ensued to retain Nigeria's pre-secession structure. The civil war officially ended in January 1970. General Gowon went further to increase the number of states to twelve states. The eastern Nigeria and

⁴⁰ General JTG Aguiyi Ironsi: He was a senior Military Officer in the Nigerian Army and first military Head of State after the coup of January 15, 1966.

⁴¹ Major General Yakubu Gowon: He was Nigerian Head of State from 1966 to 1975. He came to power in July 1966 after the previous military coup of January 15, 1966 was overthrown. He prevented the secession of the Eastern Nigeria between 1967 and 1970.

Biafra territory suffered the most with degradation. Gowon after ruling for 9 years (1966-1975) declared that he was not ready to hand over power to a democratically elected civilian government anytime soon. He was accused of excessive corruption and this led to a coup against him. He was overthrown and General Muritala Mohammed⁴² became the Nigerian Head of State.

Apart from his unrepentant anti-corruption position, he closed in on all corrupt civil service officers. He increased the number of states to thirteen states. He was assassinated in 1976 on his way to the mosque. General Olusegun Obasanjo⁴³ who was next in command took over the command after Nigeria. President Olusegun Obasanjo felt that Nigeria needed a system that would decentralize power, and give fuller recognition, power, and rulership to the constituent units or thirteen states. General Olusegun Obasanjo established a constitutional drafting committee and the committee produced a white paper that became the 1979 constitution. In this constitution, a presidential system of government was adopted for Nigeria. A new executive president was sworn in on October 1, 1979. In this thirteen year of military rule, the Supreme Military Council (SMC)⁴⁴ was the highest ruling body.

4.4.2.2. The 1979 Violence

The 1979 general election was freer and fairer as politicians were more preoccupied with transition to civil rule. This did not mean there were no irregularities, but general level of violence was reduced. This was because the politicians came together during military rule to demand for civil rule and often disagreed when the political power had been transferred to them.

⁴² General Muritala Muhammed: He was Nigerian Head of state from 1975 to until his assassination 1976.

⁴³ General Olusegun Obasanjo: He was a military officer who was Nigerian Military Head of state between 1976 and 1979; and also civilian president between 1999 and 2007.

⁴⁴ Supreme Military Council: It was the highest decision making body which had executive and legislative powers during the military administration of General Muritala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo.

The calm atmosphere and peaceful process leading to the 1979 elections was not brought about by the existence of an enshrined culture of political maturity in the Nigerian people but has been linked to the veiled threat of immediate military reprisal should anyone engage in acts leading to the breakdown of law and order, and this could also extend the transition process and by extension the date of return to civil rule (Kurfi, 1983). The military government held more and stronger power and they used it to maintain the status quo and prevent breakdown of law and order in this election.

4.4.2.3. The 1983 Violence

More violence erupted in 1983 as there was a great divide and rift between UPN and NPN. The chances of Shehu Shagari winning the elections were delimited as Chief Obafemi Awolowo had gone to the court to determine simple majority, that is a 2/3rd majority. Due to the court injunction, winning a clear cut 25% in all the regions was not sure for the two candidates (Babarinsa 2003). This heightened the contest while extreme violence started with the gubernatorial elections. On August 16 1983, several towns in Ondo state witnessed violent rioting and protest due to perceived rigging of the governorship elections to favour Mr. Akin Omoboriowo⁴⁵, the NPN candidate in Ondo State (Kurfi 2005). Ekiti state was part of old Ondo State and they manifested the same political culture. More succinctly, Ekiti people were part of this protest by various age grades who were mobilised carrying pounding pestles and sticks (Apter, 1987), they were joined by young girls and boys (teenagers) and they were then followed by men and women who were supporters and members of the UPN. This protest was in support

⁴⁵ Mr Akin Omoboriowo: He was deputy governor in Ondo state (1979- 1983) and later switched party to contest election for governorship in 1983.

of Governor Micheal Ajasin⁴⁶ and it led to violent destruction and attack on everyone that had received one favour or the other from the NPN and its candidates. Tenant farmers that were non-indigenous to the region were victimised while widows that responded to the generosity of NPN had their own share of the violence. The political class was also targeted as important personalities and allies of Chief Omoboriowo were killed. The then majority leader of the Ondo State House of Assembly, Honourable Tunde Agunbiade, his wife, two children, a driver and five other people were killed. Another record is that of Hon. Olaiya Fagbamigbe, a member of the National Assembly and secretary of NPN in Ondo State, who along with ten members of his household, were killed (Guardian 22 August, 1983: 2, 16).

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I reviewed the political developments in Nigeria since independence starting with the first democratic experience in 1960 till the military intervention of 1966. The second republic which commenced in 1979 was also discussed in this chapter until the military took over immediately after the 1983 general elections. I also reviewed the Third Republic which was truncated after the June 12, 1993 presidential elections which was annulled by the military government. I concluded the chapter with a review of the Fourth Republic which ushered the present democratic process in 1999 and showed a highlight of election and electoral violence in Nigeria during the period under review.

⁴⁶ Governor Micheal Ajasin: He was elected governor of Ondo state on the platform of the Unity party of Nigeria during the second republic.

CHAPTER FIVE

ELECTORAL FRAUD AND VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

5.1 Introduction

Questions of how electoral fraud negatively affects the quality of the electoral process, leads to the production of poor leadership, bad governance and produces underdevelopment are widely debated in the literature. Although most of the existing literature recognize the importance and usefulness of a corruption-free electoral process (particularly to emerging democracies like Nigeria), the negative impacts of elections associated with a deviation from the universal rules are unquantifiable. It is therefore important to review the relevant literature that has addressed the issue under this study in order to enhance the explanatory capacity of research on electoral fraud and violence and add to existing literature. To achieve the above, this chapter reviews the literature on the nature of electoral fraud and violence in Nigeria. The effects of electoral fraud and violence on the transition process in Nigeria are also examined.

5.2 Electoral Fraud

5.2.1 Overview of Electoral Fraud in Nigeria

Electoral fraud refers to the use or threat of force against an opponent within the context of electoral competition for state power (Alemika, 2004). According to Ajayi (2007), electoral fraud includes various form of malpractice that distort the standard pattern of the electoral process. It involves deliberate efforts to influence, manipulate and subvert the electoral process in one's favour. The acts of electoral fraud are numerous and includes murder, arson, abduction, assault, rioting, violent seizure and destruction of electoral materials, and psychological intimidation. These attitudes and perception destroy the foundational elements of democracy – choice and consent, civic participation, accountability, rule of law and trust in state officials and institutions (Alemika, 2004). Electoral fraud in the country is primarily due to the perception of

politics and political office as both an investment and as an avenue for the acquisition of extraordinary wealth through corruption, which is otherwise not possible through any form of legitimate vocation and enterprise (Alemika, 2004).

As a result of this perception and reality, Nigerian politicians engage in various forms of activities which reduce elections into warfare through which violence, ethnic, religious and other forms of primordial sentiments and prejudices are employed as weapons. The remark credited to former President Olusegun Obasanjo who counselled his party members to see the 2007 election as a do or die affair is a direct reflection of the mentality of the Nigerian politician who would rather ensure victory no matter the position of the voting population (Omotola, 2010). Electoral fraud has been the single most potent threat to a democratic transition in Nigeria. Rigging is perpetrated by all political parties relative to their strength. However, it is the incumbent party that has the most opportunity to rig an election in order to make the difference between winning and losing an election. Incumbency, particularly at the federal level, guarantees access to and control over election materials and the electoral commission, security agencies and provides for the use of vast amounts of state resources (Jega and Ibeanu, 2007).

According to Kyari (2007), the lack of free and fair elections will ultimately lead to total loss of faith in the system and, although the court may make a difference in few cases, the building and sustenance of democratic culture is beyond the capability of the judiciary. Jega and Ibeanu (2007) opine that factors precipitating electoral violence in Nigeria includes poor electoral administration, rigging, ethnicity, religious sentiments, and the poor security system during elections, political intolerance, and lack of well-defined ideology by the political parties, chronic

economic crisis and poverty. Such violence is characterized by wanton destruction of lives and properties in what has been likened to warfare (Ake, 2001). Justice Sowemimo in his judgment in the treasonable felony against Obafemi Awolowo and his “accomplices” in the second republic observed that:

“On the evidence before me, it would appear that politics generally in Nigeria has been conducted with a certain amount of bitterness. It appears that a person belonging to a party becomes an enemy of another who belongs to a rival political party. Political parties are equivalent... to, warring camps - elections are conducted with party thugs protecting the campaigners and this state of affairs has been described to have assumed a pitch that no method would be spared, however, vindictive or extreme by any rival political party as against another to score over one or another” (Anifowose, 1982)

Professor Billy Dudley observed that the Nigeria’s political system operates on the basis of nepotism and favouritism and summarized the implications thus:

- a. Prebendal politics: He described the emergence of political office holders whose major preoccupation will be personal gains, enrichment of family members and cronies at the detriment of the electorate;
- b. Patron-client economic relationship: The economy becomes such whereby those in authority explore such avenues for personal benefits;
- c. The desire to belong to the ruling government becomes more appealing due to opportunities for wealth creation which therefore undermines and creates a gap for the sustainability of opposition in the political system;
- d. Violence and all manner of manipulation become a desirable means adopted by both ruling and opposition parties as an instrument of retaining or capturing power in elections without recourse to the choices of the electorate at the polls.

It is therefore evident that the features of the Nigerian state and the emerging regimes contributed to endemic violence in the electoral process. The nature and antecedents in the political system encourages political parties to attempt winning elections at all cost even when their candidates and parties are not popular among the electorates. Ake (1996) buttresses this point by asserting that “...the state is effectively privatized. It remains an enormous force but no longer a public force, no longer a reassuring presence guaranteeing the rule of law but a formidable threat to all except the few who control it. The state is actually encouraging lawlessness with little capacity to mediate conflicts in society.” The act of lawlessness in the electoral process is becoming a norm and tradition in the polity among the political class and criminality in the electoral process is no longer viewed negatively as expected.

The literature considers electoral fraud as an array of activities involving and synonymous with election manipulation, or vote rigging and illegal interference with the process of an election (Olaoye, 2007; Aluko, 2009). These acts of fraud consequently play a role in the emergence of a particular candidate as a result of an increased vote shared or a systemized effort at decreasing the votes of a rival, or both. They affect vote counts, which consequently impacts on the election result, whether by increasing the vote share of the favored candidate, depressing the vote share of the rival candidates, or both. What constitutes electoral fraud, in terms of legislation, varies from one country to another. While several types of election fraud could be outlawed in electoral legislation, others are clearly in violation of general laws, such as banning of assault, harassment or libel. Olaoye (2007), however, points out that though technically, the term electoral fraud indicates unacceptable and illegal behaviour, the concept is sometimes used to describe actions

which could be legal but considered ethically unacceptable, outside of the spirit of electoral laws, or in violation of the principles of democracy.

Electoral fraud, with specific reference to non-adherence to the voting process, is not alien to the political system in Nigeria. It has been noticeable even during the 1959 elections and has increased in intensity up to the present fourth republic. Edoh (2003) observes that even the election in 1959 which was held under the supervision of the British had reported incidences of violence, rigging in polling stations and intimidation of perceived opponents. He further linked the present emergence and entrenchment of the negative feature of the Nigerian political system to the regional elections of 1961.

Events leading to the 1964 general elections in Nigeria witnessed the merger of four major political parties: the NPC, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP)⁴⁷, the AG, and the NCNC into a political alliance towards winning the election. Thus, AG also merged with the NCNC and the Northern Peoples Forum (NPF)⁴⁸ to present one party known as the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA)⁴⁹ on June 3, 1964 while the NPC, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP)⁵⁰ and the Midwest Democratic Front (MDF)⁵¹ adopted the Nigerian

⁴⁷ NNDP: Nigerian National Democratic Party Formed in 1923 by Hebert Macaulay in order to participate in the new Clifford Constitution, the NNDP successfully organized various Lagos interest groups into a single group that was able to compete politically. The (NNDP) ran many candidates for seats in the 1922 elections for the Lagos Legislative Council winning three seats. The party won all the seats in the elections of 1923, 1928 and 1933. Though, the party's major function was to put candidates into the legislative council, it had a broader objective of promoting democracy in Nigeria, increasing higher Nigerian participation in the social, economic and educational development of Nigeria. The party continued to dominate politics in Lagos until 1938, when the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) overtook it in elections

⁴⁸ NPF: Northern Peoples Forum: It is an amalgamation of the Northern Element Progressive Union formed in 1950 and led by Mallam Aminu Kano (It was the opposition party in Northern Nigeria) and United Middle Belt congress (The third largest opposition in Northern Nigeria) led by Joseph Tarka and others.

⁴⁹ UPGA: United Progressive Grand Alliance: It is an alliance of the NCNC, AG, NEPU and the UMBC forged towards winning the 1964 general elections.

⁵⁰ NNDP: Nigerian National Democratic Party: The party was formed in 1964 by Samuel Akintola when he left the AG and was in competition with the latter for the control of government in the western region.

National Alliance (NNA)⁵² on August 20, 1964 (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance – I-IDEA, 2000)⁵³.

The highlights of events witnessed a situation whereby the NNA had most of its candidates returned unopposed in its strongholds while UPGA was also reported to have prevented the NNA from sponsoring candidates for elections where it also enjoyed popular support (Mackintosh, 1966). In a related development, the conduct of the Western House of Assembly elections of October 11, 1965 was characterized by violence and public disorder as a result of widespread manipulations (Omotoso, 2007). The aftermath of the crisis arising from the conduct of the election led to the first military intervention which ended civil rule in the first republic.

The political process in the second republic witnessed a higher level of manipulation compared to the first republic. There were reports of massive rigging throughout the voting process as those returned elected were fraudulently declared (Olaoye, 2007). Five political parties contested the 1979 presidential elections; these parties were; National Party of Nigeria (NPN)⁵⁴, United Party of Nigeria (UPN)⁵⁵, Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP)⁵⁶ Peoples' Redemption Party (PRP)⁵⁷ and the

⁵¹ MDF: Movement for Democratic Front: It was a small political party from Nigeria's Midwest region; which had the present day Edo and Delta states. The party and others forged alliances with the dominant parties in Nigeria's first republic, such as the AG, NPC, NCNC and NEPU.

⁵² NNA: Nigerian National Alliance: It was an alliance formed by the NPC, NNDP, and other parties towards winning the 1964 general elections

⁵³ I-IDEA: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance: This is an intergovernmental organization whose aim is to support and strengthen democratic institutions and processes around the world.

⁵⁴ NPN: National Party of Nigeria: The party was formed on September 20, 1978. It has the core of the NPC members from the first republic but also drew membership from other parts of the country by attracting former leaders of defunct parties in other parts of the country and new members.

⁵⁵ UPN: United Party of Nigeria: The party was led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo and was dominant in western Nigeria during the second republic.

⁵⁶ NPP: Nigerian People's Party: The Party was formed by three major groups among which were the Lagos Progressives (mostly members of the defunct NCNC), Club 19 and the national Council of Understanding. It was one of the parties that contested elections in the second republic

⁵⁷ PRP: Peoples Redemption Party: It was a political Party in the second republic and regarded as an incarnation of the Northern Elements Progressive Union. It was created by the supporters of Mallam Aminu Kano after his

Great Nigeria People's Party, (GNPP)⁵⁸. Three political parties rejected the votes after the presidential elections in 1979 citing irregularities in the process. Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the candidate of the UPN contested the results of the election until the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the NPN candidate, Alhaji Shehu Shagari.

The activities leading to the 1983 general election were alarming as the electoral umpire was alleged to have connived with the ruling party (NPN) in order to favor its candidates. Onafagoro and Kurfi (1983) summarize this as thus, "FEDECO staff were variously accused of aiding and abetting the perpetration of electoral fraud". The legitimacy crisis occasioned by the emergence of leaders from the widely disputed election led to crisis and disorder in many parts of the country. The use of state machinery to the advantage of the ruling party and general outcry leading to violence was responsible for a military coup which ended the second republic (Osaghae, 2002). Abe (2008:170) summarizes the extent of violence associated with the elections in 1983 by asserting that, the election witnessed so much violence and a high level of sponsored thugs.

The transition in the aborted Third Republic was the longest as the dates of transition were moved severally by the military government leading to the creation of a two-party system (Ajayi,2007). After the Governorship and legislative elections at both state and federal levels had been concluded, the presidential election was held on June 12, 1993. The outcome of the

withdrawal from the National Party of Nigeria. The Party was generally known as a progressive party and had membership of notable individuals across the country.

⁵⁸GNPP: Great Nigeria Peoples Party: It was one of the political parties that fielded candidates for elections in the second republic. The party was formed by a splinter group from the Nigerian people's Party, the group was led by Waziri Ibrahim. The party seeks to promote the cause of both the prominent ethnic groups and ethnic minorities. However, the entry of Nnamdi Azikiwe to NPP led to a power struggle in which Waziri lost. Waziri then led a group of minorities in the north and some southerners to form the Great Nigeria Peoples Party.

elections as announced in some states were in favor of the Social Democratic Party (SDP)⁵⁹ who had Chief M. K. O. Abiola⁶⁰ as its candidate. The National Electoral Commission (NEC)⁶¹ under the leadership of Prof. Humphrey Nwosu⁶² published results which gave the SDP an unassailable margin before the election was annulled (Olaoye, 2007). Despite this being heralded as the fairest in the history of elections in Nigeria, the presidential election was cancelled by the Federal Military⁶³ Government headed by General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida.

Chief Abiola was arrested by General Sani Abacha for declaring himself president and ultimately died in prison custody (Aluko, 2009). The political system did not witness a return to civil rule as General Abacha attempted to succeed himself until his unexpected death in 1998. The actions of the military governments in truncating the democratic process coupled with the excesses of Abacha subsequently led to international pressures and rendered military rule unpopular. Therefore, General Abdulsalam Abubakar who succeeded Abacha initiated a transition period immediately after assuming power leading to the emergence of the present fourth republic (Aluko, 2009).

The transition period leading to the 1999 elections provided another opportunity for a return to civilian rule in Nigeria. The Presidential election was preceded by four rounds of elections for

⁵⁹ SDP: Social Democratic Party: Popularly known as SDP, it was established as a political party by the military government to encompass the ideals of a center left political organization. It was seen as a moderate party with a flavor for young radical intellectuals and socialists. In its manifesto, it called for concerted efforts to improve the people's welfare and fight for social justice.

⁶⁰ Chief M.K.O. Abiola: Chief Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola (24 August 1937 – 7 July 1998) was a businessman and Politician who ran for presidency in 1993 for which the election results were annulled by the preceding military president.

⁶¹ NEC: National Electoral Commission: The electoral commission set-up by General Ibrahim Babangida in 1987 to oversee the elections in the third republic.

⁶² Professor Humphrey Nwosu: He was the chairman of the National electoral Commission of Nigeria and was appointed by the Military President, Ibrahim Babangida between 1989 and 1993.

⁶³ Federal Military Government: A unitary administrative system of operations which is composed of Military and civilians which had both executive and legislative powers and rule by decrees.

the local government, state House of Assembly, gubernatorial and National Assembly elections. The registered political parties were the People's Democratic Party (PDP, Alliance for Democracy (AD), All peoples Party (APP) and the Nigerian People's Party (ANPP). The outcomes of the election were contested by various parties and the PDP candidate, Olusegun Obasanjo emerged President (Oromareghae, 2013). Generally, it was observed that the elections were characterized by irregularities which led the Carter Centre to conclude in its report that a judgement about the outcome of the presidential election was debatable (National Democratic Institute-, 1999).

The process, conduct and experience during the 2003 elections did not present a new political culture from the past. The Human Rights Watch (2004)⁶⁴ in its report described the election as an abject failure due to gross non-compliance with democratic tenets and procedures. Elections for Nigeria's 774 local government councils were held in 2004 and followed much the same pattern of violence, intimidation and fraud that had characterized the 2003 general elections. Nigeria's Transition Monitoring Group (TMG)⁶⁵ observed the polls and resolved that, "it is doubtful whether the elections can only be reflective of the will of the people" (HWR, 2004).

The subsequent 2007 elections in Nigeria have been described as the worst in the history of the electoral process since independence. Various stakeholders including those who should be responsible for ensuring a credible poll conspired to manipulate the process in favor of preferred

⁶⁴ HRW: Human Right Watch: A non-governmental organization which conducts researches and advocates for human rights globally.

⁶⁵ TMG: Transition Monitoring Group: Established in 1988 as a non-profit organization, TMG is one of the notable independent civil society election observation organization in Nigeria. It is committed to the entrenchment of democracy in Nigeria.

candidates and political parties using all means including violence. The provision of security and necessary guidelines for the conduct of the election did not prevent electoral fraud and virtually all local and international observers condemned the exercise. The European Union monitors summarized the outcome of the election and concluded that they fell “far short of basic regulations and international standards for democratic elections” (The Guardian, April 30, 2007).

The 2007 elections, which marked the first time three consecutive elections were held in Nigeria, witnessed similar patterns of electoral manipulation which was not only violent but also witnessed massive fraud especially in the northern region of the country where the leading candidates Umaru Musa Yar ‘Adua⁶⁶ of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)⁶⁷ and General Muhammadu Buhari of Congress for Progressive Change (CPC)⁶⁸ hailed from. Even though the results were declared in favor of the PDP candidate, the beneficiary did not only admit that the process was fraudulent but also initiated a reform of the electoral process (Nigeria Village Square, 2007)⁶⁹. Yar ‘Adua’s untimely death led to the emergence of Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan⁷⁰ who took over the reign of governance as president. Dr Goodluck completed the remaining two years of the four-year term and contested the 2011 presidential election. His

⁶⁶ Umaru Musa Yar ‘Adua: A Peoples Democratic Party member and the 13th President of the federal republic of Nigeria. He was Governor of Katsina state between 1999 and 2007 and sworn in as President of Nigeria on May 29, 2007. He was succeeded by his deputy, Goodluck Jonathan after he was pronounced dead on the 5th may, 2010.

⁶⁷ PDP: People’s Democratic Party: It is one of the major and leading political parties in the fourth republic in terms of presence in the entire country and membership. The party was formed in 1998 and won every presidential election between 1999 and 2015.

⁶⁸ CPC: Congress for Progressive Change: It was founded in 2009 towards activities leading to the preparation for the April, 2011 elections.

⁶⁹ NVS: Nigeria Village Square: A website established in April 2003 and dedicated to articles of interest on Nigeria. It also allows comments from readers.

⁷⁰ Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan: He is a Nigerian Politician and served as President of Nigeria from 2010 to 2015. He was vice President from 200 to 2010 until the demise of She Musa ‘YarAdua, Governor of Bayelsa state between 2005 and 2007 after the impeachment of Diepreye Alamieyeseigha due to corrupt allegations, and Deputy Governor from 1999 to 2005.

emergence as the winner of the election triggered demonstrations and violence especially in some northern states as a reaction to perceived irregularities in the electoral process (NVS, 2007).

The 2015 general election also recorded its own share of violence and manipulations though records indicated such occurrence were more pronounced in the Southern states of Rivers and Akwa Ibom. Political parties, especially the ruling PDP, were accused of using their position and influence to clinch victory at all expenses during the polls. There were reports of assassinations and various forms of political elimination in the build-up to the elections. The All Progressives Congress⁷¹ (APC) and other opposition parties protested the outcome of the process and claimed that elections did not hold in some places and that the PDP ensured the declaration of results using its federal power (Vanguard News, April 2015). The APC state chairman in Akwa Ibom, Mr. Attai, expressed his reservation and disappointment with the conduct of the election in a petition sent to the then Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)⁷², Professor Attahiru Jega, on the extent of irregularities in the state with the active involvement of INEC officials.

Attai said:

“In areas where polling materials were received hordes of deadly armed thugs escorted by men in Nigeria Police uniform stormed the polling units and made away with the election materials midway into accreditation. For instance, in Ndiya, 3 Unit 004 in Nsit Ubium which happens to be the polling unit of our governorship candidate, election materials were supplied but thugs invaded the place and took away all the election materials. Given the widespread failure of the INEC to supply election materials to most parts of the state, the rampant

⁷¹ APC: All Progressive Congress: In February 2013 the CPC merged with The ACN, ANNP, some members of APGA formed the APC towards 2015 elections in order to contest election against the ruling PDP.

⁷² INEC: Independent National Electoral Commission: The electoral body was set up in 1998 to oversee Nigerian elections in the fourth republic.

snatching of ballot boxes and the bloodletting by PDP thugs that characterized the conduct of the elections, we as a party hereby call for an outright cancellation of the elections. Their outcomes cannot be allowed to stand because they can never reflect the wishes of Akwa Ibom people” (Vanguard News, April 2015)

The general outcry indicated a high degree of dissatisfaction with the process by other parties whose participation was hindered by the activities of the ruling party to retain power and perpetuate itself in governance at both executive and legislative levels (Bamidele, 2011:5). In a similar vein, some northern states; Kano, Kaduna, and Bauchi are usually classified as flashpoints due to frequent occurrence of electoral violence. It has been documented that violence usually erupts as a consequence of the declaration of results over allegations of manipulation, as was the case in Zaria and Kaduna North where the army had to be invited to restore normalcy (Sun News, 2011). In 2015, the electoral dynamics witnessed some changes as the APC received overwhelming support even from states that supported the PDP in the past such as Plateau and Benue states. In the overall assessment of the elections, minimal violence was observed as international observers also commended the process all over the country and it therefore lays credence to the fact that riots and demonstrations after elections have direct linkages with the perception of the electorate on the process (Aluko, 2009). It is also reflective of the widespread jubilation over the declaration of Buhari as president elect as there was no record of mass protest nor disapproval. Therefore, it can be deduced that elections often turned violent in Nigeria because the results did not reflect the choice of the majority in many cases.

5.2.2 Dimensions of Electoral Fraud in Nigeria

5.2.2.1 Voters Registration

Often times, politicians mobilize their supporters heavily during voter's registration exercise.

Beside ensuring that their supporters have the franchise through the voter's card, politicians find the means to register a multitude of voters by paying them and buying voter's cards. This is a crucial step in the entire dragnet of electoral fraud. Politicians solicit the co-operation of appointed Electoral Officers right from the level of the polling booths to the Resident Electoral Commissioners (REC)⁷³. The deals are often mapped out neatly well ahead of the polls.

5.2.2.2 Printing of Electoral Materials

Another notable way of perpetrating electoral fraud in Nigeria is through the unofficial printing of electoral materials. Desperate politicians, in a bid to win at the polls, engage in the massive production of counterfeit election materials that are similar to the authentic ones printed by the electoral body. Such materials include ballot papers and result sheets. The politicians embark on the printing after having sight of the specimen or model copies from the electoral body. Such exercises are resource-intensive and support Sohner's (1973) assertion that a lot of resources are channeled towards getting favorable results from the election even when the results do not represent the decision of the electorates at large.

⁷³ Resident Electoral Commissioner: The role given to the head of the electoral body at the state level in Nigeria. The appointee is assisted by other government agencies to conduct elections in the state.

5.2.2.3 Threats

In its simplest form, voters from a particular demographic cohort or who are known to support a particular party or candidate are directly threatened by supporters of another party or candidate or those hired by them. In other cases, supporters of a particular party make it known that if a particular village or neighborhood is found to have voted the “wrong” way, reprisals will be made against that community. Another method is to make a general threat of violence. For example, a bomb threat which has the effect of closing a particular polling place, thus making it difficult for people in that area to vote (Capital Times, May, 2010). Polling areas or territory known to support a particular party might be a focus for opposition in order to cause mayhem or danger, in a manner which makes it undesirable for individuals around there to cast a ballot.

Another angle is to circulate information that contains subtle threats about the consequences of not voting a particular party or candidate. For instance, during the 1999 presidential election, Retired General Olusegun Obasanjo was not a popular candidate in his home region of Southwest Nigeria. His opponent, Chief Olu Falae, was preferred. In the build-up to the election, flyers were circulated that only an Obasanjo presidency could successfully ensure a military-civilian transition and keep the military in check, having previously been one of them. This according to Omotola (2010) was “in demonstration of military solidarity” and the need to ensure absolute majority towards coalition government which was identified as one of the challenges in the First Republic. The subtle message was that the preferred Olu Falae was not military and might not be able to control the army if they decided to truncate the return to democratic rule.

5.2.2.3 Multiple Voting and Ballot Stuffing

This occurs when individuals are allowed to cast more votes than they are entitled in the electoral process. In its simplest form, ballot stuffing literally involves “stuffing” multiple ballot papers into the ballot box after it has been thumb printed in favor of a preferred candidate. Another method is for voters to cast votes at multiple booths while claiming, on each occasion, that it was their only vote. In some cases, a gang of thugs will “capture” a polling place and cast votes in the names of legitimate voters, who are prevented from voting themselves (Kiesling, 2006). There are also cases whereby those who should assist voters explore such avenues to influence the process and ensure the ballot is eventually different from the intention of the voter. Voters who require assistance to cast their votes are particularly vulnerable to having their votes stolen in this way. For example, a blind person or one who cannot read the language of the ballot paper may be told that they have voted for one party when in fact they have been led to vote for another (Casimir, Omeh and Ike 2013).

5.2.2.4 Ballot Destruction and Vote Buying

One other major form of electoral fraud is to destroy ballots which are in favor of opposition candidate or party. This is unusual in functioning democracies as it is difficult to do without attracting attention and condemnation as the blatant destruction of ballot papers can render an election invalid and force a re-run (Layton, 2011). Vote buying which can be referred to as “cash for votes”. This can also be regarded as the monetization or commercialization of the voting process and the conscience of the mostly poor voters. Due to the high rate of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy, voters are usually given money or other rewards for voting in a particular way, or not voting. In some jurisdictions, the offer or giving of other rewards is referred to as “electoral treating” (Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act, 1912).

5.2.2.5 Gerrymandering

Electoral fraud often takes place during or immediately after election campaigns, by interfering with the voting process or the counting of votes. However, such activities leading to manipulation can also occur far in advance, by altering the composition of the electorate. Though this process might not indicate a direct process of interfering with the voting process, it is a technical breach and violation of the principles of democracy (Sadiq, 2005). In many cases gerrymandering occurs within, or is the result of, electoral law. However, it may sometimes take the form of true electoral fraud, for example if laws governing the drawing of electoral boundaries are broken, or officials are bribed or otherwise coerced into altering boundaries in a way which favors a particular group.

5.2.3 Cases of Electoral Fraud in Nigeria

While electoral fraud can be regarded as an unconventional practice adopted to influence the outcome of an election against the popular will of the people, it however enjoys prominence especially in developing countries. Electoral fraud in the case of Nigeria has witnessed several dynamics and sophistication since independence. Scholars such as Kia (2013) argues that an analysis of the political system in Nigeria without special reference to the challenges of manipulation will be an exercise in futility.

The 1964 political election witnessed some resistance. The UPGA in reaction to the gross maltreatment of other stakeholders in the political process by the incumbent NNA boycotted the elections. The result of the elections was disputed as it was characterized by gross abuses and irregularities. The subsequent western region election of 1965 also witnessed similar patterns of

behavior which led to the breakdown of law and order. Validating this reality, Esua, E.E. (at that point, head of FEDECO) asserted that some officials were kidnapped while others were prevented from performing their roles on the day of the election (Nnaa, 1985). While this was the case in most polling stations, there were reports of discretionary broadcasts of counterfeit results to the electorate. This political distress coupled with the failure to keep and maintain order led to the military incursion in 1966 (Kia, 2013).

The second attempt at democratization in Nigeria also had its own share of political and electoral challenges, although activities leading to the transition process and electoral conduct did not indicate that there were widespread perceptions of manipulation in the build up to the 1979 election. However, Nnaa (1985) observes that arguments over voter registration and many subsequent issues of officials who prevented individuals from casting their ballot were reported. A portion of these charges turned into the subject of court prosecutions similar to the case in the presidential political decision tussle between Shehu Shagari and the late Obafemi Awolowo (Kia, 2013).

The process leading to the conduct of the 1983 general elections were alleged to have been scripted by the ruling party with a high level of electoral fraud using both crude and modern sophisticated political techniques. It started with the appointment of FEDECO Chairman Justice Ovie-Whiskey⁷⁴. This appointment was seen to be based on party affiliation and his conduct was not going to be fair to all parties contesting the elections. Secondly, there was the outrageous quadruplicating of the figures of registered voters. For example, it was unthinkable to observe

⁷⁴ Justice Ovie- Whiskey: He was appointed by President Shehu Shagari as the chairman of the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) between 1980 and 1983.

that the old Rivers State with a total population of between 1.5 and 2.5 million people had over 3 million registered voters by 1983. Similar unbelievable figures were recorded for other states (The Daily Times, Saturday 5th November, 1983). The manner in which FEDECO approached the election had its own pitfalls and challenges. The Daily Times distribution (1983) did not only classify the conduct as a misrepresentation of reality but also condemned the process. Prof. Ola Rotimi, in his own opinion as published in the Daily Times, criticized the massive fraud which enjoyed the support and backing of the government who should rather have ensured compliance with rules and regulations. He also expressed reservations over the role of the security agencies who were supposed to check the excesses of various actors in the political process.

Arguments over the prevalence of electoral fraud in the Fourth Republic has been linked to the 1999 constitution which allows the incumbent to re-contest for political position without resignation (Kia, 2013). As a result of the sustenance of democratic rule over two administrations for the first time, the ruling party was able to use the opportunity of incumbency which does not perfectly suit the political terrain of developing nations and manipulate the electoral process. This often results in a brand of democracy whereby incumbent use their positions to a great advantage and elections generates a lot of controversy as figures of elections usually do not reflect the true nature of the voting pattern. This situation has been a re-occurring issue and not even one of the political parties can justify claim to have conducted itself without blemish (Okolie, 2009). In the subsequent elections in the present republic, there has been sufficient evidence of brazen fraud to conclude that most political parties approach elections without much faith in themselves or in the electorate.

5.2.4 Effects of Electoral Fraud on Nigeria's Democratic Experience

Threats to national security, economic decay, terrorism, political upheavals and military confrontation could be the effects of electoral fraud and the accompanying violence on democracy. Anything that can undermine the progress and stability of a nation socially, politically and economically is termed to be threat (Onwe, Ibeogu and Nkwede, 2015). The civil disturbances that occur as a result of election violence could undermine the prospects of any transition process and democratic consolidation. This is usually the case when the political system does not provide for a conducive environment for business to thrive and to accommodate investors as a result of pre and post-election violence or grievances as a result of election outcomes. The effects on the economy include a decline of gross domestic product, increase in unemployment, and significantly reduced amounts of trade and commerce as recently witnessed in the North east region of Nigeria (Onwe, et al., 2015).

There is a tendency that opposition to the ruling party could be instrumental in sponsoring or supporting the activities of terrorist groups using it as a means of protest or to disorganize constituted administration. Terrorism, as Nigeria is currently witnessing today, is considered as an extreme form of expression, which is most contrary to the values of democracy, civilization and humanity. Finally, considering the political challenges and military confrontations in the polity, any attempt to unsettle the existing democratic process could be another grievous outcome of electoral fraud and violence.

5.2.5 Trends and Prevalence of Election Fraud in Nigeria

Election fraud has characterized and often been attributed to various uprisings arising from disputed elections as far back as the late 1940s when the elective principle was introduced. It however deteriorated when subsequent elections after independence led to the breakdown of law and order. (Alemika, 2004). The aftermath of the election crisis in the Western Region led to the violent political conflict popularly referred to as “Operation Wetie”, which was recorded from 1964 to 1965 following both federal and regional elections as well as a rift between Awolowo and Akintola (Alemika, 2004). There were also violent conflicts in parts of the northern region, notably between supporters of the NPC and supporters of other parties, mainly the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)⁷⁵ and the AG.

While the election in 1979 did not record any form of post-election violence, probably due to its supervision by the military, the exercise in 1983 witnessed massive post-election violence after the declaration of victory and especially in Oyo and Ondo states considered to be the stronghold of the UPN. Several individuals including politicians lost their lives and the large-scale destruction of property was recorded. Another election which witnessed massive protests and action was the April 16, 2011 presidential election which was declared in favour of the incumbent. The area of similarity between the 1983 and 2011 election relates to the fact that it was a response to the perceived manipulation of the process through state apparatus and resulted in the death of hundreds of people while properties were also destroyed (Alemika, 2004). However, it was observed that a clear distinction between the post-election violence in 1983 and

⁷⁵ NEPU: Northern Elements Progressive Union: The party was formed in Kano and became the main opposition party in Northern Nigeria when self-governance was granted in the 1950s. It was an offshoot of the Northern Elements Progressive Association which transformed into a political party. It had a close association with the NCNC against the NPC during the first republic.

2011 is the ethnic and religious dimension which later became the tool of attacks in the latter stages of the 2011 riots. Notwithstanding, the noted differences and dimensions of the protest, it was evident they both reflected the anger of the people towards the institutions and its collaborators who have continued to undermine the interests of the electorate. It is also a revelation of the inability of the security agencies to countenance civil disturbances due to weaknesses in the utilization of relevant intelligent gathering and information systems (Alemika, 2004).

Elections since the beginning of the fourth republic in 1999 have been particularly occasioned by the instrumental use of fraud. The TMG (a coalition of 170 NGOs in Nigeria) submitted a final report on the 2003 elections under the title ‘Do Votes Count?’ They argue in their submission that the votes of citizens in the election did not count as the process was characterised by various forms of manipulation and violence, including the falsification of the final results. Similarly, the same TMG entitled its final report on the 2007 poll as ‘Elections Programmed to Fail’ due to the monumental violence, corruption, fraud and manipulation that were observed by voters as well as by foreign and national election monitors (TMG, 2015).

Therefore, elections conducted in 1999, 2003, 2007 and especially 2015 were all characterized by widespread malpractice such as violence, corruption and the falsification of results. After the 2015 election, there was widespread disenchantment with the electoral process. It was also observed that the elections held in 2003 and 2007 were preceded by widespread intra-party and inter-party violence that continued on the polling days. In a report released in 2004, the HRW observed that: Nigeria’s federal and state elections in 2003 and local government elections 2004

were marred by serious incidents of fraud, which left scores dead and many others injured. In April and May 2003, at least one hundred people were killed and many more injured (HRW, 2014). The majority of serious abuses were perpetrated by members or supporters of the ruling party, the PDP. In a number of locations, elections simply did not take place as groups of armed thugs linked to political parties and candidates intimidated and threatened voters in order to falsify results.

The judiciary also became the arbiter in virtually all electoral conduct cases as manipulation of the process became the order of the day. Francis Febode Tabai, Justice of the Court of Appeal, in his lead judgment noted and observed that there were:

“allegations of perpetration of violence either by PDP thugs in the presence of military and police personnel or by the military and police personnel themselves....There were instances of some violence in all the 14 states which elections were questioned in this petition...from Enugu State we heard the case of how police Sgt. Anthony Abba, one of the six policemen attached to the ANPP Gubernatorial candidate was killed ... by some men amongst whom was Mike Onu a PDP Stalwart... Instances of such brutal killings either immediately before or on the 19/04/03 are numerous. These allegations were in most cases not controverted... and the most tragic and disturbing aspect of the incidents is that these incidents either happened in the presence of policemen and soldiers or immediately reported to them. No arrests were made and no investigations. The scenario created from the various incidents was that some persons were, in the name of politics, licensed to destroy lives [and] properties. It is a serious dent to our claim to democracy and democratic ideals”

The election petition filed by Muhammadu Buhari, Chuba Okadigbo⁷⁶ and the ANPP against Olusegun Obasanjo (Presidential candidate of the PDP and 267 others (CA/A/EP/3/03) on May 20, 2003 was also characterized by several instances whereby security agencies were alleged to

⁷⁶ Chuba Okadigbo: He was senate president of Nigeria under the PDP and ran as vice presidential candidate to President Muhammadu Buhari under the ANPP in 2003.

have connived with some thugs loyal to the ruling government. It was also noted that the petitioners were detailed in the presentation of their facts which included the manner, process and identities of the culprits (Alemika, 2004).

The noticeable trend of electoral manipulation and violence in 2003 and 2007 elections can be clearly linked in explaining the post-election violence in April 2011. It must also be emphasized that the absence of an effective resolution mechanism for grievances arising from disputed presidential elections in the past may have led to frustration-aggression exhibited during the post-presidential election in April 2011. Alemika (2004) further linked this position and the aftermath of violence with the emergence of a delegation which had notable traditional rulers rooting for Jonathan's re-election against the PDP zoning arrangement which ultimately denied the North a second term of office. Politics had long been divided along the North-South line in Nigeria.

While the media reported a low turn-out of voters in the presidential polls, results declared a day later indicated an extra-ordinarily high turn-out of voters who also voted overwhelmingly for Jonathan and the PDP (Omotola, 2012). When the results were declared, the opposition especially in Northern states reacted with violent protests. The electoral process and pattern of behaviour observed clearly indicates a high level of similarities during the three (1999, 2003 and 2007) elections and the 2011 general election as well. The two political zones also have a political culture of declaration of results that indicated nearly 100% voter turn-out, even when media and observers' reports on the election days indicated to the contrary (Alemika, 2004).

Despite the incessant occurrence of electoral fraud as witnessed frequently in Nigeria between 1999-2015, attempts at addressing the menace have been at best wishful. The electoral laws which ought to eliminate and discourage such attitudes have rather perpetuated it and invariably violated the electoral freedom of Nigerians with impunity (Ani and Chinedu, 2013). Political actors have exploited the weak system and often colluded with the INEC officials and police, and even when caught, they believe that they would go unpunished (Ani and Chinedu, 2013). Before the 2011 elections which was applauded considering previous experiences, Nigeria had been noted for a prevalent history of electoral fraud since independence (Patrick, 2003).

A psychological phenomenon of electoral fraud anger has been a constant feature of the Nigerian political system since 1960, as a function of violence which has hindered development and planning (Ani and Chinedu, 2013). Beyond any reason of doubt, there is a political challenge that sweeps across Nigeria at any given election time since independence. This political issue is very contagious, disruptive and results in poor choices of credible leaders called “severe Nigerian Electoral Fraud Anger Syndrome” (SNEFAS) (Ani and Chinedu, 2013).

The use of various forms of manipulation in order to gain advantage over opponents has been a continuous activity within the political class. While the use of violence through ballot snatching, kidnapping and other vices are increasingly alarming, bribery and corruption of security/electoral agents and the outright technical disenfranchisement of political opponents have been other orchestrated methods of influencing electoral outcomes (Ani and Chinedu, 2013). The non-adherence to human rights as a result of police brutality, and the total disregard for cultural values and dignity accounts for the recruitment of young adults as thugs by the political elites for

the purpose of disrupting elections and ensuring the emergence of preferred and selected candidates.

5.3 Electoral Violence

5.3.1 The Outlook

Electoral violence can be described as a set of crisis motivated activities designed to create a change in the electoral outcome in order to favor a particular candidate to assume power. In the same vein, the International Foundation for Election Systems (2011) submits that electoral violence involves harm or threat that is directed towards a person or property that plays a role in an election process. Hence, any activity that disrupts the smooth-running process of an election is undesirable and damaging to the entire integrity of the process. Electoral violence is not just about activities that disrupt the integrity of the process on the day of elections, but it includes all acts that threaten and disrupt the success of an election prior to, during and after the polls (IFES, 2011).

Ilufeye (2006) describes electoral violence in Nigeria thus:

“An instrument employed by non-governmental organizations, individuals and groups to press forward their demands, hence, electoral violence has become an endemic and persistent phenomenon that is eventually becoming an impediment to political stability and economic progress. While electoral violence involve looting, arson, thuggery, kidnapping among others spontaneous or not, which may occur before, during and after every election. Electoral violence has remained an enduring character of politics in Nigeria. Electoral violence among others is competitive and aggravated, by two factors as a weapon of violence. Firstly, the perception of state power by the governing elite as an end in itself rather than a means to an end. The second is the immensity and ubiquity of state power and its exclusive control of the forces of coercion.”

This view assesses the prevalence of electoral violence as an instrument in the hand of some people who seek to undermine the interest of the larger society. It further identifies that the competitive nature of electoral fraud rests on the assumption of perceiving power as an end while the enormity of the state power is desirable due to its uniqueness.

Fischer (2002) shows that electoral violence has been a major issue in emerging democracies especially in the 'Third World'. She describes it as a random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay, or otherwise influence an electoral process through various antics that seek to subvert the ideal procedure. Igbuzor (2010) views electoral violence as any act of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities before, during or after election which could cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with electoral processes.

Electoral violence is not limited to Nigeria alone as it is a common phenomenon in most African countries. Burchard (2015) observes that elections in most African countries are often characterized by voters experiencing harassment, intimidation and death in some cases. She further observes that electoral violence has transformed into a barrier and became a hindrance to credible elections in Nigeria and other African countries. Also, Snyder (2000) and Fischer (2002) took note of the propensity for new democracies to experience such degree of violence when the drive towards nation building is just gathering momentum. They also contend that while multi-party system gives alternatives and choices of association, it has also attracted violence due to competition which undoubtedly puts some parties at a disadvantage.

Electoral violence is one of the reoccurring negative stigma and challenges to the democratic system that has been experienced in most young democracies. This disparaging act is spreading and already becoming a regular behavior that electorates experience during most elections. Animashaun (2008), in his research titled: “*African Democracy and the Dilemma of Credible Elections*”, states that, “the choice of a particular electoral system does not only have a profound effect on the political life of a country, but also distributes costs and benefits to political actors such as political parties and candidates”. He further emphasizes that an “election represents the lifeblood of modern democracy and the frequency, fairness and openness of such an election are crucial to the political stability of the polity” (Animashaun, 2010). It can therefore be understood that democracy cannot be assumed to be practiced properly without the operation of a credible election in place and within prescribed intervals. Therefore, the survival of any democratic system is dependent on values of adherence to equity and justice to all parties in the system.

Electoral violence in Nigeria dates back to the first major elections and it has, over the years, become a trend with so much sophistication by politicians and their supporters. The history of elections in Nigeria indicates that violence-free elections were those organized under colonial rule and military government (Obi, 2008; Ekundayo, 2015). In same vein, it has been documented that electoral violence in Nigeria could be traced to the first democratic experience in which the Tivland was reacting to the intimidation and harassments of the ruling Northern People’s Congress on one hand; and the perceived irregularities that characterized both the 1964 federal elections and 1965 the Western Region⁷⁷ elections on the other (Animashaun, 2008). The

⁷⁷ Western Region: On April 1, 1939, the southern Nigeria was divided into two provinces known as the Western and Eastern province. Subsequently, the Richards constitution of 1946 introduced regional Houses for the Western, Eastern and Northern Provinces. The 1954 Constitution and leading towards independence in 1960 therefore gave birth to a country consisting of Western, Eastern and Northern regions (Nigerian Wiki).

consequences of these crises greatly contributed to the termination of Nigeria's First Republic through a bloody military coup in January 1966⁷⁸.

Destructive means have been employed in some cases which negates the core elements of true democracy and the progress of any nation. As this menace continues to affect the integrity of elections, the state is becoming an apparatus for powerful politicians to pursue their selfish political ambitions by manipulating and thwarting state resources in their favor. Animashaun (2010) contends that the crisis of the electoral system in Nigeria will be better understood if situated within the context of the nature of the political economy of the Nigerian state.

The Nigerian economy is based on revenue from crude oil as over seventy percent of her earnings are derived from it. The ruling elites have been reported to use politics as a weapon to access the resources of the country. Therefore, political power in Nigeria attracts the interest of the bourgeoisie who ultimately use their wealth and influence to the advantage of preferred candidates who will favor their interest while in power. This is described as a client-based approach whereby investment in the electoral process through vote buying is a guarantee for votes during the elections (Onapajo, 2015). Onapajo (2015) further affirms the role of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy as factors necessitating the willingness of the citizens to sell their votes in exchange for money. It has been argued in the literature that Nigeria's oil wealth has been more of a curse than blessings considering the impacts on the nation. While successive governments in Nigeria have had revenue in excess of budgeted amounts in the past, the failure

⁷⁸ January 1966: The day Nigerian Military (first time) took over the reins of government through a bloody coup in Nigeria. The military hinged the coup on the breakdown of law and order which trailed the regional elections (Oromareghake, 2013).

of such to reflect in the general development of the country has been a major issue that has affected economic growth and prosperity (Adelabu, 2012).

After independence, the electoral process and the dimension of violence in Nigeria's first republic⁷⁹ showcase a nation faced with enormous challenge towards maintaining democratic governance. The democratic process has been interrupted by successive military interventions and the country is currently in its fourth phase of democratic transition. Animashaun (2010) notes that "the political parties in the fourth republic⁸⁰ are quite deficient in their ideological commitment compared to their forebears in the first and second republics⁸¹". According to him, the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS)⁸² report shows that only the 1959 and 1979 elections had taken place without systematic rigging and outright violence. Those two elections had one point in common; they were held in the presence of strong arbiters - the colonial state and the military that were not participants and desired legitimate free and fair elections. In the case of the colonial state, it was an avenue to initiate a formidable and transparent process that will serve as a roadmap for subsequent elections, and also to legitimize colonialism. The 1979 election under the military was the first after a civil war which had threaten the existence of the country, therefore the need to harmonize and create an enabling environment for all participants became inevitable.

⁷⁹ The First Republic: The period of the first civilian rule after independence (1960-1966) before the military coup of 1966.

⁸⁰ The Fourth Republic: The period of civilian rule from 1999 till date.

⁸¹ Second Republic: The period of civilian rule from 1979 to 1983.

⁸² NIPSS: The National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS): A policy formation center for bureaucrats, private sector leaders, army officers, and medium rank and senior civil servants to brainstorm on key National issues and goals. It was founded in 1979 by the Nigerian government.

It should however be noted that electoral violence has remained an enduring character of elections in Nigeria considering other elections thereafter. There has always been a clamor for a truly democratic system of government built on a credible electoral system in Nigeria, but the reality of the process has been very disturbing. Ugoh (2004) advocates for the intervention of civil societies and concludes that such can bring about effective voter education and awareness capable of reforming the political culture of the people.

Egberi (2015) however berates electoral violence and links the menace to the emergence of incompetent leaders who seized such opportunity to emerge in the polity. Ezeani (2005) observes that electoral violence has an adverse effect on democratic stability because it negates the essential purpose of elections as a popular basis for government. He noted that a government which by electoral violence sustains itself in power against the wishes of the majority of the electorate lacks the legitimacy and the moral authority to that popular mandate it enjoys.

5.3.2 Types of Violence

5.3.2.1 Incidental and Strategic Violence

In a study titled “Electoral Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa: Causes and Consequences”, Burchard (2015) identifies incidental electoral violence and strategic electoral violence as factors of disagreements in elections. According to him, incidental electoral violence takes place when there is a protest around electoral events, either before or after the election. Incidental electoral violence occurs when two or more candidates are running for a position and there are perceptions of fraud to favor one of the candidates which triggers reactions from the supporters of the other candidate(s). He contends that incidental electoral violence is not strategic due to its nature,

which is not pre-planned but rather a spontaneous event. He concludes that it may arise out of mutual frustration between proponents of rival parties against each other.

However, he describes strategic electoral violence as the direct opposite of incidental electoral violence. It is pre-planned to achieve pre-determined outcome and ultimately rig an election in favor of a particular candidate. Strategic electoral violence can be used for a multiplicity of electoral purposes including influencing and suppressing voter intentions, mobilizing voter support, or disrupting an election altogether. He further stresses that strategic electoral violence can be subdivided into two groups. These are suppressive and mobilizing strategic electoral violence and disruptive strategic electoral violence. Suppressive and mobilizing violence are conceived as part of a larger electoral strategy that an aspirant candidate or party employs in an attempt to deliberately affect the election outcome. Disruptive violence is introduced to prevent a vote from taking place or to change an already planned outcome.

There were reports that members not involved in the electoral process such as rebel groups or terrorist organizations use disruptive electoral violence to achieve their desires and objectives within the polity. For instance, the terrorist organization known as Boko Haram⁸³ in Nigeria was accused of engaging in electoral violence as a means of discouraging voters from participating in the 2011 and 2015 elections. These groups are generally external to the process of elections and acts perpetrated by Boko Haram is more akin to terrorist attacks (Burchard, 2015).

⁸³ Boko-Haram: A jihadist movement formed in 2002 by Muhammed Yusuf, based in North Eastern Nigeria and active in other neighboring countries. It aimed amongst others is the prohibition of western education and the purification of Islam. It has claimed responsibility for various kidnapping and bombings in Nigeria (Wikipedia).

5.3.2.2 Physical and Psychological Violence

Ladan (2006) also identifies two categories of electoral violence as physical and psychological violence. According to him physical violence entails bodily harm which could be inflicted on individuals or groups. He describes psychological violence as actions which seek to destroy the image of the opponent(s) such as abusive slogans and propaganda.

5.3.3 Causes and Predisposing Factors

Inokoba and Maliki (2011) aptly summarize the causes of electoral violence in Nigeria and conclude that the following conditions provide for electoral violence:

- State institutions promote violence: There have been arguments that various actions of the government and its agencies usually lead to violence. For instance, situations whereby the police or an electoral officer perceived to take side with a ruling or incumbent political officer holder often leads to violence.
- There is a culture of impunity in Nigerian society: There has also been a culture of neglecting the rules and procedures among Nigerians. Therefore, some influential politicians have been alleged to have used their influence and power to either cause crisis where they are not popular or stuff ballot boxes where they can possibly make that possible.
- Political leaders at all levels perpetrate electoral violence with impunity: It has been observed that virtually all parties in the political system often behave in a way that abuse the guidelines and provisions of the electoral Act. This often result especially when results don't seem to favor them.
- There is no strict adherence to dictates of institutional and legal solutions against electoral violence: While electoral violence is generally condemned by all and sundry,

the institutionalization of punishments for electoral violence have either not been followed to the letter or glossed over.

- Inadequate public knowledge of the electoral system and violence: Though electoral violence is generally known to exist, adequate documentation and public knowledge to address the menace is summarily inadequate.
- Prebendal politics is the basis for electoral violence: The fact that politics in Nigeria has been synonymous with sharing of the commonwealth of the nation encourages all manners of approaches, including violence, to sustain the trend while the opposition also tries to come on board and gain access to the resources.

Other factors identified by them that have an impact include;

- Hate campaigns
- Rigging of elections
- Thuggery
- Abuse of power
- Electoral corruption and fraud

Okafor (2015) also identifies some inherent factors in the system as predisposing factors of electoral violence. He identifies the failure of leadership, corruption and unemployment as major problems since independence. In his submission, he describes those in charge of governance in the country as accidental leaders whose unpreparedness is not in doubt. According to him, this set of leaders on whom the mantle of leadership fell at the country's independence in 1960 did not have the capacity, experience and willingness to accept leadership responsibilities. He

stresses that this development has led to the emergence of a questionable set of political leaders and office holders.

Ikyase and Egberi (2015) also identify corruption as a factor which often leads to electoral violence. They show that mass poverty of the people caused by the socio-economic crisis of under development is a major contributing issue of violence during elections. Osimiri (2009) develops this assertion by drawing a linkage between corruption and the catastrophic governance in Nigeria and cited the establishment of the anti-corruption agencies as a way in which the menace is being addressed. He points at the establishment of the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and its drive to instill a level of decorum and sanity in the system.

The role of unemployment in electoral violence is recorded in the literature as well. The increasing rate of unemployment in Nigeria and its poverty related consequences have been noted as a major plausible explanation for the incidence of electoral violence (Molina & Lehoucq, 1999; Ziblatt, 2009; Onapajo, 2015). Onapajo concludes that politics have become a way of making money through selling of votes to political actors. There have been reported cases of arms procurement in the electoral system leading to several assassinations, thuggery and bloody political clashes (Ajayi, 2007). This explains the volatile nature of the Nigerian electoral system whereby the security of the candidates and electorates is not guaranteed in the electoral process. The atmosphere is usually charged due to the desire of the various paid agents to do the bidding of their pay masters.

Electoral maladministration and political intolerance have also been highlighted as causes of electoral violence in Nigeria. Faboyede (2014) concludes that the perceived insincerity of the electoral officers seems to overshadow the inadequate control mechanisms and poor logistics which enhance manipulations through electoral fraud. He added that political intolerance and the tendency to see the conduct of election as “a must win” is a contributing factor to electoral violence. This is often done at the detriment of democratic stability and overall interest of the country. It can also be observed that until recently at the federal level, when President Goodluck Jonathan lost to incumbent President Muhammadu Buhari, it is often very difficult for incumbent leaders in Nigeria to accept the result of an election that seems unfavorable (Lewis and Kew, 2015).

There has been a consensus of opinion on the dangers of electoral violence to the wellbeing of the people. Attempts have been made to initiate more credibility to the electoral process through technology (Ituma, 2017). Olurode (2017) affirms that technology in elections is indispensable considering its adoption by several African countries. Technology-based elections is argued to be more efficient considering the use of biometrics which will mitigate perceived fraud related violence. Another option to address electoral fraud and violence is to strengthen the implementation of the Nigerian Electoral Act.

5.4 Technology and Elections in Nigeria

The incessant challenges to the outcome of elections and the need to ensure effective and efficient management of elections in Nigeria has given rise to the clamour for the adoption of technology. Arguments on how such has ensured credibility in other parts of the world has been advanced by proponents of such idea (Fatai and Adisa, 2017). Considering the extent of

litigations after electoral contests due to widespread irregularities and violence, voter apathy is also becoming a very big issue as voters often believe their votes do not count in the process (Nwangwu, 2015). Therefore, the need for a more reliable method of conducting elections using technology to guarantee credibility and reliability becomes a major issue to be addressed. The political class have also used the weaknesses in the system to perpetuate various forms of electoral malpractices which can only be resolved through a thorough and efficient process of “innovative anti-rigging biometric devices” (Nwangwu, 2015).

However, the process of adopting technology in the Nigerian election system faces legal and operational challenges (Fatai and Adisa, 2017). While section 52 of the electoral Act 2010 (as amended) prohibits electronic voting entirely, the capacity of INEC to manage the process effectively were also major issues of concern (Oche, 2015). Civil society organisations such as the Society for the Advancement and Protection of Public Rights in their own submission argued that:

“the use of the card reader for screening voter’s card or which has the effect of preventing a registered voter from voting is beyond the power of INEC. By section 77(2) and 117(2) of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria (as amended), INEC has not (sic) right to deprive eligible Nigerians of the rights to vote at the elections.” (SAPPR, 2015)

However, there were also counter arguments which sought to clarify that biometric authentication was a system of ensuring validation of voters rather than electronic voting per se (Alebiosu, 2016). Oderemi (2015) stated that “INEC has the constitutional power to set the standards and guidelines for elections and emphasized that using the card reader is a “fragment of the accreditation process rather than voting”. Paragraph 15 of part 1 of the Third Schedule of the 199 constitution (as amended) also mandated INEC “To organise, undertake and supervise all

elections in Nigeria; conduct the registration of persons qualified to vote, prepare and maintain and revise the registration of voters for elections.”

After the process was given consideration, the progress made after the test running using biometric verification through Permanent Voter’s Cards (PVCs) and Smart card Readers (SCRs) in selected regions across the country elicited some interests and the hope for more credibility (Fatai and Adisa, 2017). The eventual conduct of election using biometric authentication led to several electoral upsets as political parties lost in previously dominant strongholds, and prediction of electoral outcome before elections became very difficult (Mgba, 2017). The outcome of the 2015 General Elections as a result of the adoption of technology did not only restore confidence in the electoral system but also resulted in a very significant reduction in electoral petitions filed after the exercise had been concluded.

The INEC chairman summed up the success of the exercise and the ability to address most of the previous electoral challenges by declaring that:

“We have made rigging impossible for them (electoral fraudsters) as there is no way how the total number of votes cast at the polling units could exceed the number of accredited persons. Such discrepancy in figures will be immediately spotted. This technology made it impossible for any corrupt electoral officer to connive with any politicians to pad-up results. The information stored in both the card readers and the result sheets taken to the ward levels would be retrieved once there is evidence of tampering” (cited in

Oche 2015, Leadership April 5, 2015).

This position was also reflected in the reactions of stakeholders especially politicians to the result of the elections. It will be very interesting to compare the reported cases of fraud in 2007, 2011 and 2015 general elections.

Table 2: Number of States with Recorded Cases of Electoral Fraud During the Presidential Elections.

Year	2007	2011	2015
Number of states	28	11	2

Source: Compiled from the Report of the Nigerian Bar Association Election Observer Group 2015

In a similar development, the number of dissatisfactions by contestants as a direct reaction to the result was also comparatively lower than previous years under review (2007, 2011 and 2015).

Table 3: Number of Electoral Petitions recorded during the 2007, 2011 and 2015 General Elections

Geo-Political Zones	2007	2011	2015
North-Central	51	24	13
North-East	73	29	23
North-West	57	18	-
South-East	208	124	93
South-South	196	118	95
South West	204	109	73
Total	789	422	297

Source: Compiled from the Report of the Nigerian Bar Association Election Observer Group 2015

The tables above justified and clearly demonstrates a very substantial reduction in fraud related issues during elections conducted as evidenced from the moment biometric was first introduced in 2011 and the eventually full deployment in 2015. It also gave rise to a new paradigm whereby political opponents do not only accept the results but also congratulate the emerging candidates publicly. Incumbents who often believed their positions are least threatened could no longer guarantee such assumptions, as various seating Governors, Senators and other political officer holders lost the bid for re-election due to transparency in the system (Nwangwu,2015).

The introduction of technology therefore served as a check to the unconventional attitude of conducting election in Nigeria which is often characterised by massive manipulation, violence and threat to life and wellbeing of the people.

5.4.1 Electoral Act

The Electoral Act is the framework guiding electoral conduct in Nigeria. It also outlines punishments for violations of the provisions of the document. It determines the conditions for voters' eligibility, election offences and penalties, nomination criteria for candidates and every other activity that have to do with elections. The Electoral Act in Nigeria has experienced several amendments due to necessities and the need to address challenges observed in the previous versions. Animashaun (2010) observes that the electoral reform in Nigeria is anchored on two instruments; the 1999 Constitution and the 2006 Electoral Act. These two documents contain rules and regulations that guide elections and governance in Nigeria. Both documents aim at protecting the integrity of the electoral process and the role of the citizens as a whole. Although the regulations are ambitious, they have faced challenges towards guaranteeing and ensuring credible elections. The challenges faced by these regulations in practice can be linked to two major factors: the weakness and conflicting nature of essential provisions, and the weakness of the institutions in applying rules and standards as required.

These two identified inadequacies were exploited by the political class during the first post-transition elections in 2003 and were grossly abused during the 2007 polls. According to Section 154(1) of the 1999 Constitution, the powers to nominate the entire leadership of the Independent National Electoral Commission are conferred on the President subject to a screening exercise by the Senate. The state chief executives are also empowered by the constitution to appoint members of State Independent Electoral Commission subject to confirmation by the state Houses

of Assembly. In addition, Section 221 of the 1999 constitution recognizes and accepts candidates based on their sponsorship from registered political parties with the commission. Therefore, the chances of independent candidates to contest elections in the present fourth republic is not guaranteed by such provisions of the constitution. It must however be noted that disagreements as a product of the absence of internal democracy within political parties have led to the increasing demand for the inclusion of independent candidates in Nigeria's electoral regulations.

The Electoral Act of Nigeria covers all areas of the electoral process from the Independent National Electoral Commission to the electoral offences and punishment attached to the offences. From Electoral Act Simplified (2010:3), the first section spells out the function of the Electoral Commission and what it entails;

“The body responsible for conducting elections in Nigeria, how elections are conducted and the method of voting, conditions for voter eligibility, the legal requirements for being included on the voters register, conditions under which an election may be delayed or postponed, and the actions to be taken to reschedule such election, election offences and their penalties, nominations criteria for candidates and political parties and regulations for electoral campaigns.”

The second section of the Act describes the Independent National Electoral body, its functions and members that makes up the Board. It also entails the power that the body exercises. For the purpose of this research, we shall examine some of the provisions as it relates to vote buying and selling, the role of the electoral officers and their conducts, and the prohibition of the use of force in the electoral process.

Section 4 (23) of the Act deals with the issue of buying and selling of voters' cards. While the Electoral Acts clearly forbids the selling and buying of votes, the fact that money plays a

dominant role in the political system in Nigeria often influences the entire process with various actors involved (Lucky, 2013). In reality, the process of selecting leaders has been commercialized to the extent that voters often expect the politicians to give them money in return for votes. Lucky (2013) further stresses that Nigeria witnessed the mobilization of voters and distribution of materials such as caps and shirts in the first republic (1960-1966) and indicated that vote buying escalated in the second republic (1979- 1983).

The third republic witnessed another dimension of vote buying as the two-party system gave some few elites the opportunity to struggle for control of the parties. It was reported that party members demanded money from members to win elections as flag bearers and such arrangements actually determined the allocation of votes (Nwosu, 1996). However, the role of money in the Fourth Republic has been described as shameless and indecent (Suberu, 2001). The politicians have rather seen the deployment of financial resources as investments towards gaining access to political offices. In some cases, the total number of votes have been reported to be in excess of accredited voters especially during the elections for National Assembly and presidential elections (Transition Monitoring Group⁸⁴, 1999).

Section 4 (28) of the Act provides that officers have to be neutral in the conduct of election. An oath of neutrality is a requirement to be sworn at a High court by all staff of the Commission taking part in an election. However, taking a cursory look into the activities of the electoral body during the first republic revealed that the NNA government used its influence to return most

⁸⁴ Transition Monitoring Group: A coalition of local civil society groups who have played an active role in monitoring Nigerian elections in the fourth republic.

candidates unopposed and prevented the opposition from nominating candidates in some parts of the country (Mackintosh, 1966) cited in Adepeju (2011). The trend of using the electoral body to influence electoral outcomes continued in the second republic as the process were not only rigged but also witnessed series of violence (Abe,2008). Electoral officers were reported to have openly displayed bias and worked in favor of political parties which negates the professional conduct required.

The aborted Third Republic also witnessed crises and electoral manipulations like previous elections. Observers' submission indicated that elections were marred by fraud and irregularities and the US- based Carter Centre expressed reservations over the outcome of the presidential elections even though it was considered the freest in the history of the country (NDI, 1999). In the present Fourth Republic, electoral officers working in conjunction with politicians have either been found in unauthorized locations or declared missing in its entirety (Adeyemo, 2007). The electoral umpire and its officers have been accused by both the incumbent and opposition candidates as reported around the country. While the Judiciary is seen as the last resort for remedy to those who have been fraudulently rigged out, there have also been reported issues of bribery and collusion by judges who eventually give judgments in favor of preferred candidates (Onapajo, 2015). This situation has also been a challenge to the possibility of fair hearing during the resulting electoral petition cases. Several judgments have either been overturned and Judges who gave such verdicts have been indicted.

The quest for political office has also resulted in bloody clashes, assassinations and possession of arms by rival politicians (Ajayi, 2007). The level of insecurity in the country has been on the

increase as a result. Section 4 (96) of the Act provides clarity on the prohibition of the use of force or violence during political campaign. The Acts provides punishments for any person or group who tries to compel another person or group to support or refrain from supporting candidates of their choice. However, the need to suppress opponents leading to violence has been observed since independence and was reported in the first republic (Ginsberg, 1993). There were reported cases of breakdown of law and order also in the second republic as violence was promoted in a manner whereby thugs, arsonists and assassins unleashed fears and terror on opponents and voters (Abe, 2008). The fourth republic has also witnessed a rise in cases of illegal possession of arms by politicians and their supporters and incidence of violence has escalated throughout the conducts of election as various political interest and groups intimidate and suppress oppositions with all manners of violence (WANEP, 2014).

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the nature of electoral fraud in Nigeria by reviewing carefully the structure, composition, features and the existence of such in the Nigerian system. I also analysed the types of electoral fraud by examining the forms and processes involved and highlighted the causes of electoral fraud in Nigeria from independence until 2015. The effects of electoral fraud in Nigeria's democratic experience and the trends of electoral fraud were succinctly exposed. The emergence and impact of technology in the Nigerian election was also discussed and analysed. I further discussed issues of electoral violence in Nigeria and concluded the chapter with a brief overview of the Electoral Act. The factors, issues, nature and causes of electoral violence clearly point to the existence of elites who rather constitute themselves into various groups towards exploiting the vulnerability of the masses. This is a confirmation of the elite theory used as our framework in this study, it gives a clear view of the political situation

whereby very few individuals actually used their resources to dictate the political space and thereby exploiting the situation to their optimum advantage.

CHAPTER SIX

ELECTIONS AND TRANSITION IN EKITI STATE

6.1 Introduction

Debates continually ensue on how electoral fraud negatively affects the quality of democratic transition process in most part of Nigeria, and Ekiti State is not an exception. Historical narratives of the process of election in the state reveal how INEC had altered previous election timetables for new dates because of electoral irregularities especially in the gubernatorial elections. To explore the details of electoral fraud and its effects on the democratic transition in Ekiti, this chapter provides a historical background on the creation of Ekiti State and goes on to discuss salient issues that help in addressing most of the research objectives on the subject matter.

6.2 Ekiti History

Ekiti or Okiti means hilly land. The 16 kingdoms of Ekiti are: Otun, Ikole, Ado, Oye, Ijero, Ikere, Ido, Ise, Emure, Efon. Okemesi, Ara, Isan, Itaji, Obo, and Ogotun (Ola, 2011; Jeyifo, 2014). The Ekiti language differed very strongly in intonation from one town to the other. This cultural diversity suggests that various groups of people migrated into the present day Ekiti land. Observations showed that towns and cities within the same trade route have similar intonations, while towns that are not within this route have very complex intonation. Ikere, Akure, Ise, and Emure are on the same trade routes and are very close in intonation. The Ekiti economy is comprised mainly of agriculture in commercial quantity. The family dictates the ownership and factors of production, distribution, and exchange. Ekiti as an economic power house was behind the development of the south-western region.

The state is naturally endowed with timber and sandwiched between the deciduous and pure savannah leading to northern and southern ecological zones with over seventy percent population practicing subsistence farming. (Ola, 2011). The land area of Ekiti state is 10898.68 kilometers, with various mountains and hills with prominent rocks and tourist sites. According to Isola Olomola, the name Ekiti was used to refer to the entire northeastern part of the Yoruba nation or empire before the arrival of the Europeans.

The British entered Ekiti during the Ekiti Parapo war and encouraged the production of commercial agricultural products for exports. Not until 1878 that the Ekiti Parapo war started that the Ekiti people tried to form a single political unit. The Ekiti Parapo war lasted for 15 years (1878-1893). It took them so long because the Ekiti people had no political class to negotiate cease fire. It took the Ekiti military eighty years to officially bring the war to an end, with the assistance of Oyo, Ife, and the British colonial power (Morakinyo, 2006). After the war, Ekiti became an isolated geographical and political jurisdiction. However, they retraced their steps and joined national politics grudgingly (Adetoye, and Ajayi, 2006).

6.3 State Creation and Democratic Transition

Ekiti was created as a political federation of Nigeria on October 1, 1996 from the old Ondo State by the late General Sani Abacha during a military regime. Ekiti State shares boundaries with Ondo, Osun, Kwara and Kogi States. Ekiti State has 16 Local Government Areas as shown in Figure 2. The LGAs are politically grouped into three senatorial districts, 6 federal constituencies, and 26 State House of Assembly constituencies. Ekiti Central and Ekiti North senatorial districts both have five local governments each, while Ekiti South senatorial district has six local government areas (Omilusi, 2014). Due to previous agitations over the years, the

creation of the state received an overwhelming applause by the indigenes at home and abroad. The initial push for the formation of the state by Ekiti people was borne out of a feeling of neglect, marginalization, impoverishment and the desire and quest for self-assertion, autonomous development and meaningful participation in events and situations that directly impacted on their lives and destiny (Oyebode, 2001).



Figure 1 Map of Nigeria Showing the Location of Ekiti State

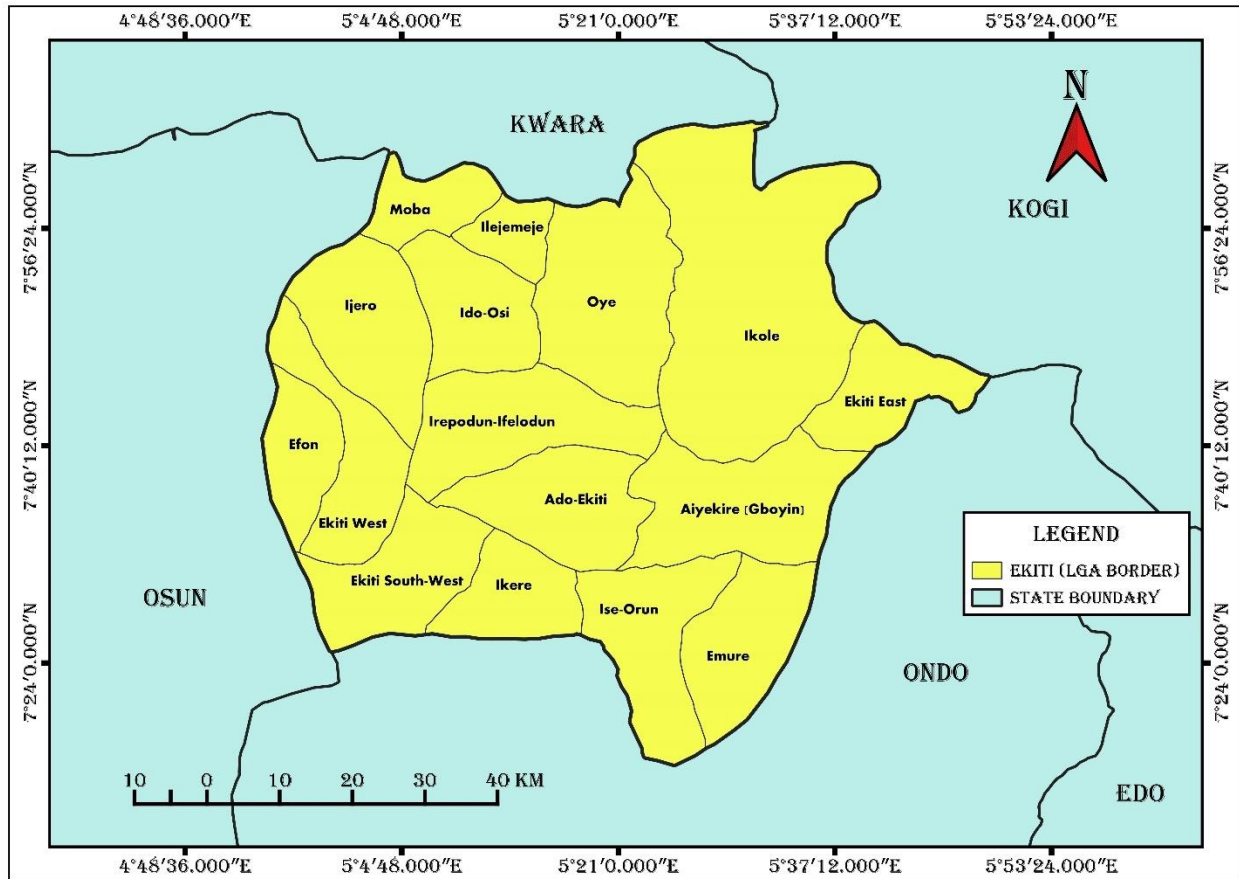


Figure 2:Map of Ekiti State Showing the 16 LGAs

Ekiti is culturally homogenous and they speak a dialect of Yoruba language known as Ekiti (Ekiti State Government Bulletin, 2011). The homogenous nature of Ekiti confers on the state some uniqueness among the states of the federation. The homogeneity in the Ekiti people can be linked to the shared values of the people, customs, traditions and accustomed ideas about how they view the society. Slight differences are noticeable in the Ekiti dialect of the Yoruba language spoken by the people. This is affected by their locations, especially the border communities to other states.

Ekiti State was administered by two military administrators, Lt. Col. Mohammed Bawa and Navy Captain Atanda Yusuf between October 1996 and May 1999 when the state witnessed its first democratic elections. Just as the creation of the state became a necessity due to agitations, a publication of the Nigerian Governors Forum summarized the emergence of Ekiti State thus:

“The quest for the creation of Ekiti was a long-cherished ambition of the people of the State. The excision of Ondo State (of which Ekiti was a part) from the Western State in 1976 was a half-way station on the road to the fulfillment of this dream, which came to reality in 1996. Thus, when the people of Ekiti State elected their Governor and members of the State House of Assembly in 1999, they were hopeful that self-determination would result in rapid socio-economic development. The Alliance for Democracy won the election of 1999, but lost the 2003 governorship election which brought in the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) to power (NGF, 2013)”

The creation of Ekiti State according to this publication was a step towards meeting the yearnings and aspirations of the people. The development gave birth to an anticipated development of the general wellbeing of the people leading to the election of executive and legislative arms of Government at the return of democratic rule in 1999. The politics of the state has also witnessed the transfer of power between the two major political parties. The fact that two parties govern the state within the first eight years of democratic rule (two terms) could also indicate the independent nature of the people who could actually have decided to give the alternate party a chance towards evaluating their ability compared to the experience in the first four years.

Ekiti State, having been carved from Ondo State, was known for supporting progressive political parties. But on few occasions, grassroots candidates who did not belong to the progressive platforms enjoyed popular votes and have been returned elected. The outcome of the 1999 general election truly reflected the trait of the progressive platform with Governor Niyi Adebayo

of the Alliance for Democracy (AD) who became the first civilian governor of the state. The AD party effectively won the six Southwest states, including Ekiti, in the 1999 election (Omilusi, 2014).

However, the 2003 general election witnessed the emergence of PDP as winners in the entire southwest states, except for Lagos State. The result of the 2003 general election, as well as the behaviour of the people at the polls was a huge departure from the experiences of the past which usually favoured the progressives as a result of the historical electoral victory in the region (Onapajo, 2015). It was attributed to the desire of the people to align with the government at the federal level and the desire of President Obasanjo (a PDP member) to “capture” his constituency (Southwest Zone). The People’s Democratic Party (PDP) won the governorship election and its candidate, Mr. Ayo Fayose was elected Governor. His tenure was terminated three years later through impeachment by the State House of Assembly (Adaramodu and Jamiu, 2011).

The people perceived the prolonged neglect of the state by successive administrations to be consequent upon their traditional and historic romance with the opposition party. As such, they believed that voting a party that controlled the centre, would attract the much-needed “federal” presence (Abe, 2010). However, the mainstream politics - aligning with the party at the center - introduced to the zone in the 2003 election (which led to five out of the six states in the zone being controlled by the People’s Democratic Party) did not reflect any significant change in the living standard of the people (Omilusi, 2014). Due to the experience under the PDP government, there was a consensus of opinion that voting a party which controls government at the federal level does not translate to the anticipated impact on the socio-economic development of the state.

It was rather observed that the ruling party betrayed the people's trust, confidence and expectations, an action that led to the impeachment of the Governor.

The situation corroborates the view that political parties in Nigeria are vehicles for the expression and exercise of conflicts over the control of power. This is simply because the activities of the government and reasons adduced for the eventual removal of the Governor did not reflect the laudable promises during electioneering and campaigns. Mr. Ayodele Fayose's impeachment on October 16, 2006 by the State Assembly (and replacement by then Speaker Aderemi) was declared illegal by the Federal Government and this led to a prolonged period of leadership and political crisis. Ekiti State was then placed under the administration of retired General Tunji Olurin, who was appointed after the declaration of a state of emergency by President Olusegun Obasanjo. On April 27, 2007, Olurin was replaced by Tope Ademiluyi as Acting Governor and this affected the democratic transition in Ekiti State (Omilusi, 2014).

After the 2007 general election, Segun Oni candidate of the PDP was announced as a governor of Ekiti State, and this election was full of electoral fraud and was marred by widespread irregularities. Dr. Kayode Fayemi the candidate of Action Congress (AC), challenged the results at the Election Tribunal⁸⁵ to cancel some of the results. In August 2008, the Election Tribunal confirmed the PDP candidate, Eng. Segun Oni, as winner of the gubernatorial election. This judgment did not satisfy the ACN candidate, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, who filed an appeal. The

⁸⁵ Election Tribunal: Election Tribunal in Nigeria is a direct creation of Section 285 of the Nation's Constitution which provides for the establishment of the National Assembly, Governorship and Legislative Houses Election Tribunal. The Constitution also gives original jurisdiction to the Court of Appeal over certain categories of election petitions. The Electoral Act provides details pertaining to the establishment, membership, jurisdiction and proceedings of each Election Tribunal.

Appeal Court overturned the judgement in February 2009 and ordered re-run elections within 90 days in 10 out of 16 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Ekiti State (Enweremadu, 2011). Although the INEC again declared that Oni had won the re-run elections conducted in April 2009, Fayemi disagreed and again went to the Election Tribunal. Rerun elections were disputed due to reported coercion of electoral officers leading to the termination of Oni's mandate by the court after three years. Dr. Kayode Fayemi was eventually declared the duly elected governor of Ekiti State in October 2010, after a protracted judicial struggle (Onapajo, 2015).

Since the democratic transition in 1999, none of the governors from Ekiti State have been successfully elected for two consecutive terms. From 2003 to 2014, due to electoral disputes and judicial pronouncements, the process of democratic transition has been altered in Ekiti and some other states in Nigeria. However, the PDP's hold on power was tenuous because of internal party crises, which paved the way for the simultaneous impeachment of the Governor and Deputy Governor on 16 October 2006 (Offor, Eze and Nwaeze, 2016). The political intrigue that culminated in their impeachment also resulted in the removal of the State Chief Judge, who was side-lined by the State House of Assembly to pave the way for the impeachments. The Chief Judge had alleged that the leadership of the House of Assembly was trying to impose a list of nominees to be constituted on the panel to investigate allegations against the Governor (Vanguard, 2006).

“The impeachment imbroglio led to a situation in which the Speaker of the State House of Assembly, the Deputy Governor and the Governor simultaneously claimed to be the State's chief executive for a few days. Ostensibly because of the flawed process followed by the State House of Assembly in removing the executive and the multiple claimants to the political leadership of the State, President Olusegun Obasanjo declared a State of Emergency in Ekiti State on 19 October, 2006 and appointed retired General Tunji

Olurin as a Sole Administrator for six months, during which period he presided over the 2007 general elections in Ekiti State” (NGF, 2013)

The impeachment of the Governor should naturally make the Deputy Governor to take over the reins of government according to the provisions of the Nigerian 1999 constitution. However, the impeachment of the Deputy Governor as well by the State Assembly meant the Speaker who is recognized by the constitution as the third in hierarchy was supposed to assume the position as Acting Governor. This situation and conflicting political interests by all parties, especially the reported interest of Olusegun Obasanjo, led to a declaration of a state of emergency because the Deputy Governor was not spared in the process (Nwagbo, Okafor and Obiorah, 2016.)

Naturally, the removal of a Governor or his deputy due to any offence or gross misconduct as prescribed in the constitution ought to be followed objectively in a manner stipulated in the constitution. In this case, the manner in which the House of Assembly carried out its activities and their resolve to pressurize the Chief Judge to raise a panel were critical observations to the process. The resultant political crisis over who actually was in charge leading to the declaration of emergency rule exposed the political elites and their failure to agree on the impeachment process and outcome.

Akinnaso (2014) observes that:

“Ekiti State politics has been typified by four main features, namely; cut-throat intra-party intrigues and inter-party competition among contestants; imposition of candidates by political god-fathers; physical and verbal thuggery; and electoral malpractices”

This assertion clearly summarizes the nature of the political system in the present republic where federal might and impositions within and outside the state is a common feature. Kumolu (2011) emphasizes the incessant use of impeachments to settle political scores among gladiators in the polity. Most impeachments have been linked to personal grudges and political disagreements as was reported in the case of Ayo Fayose and Olusegun Obasanjo (Nwagbo et al, 2016). The public pronouncement of the 2007 election as a do or die affair by President Obasanjo did not only promote thuggery but gave a backing to electoral malpractices in the country (Omotola, 2010). This also led to a charged political atmosphere and the inability of the electoral body to conduct a fair election.

6.4 The 2014 Elections in Ekiti State

Due to the irregularities in the INEC timetable in Ekiti State, election took place in 2014 instead of 2015. The timetable of the INEC changed after the 2007 general election. The elections conducted under the administration of Olusegun Obasanjo as the elected President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria were undoubtedly characterized by various forms of electoral challenges. This clarifies the inconsistency of eight-years of civil rule, which internalized the ethos of impunity and dictatorship rather than civility that promotes and protects democratic ethos. Marietu (2009) sums up Olusegun Obasanjo's style of administration over the conduct of elections during his government as full of irregularities and lacks credibility (Marietu, 2009).

Olusegun Obasanjo's notion and resolve that elections were to be won by his political party by all means had a very negative effect on the electoral system. This approach, method and consequences have different implication on democratic transition. In the case of Osun State, the judicial ruling invalidating the election that ushered in governor Oyinlola of the PDP and

aftermath of the judgment declaring Mr Rauf Aregbesola as winner of the election have also affected the democratic transition of the state (Marietu, 2009; Frank, 2012). Considering the distortion of the electoral system, Omotola (2009) observes that Nigeria is faced with the grim prospect of a democratic transition without a sound electoral system.

Since the 2007 general election in Ekiti State, due to the institutionalized election fraud in Nigeria, conducting credible, transparent, free and fair elections have been one of the major problems and threats to the democratic transition in Ekiti State. Former President Olusegun Obasanjo's position on the issue of election laid the foundation for the political experience and the reality of events which altered the electoral timetable of Ekiti State and others (Williams 2007). While the judiciary is expected to play a vital role in cases where electoral frauds have been proven, reported cases of corruption have hindered the administration of justice. In recent times, experiences in Ekiti, Edo and Osun States where the courts invalidated some earlier rulings of the tribunals or lower courts and declared other candidates as winners or ordered re-run elections clearly indicate a challenge to the electoral process. This is one of the reasons why electoral reforms which will further address the shortcoming of the present electoral process is very significant and important.

It has been argued that electoral reforms are required to undertake a holistic examination of the various challenges to the electoral system. Animashaun (2010) contends that such an exercise will impact positively on the quality and credibility of the electoral process in Nigeria. While the issue of electoral fraud can be multifaceted, addressing the menace through a reform has been identified as a viable solution to the challenges. The appointment of the chairman of the electoral

commission according to the constitution is vested in the President with confirmation from the Senate (1999 Constitution, section 154:1). In the same vein, the Governors are empowered to appoint members of the State Electoral Commission (Section 198, 1999 Constitution). Considering the fact that the Nigerian electoral system is still at infancy, coupled with the actions of the political gladiators, the executives often use such opportunities to their advantage. Omotola (2012) argues that the tenure of the members of the electoral body, its composition and its funding are factors that often lead to compromise during the electioneering process.

The use of violence in elections and the penalty for such acts have been a major issue in Nigeria. Animashaun (2010) identifies two major reasons for the reliance on violence as a weapon of political competition. He argues that state power is perceived as an end in itself rather than a means and that the enormity of state power and influence makes it more attractive, thus making electoral contests akin to warfare. He also observes that the penalty for electoral offence is comparatively small while the non-application of the punishments as stipulated in the Electoral Act has rather promoted a culture of impunity. There is a consensus of opinion that the provisions of the Electoral Act for a payment of 50,000 Naira or maximum sentence of six-month imprisonment for an individual is not commensurate with the enormity of such offences. Neither does a fine of 250,000 Naira for the first offence in the case of political parties and 500,000 Naira for subsequent violation adequate.

In addition, it has also been argued that election funding regulations have been flouted by the various political parties. The activities of various individuals, corporate bodies and governmental organizations in funding candidates have either been a violation of the constitution or gross

violation of the provisions of the Electoral Act (David, Manu and Musa, 2015). The period of electoral litigations has also been identified as a challenging issue in the political system. While the Electoral Act stipulates that petitions must be received within thirty days of declaration of results, it is silent on the period of adjudication (Animashaun, 2010). The electoral reform is therefore seen as a requirement to address the noticeable and reoccurring challenges of the electoral system. The reform will also provide an enabling environment for democracy to thrive towards achieving credible and sustainable elections.

After the conduct of the Ekiti State Governorship election in 2014, the poll provided insight and lessons on the fundamental discrepancies between what is perceived and the reality of events. In a show of disbelief to the extent in which the elections were managed leading to his loss at the polls, Dr Fayemi noted in his broadcast that: “Indeed, a new sociology of the Ekiti people may have evolved. However, the task of understanding how the outcome of this election has defined us as a people will be that of scholars” (Macaulay, 2014:21). Before the electoral defeat, the public perception of his administration and media presentations gave him an advantage in the election as a function of his performance in office. His unexpected loss therefore creates a question of whether the media was faithful to its role in representing reality or fiction as the case played out (ibid). Usukuma (2014) describes the landslide victory recorded by the candidate of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), Mr Ayo Fayose, in the election which was adjudged comparatively fair and credible as a mysterious contestation of voter behavior which would take a long time to be unraveled.

This mystery is occasioned by the vast distinctive personalities of the two major contestants which tended to place Dr Fayemi at an advantage above the declared winner of the elections (Fayose). While the APC led government of Fayemi was reputed to be headed by a technocrat and opinion polls were in his favour; the eventual winner of the election was previously accused of money laundering which led to his impeachment during his first term as Ekiti State Governor. Mr Ayo Fayose however campaigned on a populist agenda of “stomach infrastructure⁸⁶” and was reported to have won the heart of voters by dinning and moving closer to the electorates. It therefore becomes very obvious that the political culture of the people and what appealed to the electorate changed over time from previous experience. While the financial strength of Fayose to use inducements through his approach was not in doubt, it was also evident from the result of the election that cultural heritage which the people are known to protect was no longer a determinant.

Some core values and cultural heritage that defined the Ekiti people are encapsulated in the thoughts of Omilusi (2006):

“The state is a conglomeration of compact rural communities of distinct history where communalism operates in its real form. The people there live for the benefit of their neighbours and common good is the core value. Honour and integrity also play essential roles in every action and speech of that growing up boy or girl in the neighbourhood. The quest for materialism does not receive public attention. Rather, education is an indisputable path to greater things in life... Admitted that the hooliganism of ethnic militias and incessant religious crises that characterize other parts of the country are not yet here with us, but the face of politics has horrendously changed to accommodate insecurity of life and property”.

⁸⁶ Stomach Infrastructure: It is a phrase describing the willingness of the people to sell their votes or associate with politicians based immediate personal gains due to the high level of poverty and greed in the society.

Omilusi's submission above defines the character and general attribute of the inhabitants in relation to their desire for education above material benefits and their determination to uphold principles of equity, justice and honor. It also emphasizes the fact that Ekiti people are generally known to care for themselves and the interest of the whole community comes first in their relationships. However, though other vices have been noticed in other parts of the country lately, the democratic era has witnessed a negative transformation which has threatened peaceful coexistence and means of livelihood. The choice of Fayose over Fayemi at the polls due to financial inducement and stomach infrastructure portends a shift in the cultural heritage the Ekiti people were known for.

According to Fagbenle (2014:80);

“Granted that Ayo Fayose had a peculiar appeal on his people, and granted that there were other factors that conspired against Dr. Kayode Fayemi, if truly, contrary to long held values of the Ekiti and the Yoruba people, the Ekiti result is owed largely to people's preference for “stomach infrastructure” to long-term overall development of the state, then there is danger in the land and all right thinking people must recognize this and get armed to confront the virus before it assumes epidemic proportion”.

There were several arguments used to justify the upset recorded in the election. While opinions suggest that the federal might, in the form of the presidential support and backing Fayose enjoyed, might have influenced the outcome of the elections, it was also observed that the people were particular about personal gains. This is at variance with what appeals to an average indigene of Ekiti and portends a great danger for the future of democracy in the State. Fagbenle's submission summarizes the fact that such developments are not good signals to Nigeria's democracy and should be addressed forthwith.

However, there is little doubt that Mr Ayo Fayose's "grassroots politics" and his eventual success at the polls had a direct bearing on the class factor in the society. Fayose had a plebeian appeal and was willingly interacting with the commoners on the streets and so did little in terms of articulating a manifesto to win the election (Adelakun, 2014:64). There was an absence of intellectual debate that could have also swayed votes nor a standardized pre-election poll which could have indicated the likelihood of a tight contest. Akinnaso (2014) argues that it would be misplaced to quickly ascribe the victory or voting pattern in the governorship election to a general acceptance of a particular political party by the Ekiti people. He further stresses the fact that Fayose's victory was a demonstration of voter decisions in admiring Fayose's closeness to the ordinary people and those who felt voting out Fayemi was more desirable. The pattern of election and outcome of the exercise were clear indications of perceptions and influence in the society. The opinions and positions of the electorates were mostly influenced by the candidate's appeal during the electioneering.

6.5 Political Elites and Electoral Fraud

This section discusses the role played by the political class in the conduct of elections in Nigeria, particularly under the Obasanjo and Jonathan administrations. The problem of elections under Obasanjo's administration according to Faboyede (2014) is a function of his perception that his party must continue to rule by all means. He contends that political actors and their agents were actually responsible for the flawed electoral system. Omotola (2012) corroborates this assertion by stating that Nigeria is not devoid of institutional foundations for the conduct of viable elections but the self-interest of actors has been a major hindrance.

Suberu and Diamond (2002), argue that Obasanjo's spirit and action contributed as an individual to the process, but the role played by the electoral body was also evident in the various cases between 1999 and 2015. From the historical perspective, David-West (2012) argues that "the irregularities or excesses of the 1963 controversial census in Nigeria and the failure to consider the concept of determinism in history were prevailing circumstances of the root cause of electoral fraud in elections in Nigeria" (David-West 2012: 51-52).

This assertion seeks to relate the causes of electoral fraud to the perceived distortions of figures to favor some sections of the country during the conduct of the first census in Nigeria immediately after independence. While electoral fraud had its root from the independent era, the process was almost becoming a way of life considering the way it became prominent under Olusegun Obasanjo (Faboyede, 2014). In addition, there is an argument that claimed every action taken by him was intended to manipulate power in his favor and he, therefore, should accept responsibility for the aftermath (Faboyede, 2014). The deteriorating nature of the electoral process was also acknowledged by Obasanjo's successor (Shehu Yar'Adua) who contended that the election which brought him, Yar'Adua, to power was marred by massive irregularities (Onapajo, 2015).

Yar'Adua's submission led to the inauguration of an Electoral Reform Committee (ERC) saddled with the responsibility of reviewing the electoral process. The ERC enjoyed a level of autonomy which indicated government's sincerity in reforming the electoral process. The committee's report was submitted shortly before Yar'Adua's death in office. After the death of Yar'Adua, Vice President Goodluck Jonathan assumed the position of President and proceeded

with the implementation of the reform which had been initiated by his predecessor. He completed the term and won re-election in 2011 in an election considered more credible and fairer compared to recent experiences (Lewis, 2011).

However, the emergence of Jonathan as President disrupted the political arrangement of his party (PDP) which had given the previous eight years under Obasanjo to a Southern Christian (Lewis and Kew, 2015). They further affirm that Jonathan was faced with economic issues, Boko-Haram and its activities leading to the abduction of over two hundred girls in Chibok⁸⁷, unemployment, and allegations of high levels of corruption by his government. Events leading to the conduct of the 2015 General Election created a political alignment against the incumbent as opposition parties formed an alliance which led to his defeat in the election. While the election was considered an improvement over previous elections, especially with the introduction of technology, the fact that credible and fair elections require a total overhaul of the electoral process could not be denied (Olurode, 2017).

It is however revealing that Nigerian electoral process since independence has been characterized by ineffective administration at all stages and has undermined electoral outcomes (Omotola, 2012). It is also worrisome when the numbers of litigations challenging electoral results are considered at the end of the electoral process. The flagrant nature of election abuse during Obasanjo's administration to allow the PDP to continue in office has been identified as the bedrock of the bane of Nigeria's politics in the present republic (Offor, Eze, and Nwanze, 2016).

⁸⁷ Chibok: It is a Local Government in Borno State, North east of Nigeria. It has a population comprising a Christian majority and Muslim minority. 276 female students were abducted in 2014 by Boko Haram, a classified terrorist organisation.

However, despite the subversion of the political will of the people under his administration, he was not apologetic when he concluded that even Jesus Christ couldn't have conducted a free and fair election in Nigeria (Omotola, 2012). Experience from subsequent elections have rather invalidated this claim as the process has witnessed improvements (Olurode, 2017).

For an analysis of the various incidence of electoral disputes and the role of judiciary, it will be interesting to analyse the cases of Osun and Sokoto States and relate them to our case study. In the case of Osun State, Engineer Rauf Aregbesola of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) approached the Electoral Tribunal and asked for the nullification of the results which declared Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola as winner of the 2007 governorship elections. There were obvious functional evidence and a great deal of discrepancies in the process as they related to the ballot papers tendered and counted openly in the court (Faboyede, 2014). Faboyede further highlights the incidence of multiple thumb printing done in favour of Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola of the PDP.

After considering the contradictions leading to cancellations of results in some local governments, Engineer Rauf Aregbesola was declared the winner of the elections (Faboyede, 2014). The nullification of the unlawful votes did not come easy and the legal battle at the Election Petition Tribunal lasted over twenty months (Agbiti, 2010, Williams 2002, Faboyede, 2014). The fact that electoral adjudication took long meant Olagunsoye Oyinlola was Governor of Osun State and the period of his rule in that capacity was not recognized by law. Engineer Rauf Aregbesola was eventually sworn-in as Governor after the court declared he had the highest number of valid votes in the election for the commencement of his administration. The ruling

therefore changed the electoral timetable of the state as the fresh term of the new administration meant Governorship election could only take place after four years of the new administration.

The situation in Sokoto State presented another dimension and challenge to the electoral system. The incumbent Governor seeking re-election was Alhaji Aliyu Wamakko. He was initially a member of the ANPP (Faboyede, 2014). In the absence of an alliance or coalition recognized by the Electoral Act, Wamakko contested and won the reelection on the platform of the PDP without relinquishing his candidature of ANPP or picking a running mate. The outcome of litigations after the elections questions the regulating power of the Electoral body, the Electoral Act and the Courts which upheld the election.

Alhaji Dingyadi who was the main opponent in the election and was popularly favoured to emerge victorious became a victim of the inconsistency of the electoral system and the Nigerian institutions. Faboyede (2014) submits that “it is highly regrettable that the Supreme Court and the National Judicial Council (NJC) that ought to be at the fore-front in the realization of the social engineering role of law have, with the greatest respect, not lived up to the expectation”. This argument raises questions over the rule of the Judiciary and the perceived inconsistencies in judgements and court rulings as it relates to political parties. It has been argued that judges often compromise and favour parties as a result of corruption in the system (Onapajo, 2015).

The case of Ekiti State presented similar issues as experienced in Osun State regarding the conduct of Electoral Officers in charge of the election. Mr Gabriel Okafor who was the Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) was reported to have flouted electoral law guiding the process of

declaring election results and made efforts to frustrate the litigation process (Onapajo, 2015). Mrs Ayoka Adebayo was appointed as the new REC for the supplementary election as a consequence of the invalidation of results in some Local Governments of the state by the Court of Appeal. Her sudden disappearance mid-way into the announcement of results until she later resurfaced to announce election results in favour of the PDP Candidate led to widespread condemnation and criticism. The Appeal Court however declared the ACN Candidate as the winner of the election after the decision of the Election Tribunal was overturned in favour of Dr Fayemi (Onapajo, 2015).

6.6 Impediments to Democratic Transition and Consolidation

The problems of electoral fraud in Ekiti State have been one of the main problems to the growth and development of democracy in the state and this has grown steadily worse and more daring. Corruption is one of the significant obstacles to democratic transition and consolidation in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Corruption is defined as the misuse of public position, resources and power for selfish gain. In the same view, Obayelu (2007) argues that, corruption is an effort to secure wealth or power through illegal means for private gain at public expense, or a misuse of public power for private benefits. Gyekye (1997) argues that corruption may be classified into three broad categories, namely; bureaucratic, economic and political corruption. Political corruption entails securing and acquiring power through illegal means which translates to fraud and applies to the theme of this study and theoretical analysis.

Political corruption can be defined as the illegal, unethical and unauthorized exploitation of one's political or official position for personal gain or advantage. Therefore, this means that the most prominent victims of political corruption include the citizens of a political community and the

public interest in general. From the above perspectives or clarifications, it will be appropriate to say that political corruption which includes electoral fraud, favoritism, nepotism and even illegal seizure of political power has been a major impediment to sustaining democracy. Consequently, attempts to achieve democratic consolidation appears very bleak due to the rampant bureaucratic and political corruption in the country. This is because corruption in Nigeria has reached a climax. However, an average Nigerian links corruption to democracy in the name of “sharing of the national cake”. An example of such was witnessed during the 2011 voters’ registration and the conduct of general elections in the country (Ebirim 2013).

It has also been observed that the high rate of unemployment in the country is also an impediment to democratic consolidation in Nigeria. Because there is high rate of poverty due to the increasing number of people without jobs in the country, redundancy has placed many people in abject poverty with consequences for electoral fraud. According to the 2005 United Nations’ report which focused on the indicators of poverty and hunger, poverty is described as a denial of choices and opportunities, and a violation of human dignity. In the same view Ake (cited in Kwasau 2013) argues that a society of beggars, parasites and bandits cannot develop. He further mentioned that such a society cannot know peace or stability and cannot be democratic. This shows that an individual deprived of the basic wherewithal cannot participate effectively in a democratic system.

A lack of internal democratic ideology in political parties and inter-party defections by politicians all have negative implications for the process of democratic consolidation in Ekiti State. There’s also the absence of political party organizational structure, democratic system and

internal party democracy which guarantees the participation of all party members to contest any position both within the party and for public office. Since returning to democratic rule in the present dispensation in 1999, political parties and politicians have faced the problem of nondemocratic practices. The expectation generally is that political parties must be democratic not only externally in their goals but also democratic internally in their organizational practice and behavior. However, the absence of internal democracy among Nigerian political parties has become a persistent threat to the country's nascent democracy and democratic transition process. At the same time, defections (cross-carpeting) from one party to another among legislators, governors, deputy governors, and politicians or other party members have made accountability difficult in relation to party manifestoes and have constituted a great challenge to democratic consolidation in Nigeria (Mbah, 2011).

Lastly, the absence of credible, transparent, free and fair elections is also a significant challenge to democratic transition consolidation in Ekiti State. Electoral fraud has discouraged many qualified citizens from participating in any election process. The reason is because participation in election or voting in an election will be meaningful when the votes of the participants or voters count, but not when their votes are subverted for the interests of the few politicians (Osinakachukwu, 2011). In any ideal society where candidates are imposed against the will and choice of the people, democratic transition cannot be consolidated. Moreover, election fraud or rigging over the years in Nigeria's nascent democracy have led to the violation of the principle of fundamental human rights and has robbed the electorate of the true benefits of an effective franchise.

6.7 Reflections on Elections and Politics in Ekiti

Credible, transparent, free and fair elections are the yardstick of sustainable democratic transitions. General elections give the electorate an opportunity to exercise the right of franchise to elect their political leaders. Elections are a kind of stewardship for offices holders to examine their record of office as to ascertain whether they have kept their election promises or not. Electoral fraud has been a persistent issue in Nigeria's democratic transition process from the First Republic. Electoral fraud includes the unlawful printing of voters' cards; the illegitimate access to ballot boxes; the padding of ballot boxes; the forgery of election results, under age voting; the compilation of fictitious names on voters' lists; the illegal compilation of separate voters' lists; the illegal printing of forms used for collection and declaration of election results; a deliberate refusal to supply election materials to certain areas; the announcing of results in places where no elections were held; the switching and unauthorized announcement of results; the harassment of candidates, agents and voters; changing the list of electoral officials as well as box-inflation of figures; the use of police and security operatives to terrorize opponents and rival party agents; among other forms of fraud (Durotoye, 2015; Osinachukwu and Jawan, 2011; Kwasau, 2013).

The consistent issues of credibility, transparency, and free and fair elections have been attributed to the phenomenon of "failed, uncaring and unresponsive governance" in Nigeria (Inokoba and Kumokor, 2011:139). Electoral institutions and processes in Nigeria have not typically been celebrated for spectacular probity. A more usual characterization is found in Suberu's (2010) lamentation that the "monumental electoral shenanigans have come to be associated with political contests at all levels in Nigeria". Because of their huge influence on political dynamics in Nigeria's elections, federal and state level elections have more often inspired such dire

evaluations by researchers and elections observers or monitors of electoral politics in Nigeria. The actions and activities of the political class do not reflect a symbol of responsibility when power is attained. This is usually associated with the ways and manners of accessing political positions which do not represent the true yearnings of the people and the political class become unaccountable. It is therefore logical to connect the insensitive affluence of the political class to the yearning of the poor electorate to the way such mandates have been attained.

Nigerians crave desirable democratic transition above any form of dictatorship, but the perception of Nigerians about democracy has been muddled by gross impunity, socio-political and ethnic intolerance. Furthermore, the answer to the problem of democratic consolidation in Nigeria requires a concerted effort towards building political institutions and a resolution by actors to operate within legal limits (Omotola, 2012). Moreover, at the individual level, political office holders should be made accountable, and their actions transparent, to the electorate they represent.

Ebirim (2014) suggests that one of the major and significant purposes of the political party is a regular forum of interaction that should be organized between the people and their representatives at the various levels. At the level of the masses, more political awareness and education is needed to transform the people into democratic citizens. He contends that such avenue will make them stand up for their rights against the government, including the capacity to demand more accountability. He further argues that ability to build political unity and encourage political participation will assist in avoiding all forms of electoral fraud (Ibid). For instance, the type of political culture that was experienced towards the 2003 general election may have

discouraged and led to the largely non-participatory attitude or the development of political apathy in the country. The outcome of elections conducted in 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2014 in Ekiti State has been so keenly contested resulting in the subversion of the will of the people.

6.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced the chapter with a general overview of Ekiti State's creation and the issues under the present democratic experience. In addition, a review of the 2014 election and democratic transition in Ekiti State was analyzed and discussed as it relates to the general perception and opinion polls and the eventual outcome of the exercise. The factors which encouraged electoral fraud such as the role of poverty in influencing the cultural values of Ekiti people and their voting behavior, the role of the political elites, and the lack of a clear ideology by the various political parties were espoused.

CHAPTER SEVEN

STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTION ON EKITI ELECTIONS

7.1. Introduction

Nigeria's electoral system faces daunting challenges as a result of non-compliance with rules and procedures required in a free and credible contest. The return to democratic rule after about sixteen years of military rule has been shrouded with a lot of controversies associated with the conduct of the exercise (Oni, Erameh and Oladejo, 2017). The roles played by various actors in the political system have been at variance with expectations in ideal democratic societies. Edet (2011) submits that any meaningful outcome in the electoral process requires a demonstration of democratic values by "the electoral body, security agents, political class and political parties". It is in the light of this argument and submissions by other scholars that a field interview was conducted to engage various actors in the political system on various issues relating to the conduct of elections in Ekiti State.

The themes covered in this chapter includes the observation of security measures in the conduct of elections and INEC's capacity to conduct its statutory responsibility during elections considering the challenges and outcry after electoral contests. The third theme investigates the accessibility of electoral materials while the fourth was a consideration of voter apathy as a function of electoral fraud. Executive influence and the extent of incumbent's involvement in electoral fraud are also examined. The impact of money on the choice of voters, role of political parties in electoral fraud and the impact of card reader in the general election were also examined.

This dissertation made use of a pre-structured elite interview guide with nine structured questions to get the needed information from the electoral elites. There was no pre-guided answer as the respondents were left to answer the questions on their own. The information collected through these interviews were interpreted through a process that rated responses on a Likert scale of 1-3. A structured number matrix was constructed which gives us the frequency distribution of each variable in the interview. A distributive study of each variable in the study was used to provide a substantive relationship between processes of election and the prevalence of electoral fraud. The structured interview was interpreted using abbreviations to represent each variable of the questions in the interview. They are therefore abbreviated thus:

- OSM – Observation of Security Measures
- ICUEF – INEC Capacity to Undertake Expected Functions
- AEM – Accessibility of Electoral Materials
- VAFEF – Voter Apathy as a Function of Electoral Fraud
- EIEO – Executive Influence on Electoral Outcomes
- IEEF – Incumbent Engagement in Electoral Fraud
- IMVC – Impact of Money on Voters Choice
- RPPEF - Role of Political Parties in Electoral Fraud
- ICRGE – Impact of Card Reader on General Election.

7.2. Procedure for Interpretation

The study made use of printed interview guide. It was administered to members and staffs of the Independent National Electoral Commission, party stewards, INEC ad hoc staff, election observers as well as ward and constituency representatives. The sample was basically drawn from the target population in Ekiti State. A total of 29 interviewees were used in the study and due consent was requested before embarking on the elite semi-formal interview. Immediate

response was solicited and answers to the interview questions asked were retrieved immediately. The interpretation of the answers was conducted using a numbered matrix before it was transferred to statistical tools.

7.3. Results and Discussion

7.3.1. *Observation of Security Measures during Election (OSM)*

The incessant cases of electoral fraud have been a very serious indictment on the security apparatus in Nigeria. Faboyede (2014) decries the rate of criminal activities before, during and after elections and how they indicate a challenge to credible elections. The political atmosphere has also been described as unfertile and characterized by various forms of violence which prevent the operation of the peaceful democratic process (Ake, 1996). In the light of the experience of Ekiti State and challenges faced in the conduct of elections, the Figure and Table below show responses of participants to their observation of security measures during the election.

Figure 3 *Observation of Safety Measures*

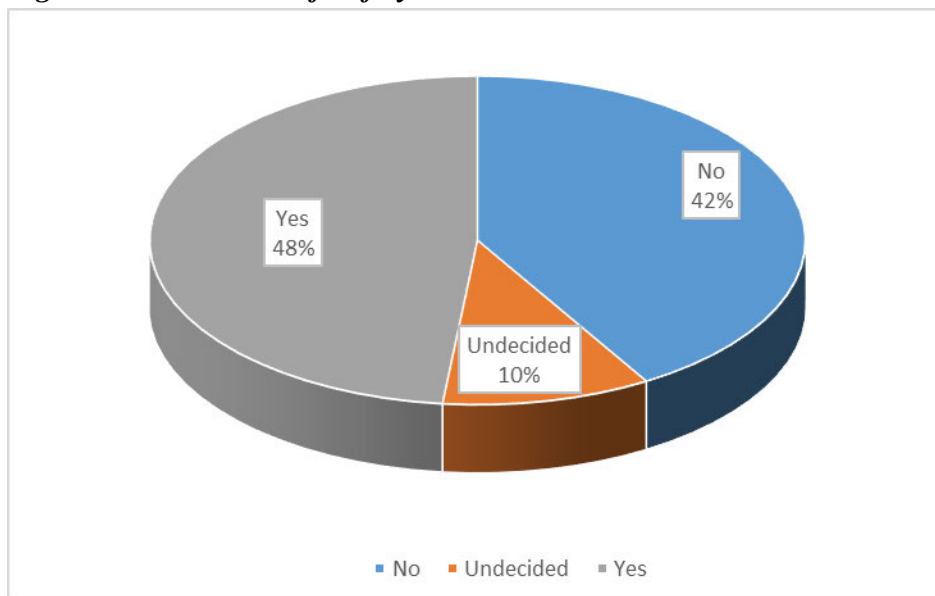


Table 4: Observation of Security Measures (OSM)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
No	12	41.4	41.4
Undecided	3	10.3	51.7
Yes	14	48.3	100.0
Total	29	100.0	

Source: Researcher's compilation, 2017

From the drawn sample, twelve people said no, they did not observe any security measures in the Ekiti State elections. This is equal to a total of 41.4% of observed participants. Three (10.3%) of the observed participants were undecided while fourteen out of twenty-nine (48.3%) observed participant said yes there was observed security measures in the Ekiti elections. Cumulatively, a total of 51.7% of observed participant said there was no security measures or were undecided. This suggests that security measures in Ekiti elections were inadequate and it clearly indicates why reports such as ballot snatching, intimidation of voters and other actions of electoral manipulations were high. The failure to check these excesses has therefore made it desirable as politicians often attack polling units where they perceive defeats in order to ensure cancellation.

This finding portends great implications on the sanctity of the electoral process in the state as it makes the electorate and the electoral umpire vulnerable to all forms of attacks and intimidation from politicians and political thugs. This often result in to the snatching of ballot boxes and harassment of voters which ultimately frustrate the election process or make the election inconclusive when the result is perceived unfavorable. Majority of the stakeholders interviewed

attest to the fact that the security measures during elections were not adequate. One of the respondents opined that:

“The central security system in Nigeria allows some politicians to manipulate the security to do their biddings. In the case of Ekiti, there were reports of military generals negotiating on tape on how to manipulate the election. Some military Officers were sacked in relation to the Ekiti-gate scandal. The incumbent also made a budget for security operatives to get their support during the elections. The role of security agencies in some states were poor especially in Bayelsa where they were over-powered. There have been successes and challenges in security during elections generally in Nigerian states” (Respondent 3).

It was also reported that the country is under-policed and politicians often takes advantage of that to perpetrate their unscrupulous acts. This was noted in the following response from Respondent 6:

“The country is under-policed. EMB materials are usually attacked in the process. The security agencies are usually biased and protect their interest to secure favour from politicians”.

The decadence in the security apparatus of Nigeria has negative consequences on the conduct of a truly free and fair election. Security agencies are supposed to be the stronghold of safety and reliance in turbulent periods or during situations of unrest but when their integrity is tainted and characterised by corruption and unethical practices, the lives of the citizenries become jeopardised and all assignments handed over to their enterprises become compromised. It is therefore very crucial to address security issues for a genuine electoral process in Nigeria.

7.3.2. INEC's Capacity to Undertake Expected Functions (ICUEF)

Omotola (2012) observes that the role of the electoral body in conducting credible elections is very vital and it becomes even more visible in emerging democracies. This is simply because democracies at their early stages are more fragile in the face of challenges. Birch (2008) contends that the survival of the electoral system depends largely on the electoral monitoring body and its ability to ensure fairness to all parties involved. The Figure and Table below show respondents' views about the capacity of the INEC to conduct its statutory functions.

Figure 4 :INEC's Capacity to Undertake Expected Functions

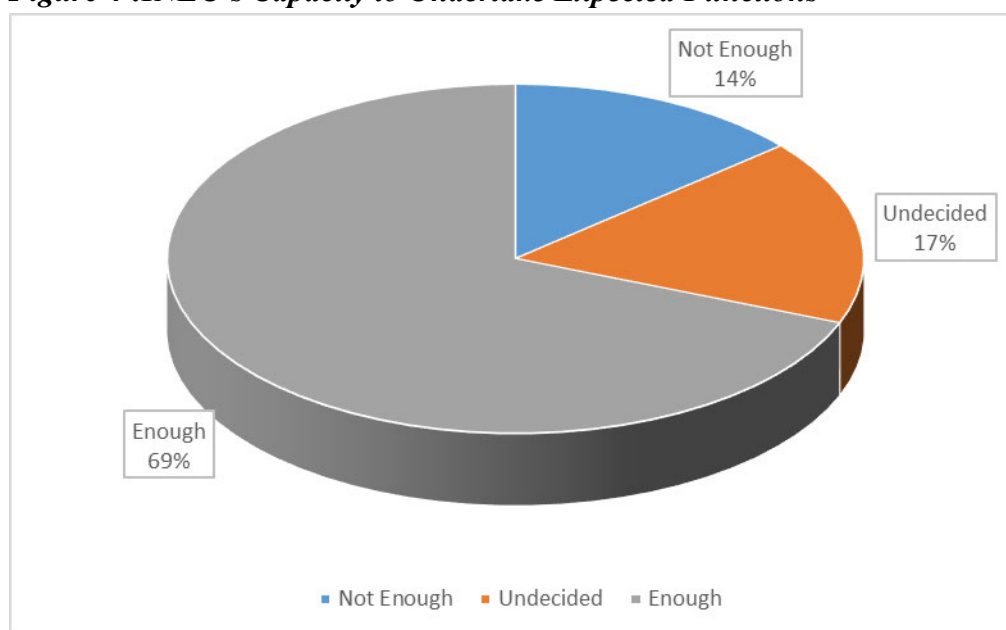


Table 5: INEC Capacity to Undertake Expected Functions (ICUEF)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Not Enough	4	13.8	13.8
Undecided	5	17.2	31
Enough	20	69.0	100
Total	29	100.0	

Source: Researcher's compilation, 2017

From the observed participants, four respondents said the INEC does not possess enough capacity to undertake expected functions. A total of 13.8% of respondent said the INEC does not have enough capacity to undertake expected functions. Five respondents were undecided as to the INEC's capacity to undertake elections. Twenty respondents said the INEC possessed enough capacity to undertake election functions. A total of 69% said the INEC possessed the required capacity to undertake Ekiti elections. It implies that many respondents did not doubt the INEC capacity to undertake elections.

On the examination of the role of the Independent National Electoral commission on electoral fraud and malpractice, and implications thereof, the result shows that the INEC as an electoral body possessed the required capacity to conduct elections. From the analysis observed in Table 2, majority of the respondents did not doubt the INEC's capacity to undertake elections. This is a plus to the electoral umpire and the implication is that if given a conducive environment, it has the capacity to perform creditably well. Also, a response generated from one of the stakeholders interviewed (Respondent 15) supports this position:

“Historically, there were bigger worries but now it seems those things have been addressed. There was a massive decline in the electoral process until the appointment of a chairman (Jega) who was ready to sanitise the system. After the 2007 election, the 2011 general election showed tremendous improvements. The adoption of technology in the 2015 election further strengthened the process and was applauded by local and international observers”.

Also, important to note is that despite the ability of the INEC to conduct credible election, there are external factors that need to be taken care of to get the best out of the electoral body. Just as respondent 12 proposed:

“The personnel are available but there is inadequate finance. Considering the geographical spread of the country, the financial commitment is inadequate to secure speed boats, donkeys and camels etc. as the case may demand for specific areas.”

Respondent 10 was also of the opinion that:

“The process of conducting elections should not be difficult ideally but the external influence affects the performance of the INEC. We need upright people as those at the helms of affairs have always shown partisanship due to economic benefits. Technology has helped the process but ballot snatching, falsifications, violence and other forms of manipulations are still prevalent.”

These responses presented showed that the electoral body in recent years has witnessed successes because of various reforms. It is therefore incumbent on the government to continue strengthening the institution and avoid any form of interference with the electoral process. If these external factors are taken care of, a credible, free and fair election can be envisaged.

7.3.3. Accessibility to Electoral Materials (AEM)

The drive towards ensuring the political process is credible and fair informs the new focus of research in electoral studies and democratization to electoral administration (Omotola, 2012). This focus is premised on the need to ensure every aspect of the process and institutions involved operate and demonstrate professionalism to ensure fairness. The Figure and Table below depict the respondents' views on the extent to which the polling units were accessible to the people.

Figure 5: Accessibility of Electoral Materials

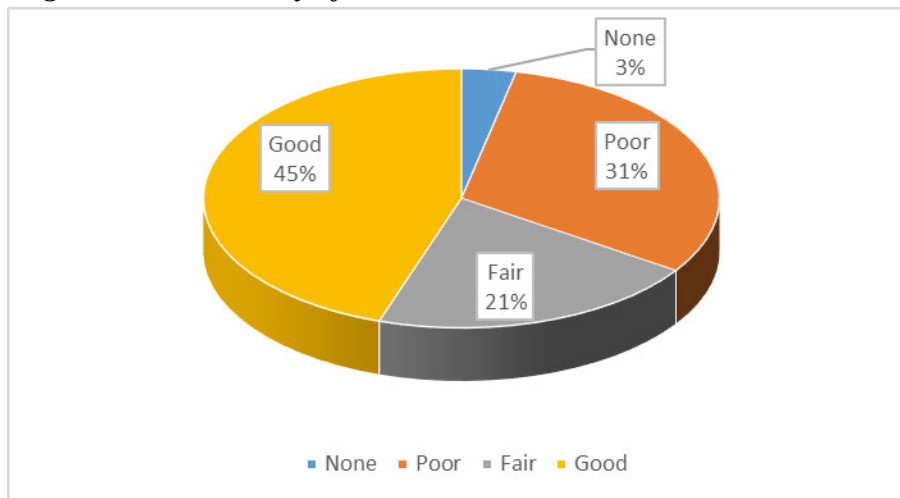


Table 6: Accessibility of Electoral Materials (AEM)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
None	1	3.4	3.4
Poor	9	31	34.5
Fair	6	20.7	55.2
Good	13	44.8	100.0
Total	29	100.0	

Source: Author's compilation, 2017

In terms of accessibility to electoral materials, one of the participants gave a contradictory answer as to the accessibility of election materials in Ekiti State elections. Nine respondents (31%) said the accessibility to election materials in Ekiti State was poor. Six participants or 20.7% of the respondents said accessibility to electoral materials was fair while thirteen people (44.8%) of the respondent said accessibility to electoral material in Ekiti was good. Cumulatively, 55.2% percent of stakeholders in Ekiti elections said accessibility to electoral materials in the Ekiti elections was not up to expectations.

Respondents representing 55.2% expressed deep reservations on the accessibility of materials for the purpose of carrying out elections. It has been observed that materials often arrived late or sometimes there are allegations of diversion of the materials by political actors. The late of arrival of materials on election day also constituted one of the challenges highlighted by respondents. Respondent 16 summarizes the experience thus: *“The electoral materials arrived late and some voters had left the polling unit”*.

The INEC’s task of distributing materials on the day of the election often resulted in the late arrival of voting materials in some areas especially those that are not close in proximity to urban centers. Non-commencement of the exercise of voting as planned often leads to a situation whereby voters often ignore voting entirely.

7.3.4. Voter Apathy as a Function of Electoral Fraud (VAFEF)

Voter apathy as a result of the actions of political actors constitutes a great setback to building a viable democratic society (Ajayi, 2006). Most people rather ignore their civic responsibility due to perceived manipulations and feel their participation is insignificant because outcomes are usually compromised. Oladosu (2007) concludes that the electorate is not just interested in the electoral process considering their attitudes towards voter registration. This discontent by some people poses a great challenge to democratization as the desire for participation diminishes as a result of irregularities associated with the exercise. The chart below assesses the relationship between voter apathy and perceived electoral fraud in the system.

Figure 6: Voters Apathy as a Function of Electoral Fraud

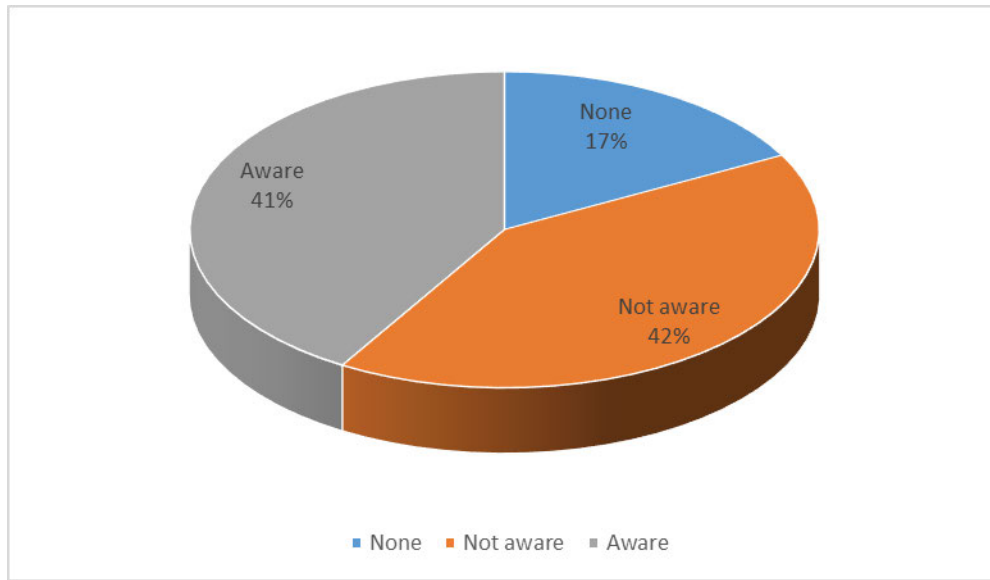


Table 7: Voter Apathy as a Function of Electoral Fraud (VAFEF)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
None	5	17.2	17.2
Not aware	12	41.4	58.6
Aware	12	41.4	100
Total	29	100.0	

Source: Author's compilation, 2017

In terms of perceptions, five people representing 17.2% did not give a clear response to this question. Twelve people representing 41.4% of the respondents said they were not aware that voter apathy is a function of electoral fraud while another 12 respondents (41.4%) said voter apathy is caused by electoral fraud. There was therefore no consensus on whether voter apathy occur as a result of electoral fraud.

The total number of registered voters and votes cast have been significantly wide. Considering this observation in the various elections conducted, respondents gave divergent opinions on what could have contributed to the situation. Respondent 9 concluded that:

“Voter apathy occurs because of the high rate of electoral fraud and violence during elections. Most elites do not want to risk their life and do not take such risks compared with the poor masses”.

However, Respondent 2 did not agree with the submission by Respondent 9. The respondent cited other reasons which could have led to perceived voter apathy during elections. Respondent 2 summarized her thoughts thus:

“There are various reasons for the low turn-out during elections which could be due to where registration took place, people also use the period of the holiday to travel and therefore cannot exercise their civic responsibilities”

This revelation therefore points to the fact that several factors account for voter apathy in Ekiti elections and Nigeria in general. The interest of individuals actually determines their level of participation.

7.3.5. Executive Influence on Electoral Outcomes (EIEO)

The constitution of Nigeria provides a lot of privileges for the occupants of executive positions in government (Omotola, 2012). However, there are arguments that these privileges have been exploited over time to an advantage which becomes unfavorable to the opposition. The appointment of the chairman of the electoral body and funding have always been criticized

because of the reliance on the executive arm of government. Security agencies are also answerable to executives at the state and federal levels (Omodia, 2011). This is often interpreted as an advantage for occupants of such positions. Respondents' perceptions on the extent of executive influence on electoral outcomes are illustrated below.

Figure 7: Executive Influence on Electoral Outcomes (EIEO)

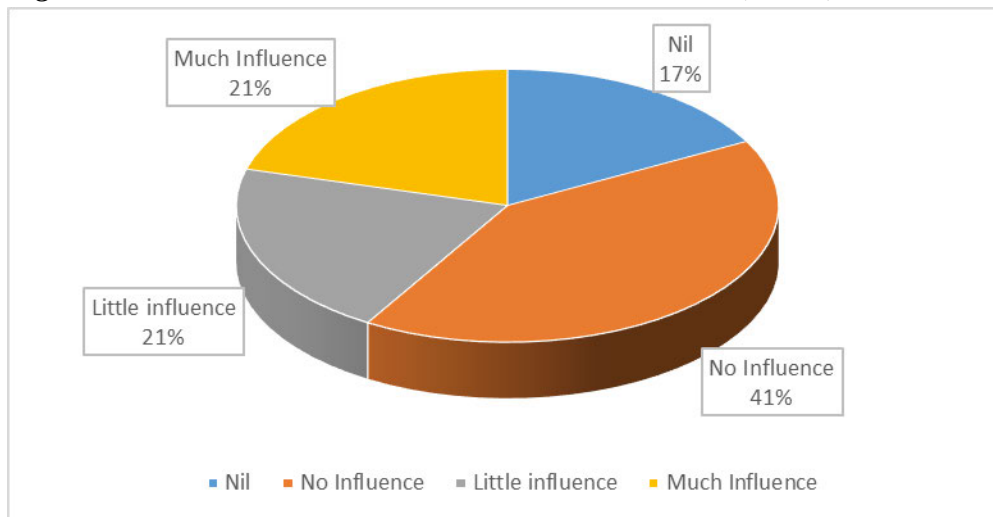


Table 8: Executive Influence on Electoral Outcomes (EIEO)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Nil	5	17.2	17.2
No Influence	12	41.4	58.6
Little Influence	6	20.7	79.3
Much Influence	6	20.7	100
Total	29	100.0	

Source: Researcher's compilation, 2017

Five people (17.2%) said they couldn't really justify or substantiate the influence of the Executive. Twelve people (41.4%) said the executives had no influence on electoral outcome while six respondents (20.7%) said the executives had little influence on electoral outcome. Another six respondents (20.7%) said the executives had greater or much influence on electoral outcomes. Cumulatively, 41.4% of the respondent said the executives had influence on electoral outcome.

Essentially, an appreciable number of respondents (41.4%) acknowledged that the executives use their position to influence the outcome of votes due to the over dependence of various institutions on that arm of government. Several institutions such as the security agencies, INEC, and the courts have been accused of working in the interest of those who are in power. Respondent 21 summarized the role of executive thus:

“The executive plays a major role in appointment and funding of various agencies who are associated with elections. It is easier for appointees to work for Executives as payback.”

The submission of this respondent supports the general notion that the executive receives total allegiance from most organizations and bodies saddled with responsibilities in the electoral process. This is a function of the power of the executive to influence decisions in their favour.

7.3.6. Incumbent Engagement in Electoral Fraud (IEEF)

Incumbents have been accused of enjoying privileges that gives them advantage in elections due to their position and influence in the society. Omotola (2012) attributes the massive victory of the PDP at the state and federal levels in the 2003 elections to patronage by wealthy individuals

and corporate bodies coupled with unhindered access to resources of the state. Due to the high rate of corruption in the country, various institutions and stakeholders in the electoral process have been accused of compromise (Onapajo, 2015). The Figure and Table below describe the perceived influence and roles of incumbents in electoral fraud.

Figure 8: Incumbent Engagement in Electoral Fraud (IEEF)

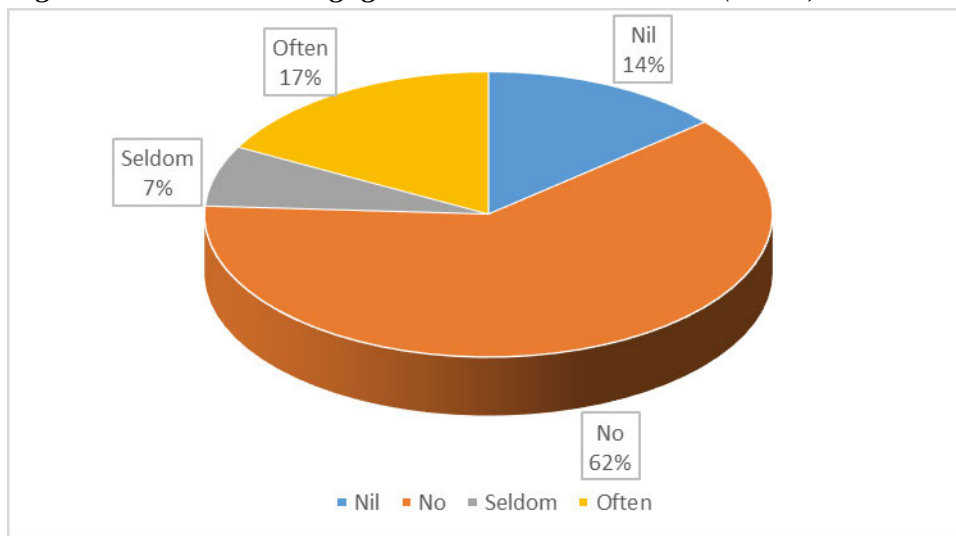


Table 9: Incumbent Engagement in Electoral Fraud (IEEF)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Nil	4	13.8	13.8
No	18	62.1	75.9
Seldom	2	6.9	82.8
Often	5	17.2	100
Total	29	100.0	

Source: Researcher's compilation, 2017

Four respondents (13.8%) gave unclear or ambiguous responses. Eighteen respondents (62.1%) said there was no incumbent influence on electoral fraud in Ekiti State. Two respondents (6.9%) said there seldomly were incumbent influences on electoral fraud. Five respondents (17.2%) said incumbent influence on electoral fraud took place often while 24.1% of the respondent said there was incumbent influence on electoral fraud. According to the results, the majority agreed that there was no incumbent influence on electoral fraud.

On the investigation of the role and power of the incumbent executive in promoting electoral fraud, the majority of the respondents in the analyzed data said there was not much influence of the incumbent government on the electoral outcomes so far in Ekiti State. This is however against popular beliefs or expectations of the power of the incumbency. In Nigeria, it is often inconceivable for an incumbent government to lose in any election because of their current access and control to government apparatus, including their use of the government mass media to influence public opinion. One of the respondents believed that elections are still being influenced by the incumbent in the state. He said,

“It is a general phenomenon. Money plays a major role in who becomes what and when! There is an endless budget and there is no mechanism to monitor expenses of aspirants or candidates. There is also misinformation as media houses are controlled by the government in power and elites who hold stakes in those sectors” (Respondent 18)

On the contrary, Respondent 12 believed the face of electioneering in Nigeria was fast changing and that candidate’s pedigree is becoming an important deciding factor. He said:

“It was more like a norm to assume an incumbent must win an election. But events in the last few years have indicated a paradigm shift. Incumbent have lost elections at the state

and federal levels lately. Election promises and performance have now become a tool of evaluation rather than non-existing issues. The innovations such as biometric has also closed a lot of gaps for rigging and votes now count, though resources of incumbents still play a role in vote buying which gives an undue advantage”

Things are changing and people are becoming more enlightened and aware of the electoral process thereby taking a more active role in the election process. Electoral promises, past performance and individual pedigree or charisma are becoming a major issue in determining electoral outcomes.

7.3.7. Influence of Money on Voter's Choice (IMVC)

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reported an increase in the poverty rate by 4.6 percent between 2004 and 2010. Nigeria's poverty index is considered to be among the lowest 20th in the world with over 70 percent classified as poor and living in abject poverty (Ugoh and Ukpere, 2009). According to latest official figures, 40.1% of Nigerians live on less than \$1.1 a day (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020). The economic situation of the majority who live on less than \$1 a day has been linked to the desire of an average voter to sell their votes during elections (Olawale and Oluwaseun, 2014). The behavior of the electorate and, most recently, the desire to embrace “stomach infrastructure” has been attributed to the economic conditions of the people. The respondents' perceptions on the influence of money on the choice of voters in Ekiti State are illustrated in Figure 9 and Table 7.

Figure 9: Influence of Money on Voter's Choice (IMVC)

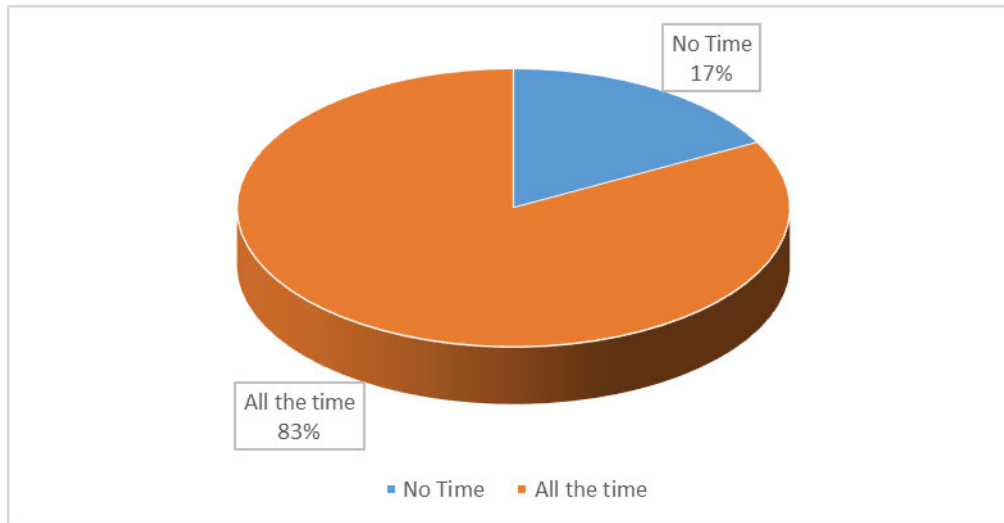


Table 10: Influence of Money on Voter's Choice (IMVC)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
No Time	5	17.2	17.2
All The Time	24	82.8	100
Total	29	100.0	

Source: Researcher's compilation, 2017

Five respondents (17.2%) said money did not influence voters' action at any time. Twenty-four people (82.8%) of election stakeholders in Ekiti said money influenced voters' action all the time. The response shows that money greatly influenced voters during elections. This suggests that pervasive poverty that is fostered by a high rate of unemployment and corruption, among other driving factors, has an influence on electoral outcomes. Elections in Nigeria is now

considered to be about the highest bidder, whereby the highest spender wins the election. A respondent posits that:

“Poverty is a fundamental issue in the country. This is a poverty of mind due to economic challenges and the winner takes all syndrome of the political parties”

(Respondent 5)

The mindset of people towards the election process is also driven by their experiences. To some, that is the only time to enjoy the deprived “dividends of democracy” from politicians who only show up once in four years to canvass for votes. Respondent 28 expresses this in the following manner:

“The people are poor economically and intellectually. Mentality is the problem of seeking for money before voting. In several cases, those who are gainfully employed also demand for money before voting and usually decide by going for the highest bidder. The issue is therefore beyond poverty but a negative mentality to get a share of the resources because once elected, the politicians won’t remember them.”

7.3.8. Role of Political Parties in Electoral Fraud (RPEF)

Political parties have also been reported to engage in various forms of electoral malpractices in a bid to gain an advantage over the opposing candidates and parties. The position of former President Obasanjo that his party would win at all costs was a clear indication of a negative approach to an electoral contest. It is however interesting that his successor within the same party and beneficiary of the fraud acknowledged the flaws and made plans to address the trend. It

therefore raises questions of the role played by political parties and those of the individual members in the electoral process.

Figure 10: Role of political parties in electoral fraud (RPPEF)

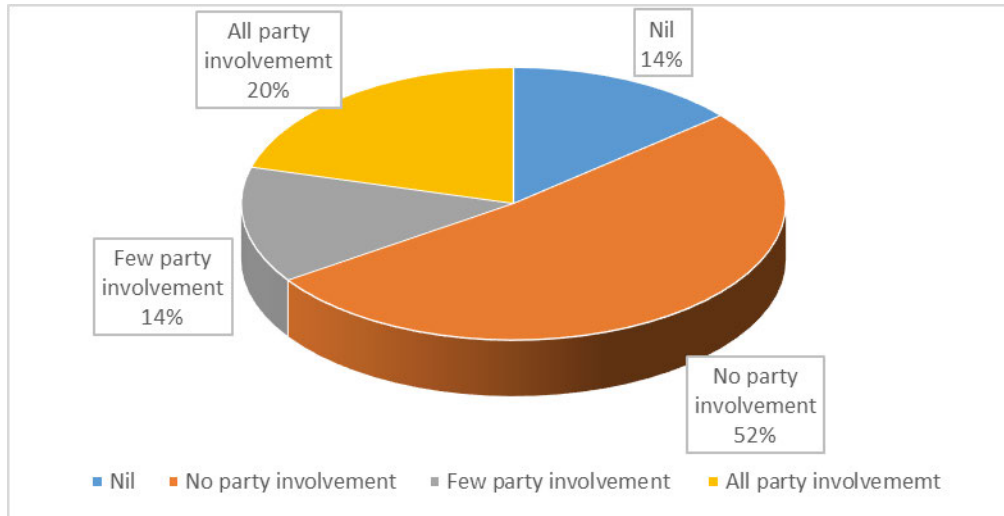


Table 11: Role of Political Parties in Electoral Fraud (RPPEF)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Nil	4	13.8	13.8
No party Involvement	15	51.7	65.5
Few Party Involvement	4	13.8	79.3
All Party Involvement	6	20.7	100
Total	29	100.0	

Source: Researcher's compilation, 2017

Four respondents (13.8%) did not give a clear response to this question. Fifteen respondents (51.7%) said there was no party involvement in electoral fraud. Four people (13.8%) said only a few parties were involved in electoral fraud. Six respondents (20.7%) said all parties were

involved in electoral fraud. Carefully put, according to the result of these interviews, parties were not perceived to be overwhelmingly involved in electoral fraud.

The findings indicate a sharp distinction between the general assumptions of political parties' involvement in electoral fraud. Though political parties are direct beneficiaries of the criminal acts of the actors, 51.7% of respondents concurred that political parties did not engage in electoral fraud. Respondent 15 claimed that:

“Individual politician source for money either from god-fathers, associates and any other means to buy votes during party primaries and even during general election. They also use their wealth to influence decisions in their favour within the parties”.

This finding reveals that it is perceived that it is individual politicians who actually use money to influence the process of elections. Money politics is actually evident even within the parties as politicians outwit one another with their resources. It is such competition that is extended between politicians within and across party lines.

7.3.9. Impact of Card Reader on the General Election (ICRGE)

One of the major challenges to the democratic process in Nigeria is linked to the issue of multiple voting, impersonation and all manner of actions to increase the number of votes during elections (Alebiosu, 2016). This has been one of the major reasons for the introduction of technology into the voting process. The card reader is a technological device which authenticates voters using their permanent voters' cards (INEC, 2015). Table 9 shows the perception of the respondents on the impact of the card reader on the General Election in 2015.

Table 12: Impact of Card Readers on General Election (ICRGE)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percent
No Impact	3	10.3	10.3
Moderate Impact	1	3.4	13.8
Great Impact	25	86.2	100
Total	29	100.0	

Source: Researcher's compilation, 2017

Three respondents (10.3%) said the card reader did not have any impact on general elections, and thus there was no influence of the card reader. One respondent (3.4%) said that the card reader had a moderate impact on the general elections. Twenty-five people (86.2%) said that card reader had a great impact on the general elections. Cumulatively, 89.6% said that the card reader had an influence on general elections. Respondent 18 argued that:

“The card reader was very useful as those who could not be accredited through the machine were not allowed to vote”.

Other respondents concurred with this. Respondent 15 particularly described the card reader as “a major achievement as everyone had just a single opportunity to cast their vote.” Indeed, the role of technology has been very positive according to most of the respondents as they agreed that it helped to control and mitigate electoral fraud during the general elections.

7.4. Conclusion

The journey through this research process has insightfully revealed that electoral fraud accompanied with violence and instability have turned out to be a seemingly inevitable political culture in the history of Nigeria's elections generally and, that of Ekiti-State specifically. This study has shown that there are connections and correlations between electoral fraud and security inadequacy, the power of incumbency, the lack of integrity of the electoral board in the state, and the level of poverty in the state. The result of this research experience further justifies the application of existing theories adopted for this study. The elite and differential association theories adopted for this study adequately suited the political system and gave a clear view of the interrelationships between the interests of the political elites and other political stakeholders, the shift in cultural values, and electoral fraud in the state.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. Summary

The elections and the democratic process in Ekiti State have witnessed a high level of instability and tension due to the activities of the political class who are engaged in electoral fraud and political manipulation. The incessant incidences of violence and several forms of electoral malpractices have led to the invalidation of elections, several court pronouncements and political crises leading to the declaration of a state of emergency. The roles of the INEC, security agencies, the attitude of the voting population, political parties, incumbency and the power of Executives in the electoral process were investigated to establish perceptions in this trend.

For the purpose of this study, democratic elite theory and differential association theory were adopted as the theoretical framework of analysis. Democratic elite theory provided insight on the influence of some who are a privileged few in the society and who use their resources to dictate the power equilibrium in the society. The differential association theory on its part was used to dissect the relationship between criminal acts and its recognition as a way of life as a result of social transmission. The methodology adopted was the mixed method research design that employed a combination of the interpretive, descriptive and survey methods of research investigation.

The first chapter evaluated the concept of democracy, its characteristics, its applications and how variance with accepted standards negates classification. Several concepts used in the research were also defined as it relates to this study while the contemporary issues of electoral fraud were extensively discussed. Electoral fraud naturally elicits reactions which could be violent due to

emotions and a feeling of being outdone. However, the use of violence was analysed as a function of electoral malpractices and the controversy over actors responsible was espoused. While scholars have not reached a consensus on who should accept responsibility for violence in elections; the study considers the role of the formal political process and informal structures as a factor. It also justifies the assertion that a deviation from democratic tenets leads to violence as a result of non-adherence to the rules guiding the electoral process.

The second chapter focused on the review of related literature and a discussion of the theoretical framework under which the study was conducted. In the third chapter, I reflected on the research methodology driving the research process. The philosophy was centred on interpretivism and was qualitative in approach. The research strategy adopted was descriptive while interview guide in the form of an open-ended questionnaire was used as a survey method to understand the perceptions of individuals and meanings attached to various issues relating to the electoral malpractices.

In chapter four, I introduced the evolution of democratic governance in Nigeria and also discussed the main features of the democratic experience in Nigeria since independence in 1960 that are relevant to the understanding of electoral frauds in the Nigerian political landscape. I examined the situation from the First Republic until the Fourth. It was observed that the multi-party system in Nigeria in the First and Second Republics was ethnic-based. The Third Republic which witnessed the operation of the two-party system and the present Fourth Republic's adoption of a multi-party system was also examined. The latter formed the fulcrum around which

discussions in chapter five centered around. The fifth chapter also contained an analysis of the types, causes, patterns and impact of electoral fraud in Nigeria.

The history of the study location (Ekiti State), its emergence as a State and features of its democratic transition were discussed in the sixth chapter. The key issues of how political elites' influence, political ideology of parties and the cultural orientation of the people influenced election outcomes in the state were discussed in this chapter. The seventh chapter provided evidence from interviews to support the general perceptions of political stakeholders in Ekiti on aspects of electoral fraud.

8.2. Conclusion

It is therefore important to assert that electoral fraud has been a major challenge to the foundation of democracy since independence. Activities of the 1962 census coupled with the disagreements among the political class immediately after self-government was achieved, laid the foundation for a bad precedent in the political system. It is also evident from our study that fraudulent activities have become entrenched in the society even in places which had hitherto been identified with high levels of morality and justice like Ekiti State. The activities of the political elite in using their wealth and influence to cause mayhem and ensure their candidates are returned elected at all costs also revealed a system of non-adherence to rules and principles of the electoral process. The economic situation of the people has also been exploited, leading to the desire of the electorate to sell their votes in exchange for money. This has been linked to the emergence of “stomach infrastructure” in place of electorate demanding for what would impact on the people positively and the desire to hold public office holders accountable.

It is therefore evident from this study that political officer holders have deliberately cultivated the habit of using various means to influence electoral outcomes in order to favor their choice of candidate(s) or political party. This development has invariably led to the series of electoral crises and truncation of the political process due to military interventions in the country. The political class have been accused of not allowing democracy to thrive due to the inability of various actors to allow fairness and impartiality to govern the process.

Considering the findings of this research, it is very important to assert the relevance of the elite theory to our discussion. This is indicative when activities of the political class in the society is carefully examined. The fact that clientelism exists in the Nigerian political system has further been revealed by the monetization of the system through vote buying and influence on the judiciary. Political god-fathers have been linked with sponsoring candidates for elections with the aim of recouping their investments after successfully installing their anointed political allies. The desire of the political elites to achieve their will, has also been reportedly responsible for the high level of corruption in the judiciary.

The differential association theory also confirms that criminal behavior often become acceptable in the society, and the social negativity of such actions cease to exist. This can be explained with the emergence of “stomach infrastructure” in Ekiti State. Due to the high rate of unemployment, poverty and illiteracy (among other factors), a large number of voters resorted to collecting cash and other materials in exchange for their votes. While issues and policies remain the factors to influence voters in most developed democracies, the theory, when applied, gives a clear analysis

of how material resources and money played vital roles in the electoral process in Ekiti State and the country at large.

However, while there have been various suggestions that the emergence of a new political elite could take politics beyond the prebendal political culture, it is possible that the system of elite recruitment and relationship between elites and society would be a major challenge to this. The notion of creating wealth accumulation through politics also creates a system whereby corruption is embraced as a way of life.

8.3. Recommendations

Democratic systems deal with the collective interest of the people and their ability to make a choice amongst themselves. As a guiding principle, it therefore becomes very important to conduct elections in a way that ensures credibility, transparency and fairness to all parties involved. This will go a long way in sustaining a smooth transition process and also serve as a channel for democratic consolidation.

The following recommendations have been suggested to address the challenges of electoral fraud in Nigeria.

- There is a need to strengthen the security apparatus in the country towards imbuing the spirit of professionalism and ensuring their independence as statutory bodies. This will allow various agencies responsible for maintaining law and order to operate, without attachments to the government in power, nor favour some powerful individuals in the society. Strict punishments should also be attached as penalties for deviants who may constitute impediments to changes as a result of perceived benefits from the old order.

- The INEC should not only be properly funded but its reliance on the executive arm needs to be addressed. Funding should be direct from the consolidated revenue account rather than the present arrangement under the office of the presidency. This will guarantee a more independent electoral body and guarantee a more proactive process which will address some logistical problems usually experienced towards the election date and during the elections.
- There is a need to decentralize the conduct of elections and devolve some responsibilities to the States and Local Governments. This will assist the INEC to combat several problems associated with the distribution of materials, personnel movements and access to polling units. This will further accommodate other levels of government and the process of de-concentration does not only justify federalism in practice but will help mitigate corruption amongst the political elite as a result of the involvement of various levels of government in the exercise.
- Political parties and civil society organizations need to organize forums of interaction to educate the people about the significance of voting in elections. There needs to be more sensitization on the power to use votes to remove a corrupt and non-performing administration. At the local level, more political awareness and education are needed to transform the political culture of the people to know their rights including the capacity to demand accountability from their leaders.
- Political offices should be made less lucrative to discourage money bag politicians and god-fathers whose perception of politics appears limited to investment where they can get returns when their candidates are elected. This will encourage those who have a

genuine interest, capacity and competent individuals to contest and hold leadership positions in the overall interests of the society.

- The introduction of technology was acknowledged to have impacted positively on the electoral process. However, efforts should be channelled to widen the scope and develop a software which will allow citizens to vote in any part of the country where they might find themselves during elections. This will help address the huge variance between the numbers of registered voters against those who actually vote during the election.
- In addition, the penalties for those who engage in electoral fraud are relatively insignificant when compared with the effect on the society. Such individuals are hardly prosecuted. There is therefore the need for stricter enforcement of electoral laws to proffer adequate sanctions for acts which promote electoral fraud and all forms of electoral manipulation.
- Finally, drawing on the theoretical framework employed for this work, it is clearly evident that the differential association theory calls for the transformation of a pattern of behavior in a society. This comprises the “do or die” approach to the electoral process by competing political actors through violence and malpractice and the prevalence of vote buying which guarantees the ballot to the highest bidder during elections. Democratic elite theory can be extended to consider further the process of selecting candidates who stand for elections. The Electoral Act has clearly defined the emergence of candidates to be either through direct, indirect or consensus in order to stand for election. Too often there are cases of imposition and favoritism of political elites who then dictate to the majority in this political environment. Therefore, there is the need to sanitize the system through the building of, and then adherence to democratic norms and traditions for

effective democratic leadership with its consequences for economic recovery and general development in Nigeria.

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APPENDIX A

(Interview Guide)

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. *What was your observation of the security measures before, during and after elections?*

2. *With the rate of petitions on electoral malpractices, can you tell me about your experience with INEC's staff and their capacity to undertake their expected functions*

3. *Considering the size of the country and other factors such as the hinterlands, tell me about logistics and the accessibility of electoral materials from your experience*

4. *From your experience, are you aware of a linkage between voter apathy as a function of electoral fraud?*

5. *Can you tell me of any instances of which you are aware in which those in Executive positions have influenced electoral outcomes?*

6. *From your experience, do you know of any instances in which incumbents or members of the opposition engage in electoral fraud? Can you give me examples?*

7. *From practical experience how far, and in what ways, does money influence voters' choice?*

8. *Can you tell me, from your experience, about any political party involvement in electoral fraud?*


9. *How has the introduction of the card reader impacted the general elections?*

10. *What are your suggestions for improvement in the electoral process?*


Schedule to Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2010

(1) SHORT TITLE OF THE BILL	(2) LONG TITLE OF THE BILL	(3) SUMMARY OF THE CONTENTS OF THE BILL	(4) DATE PASSED BY THE SENATE	(5) DATE PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ELECTORAL (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2010	An Act to amend the Electoral Act No. 6, 2010, among other things, to provide for adequate time for the Independent National Electoral Commission to issue notices, receive nomination of candidates from political parties and ensure the proper conduct of political parties.	This Bill amends the Electoral Act No. 6, 2010, among other things, to provide for adequate time for the Independent National Electoral Commission to issue notices, receive nomination of candidates from political parties and ensure the proper conduct of political parties.	21 st December, 2010	21 st December, 2010

I certify that this Bill has been carefully compared by me with the decision reached by the National Assembly and found by me to be true and correct decision of the Houses and is in accordance with the provisions of the Acts Authentication Act Cap. A2, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004.


SALISU ABUBAKAR MAIKASUWA, mni
Clerk to the National Assembly
29th Day of December, 2010

I ASSENT.


DR. GOODLUCK JONATHAN, GCFR
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
29th Day of December, 2010