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ELECTORAL REFORMS AND DEMOCRATIC STABILITY IN NIGERIA: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE 2022 ELECTORAL ACT

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Abstract

The paper interrogates the prospects of attaining democratic stability in Nigeria, via the instrumentality of electoral reforms, taking the Electoral Act 2022 into perspective. Electoral reforms have been generally observed to hold mixed (positive and negative) outcomes on the electoral process and democracy at large. Nonetheless, the case of the Electoral Act 2022 has not been examined to ascertain its prospects for improved electoral credibility and democratic stability, or otherwise, in the country. This is the primary objective of this paper. The paper relies on descriptive and explanatory research designs, using document analysis and desk review methods. It relies on secondary data sources. The paper finds, among others, that, the Electoral Act 2022 is capable of guaranteeing stronger financial independence of the Independent National Electoral Commission and addressing logistics challenges; that, by legalising the use of technology, electoral credibility will be improved upon; and that, most of the provisions in the Act, when well implemented, are capable to midwife democratic stability in Nigeria. It concludes that beyond the enactment of the Act, political elites must develop the right attitude and political will to sincerely improve the electoral process, and that, all hands must be on deck to see to the effective implementation of the Act to harness its efficacy towards attaining democratic stability in the country.

Introduction

Electoral democracies the world over, thrive on credible, free, fair, and periodic elections. This is to the extent that, while elections alone do not make democracies (Katz, 1997), there however cannot be democracy in the real sense of the word without clean elections (Levitsky & Way, 2010; Ninsin, 2006; Ojo, 2021). Thus, it is safe to infer that democracy will survive well into the future when there are credible elections. Given the fact that elections are imperfect the world over (Olivia, 2011), democratic states make efforts from time to time to improve the electoral process by way of tinkering with the electoral laws and guidelines. This singular act is what is meant by electoral reforms. It, therefore suffices that electoral reforms not only improve the electoral process but also serve as instruments for attaining democratic stability – an assurance of democratic practice well into the future.

All too often in Africa, Nigeria, inclusive elections are marred by serious irregularities which threaten the continued existence of democracy in such a manner that democratic stability is not assured. Since the democratisation of the continent in the 1990s, several changes have been made on issues relating to gender voting, voter registration, participation of people living with disability, and the participation and inclusion of marginalised groups, etc. (IDEA, 2014). In Nigeria, since its return to democratic rule in 1999, elections have been synonymous with rigging, and antithetical to democratic stability (Ogwu, 2016), with 1999, 2003, and 2007 elections standing out in terms of poorly conducted elections. In 2015, with some measures of electoral reforms (Electoral Act 2010, as amended in 2015), and the deployment of technologies for the conduct of the election, it resulted in one of the best elections in the electoral history of the country (Idowu & Mimiko, 2020). Since 1999, the country has made efforts to improve its electoral process by way of electoral reforms, including the Justice Uwais Commission of 2007/2008, and the Electoral Act 2006, 2010, and 2015. After a few controversies and going back and forth on the Electoral Act 2022, it was eventually assented to by the president on February 25, 2022. Pertinent to add that these reforms were designed to address such electoral malfeasance like ballot snatching/stuffing, over-voting, multiple registration/voting, and lack of confidence in the election management body, among others, which frequently beset the electoral and democratic process in Nigeria.

The impression that has been created in previous studies is the fact that electoral reforms play a critical role in stabilising democratic practice (Diwakar, 2015; Idowu, 2018; Jinadu, 2012; Ogwu, 2021). Nevertheless, electoral reforms do not always guarantee democratic stability, as some are mere façade by the political class to suit their political interests, and do not necessarily with a sincere motive to improve the electoral process (Ojo, 2021; Omotola, 2010, 2021; Stein, Owens & Leighley, 2003), and may yield mixed results (Green & Gerber, 2004). It is however yet to be demonstrated, how the electoral reforms have helped or are helping to stabilise democracy in Nigeria, or otherwise. The critical question thus, is: what are the prospects of attaining democratic stability in Nigeria through the instrumentality of electoral reforms? It is to answer this question that the present paper reviews Electoral Act 2022. This paper relied on secondary sources and was analysed using a desk review.

Literature Review

Electoral reform refers to changes made to electoral laws and processes over some time, often to improve the electoral process. It is a deliberate and conscious attempt by the state to correct loopholes and weaknesses in the electoral process (Ogwu, 2016). According to Butler (2004), electoral reform implies a change in the electoral system to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the election management process. The International IDEA (2014:5) categorized electoral reforms into "Political electoral reform [which involves] changes in the political environment that an EMB operates within…, Administrative electoral reform [which involves] changes that are related more to the day-to-day work of an EMB… [and] legal electoral reform [which involves] changes to the constitution, electoral laws and rules and regulations." Several state and non-state stakeholders have been identified to be working hand-in-hand with the EMBs in the electoral reform process. Table 1 presents some of such stakeholders working with EMBs in the electoral reform process.

Table 1: State and Non-State Stakeholders involved with EMBs in Electoral Reform Process

State Stakeholder	Non-state Stakeholders
Government (Ministry of Finance, Justice, Labour, etc.)	Political parties and inter-party networks
Parliament (various committees in the legislature)	Civil society organisations
Office of the Attorney General	The electorate
The Judiciary	The media
Public commissions (media, gender, human rights, law reform, etc.)	International and domestic observers
International diplomatic community	Regional and International EMB networks
	International assistance providers
	Development partners/donors
	Election experts

Source: IDEA (2014: 21)

Democratic stability refers to the consolidation of the democratic process, ensuring democracy is secured well into the future. It is the absence of a democratic breakdown. Amersfoort and Wusten (2010) infer that democratic stability is the 'continuity' of the democratic system over time, without disruptions or interruptions.

The literature is replete with the relationship (positive and negative) between electoral reform and democratic stability. Abubakar and Yahaya (2017) argue that electoral reform is sacrosanct for the growth and development of electoral processes, institutions and the attainment of democratic stability. This is so, as electoral reforms provide the opportunity to improve the electoral process and promote citizens' electoral rights. These scholars posit that in most contexts, EMBs do not have the statutory and constitutional mandate of initiating and prosecuting electoral reforms even though they are the executing authority. Despite lacking constitutional backing in most cases to be involved in electoral reforms, EMBs possess the requisite information and practical experience to assist and guide a successful electoral reform process across democracies (National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, 2008). In a related study, López-Pintor (2000), pointed out that EMBs' engagement in electoral reforms is hampered by many factors including the lack of political will, lack of support by the

political elite, procedural difficulties, inadequate funding, inadequate staffing and capacity, technological innovation, etc. Figure 1 shows EMB's involvement in the electoral reform process.

Figure 1: Diagrammatical Presentation of EMB involvement in the Electoral Reform Process

Establish legal reform engagement plan, including priorities and timeline

Implement legal reform

Carry out research

Inform stakeholders and inform/educate the public

Draft/submit/revise/ present reform proposals to parliament/ relevant parliamentary committee

Operationalize the implications of reform

Continuous engagement with national, regional and international stakeholders

Mainstream gender equality in the legal electoral reform process

ELECTORAL REFORM IS VOTED THROUGH THE LEGISLATURE

Source: International IDEA (2014: 15).

While the original purpose of electoral reforms is to improve the electoral process and enhance the prospects of democratic stability, evidence has also shown that electoral reforms could be manipulated to bring 'negative' effects on democratic stability (Omotola, 2010; Stein, et al. 2003). In some instances, electoral reforms have, therefore, been observed to have promoted equality at one point, while further dividing the electorate and increasing socio-economic divisions at the same time (Berinsky, 2005; Rigby & Springer, 2001). Also, while some electoral reforms have increased representation of minority groups and citizen participation, and turnout over some time, Henderson (2006) avers that this effect was not always the same, as the reverse was the case at other times. The effectiveness of electoral laws has also been strongly linked with elite behaviour (Hooghe, Maddens & Noppe, 2005). That is to imply that whether electoral reforms will produce the desired positive effects on the electoral system and democratic practice, significantly depends on how the political elites comport themselves and allow full implementation of the electoral laws. In essence, good electoral laws are not enough, political elites must develop the right attitude (European

Union, 2022). This informs Stein, et al's (2003:1) coinage of 'elite strategic behaviour', which they claim is imperative for the effectiveness or otherwise of electoral laws.

Botchway and Kwarteng (2018) emphasised the importance of electoral laws and reforms, which they claim are the determinants of the progress and stability of the democratic process. As such, they recommend the periodic reform of electoral laws in such a manner that they provide a level playing field for all political competitors, and be supportive of citizen participation. This is important as electoral reforms can go a long way to influence participation and voter turnout, etc. (Green & Gerber, 2004; Johnson, Rossiter & Pattie, 2006). Electoral reforms have also been seen to improve the electoral process and further stabilise the democratic process (see, for instance, Agyeman-Duah, 2008; Atuguba, Ansah, Anin-Yeboah, Baffoe-Bonnie & Gbadegbe, 2013; Debrah, 2009; Idowu, 2018; Jinadu, 2012). Diwakar (2015) also notes that electoral reforms invoke higher voter turnout, reduce electoral violence, and invoke a higher level of credibility in the electoral process.

Considering the factors which trigger electoral reforms, Shugart (2018: 29) identifies two prominent factors – inherent and contingent factors. According to him, to trigger electoral reform, the electoral system can produce a systemic failure which differs from general expectations. When this happens, it gives room for an inherent condition for electoral reforms to take place. This inherent condition creates two scenarios which facilitate electoral reform – it allows an anomaly to occur within the political system which results in outright public criticism of the electoral system. Accordingly, Shugart avers that for electoral reform to take place, there must be a systemic failure which Peelish (2016: 30) defines as "a deviation from the expected normative outcome." On the other hand, the contingent factor for electoral reforms refers to anything that stimulates a newly elected party to initiate an electoral reform system. Reed and Thies (2001) categorised these contingencies into two – outcome-contingencies, and act-contingencies. While the former implies incumbent party support for electoral reforms because it feels that the reforms will be in its favour, the latter implies incumbent support for reforms because the reforms enjoy public support, and it can therefore

win public support/sympathy by voting for such reforms. Shugart (2008) however argued that all electoral reforms are driven by a combination of inherent and contingent factors. This is because, there has to be an anomaly in the electoral system (inherent condition), which invokes public pressure against the system, and stimulates the incumbent party to advocate and drive electoral reforms (contingent factor). In all cases, Renwick (2010: 45) makes an important observation, which is that public pressure is a constant factor in all cases of electoral reforms. Kerr (2013) observed that incumbents are more likely to implement significant reforms to improve the electoral process if the costs of maintaining the status quo outweigh the benefits. He identified three factors that influence the cost-benefit calculation of powerholders: The strength of domestic opposition relative to the incumbent and the ability of the opposition to credibly pressure the incumbent; 2. Regimes' vulnerability to external pressure and the commitment of international actors to credibly pressure the incumbent; 3. The extent to which EMB reforms will influence the incumbents' electoral prospects.

Using the veto player theory, Blau (2008: 63) provides an analysis of how electoral reforms are proposed. According to this theory, a rational player, what Blau calls an 'Agenda setter', always pushes for reforms in such a way that causes a change in the electoral system. In this case, the agenda setter (often the incumbent party), not only chooses the reforms to go into the electoral system but also, the legislative path to take to attain success (Peelish, 2016). Blau (2008) argues that beyond interest, the agenda setter also considers attitude (what the individual considers as good or bad, and their impression about how the policy affects their interest), in determining what reforms to propose. It considers self-interest and party interest as the main drivers for the agenda setter in electoral reform proposition. On party proposition, Blau (2008: 75) identifies four major reasons why a party (especially a ruling or major party) may propose an electoral reform. They include the belief that reforms would bring better governance; if it would win the minority party over; if it would be in favour of the party; and if voting for a reform garner more public support for the party. Peelish (2016: 32) posits that in whatever circumstance among the above, being rational players, party leaders will always propose reforms that suit their party interest.

Shugart's outcome-contingency and Blau's veto player theory align with the rational choice institutionalism and partisan interest theory of electoral reforms, which argues that parties have preferences for electoral reforms depending on the expected benefit or payoffs for them, whether in the present or future (Benoit, 2007; Bowler, Denovan & Karp, 2006).

Historical Trajectory of Electoral Reforms in Nigeria

Electoral reforms in Nigeria date back to the period of colonial rule. Following independence in 1960, Nigeria had its first elections as a Republic in 1964. Since then, several other elections have been held amidst intermittent disruptions by military interventions. Many if not all of these elections have been alleged to be marred with different kinds of irregularities and malpractices. Apart from serving as incentives for the military to interrupt the process, these electoral malfeasances have provided justifications for many of the electoral reforms before the return to democracy in 1999. For example, Nigeria practised the proportional representation electoral system under a parliamentary system of government from 1959-January 15th 1966 (Ibrahim, 2007) when the military struck and usurped political powers in a bloody coup d'état. Within this period, parliamentary seats were allocated to political parties based on the number of votes pulled in a poll. However, in 1979, Nigeria not only instituted a presidential system of government but also adopted the *first-past-the-post* electoral system modelled after the United States (Amah, 2017).

To address electoral fraud and irregularities identified in previous elections in Nigeria, the National Electoral Commission (NEC) during the military administration of General Ibrahim Babangida innovated the *Option A-4* system to conduct the 1992/93 General elections (Ojo, Adewunmi & Oluwole, 2013). *Option A-4* is an electoral system which requires voters to queue behind the campaign poster of their preferred candidates until after counting and proper recording. It was *Option A 4* that produced the outcome of the 1993 presidential elections allegedly won by the late Chief M. K. O. Abiola. The election was widely acclaimed by both international and domestic the most credible election ever conducted in Nigeria. Sadly, the election was annulled by the Gen. Babangida-led military government (Balogun

& Ikheloa, 2022). The crisis and controversies generated by the annulment of the June 12 elections are well-known with far-reaching implications for Nigeria's corporate existence. The annulment of the June 12, 1993, elections ushered in yet another military-civilian rule transition programme midwife by the late Gen. Sani Abacha's military regime. During the Abacha regime's military-civil rule transition programme (1993-1998), the *Option A-4* system was replaced with the Open-Secret Ballot system. However, the transition from the military-civil rule programme ended abruptly following the death of Gen. Sani Abacha on June 8 1998 (Ngara & Esebonu, 2012).

In 1999, Nigeria returned to democratic rule after a successful 9-month military-civil rule transition programme administered by Gen Abdulsalami Abubakar. During the military-supervised general election in 1999, the Open-Secret Ballot system innovated by Gen. Sani Abacha's regime was sustained. It must be noted that the 1999 and successive elections in Nigeria have been characterized by varying degrees of malpractice. As Omotola (2011) noted that there is a widely accepted notion supported by undeniable evidence that the quality of elections in Nigeria is progressively compromised at each circle of elections just the same way it happened in the 1999, 2003 and 2007 general elections. He further argued that the major challenge bedevilling Nigeria's democracy is that of "election administration." Indeed, all the stages of the electoral process from voter registration, party primaries, and election campaigns to the conduct of elections and management of post-election issues have remained sources of worry to observers and the international community (Omotola, 2011).

These concerns have often inspired the calls for reforms and accounted for the electoral reforms initiated by the Federal Government since 2003. By the provisions of the 1999 Constitution (as Altered), general Elections have been held every four years since 1999. These elections were held in 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019. Before each of these elections, electoral reforms of varying degrees were introduced. Before the 2003 general elections, the Electoral Act 2002 was passed. The Electoral Act covered voter registration, political party operations, area and local government council elections, electoral offences, and election petition tribunals. However, these provisions did not constitute any significant reform to the electoral process (Electoral

Hub, 2020), as the inadequacies of the Electoral Act 2002 resulted in the 2003 elections falling below the minimum standard due to widespread violence.

The deficiencies in the Electoral Act 2002 created the impetus for further reform and culminated in the Electoral Act 2006. The 2006 Act expanded the functions of INEC to include conducting voter and civic education; promoting knowledge of sound democratic electoral processes; and conducting any referendum required by law. In addition, the Electoral Act 2006 closed gaps in the Electoral Act 2002 that makes it possible for political parties to change or replace candidates even during polling; gave supremacy to election tribunal judgments over INEC's certification where election results are contested; introduced campaign funding ceilings; as well as INEC power to appoint its own Secretary (Electoral Reform Committee, 2008). Despite these among other reforms, the 2006 Act had its failings such as ambiguous provisions, poor drafting, and denial of rights of the petition to some stakeholders which adversely impacted the 2007 General Elections. The 2007 General elections were described by observers including President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, who came into office during the same election as one of the worst elections ever held in Nigeria due to widespread irregularities and malpractices that characterized it (Human Rights Watch, 2007). Despite these, the 2007 General Elections gave Nigeria a huge quantum leap in democracy development and tested the resolve of Nigerians to embrace democracy with all its flaws as the preferred system of government.

Having publicly acknowledge the elections that brought him in were fraught with irregularities, President Umaru Musa Yar'adua upon assumption of office on August 28 2007, inaugurated a 23-man Electoral Reform Committee (ERC), led by Justice Muhammed Uwais and drew membership from the CSOs and other critical stakeholders. The ERC was mandated to suggest ways to comprehensively reform and overhaul the country's electoral process. In its recommendations. In its report, the ERC's recommendations include amongst others:

i.   The INEC Chairman should be a person with a high level of in-tegrity and credibility;

ii.   INEC officials should be nominated by the National Judicial Council (NJC), rather than the executive;

iii. INEC funding should be a first-line charge on the Consolidated Revenue of the Federation;

iv. INEC should be unbundled by creating new commissions: The Political Parties Registration and Regulation Commission, the Electoral Offenses 8 Commission, a Constituency Delineation Commission and the Centre for Democratic studies;

v. Parties should disclose all funding sources to INEC;

vi. There should be donation ceilings for parties and candidates;

vii. There should be a qualifying period for membership of a party, to discourage people from joining parties solely to contest elections;

viii. Voter registration should be fully computerised, with electronic voting introduced gradually;

ix. Internal party democracy should be promoted and monitored by INEC;

x. Election petitions should be resolved before new candidates are sworn in;

xi. Election petitions should be resolved more quickly by reducing the number of judges sitting in each tribunal, to allow more tribunals to hear cases;

xii. An additional 30% of the total seats in the National Assembly, State Houses of Assembly, and Local Government Council should be created. Proportional representation would be used instead of the first-past-the-post system for elections into those seats. Parties would be required to put forward at least 30% female candidates and 2% physically challenged candidates in these elections (Electoral Reform Committee, 2008).

Although not all of the recommendations of Justice Uwais's led ERC were accepted by the Federal Government, about 90% of its recommendations were included in the Electoral Act 2010 and the First Alteration Act 2010 (Election Hub, 2020). It introduced the following among other reforms:

i. To improve the independence of INEC, section 156 of the Constitution was amended to state that INEC members cannot be members of political parties;

ii. Section 84 of the Constitution was amended to state that INEC fund-

ing would come from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, rather than the executive;

iii. Section 160(1) of the Constitution was amended to state that INEC can make its own rules and regulations without the interference of the President;

iv. Section 228 of the Constitution was amended to give more powers to INEC to monitor internal democracy within parties;

v. Election timeframes were amended so that elections would be held not earlier than 150 days and not later than 30 days before the expiration of the term of office of the incumbent official;

vi. The number of judges sitting in election petition tribunals was reduced from five to three, and tribunals were obligated to deal with election petitions within 180 days from the date of filing, and appeals within 60 days;

vii. INEC introduced a new biometric voter registration system;

viii. INEC improved the security of election materials by introducing serial numbering and colour-coding of ballot papers and boxes;

ix. INEC established the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) to promote synergy across the security agencies involved in elections; and

x. INEC started the recruitment of National Youth Service Corps members as ad-hoc staff, and university academics as Returning Officers on Election Day (Onapajo, 2015).

It is noteworthy that the successes recorded in the 2011 general elections as one of the peaceful, transparent and credible elections in Nigeria were attributed to the quality of the Electoral Act 2010. Despite the reforms resulting in the Electoral Act 2010, there were still allegations of malpractices and technical hitches during the 2011 general elections. This led to another reform which amended the Electoral Act 2010 to midwife the 2015 general elections. During this election, power alternated from the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) to the main opposition, the All Progressives Congress (APC). Although, several attempts to amend the Electoral (Amendment) Act 2010 as passed by the National Assembly couldn't receive presidential assent. Nonetheless, the 2015 general elections were adjudged free, fair and credible as a result of a wide range of reforms introduced including the use

of the card reader in the voter accreditation process. The need for further improvement in the electoral process led to attempts for further reforms, especially in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

Another important reform was in 2018 when the Not Too Young to Run Act was enacted. The Age Reduction Bill popularly known as the Not Too Young to Run Bill was initiated by civil society groups including YIAGA Africa. The Act reduced the age of running for elective positions in the House of Assembly and House of Representatives from 30 to 25 years old, the Senate and Governorship from 35 to 30 years old, and President from 40 to 30 years old. However, the 9th Session of the National Assembly successfully repealed the 2010 Electoral Act in 2022 and enacted the Electoral 2022. The key provisions of this new Electoral Act 2022 as summarized by Ajulo (2022), include:

i. Section 29(1) stipulates that political parties must conduct primaries and submit their list of candidates at least 180 days before the general elections;

ii. Section 65 provides that INEC can review election results declared under duress;

iii. Section 3(3) captures that the funds for general elections must be released at least one year before the election;

iv. Section 51 states that the total number of accredited voters will become a factor in determining over-voting at election tribunals;

v. Section 54(2) makes provisions for people with disabilities and special needs to be given preferential treatment in the management and conduct of elections;

vi. Section 47 provides legislative backing for smart card readers and any other voter accreditation technology that INEC deploys;

vii. Section 34 empowers political parties to conduct a primary to replace a candidate who died during an election;

viii. Section 50 empowers INEC to carry out the electronic transmission of election results;

ix. Section 94 allows for the early commencement of the campaign season. By this, campaign season will now start 150 days before the election day and end 24 hours before the election; and

x.   Section 84 provides that anyone holding a political office (such as ministers, commissioners, special advisers, etc. must relinquish the position before they can be eligible to participate in the electoral process either as a candidate or as a delegate.

Since electoral reforms began in 2002, Nigeria's electoral process, administration and jurisprudence have greatly transformed. Of important note was the introduction of electoral technology such as biometric voter registration, and smart card readers which are now replaced with the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS). These technological innovations are expected to put an end to age-long electoral crimes like ballot box snatching and stuffing, even though there are public concerns that desperate politicians may work to compromise the INEC server. INEC itself has raised alarm over attempts to clone the BVAS to manipulate the 2023 elections (Ede, Dec. 14, 2022). Regardless of these fears, the ultimate test of the Electoral Act 2022 will be the 2023 general election which will determine whether the Act will stand the test of time or undergo reforms before the 2017 general elections.

The Electoral Act 2022 and Democratic Stability in Nigeria

After much public agitations and goings back and forth between the National Assembly and the Presidency, the Nigerian president finally assented to the Electoral Act 2022 on February 25, 2022. This repeals the Electoral Act of 2010, and it is to be deployed for the 2023 general elections. According to the European Union (2022: 1), "the Electoral Act 2022 comprehensively introduces a range of measures that improve the electoral process." The Act replaces and/or modifies many of the previous provisions in the Electoral Act 2010 (as amended in 2015). It was a product of contributions from civil society, court precedence on previous elections, INEC, and credible election observation reports and recommendations. Among others, the Electoral Act 2022 makes provision for the legal backing for the deployment of technology for elections by INEC, early release of funds to INEC before the election year, improved timelines, enhanced result transmission process, and justification for INEC to cancel results announced under duress (EU, 2022). Table 2 below presents some major provisions/improvements made over the previous Electoral Act 2010 (as amended in 2015) in the present Electoral Act 2022.

Table 2: Some Major Provisions/Amendments to the Electoral Act 2010 on the New Electoral Act 2022

S/N	Previous Provisions under Electoral Act 2010	Modifications of the Electoral Act 2022
1.	Electoral funds are to be released in line with the rules set out by INEC	**Section 3 (3)** provides that electoral funds be released at least a year before the next election date
2.	Submission of political party candidate list to be done at least 60 days before the election date	**Section 29 (1)** provides that party primaries and submission of candidates be done at least 180 days before the election date
3.	Provided no legal backing for E-voting and electronic transmission of results	**Section 47 & 50 (2)** provide legal backing for the use of technology for voter accreditation and electronic transmission of results, while **Section 62 (2)** gives legal backing for INEC to maintain an electronic register of votes
4.	Allowedpolitical appointees to vote and be voted for during political party primaries	**Section 84 (12)** bans political appointees from voting as delegates or standing as aspirants
5.	No adequate provisions were made to assist persons living with physical disabilities and vulnerable populations during voting	**Section 54 (2)** provides that voters with disability, special needs and other vulnerable populations be assisted by someone chosen by themselves, to vote at the polling unit, and INEC is to provide necessary facilities to assist these groups of persons at the polling unit
6.	Number of registered voters used to determine cases of over-voting.	**Section 54** provides that only number of accredited voters be used as a yardstick to determine cases of over-voting
7.	No provision was made with respect to results declared by returning officers under duress	**Section 65** provides that within seven days, INEC can review the results declared by any returning officer under duress, and/or where the declaration is made against the election guidelines and laws

8.	Political parties had only 90 days before the election date for political campaigns	**Section 94** provides that electoral campaigns can now begin 150 days before the election day, and end 24 hours prior to the election date
9.	Did not make provision for the death of a candidate before or during the election, but only empowered the commission to postpone only yet-to-be-commenced elections	**Section 34** provides that at the death of a candidate before the election date, INEC should suspend the process and fix a new date within 14 days. When the candidate dies during the voting process before the final results are declared, INEC should suspend the process for at most 21 days. In the latter case, for legislative elections, a new primary is to be conducted by the party within 14 days of the death, while for presidential or governorship or FCT Area Council election, the running mate to the deceased shall continue with the process, and nominate a new running mate.
10.	Any member of the public could seek judicial review for a candidate with false information or a forged certificate.	**Section 29 (5)** provides that only aspirants who contested against the candidate in the party primaries can seek a judicial review on issues relating to false information or forged certificates
11.	No adequate provision was made for the neutrality of INEC personnel, and no stipulated punishment for partisanship.	**Section 8 (5)** provides that INEC personnel (ad hoc officers inclusive) must be neutral and non-partisan. Such attracts a punishment of 5 million Nairas, and/or two years imprisonment.
12.	Provision for only a national collation centre for the presidential election.	**Section 27** makes provision for a state collation centre for the presidential election.

13.	Political parties' registration could be made at least 6 months before the general election date	**Section 75 (1)** provides that INEC shall only register political parties that submit their application at least a year before the general election date.
14.	Fixed lesser campaign spending limits for political candidates during elections as follows: - Presidential – 1, 000, 000, 000 naira - Governorship – 200, 000, 000 naira - Senatorial – 40, 000, 000 naira - House of Representatives – 20, 000, 000 naira - State Assembly – 10, 000, 000 naira - Chairmanship – 10, 000, 000 naira - Councillorship – 1, 000, 000 naira	**Section 88 (2-7)** increased the maximum amount to be spent on political campaigns by political candidates during elections as follows: - Presidential – 5, 000, 000, 000 naira - Governorship – 1, 000, 000, 000 naira - Senatorial – 100, 000, 000 naira - House of Representatives – 70, 000, 000 naira - State Assembly – 30, 000, 000 naira - Chairmanship – 30, 000, 000 naira - Councillorship – 5, 000, 000 naira

Source: Compiled by the Author from Electoral Act 2010 (as amended), and Electoral Act 2022.

No doubt that the various provisions and amendments to the previous Electoral Act 2010 (as amended in 2015) in the Electoral Act 2022, is in order to improve the electoral process, and midwife democratic stability in the country. A careful study of the Electoral Act 2022 reveals clearly that if it is religiously implemented, it holds the prospects of attaining democratic stability in Nigeria over a period. These prospects are embedded in several aspects and provisions of the Electoral Act 2022. For instance, by making election funds available to INEC one year before the election date, the new law ensures, and further strengthens the financial independence of the commission, and addresses major logistics challenges the commission had

encountered in the past. This is closely followed by the provision, which has fixed the deadline for the registration of political parties to one year before a general election year. This will enable the commission enough time to plan ahead of time with the accurate number of political parties and candidates participating in a general election, thereby, helping to resolve some of the logistics challenges often faced by the commission as a result of hasty preparations due to late comers for registration.

The legalisation of the deployment of existing technologies and new ones, including the electronic transmission of election results, will no doubt, reduce human interference in the electoral process and prevent manipulations and fraud, thereby, improving electoral credibility. Also, the empowerment of INEC to review results declared by returning officers under duress will serve as a deterrent to the practice whereby politicians often hold returning officers to ransom to declare them winners in elections they had not won. The provision for the neutrality of INEC personnel, and an attached punishment, put security personnel, INEC staff, and ad hoc staff on their toes, and serves as a deterrent against their partisanship.

Furthermore, the special provision to assist persons with disability and other vulnerable populations create room for inclusivity in the electoral process. The redefinition of what constitutes over-voting by the use of the number of accredited voters, rather than the number of registered voters, will deal a blow to the rampancy of ghost and foreign voters. The early conduct of party primaries and submission of candidate names to INEC, and the extension of campaign periods, provide enough room for the electorate to familiarise themselves with the candidates, interrogate their policies, and make informed decisions on election day. While the provision which increases political candidates' campaign spending during elections is plausible, given the current economic realities in the country, it is quite debatable, how this move contributes to strengthening democracy in the country. This is so because previous provisions on campaign spending limits in the Electoral Act 2010 have been audaciously flouted by all political candidates in the past, it is therefore yet to be seen whether the present and increased provisions will be adhered to. If adhered to, it could then safely be adjudged to be contributing to the attainment of democratic stability through

adherence to the rule of law, otherwise, the debate on this addendum and its relevance for democratic stability continue. All of these breakthroughs and more invoke so many prospects for the Electoral Act 2022 to birth democratic stability in Nigeria. To this extent, Abati (2022) argues quite correctly that "The amendment of the Electoral Act 2010 [that is the Electoral Act 2022] is the most comprehensive and pragmatic effort that the National Assembly of Nigeria has embarked upon since it was resolved that having a credible electoral framework is crucial for the integrity of elections and the leadership recruitment process."

Despite these prospects, it is pertinent to note that beyond the Electoral Act 2022 coming into force, implementation of the Act to the latter is germane to achieve the desired result of democratic stability. As such, the European Union (2022) shows some concern with respect to the conditions which could undermine the effectiveness and efficacy of the Electoral Act 2022. They include persistent logistics challenges besetting the INEC; the doubt over INEC's total independence; the challenge of electoral security, coupled with the obnoxious role of some security personnel during elections; lack of inclusivity and participation, especially of the women's gender, etc. In the area of technological deployment for election administration, the fact that those technologies are still going to be operated by humans gives a cause for concern about the chances of continuous manipulations. Also, the extension of the campaign period means that political parties and political candidates will now have to spend more resources on political campaigns. While some political parties may be capable to finance a longer campaign window, others may not have the financial wherewithal to do the same. This creates room for some inequality, especially in terms of how well political parties are able to equally sell themselves, their candidates and their policies to the electorate, which in turn, can influence the electoral outcome.

Furthermore, the attitude and behaviour of the Nigerian elites are a cause for concern as far as the effective implementation of the Electoral Act 2022 is concerned (European Union, 2022; Stein, et al. (2003: 1). The desperate tendencies of Nigerian political elites to win an election by all means possible, makes them one of the greatest threats to the effectiveness and efficacy of the Electoral Act 2022. Therefore, while the provisions of the Electoral Act 2022

are good enough to significantly improve the electoral process, the character of the Nigerian political elites to always find means to beat the system may constitute a huge challenge. Albeit, while these challenges call for concern, there is no doubt that indeed, "Notwithstanding 'banana peels' strewn on the path of the electoral process, the 2022 Electoral Act offers a great opportunity and hope in our [Nigeria] quest for free, fair, transparent and credible polls." (Umar, as cited in Olatunji, 2022). The Electoral Act 2022 thus, provides an opportunity, and charts a path towards democratic stability in Nigeria, via its various provisions.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Electoral reforms are credible and essential tools towards attaining democratic stability. This is because they help to improve the electoral process and reduce the possibility of fraud and other manipulations that are cankerworms to democratic stability. Following this, the Electoral Act 2022 has been reviewed to possess the ethos to chart the path to democratic stability in Nigeria; albeit, not without first addressing some critical challenges such as elite behaviour and lack of political will and attitudes towards sincerely improving the electoral process, persistent electoral security challenges, logistics challenges still besetting INEC, etc. If the prospects of attaining democratic stability must be achieved through the Electoral Act 2022, these challenges and others must be nipped in the bud. This paper hereby makes the following policy recommendations:

i.   There is a need for INEC to put in place a policy roadmap to guide the strict implementation of the provisions of the Electoral Act 2022. Such policy guidelines will spell out programmatically action-related activities to ensure compliance with the Electoral Act, including conscious efforts to overcome persistent logistics challenges during elections;

ii.   INEC should be decentralised to relieve it of some of its responsibilities, as the Commission is presently overburdened. This can be achieved through the Constitutional Alteration to unbundle the Commission to make departments such as Political Party Monitoring, Voter Education and Publicity, Litigation and Prosecution etc., an independent body to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of

electoral administration as well as improve election planning and operational oversight;

iii. INEC should strengthen collaboration with Civil Society Organisation (CSOs), and institutions such as the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), to develop tailor-made training programmes and sensitisation workshops for election duty workers. Such training and reorientation programmes are especially necessary for the Nigeria Police and other security operatives deployed on election duty to sensitise them on the need to maintain peace and order, civility and neutrality during elections.

iv. Beyond the 2023 general elections, the Electoral Act 2022 requires amendments and innovations that will help to demonetise party primaries. In addition, Section 84(12) which bars political appointees from voting as delegates or standing as aspirants should be amended to protect the political rights of those categories of public officers. Also, Section 94 which provides 150 days for campaigns needs to be amended to reduce the period for the campaign to 90 days. This is because the extended campaign period creates a disadvantage for smaller, newly registered political parties or those with a limited financial capacity to sustain a campaign for a long period of time relative to older, financially stronger and/or more established parties.

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ARTICLE

2

CONFLICT AND DISTORTION IN RESOURCE UTILIZATION AND PEACE-BUILDING IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Conflict always generates insecurity. Peace scholars recognise conflict as a non-economic factor that impacts negatively on economic growth and development. The conflict escalated by resource control is prevalent partly because of multiple and competing demands for resources. In Nigeria, various conflicts among interest groups in different parts of the country attract national discourse because they impact negatively on the nation's security. This study investigates the causes of conflict provoked by resources and the attendant peacebuilding efforts in Kogi State and the nation at large. The paper's main objective is to create a sustainable and peaceful way forward. Data were generated from primary and secondary sources through Key Informant Interviews (KII), and a structured questionnaire administered in six randomly-select local governments, namely: Abejukolo, Bagana, Bagaji, Akpacha, Icheke, and Ofejiji. This study used Peacebuilding Theory. Qualitative and quantitative analyses were done. Findings reveal that conflict precipitates the destruction of human lives; causes humanitarian crises such as internally displaced persons (IDPs); creates extensive damage to physical and agrarian structures; causes disruption of psychological well-being; breakdown of law and order, among other negative outcomes. A major proposition of this study is that peace-building mechanisms should be instituted and managed by all stakeholders because non-state actors in conflict theatres sometimes allow grievances to smoulder because of fear, distrust, peer pressure, financial constraints, exclusion from certain conflict resolution procedures, or for strategic reasons.

Introduction

Natural resource conflicts are disagreements and disputes over access to, control over and usage of natural resources such as forests, water, pastures and land. These conflicts often emerge because people have different usages for resources or want to manage them in different ways. Appelbaum et al 1998, cited by Osisioma (2004), define conflict as an interpersonal dynamic which is shaped by the internal and external environments of the parties involved, and is manifested in a process which affects group performance either functionally or dysfunctionally. Conflicts arise when two or more individuals, groups, communities, or nations pursue mutually exclusive or non-harmonious goals. Oftentimes, the underlying factors include scarcity of resources, clash of interests, the incongruence of values, standards and principles, and a perception of being displaced by other parties in pursuit of desired goals.

The predominant form of violent conflict involves wars by national armies (state actors) fighting each other (inter-state wars) to protect their sovereignty; fighting for independence, separation or political control (intra-state or civil wars). According to Okpaleke (2016), conflict is characterised by extreme aggression, economic disintegration and irrationality, social disruption and usually high mortality. At other times, the army fights non-state actors such as rebels, gangs and organized criminals that threaten the nation's peace. However, there has been a relative reduction in human carnage since the end of the cold war in the 1980s. Given the changing nature and cycles of conflict, the post-conflict phase is not always easy to identify, particularly when there is no peace agreement.

Conflicts can be intra-personal, intra-group, and intra-national. Conflict can reflect incompatible actions between contrasting groups or persons leading to interpersonal, intergroup or international conflicts. Many scholars have attributed conflicts to different causative factors such as the cultural/historical backdrop of nomadic pastoralism (Adogi, 2013). Others have also attributed the causes of conflicts to migration due to climate change, policy on land law and land resource control systems (Okpaleke, 2016). Disagreements often arise when these interests and needs are incompatible, or when the priorities of some user groups are not considered in policies,

programmes and projects. This usually causes conflicts of interest and it is inevitable in human communities.

In recent years, the scope and magnitude of natural resource conflicts have increased and intensified. Such conflicts often escalate into violence, cause environmental degradation, disrupt projects and undermine livelihoods. Acknowledging that conflict is a common feature of any resource use system is a prerequisite for sustainable management that is participatory and equitable. In recent times, developing and under-developed regions of the world have experienced economic growth and reductions in poverty (Fiki and Lee, 2005). Unfortunately, the trajectory of development in Africa is different because economic growth has been limited and the increase in wealth has not kept pace with population growth. This has often resulted into conflict especially in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious community like Nigeria.

Conflict causes retardation, and promotes underdevelopment, causes destruction of lives, farmlands and property. In Nigeria, violent conflict, just as in other parts of the world, have created rift in human relations, and caused a serious threat to food security, among many other negative effects (Abass 2012). The conflict has increased in the last two decades in Nigeria. Natural resources underpin livelihoods for the vast majority of populations worldwide and are often the building bloc of economic development, industrial growth and gross domestic product (GDP). Amartya Sen cited in Otive Igbuzor, (2009) opines that we live in a world of opulence, of a kind that would have been hard even to imagine a century or two ago... And yet we also live in a world with remarkable deprivation, destitution and oppression. So, whenever there is perceived opposition to needs, values and interests, conflict erupts.

Official laws and sometimes, communal beliefs usually impose restrictions on certain communities and groups of people and exclude them from ownership and access to natural resources. This is most evident with regard to land tenure but also extends to access and usage of renewable resources, such as water, and benefit-sharing from extractive resources. Other resources with actual or potential sources of wealth include timber,

water, fertile land, wildlife, minerals, metals, stones and hydrocarbons. Such exclusions usually cause structural inequalities and, discrimination and provoke conflicts.

Okpaleke (2016) explains peacebuilding as a term describing outside interventions which are designed to prevent the start or resumption of violent conflict within a nation by creating sustainable peace. In other words, peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted at strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management and laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding often takes place in a dynamic and fluid political environment, in which transitional authorities may be established, elections prepared and national constitutions revised or rewritten.

Local-level governance structures may also change as new leadership is established and local institutions are reformed. In many cases, the governance of natural resources also undergoes major reforms linked to inclusive decision-making, benefit-sharing, transparency and sustainability. Therefore, the peacebuilding phase provides a critical entry platform for increasing and strengthening women's profile and political participation. Conflict always degrades natural resources such as land, agricultural crops, and water and devastates rural dwellers that generally depend on these resources for their livelihoods. Conflict often significantly disrupts social and cultural management systems for natural resources.

Some of the far-reaching damages of conflict include environmental degradation of local resource base such as intensified land usage, deforestation, encroachment of forests and reserved or protected areas. Consequently, the resultant environmental degradation prevents access to medicinal plants; mining and grazing and imposes further marginalization on impoverished communities. In most cases, peacebuilding interventions (whether focused on livelihoods or institutional and legal reform), often misses specific challenges such as lack of access to renewable resources and inability to capitalise on opportunities facing the community.

The aim of this study, therefore, is to analyse the conflict between users of resources and their host communities. In other words, it is to re-examine resources utilization of interest groups and through it, assess the nature of conflict; examine the causes, effects, and alternative ways of de-escalating conflict; and assess the impact of conflict on natural resources in select communities.

Peacebuilding Theory

This paper adopts John Paul Lederach's Peacebuilding theory because the theory addresses the issues in a very comprehensive manner. According to John Paul Lederach, peacebuilding involves the conflation of "processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships." Essentially, this implies the transformation of relationships among people as well as the ending of violence. This theory is apt because it is central to the transformation from war to peace. In this paper, the theory is deployed to address how to de-escalate conflict over common resources between herdsmen and host communities in Omala local government in Kogi state, Nigeria.

Crisis in Omala Local Government

Given the context of this study, extant literature had to be sourced from media reports. *Daily Post* Newspaper of March 28, (2019), there was a serious conflict involving various interest groups in Omala Local Government Area (LGA), two of the major interest groups were cattle herders and local farmers of the community. Mr Steve Shaibu the Special Adviser to the Sole Administrator of Omala LGA on Security Matters stated that more than 20 people were killed in the attack. Several others were injured while over a hundred people were displaced and disengaged from their main economic activities. *Leadership* Newspaper April 21, (2019) also reported that an ambush was carried out on Abejukolo- Bagana road in the same local government and three people lost their lives while several others sustained injury. Hon. Musa Hilarion Collins Attai a member representing Omala Local Government in the Kogi State House of Assembly condemned the attack. According to him, the conflict had claimed the lives of over 200

people while property worth millions of naira had been destroyed. He then called on the state government to set up a committee of enquiry to look into the remote and immediate causes of the conflict and proffer ways to resolve the conflict. In an official statement, DSP William Ovye Aya Public Relations Officer of Kogi State Police Command confirmed the incident and said that his men had been drafted to the area to forestall the breakdown of law and order.

Methodology

This study was conducted in Omala, the conflict theatre. Omala is the eastern part of Kogi state. Omala is a significant area because the region has abundant fertile soil that greatly supports the cultivation of arable crops. A stratified random sampling procedure technique was used to select respondents for the research. Omala is one of the twenty-one local governments in the state and has recorded conflict in eleven wards. For this study, the authors did a random selection of six wards, namely: Abejukolo, Bagana, Bagaji, Akpacha, Icheke, and Ofejiji. In each ward, sixty-five (65) structured questionnaire samples were distributed. A total number of three hundred and ninety (390) questionnaires was completed and returned.

Data collected were content-analysed with the view to identifying the causes and implications of incessant conflicts among the interest groups on the uses of land resources and its effects on peacebuilding and economic development of Kogi State at large.

Results and Discussions

From the study conducted, it was seen that conflict is a permanent feature of human coexistence in all societies. To a large extent, conflict is inevitable and indeed, a necessary corollary to social change, as it exposes tensions and incompatibilities among different, mutually interdependent parties over respective needs, interests and values. It was discovered that conflict escalates during the phases of profound socioeconomic change and political transition. The findings show resource conflicts as a negative phenomenon which often leads to loss of lives and properties and impacts

negatively on resource utilization and peacebuilding. Following the conflict in some of the villages, the local resources were destroyed by aggressors. The affected communities refused to be restrained and therefore retaliated by invading the aggressors' community because they felt that their common resources had been destroyed by other parties (See Table 1). Resources destruction was strongly agreed as 66.8% attest to that as the cause of the crisis, non-control of resource uses is another factor as 57% strongly agreed as the cause while cultural difference shows 38.7% Prolong settlement in the area and stealing of property was also contributed.

The retaliation escalated to a major conflict and resulted in the disruption of human and economic activities. One of the manifest effects of the conflict is widespread poverty. Others include non-sustainability of the socio-political and economic development; and destruction of the environment.

Table 1: Causes of the Crisis

Perceived causes of conflict in percentage	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Resources destruction	66.8%	31.6%	1.6%	-	-
Cultural difference	15.0%	38.7%	27.4%	12.6%	-
Prolong settlement in the area	28.4%	35.3%	30.5%	2.6%	-
Non-control of resources uses	54.7%	30.8%	9.7%	4.7%	-
Stealing of property	24.5%	29.2%	24.5%	21.8%	-

Source: *Field Study, 2019*

Many of the conflict actors who were also respondents reported that they suffered various outcomes (repercussions) as a result of the conflict. These include physical, economic and socio-psychological effects. The result of the investigation of the socio-economic repercussions of conflict among respondents is presented in Table 2. Conflict outcome experienced by the respondents was actually determined as the loss or gain of any of the listed resources.

Table 2 Record on Effects of the Crisis

Perceived effect of conflict in percentage	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Reduction in resources	71.8%	22.4%	3.7%	1.6%	-
Loss of lives, injuries sustained and property loss	56.1%	39.5%	2.1%	2.4%	-
Forced relocation of farmers	33.2%	44.2%	12.6%	3.4%	3.9%
Shortage of income	69.7%	22.9	5.8%	0.5%	1.1%
Increased in the number of widows and orphans	39.2%	41.3%	15%	2.4%	2.1%

Source: *Field Study, 2019*

The findings show that the various interest groups reported non-material gains from the conflicts. 71.8% of respondents, for instance, strongly agreed with the loss of resources while forced relocation by other groups was put at 33.2% as a result of mutual conflict. Moreover, 56.1% of respondents indicated a loss in the quality of the relationships as a result of the conflict. However, concerning non-material resources, 56.1% strongly agree, and 39.5% agree to injuries and property losses. The outcome of the investigations on the socio-psychological repercussions of conflict on the quality of family life of respondents has also been summarized. Findings of separate studies by other researchers such as Ajayi and Allagenyi (2001), Johnson and Johnson (2002) and Daniels (2006) showed that family instability and intense frustration are negative consequences of conflicts.

The development of militancy and acts of terrorism has become noticeable consequences of conflict in Kogi State. It has been observed that wherever conflict occurred between herdsmen and the host communities, the host communities have developed the attitude of self-defence and readiness to react violently to any challenge. This situation has led to the emergence of militia and illegal vigilante groups (without control) in affected areas and neighbouring communities Onyegbula (2001); Elechi (2003); Ginifer and Ismail (2005).

Figure 1: Alternative Method used in Combating Conflicts
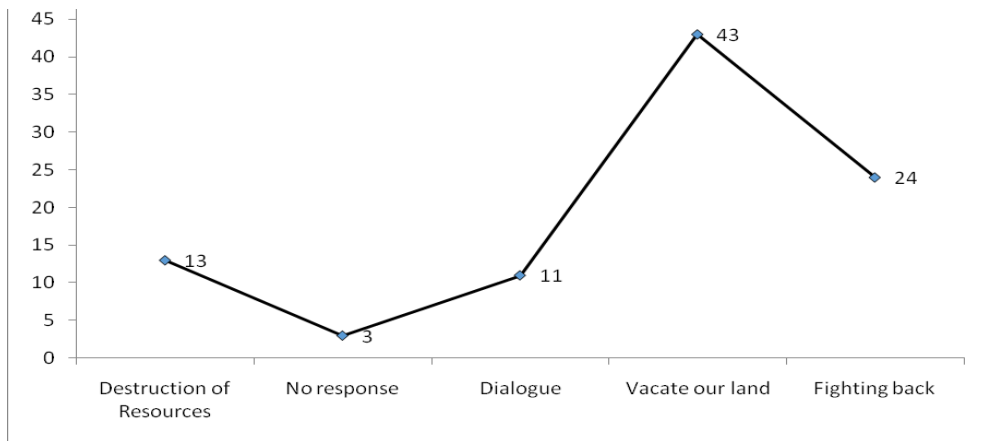
Source: *Field Study, 2019*

Figure 1 shows that most respondents prefer alternative methods such as vacation of farmland, dialogue, and fighting back in combating conflict. However, 43% preferred vacation of land; 24% of respondents chose to fight back, and 11% decided to adopt the part of peace. Since both conflicting groups and their supporters belong to different cultural groups, gross fear and suspicion of each other is often entertained (whether real or imagined). This will inevitably create and encourage divisive tendencies such as discrimination, segregation, ethnic cleansing, stereotype, prejudice, etc., in them. All these tendencies impact on peace building and are inimical to the peaceful coexistence and unity of the country.

Way Forward

For harmonious and peaceful coexistence between herdsmen and farmers the following is hereby proposed:

- Government needs to design policies to ensure that herdsmen have access to grazing without compromising crop production and other farm produce because the policies will reduce insecurity and mitigate the spate of conflict. This will bring about peaceful coexistence between the herdsmen and host communities.

- The law on the grazing route should be amended and improved to further enhance peaceful and harmonious coexistence between herdsmen and host communities.

- For a more sustainable and enduring peace-building effort, there must be a deliberate design to enlighten and mobilize the conflict parties to understand the ecology and the resources available in the communities. This will open the window for interdependence and complementarities among interest groups for the optimal usage of the resources for collective benefit and equitable access.

- Factors associated with the conflicts must be properly documented, studied, harnessed and managed by appropriate institutions engaged in conflict resolutions. In this regard, local governance and the input of stakeholders as well as shadow parties in the conflict must not be overlooked. Traditional methods need to be combined with the emerging strategies and dovetail into how communities create local structures and networks for the purposes of engagement, participation, inclusiveness, mutual partnership and transformation of the environment through equity in resource utilization.

- Structures must be created for and by communities to generate networks and feedback by ensuring that people relate to each other amicably for the common use of resources and ensure the principle of "safety first" in cattle grazing and pasture as well as crop production. This is in tandem with the peacebuilding theory of bringing different groups together to build trust and promote reconciliation. Kogi State Government needs to ensure compliance by both the herdsmen (to agreed routes) and farmers (avoid farming across grazing routes) in host communities in other words, as indicated in peacebuilding theory, the government has to ensure that development programmes remain sensitive to conflict dynamics so that they can consciously promote peace process of conflict. Just as indicated in the peace building theory, this implies transformation of relationships among people as well as the ending of violence.

Conclusion

The periodical struggle for scarce resources has degenerated into violent conflicts between interest groups. These conflicts have become more intense, widespread and destructive. This study identified the factors responsible for the conflict between interest groups and their socio-economic implications in Kogi State. Notable among the factors is the struggle over the use of land resources which is the main trigger of the conflict as the conflict groups regard land resources as their major economic source of livelihood. Other factors include but are not limited to poor policy framework; deficient response/ poor policy implementation; and ecological/demographic factors such as climate change; soil degradation; increasing population increase of human and general development activities affecting land. All these have exacerbated insecurity and encouraged the conflicting parties to take responsibility for their own security and engage in self-defence, an action that poses a major threat to peacebuilding and the security of the nation.

Recommendations

There should be an improvement in communication and information sharing among interest groups. Engaging an itinerant group like herdsmen can be done through formal organisations like the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN). There should be a more robust usage of available platforms offered by the human rights commission, civil society organisations, law enforcement agents, education and community engagement.

i.   The causes of conflict should be addressed in a collaborative manner. This involves deploying the spirit of tolerance and sanctioning hate speech and inflammatory pronouncements.

ii.   Transform the conflict management process into a force promoting positive social change. This will promote peacebuilding. In light of this, all stakeholders including traditional and religious as well as community leaders need to be involved in all the peace building processes and cycle.

iii. The various security agencies in the state like the Nigeria

Police Force and Civil Defence must ensure that perpetrators of herdsmen and farmers conflict are punished to deter future perpetrators.

iv. Peace-building mechanism that targets the two groups (herdsmen and farmers) should be initiated in all the affected areas. This will be in line with efforts of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution in bringing a sustainable peace to the entire northern region through the support of the United Nation High Commission on Refugee (UNHCR).

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ARTICLE

3

DEMOCRACY WITHOUT THE PEOPLE: INTERROGATING LOW VOTER TURNOUT IN NIGERIA'S 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS

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Abstract

This paper examined low voter turnout in the 2019 general elections in Nigeria. The paper utilized both secondary as well as primary data sourced through a purposively administered questionnaire on a total of 260 respondents in Abia and Lagos States, respectively, which had the lowest turnout in the 2019 general elections. Responses showed that Nigeria recorded low voter turnout during the 2019 general elections with a score of 56%. The study found that among the factors responsible for the high voter turnout during the elections was the belief that votes do not count which scored highest at 35.7%; non-independence of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) came second with a score of 23.1%; while inadequate security arrangements at polling centres rated third with 22.3%. Similarly, failure by politicians to keep or fulfil campaign promises came fourth place with 16.4%; while long queues at the polling centres rated fifth with 1.3%. The paper considers the abysmally low turnout in the 2019 general elections as a travesty of democracy with grave implications for the legitimacy of the election outcomes and the quality of democracy. It recommends a total overhaul of the Nigerian electoral process through a comprehensive review of the 2022 Electoral Act.

Introduction

The participation of voters in government and the process of decision-making has been the cardinal feature of most democracies all over the world. Over the years, scholars have made efforts to develop indices for measuring democracies. One of the most accepted criteria for distinguishing one democracy from another and between democracy and other forms of government has been the amount of inclusiveness allowed or permitted by any system (Coppedge, Alvarez and Maldonado, 2008). This perhaps explains why Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, delivered in 1864 extolled the virtues of democracy as the "government of the people, by the people, and for the people" (Heywood 2007, p. 3). But, the question is, what constitutes democratic participation? And what kind and how much of it is adequate or necessary for a government to be termed democratic? Whereas proponents of direct democracy such as Pervin (2018); Manin (2010); Lijphat (1997); and Landemore (2017), argue that there must be direct participation of citizens for a government to qualify as a democracy, others believe that people can be governed indirectly through representation; and citizens' could participate through elections (Bevir 2010 and Somin 2016).

Although the election is critical to any democracy as a formal procedure for making a group decision, the participation of the people as voters in the electoral process is a key determinant of the level of political inclusiveness or otherwise. While voter turnout rate, on the one hand, is widely seen as an important symbol of participatory democracy; and a measure of the credibility and legitimacy of the regime that emerges from the electoral process (Moon et al, 2006 and Ibrahim, 2006); low turnout on the other hand signals diminished legitimacy and calls to question the level inclusiveness and representativeness of the regime (Robert, 2009 and Thompson, 2009).

It must be noted that in most democracies across the world, turnout in elections has been on a steady decline. For instance, in the United States, the 2016 General Elections and the 2018 Mid-Term Elections recorded 55.5% and 49.3% in voter turnout (Domonoske 2018), respectively. In Nigeria, the 1999 Constitution (as altered) confers on citizens of the age 18 and above the

right to vote and be voted for depending on the office and as long as such persons are not legally incapacitated. These rights are detailed in Section 12(1) of the Electoral Act 2022, which is consistent with Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which provides that "the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures."

The right to vote is not only a civic and democratic duty but also allows the electorates to choose, reject or revalidate competing candidates and programmes enunciated by political parties. Thus, since the return to democracy in 1999, Nigerians have exercised these rights whether in general or off-season elections. However, since the general elections that ushered in the democratic government in 1999, there has been a steady decline in the turnout of voters in successive elections. During the 2019 General Elections, the Nigerian population was estimated at 200 million people (NBS 2019). However, only about 84,004,084 were registered voters and 28,632,225 million voted in the elections (Independent National Electoral Commission 2019). Out of this number, only 27,882,398 valid voters decided the outcome of the elections (INEC 2019. This implies that out of an estimated population of 200 million Nigerians, only 27 million voters decided the outcomes of the elections, representing 33.1% of total registered voters.

The low turnout in these elections has not only raised serious concerns about the outcome of the elections but also put to question the viability and quality of democracy in Nigeria. It is against this background that this study interrogates low voter turnout in the 2019 General Elections and its implications for democracy in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Many attempts have been made at defining democracy by different scholars across philosophical, ideological, and epistemological spheres in the last two centuries. This broad spectrum of views perhaps explains the difficulty in achieving a universally accepted definition across the board

despite the seeming broad consensus on the underlying principles of democracy. Appodoria (2004); Diecy (1905) and Bryce (1921) in their disparate conception of democracy all agreed that the defining feature of democracy which set it apart from any other form of government is its central focus on the people. It is also on this premise that Abraham Lincoln (1864) extolled the virtues of democracy as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. This definition lends credence to the views of classical writers such as Locke (1704), and Bentham (1838) who treat the people as the sovereign source of political authority without whom no political authority is legitimate and should exist. The democratic principle set out by these scholars laid an enduring foundation for the participation of citizens in the political process. Specifically, Locke (1704) viewed the government as a trustee of power vested by the people who have a watchdog role to play in which case they can remove the government if its performance is below expectation. This means that beyond the primary role of investing trust through the electoral process, the supervisory role expected by citizens is equally important to keep the government accountable.

In a related study, Kanyinga (2014) affirmed that the involvement of people in making decisions that concern their lives is the very essence and feature of democratic societies. He added that since democracy is about the "rule by the people", it thus requires that people should be at the centre of decision-making processes. Kanyinga maintained that citizens' active and meaningful engagement in public affairs is the underlying and founding principle of democracy which is universally accepted as a requirement for a just society. Kanyinga (2014) further noted that this principle is also enshrined in international instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948, which provides that everyone has the right to take part in the government of his/her country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

Kanyinga (2014) also cited the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which stipulate that: Every citizen shall have the right and opportunity… (a) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives; (b) To vote and be elected

at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors; (c) To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his [or her] country.

Similarly, Osondu (2014) pointed out that citizens' participation in the political process is what gives democracy its fundamental meaning. He suggested that citizens' participation in the political process is a bargaining process which has two important dimensions. The first is the bargain of government legitimacy which oblige citizens to obey law and order made by duly constituted authority and the second is the opportunity that exists for citizens to regulate the bargain of legitimacy through competitive elections.

Mahmud (2015, p.2-3) defined voter turnout to mean the percentage of the voting-age population (or the percentage of registered voters) who came out to vote in an election. He contends that in democratic societies, voter turnout is the most common form of political participation. In a similar study, the Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room (2015) argued that active voter turnout and civic participation are not only important predictors of a vibrant and healthy democracy but also a barometer to gauge the level of citizens' participation in politics. Voter turnout can be measured as the percentage of voters who cast a vote (i.e., "turnout") at an election including the total number of voters who cast blank or invalid votes. The Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room (2015) further noted that when voter turnout is low, it describes a state of political disengagement and the belief that voting for one candidate/party or another is inconsequential to changing public policy. In a related study, Pateman (1970) highlighted three functional importance of citizen's participation in politics to include: (i) educative function, (ii) integrative function and (ii) legitimating function.

When Wattenberg (2002) asked: *Where have all the Voters Gone?* Patterson (2002; 2009) followed with "why are the voting booths so empty?" Little did they realize how relevant their theses would be in Nigeria a decade and a half after the 2000 American elections that animated their works. Wattenberg's position was that the declining voter turnout rate in America

which was the lowest in the industrialized world was a serious problem because greater participation is essential for a democratic government to function well. He approached the subject from a multi-disciplinary perspective arguing that the transition from diminished parties to candidate-centred politics dragged down the turnout rate in American elections. While Wattenberg illuminated the understating of voter turnout dynamics, little attention was paid to equally important questions of how negative political advertising and how difficulties encountered in the act of voting itself could have helped in driving potential voters away from the booths (Griffin, 2012).

Like Wattenberg, Patterson sets out to account for why voting booths were becoming empty in American elections despite of increasing level of education and simplification of the registration process. He engaged this question first in an article published in 2002, and subsequently in a book written in 2003, both of which were outcomes of the "Vanishing Voter Project." Patterson argued that the level of competition, clear-cut parties, uplifting campaigns and nature of adverts affect turnout rate. Closely contested competitive elections attract higher turnout rates than otherwise. When there are no real choices to make between political parties, voters tend to turn their backs on voting booths while uplifting campaigns and positive adverts inspired higher turnout rates and *vice versa* (Patterson, 2002, p. 21).

Examining factors responsible for declining voter turnout in elections, Gherghina and Geissel (2015) espoused that the global spread of liberal democracy corresponds with a growing trend of citizens' dissatisfaction with representative institutions and actors. This trend has culminated in the shrinking of party membership, reduction in the number of loyal voters and decline in electoral turnout in many democratic societies in the last three decades. Several studies have looked at elections and political participation in Nigeria. While Nwankwo et al, 2017; Falade 2014; Adeleke 2013; and Agu et al, 2013) focused on Southwestern Nigeria, others such as Nyiayaana (2019), Taiwo and Ahmed (2015), Ayanda and Braimah (2015) and Ngara et al (2014) took a national dimension. Interestingly, most of these studies appeared to agree that the major factors associated with low voter turnout in Nigeria include:

i. Incompetence on the part of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC);

ii. Political corruption

iii. Youth Unemployment and political thuggery

iv. Overcrowded Polling Centres;

v. Failed Electoral Promises; and

vi. Electoral Violence.

Specifically, Agu et al (2013) argued that the failure of INEC to function as an independent, competent, autonomous, and impartial arbiter of the electoral process is perhaps the most important determinant of poor turnout in elections. They maintained that there is an entrenched public distrust of INEC as an electoral umpire and other public institutions. Nwankwo, Okafor and Asuoha (2017) on their part viewed electoral fraud such as mass rigging and doctored election results as a major cause of low voter turnout during elections in Nigeria.

It is discernable from the range of literature reviews that most works on electoral behaviour or voter turnout in elections are based on Western experience, particularly in the United States. While these works are the most referred to in local research, they are hardly able to explain the peculiar context of Nigerian voters or their electoral behaviour. In addition, many of the existing studies on voter turnout in Nigeria are anecdotal and speculative thereby creating a gap in empirical research. This has warranted the need for more empirical studies to develop evidence-based policy responses.

Theoretical Perspective

This paper adopts the Rational Choice Theory (RCT) to contextualize this study. The theory owes its origin to the pioneering works of Black (1948) Arrow (1951) Downs (1957) and Tullock (1967). Although the RCT is central to most economic models, it has nonetheless enjoyed wide appeal and application in political science, especially in explaining voter behaviour. Furthermore, the frontiers of this theory have also been extended and modified with several strands and variants over the years. The application

of the RCT to this study will be done in a generic sense because of the cross-cutting effects of the different assumptions. This is because restriction to a particular variant will be limiting in terms of its explanatory powers hence the preferred reliance on the generic model.

The main assumptions of the RCT imply that every individual has a rational side, which is capable of making consistent choices (Downs 1957). At the core of the theory is the assumption that actors are rational at least to the extent that they make choices that will maximize their utility. Downs (1957) recognized that where voting is costly, individuals will consider both how much they care about the outcome and the likelihood that their vote will influence the outcome (be pivotal). For instance, Farber (2009) suggests that in large elections where the potential of the individual vote in determining the outcome of elections is negligible, the individual assessment of the expected benefit of voting may be more than the costs and could serve as a disincentive to vote. Similarly, other proponents of this theory hold that an increase in the cost of voting can negatively affect turnout in the election. This explains why policymakers are always making efforts to reduce the costs of voting through the reduction of numbers of registered voters in pooling units, the creation of more polling units for easy access and in some jurisdiction introduction of electronic and other impersonal voting options to make voting easier. Even in countries like Australia where voting is compulsory, turnout is about 80 per cent of the voting-age population (Fisher, Fieldhouse, Franklin, Gibson, Cantijoch and Wlezien 2007).

It should be noted that despite different variables and conclusions, they all assume that each individual is a rational decision-maker who cares about their economic interests: they vote only if their benefits outweigh their costs, otherwise, they abstain. The most important problem of the turnout puzzle is that while a lot of people go to vote, RCT predicts that people do not vote because voting costs outweigh voting benefits (Youngmevittaya 2016).

The relevance of the RCT to the present study is that Nigerian voters are rational human beings who calculate their electoral decision and choice based on the realities of cost-benefit analysis. Thus, voting decisions by

Nigerian voters as rational actors within the electoral process are practical and strategic in their motivations, often guided by self-interest (Saxena 2017). Consequently, when the voters consider that their vote may not produce the desired outcome, they may choose not to participate as voters (Nyiayaana 2019). This theory helps to explain why voters refused to come out and vote in the 2015 and 2019 general elections.

Analysing Voters' Turnout in Nigerian Elections 1979 - 2019

In measuring voter turnout rate, there are three approaches commonly adopted by analysts. These are: (i) Actual Vote to Registered Voters and total Population (Vote-Reg-Pop); (ii) Actual Vote relative to the Voting Age Population (Vote-VAP); and (3) Actual Vote as a Proportion of Total Population (Vote-Pop). Vote-Reg-Pop allows for a comparison between the total population, registered voters, and voter turnout (Solijonov 2016). It is expected that there will be a proportionate increase/decrease in actual votes as the population changes over the years. Election Management Bodies (EMBs) particularly find this statistical information useful in making projections for planning logistics at national and community levels. See Figures 1

**Figure 1: Voter Turnout to Registered Voters and Population (Vote-Reg-Pop)**
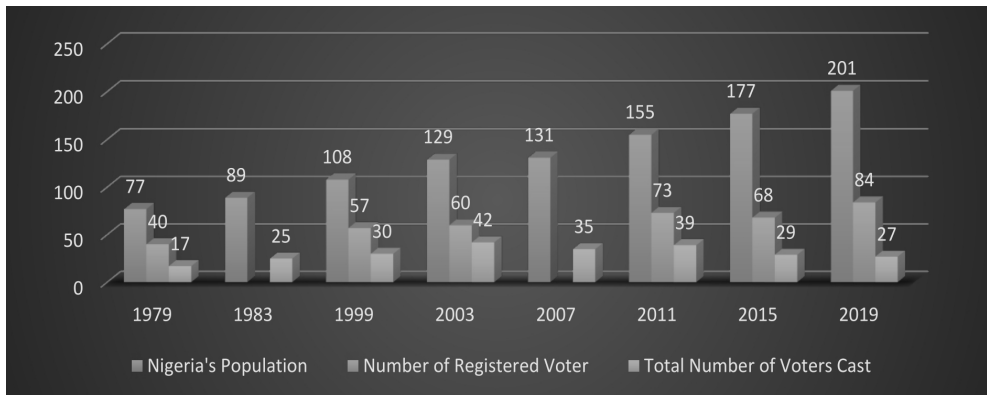
Source: Authors' compilation from FEDECO, NEC, NECON & INEC data

In 1979 when Nigeria's population stood at 77 million with 40 million registered voters, 17 million voted (representing 42.5%) (International IDEA 2002). The nation's population was 108 million in 1999 out of which 57 million

Nigerians registered and 30 million voted (representing 52.6%) (*Vanguard* 2011; International IDEA 2002). In 2003, there were 129 million people in Nigeria out of which 60 million registered and up to 42 million people voted, (representing 70%, the highest number ever recorded) (*Vanguard* 2011; Nweke and Etido-Inyang 2020). This figure declined drastically to 53.4% in 2011 when Nigeria's population was 155 million from which 73 million registered and 39 million voted (*Vanguard* 2011; European Union 2011; and Nweke and Etido-Inyang, 2020). Voter turnout on March 28, 2015, National Assembly/Presidential elections declined to an all-time low since 1979 when only 29 million people turned out to vote out of 68 million people that registered (INEC, 2019; Sule et al, 2018).

This implies that, for whatever reason, more than 57 per cent of registered voters had their backs turned against polling booths. In any case, 68 million registered voters in 2015, representing 38.4 per cent of 177 million people. Whereas, in 2019 only 27 million Nigerians (13.87%) out of the 84million registered voters decided the winner of the elections. The limit of this comparison as well as the Vote-Pop in Figure 2 is that it compares the total population with actual votes without taking cognizance of eligibility to vote in terms of the minimum age requirement which is fixed at 18 years in Nigeria. It should be noted that because democracy entails "representation of the people" as against "representation of eligible voters" the Vote-Pop model remains a useful lens for assessing voter turnout rate.

Figure 2: Voter Turnout in relation to Population (Vote-Pop)
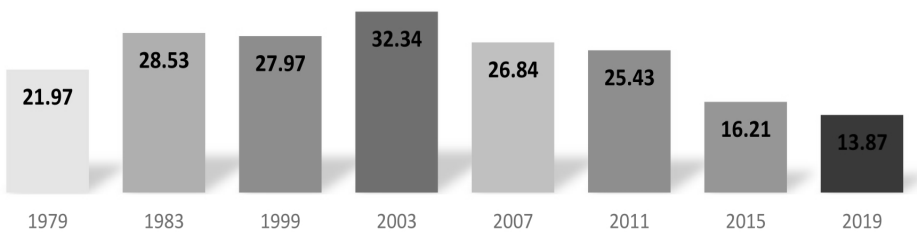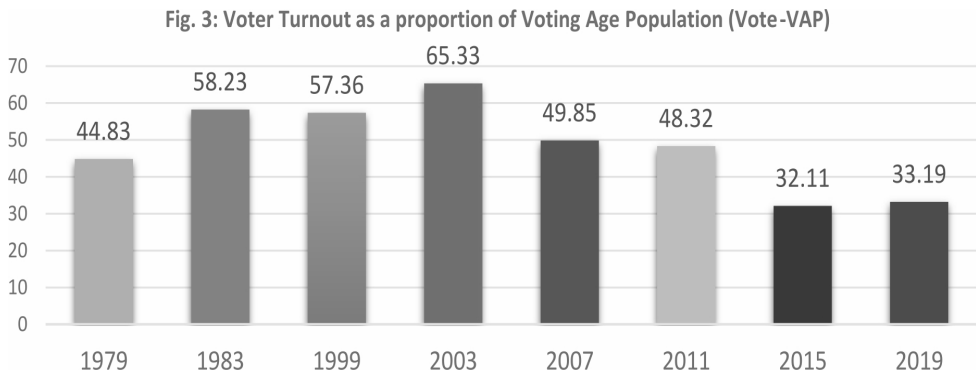

Source: Authors' compilation from FEDECO, NEC, NECON & INEC data

Figure 2, which shows the time series trend in voter turnout relative to the Nigerian population, is relevant because democracy boils down to representation and inclusion. The idea of majoritarianism is anchored on the notion that ample space is given for the broad participation of citizens in a way that protects the interests of the majority without compromising the rights of the minority. Hence, voter turnout relative to the total population offers a valuable glimpse of the extent to which the electoral process ensures that the majority will prevail. About the total population, the turnout rate was 21.97 per cent in 1979, peaked at 32.34 per cent in 2003, declined to 25.43 per cent in 2011, and fell drastically to its lowest point of 16.21 per cent in 2015 and further to 13.87 per cent in 2019. This indicates that out of every 100 Nigerians, only 13 voted in the 2019 general elections. By any standard, the fact that 13.87 per cent of the population turned out to vote raises valid questions on the inclusiveness of the process and curiously on the representativeness of the outcome.

Rather than using the total population as the basis for estimating voter turnout, after all not everyone is entitled to vote in the first place, the analysis could be refined by comparing turnout with the voting-age population (Vote-VAP). Figure 3 shows voter turnout as a proportion of the Voting Age Population. Voter turnout increased from 44.83 per cent in 1979 to 58.23 per cent in 1983 suggesting a marginal growth rate of 13.4 per cent. The vote-VAP ratio witnessed a little decline in 1999 when it dropped from 58.23 per cent in 1983 to 57.36 per cent, indicating a marginal decline of -0.87 per cent. Voter turnout as a proportion of the voting-age population peaked at 65.33 per cent in 2003 with a sizeable marginal increase of 7.97 per cent above the 1999 figures. Voter turnout dropped massively by -15.48 per cent from 65.33 per cent in 2003 to 49.85 per cent in 2007.

The irregularities that marked the 2007 general elections were compelling and Late President Musa Yar'Adua responded by inaugurating the Uwais Panel which affirmed irregularities in the elections. However, the electoral reforms proposed by the Uwais Panel were never implemented before the demise of President Yar'Adua. Voter turnout continued its negative trend in 2011 with a marginal decline of -1.53 per cent. The 2019 General

Elections recorded another major decline of -13.87 per cent in turnout rate when it dropped from 48.32 per cent in 2011 to 33.19 per cent in 2019. This implies that only 33 out of every 100 eligible voters turned out in the 2019 general elections. By all measures, the 2019 general elections recorded one of the lowest voter turnout rates in Nigeria's electoral history.

Fig. 3: Voter Turnout as a proportion of Voting Age Population (Vote-VAP)

Source: Authors' compilation from FEDECO, NEC, NECON & INEC data

The advantage of voter turnout as a proportion of the voting population (Vote-VAP) is that it makes clear the actual differential between those that voted against those who ought to vote instead of comparing with the gross population. Ordinarily, all citizens who attain the age of 18 years are expected to register and vote during elections. Provided the necessary conditions prevail, a significant proportion of this segment of the population ought to turn out during elections. If for whatever reason Vote-VAP declines year-on-year as Figure 3 suggests, there is a need for a closer examination of factors that affect turnout to unravel the impediments to turnout among eligible citizens and use the information to propose actionable and constructive remedies.

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed method which consisted of the use of both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were obtained through the administration of questionnaires while secondary data were collected through consultation with textbooks, journals, periodicals,

newsletters, conference and seminar papers, monographs, and other unpublished materials relevant to this study. The research population consisted of 84,004,084 registered voters in the 2019 General Elections. The sample population comprised INEC staff, select voters (both those who voted and those who did not vote in the 2019 general election), Civil Society organisations (CSOs), security personnel and members of the academic community.

Due to the special nature of the information required for the study, purposive sampling was adopted. A total of 270 questionnaires were administered in two states, namely; Abia and Lagos states. 135 respondents were selected from each of the states, respectively. The two states were purposively selected as representatives of the 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). This is because the two states (Abia -18% and Lagos 17.6%) had the lowest voter turnout in the 2019 Presidential and National Assembly elections. The method of data analysis employed includes Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), descriptive statistical tools, prose and narratives.

Discussion

The findings from the sampled respondents showed that there was a low turnout in the 2019 General elections. When asked whether they belong to any political party, 121 respondents, representing 50.8 per cent answered in the negative while 104 representing 43.7 per cent affirmed their membership of various political parties. However, 13 (5.5%) of the respondents were undecided. This shows a high level of political apathy among Nigerians. Similarly, among the 238 respondents sampled, 184 representing 77.3 per cent were registered voters, while 51 representing 21.4 per cent were not registered voters. However, 3 respondents declined to state their registration status. The foregoing indicates that although many adult Nigerians of voting age are registered voters, some due to one reason or another do not vote during the elections. See Table 1.

Table 1: Registered Voter

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Undecided	3	1.3	1.3	1.3
	No	51	21.4	21.4	22.7
	Yes	184	77.3	77.3	100.0
	Total	238	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

When asked about their Permanent Voters' Card (PVC), 186 (78.2%) respondents stated that they have their permanent voters card, while 51 (21.4%) do not have their PVC. It also shows that despite having their PVCs, some respondents still did not vote in the 2019 elections. Also on the question of whether people voted in the 2019 General Elections, 164 (68.9%) agreed that they voted in the last election while 73 representing 30.7 per cent did not vote.

When asked whether they have been participating in elections since 1999, responses indicated that 147 (61.8%) have been participating in elections since 1999, whereas 89 representing 37.4 per cent say they did not participate in elections since 1999. Only 2 (0.8) respondents stated that they were below the voting age as of 1999. In the same vein, in determining the level of voter turnout in the 2019 general elections, 14 (5.9%) respondents rated voter turnout in the election as very low, 46 respondents representing 19.3 per cent rated turnout low, while 99 (41.6%) respondents rated the turnout as average. Conversely, 57 (23.9%) of the respondents rated the turnout high, while 22 (9.2%) respondents said the turnout was very high.

Responses also indicated that voter turnout in the 2019 General Elections was low as the majority of the respondents affirmed. For instance, 62 (26.1%) of the respondents strongly agree with the view that voter turnout in the 2019 General Elections was low. 70 (29.4%) agreed, while 68 (28.6%) were undecided. Conversely, 31 (13.0%) disagree with the assertion that voter turnout in the 2019 General Elections was low, while 7 (2.9%) strongly disagreed. The summary of the responses in this regard shows that those

who strongly agree with that assertion are placed third highest while those who disagreed were in the minority as reflected in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Responses to Whether Voter Turnout in 2019 General Elections was Low
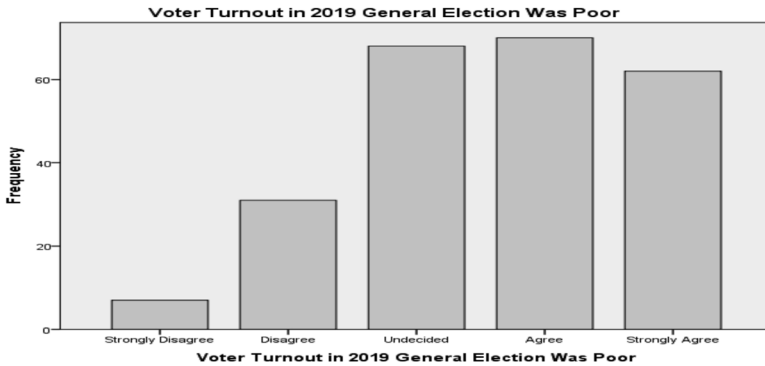
The study also revealed that several factors were responsible for the low voter turnout during the 2019 general elections. Respondents while identifying factors that were responsible for the low voter turnout in that election answered as captured in Figure 6. Whereas 85(35.7) respondents indicate that votes do not count as the main factor, 55 (23.1%) said the low turnout was due to the perception that INEC was not independent, 53 (22.3%) of the respondents ascribed the low turnout to inadequate security arrangements at polling centres, while 39 (16.4%) of the respondents believed the low turnout was because elected officials do not fulfil campaign promises. Meanwhile, 3 (1.3%) say long queues at the polling booths were the reason for low voter turnout during the elections as presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Factors Responsible for Low Voter Turnout in 2019 General Elections
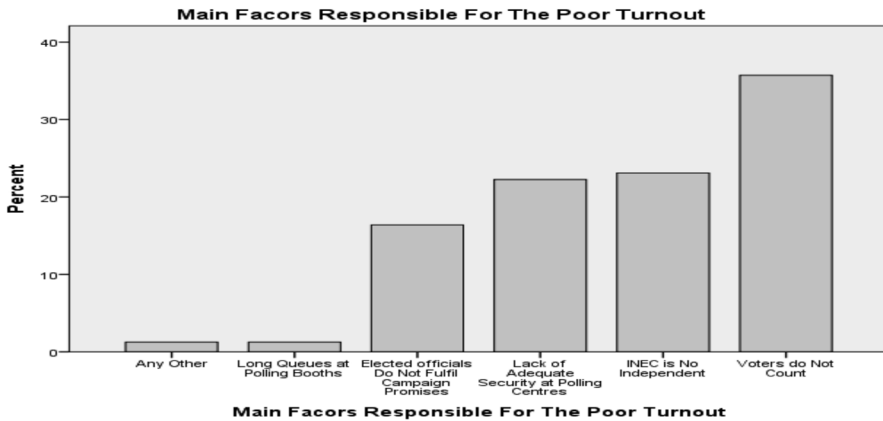
In measuring the impact of votes not counting on low voter turnout during the 2019 General Elections, 75 (31.5%) respondents indicate that the impact of votes not counting on low voter turnout is very high. 70 (29.4%) think that the impact is high, 43 (18.1%) say the impact is low, and 22 (9.2%) of respondents believe the impact is very low. This means that its impact on voter turnout was indeed high.

On the impact of the belief that *INEC is not independent* of voter turnout, 55 (23.1%) respondents rated it very high while 83 (34.9%) rated it high. In addition, 55 (23.1%) respondents rated its impact low while 25 (10.5%) rated very low. However, 20 (8.4%) were undecided. On the impact of the belief that *lack of adequate security at polling centres* on voter turnout, 61 (25.6%) respondents rated it very high while 88 (37.0%) rated it high. In addition, 55 (23.1%) respondents rated its impact low while 25 (10.5%) rated it very low. However, 9 (3.8%) were undecided.

When asked to rate the impact of the *failure of elected officials to fulfil campaign promises* on voter turnout, 79 (33.2%) respondents rated it very high, while 74 (31.1%) rated it high. In addition, 44 (18.5%) respondents rated its impact low while 28 (11.8%) rated very low. However, 13 (5.54%) were undecided. This indicates that the failure of public officeholders to deliver on their campaign promises is a major contributing factor to political apathy in the country. When asked to rate the impact of *long queues at polling booths*

during the 2019 general elections on voter turnout, 65 (27.3%) respondents rated it very high while 70 (29.4%) rated it high. In addition, 60 (25.2%) respondents rated its impact low while 19 (8.0%) rated very low. However, 24 (10.1%) were undecided. The implication is that poor logistics arrangements engendering long queues in polling booths generate stress and frustration for electorates thereby contributing to discouraging voters from participating in voting during elections.

Conclusion

The voter turnout as a proportion of the voting age population (Vote/VAP) has been on the decline in successive elections in Nigeria since the return to democracy in 1999, except in the 2003 general elections when it peaked at 65.33% and plummeted to 33.3% in 2019. The 2019 general elections have so far witnessed the lowest voter turnout in Nigeria's electoral history. During this election, there was a total of 84,004,084 registered voters out of which only 28,632,225 million voters turnout during the elections. This number represents 33.3% of the registered voters and 14.3% of the total estimated population of about 200 million people. By any democratic standards, these figures show an undesirable signal of a declining level of inclusion, legitimacy and quality of democracy.

Out of the several factors identified as a disincentive for voters in the 2019 General elections, the perception that "votes do not count" scored highest with 35.7%. The perception of lack of independence by INEC came second with a score of 23.1%; inadequate security arrangements at polling centres rated third with 22.3%, while the belief that politicians do not keep or fulfil campaign promises came fourth place with 16.4%; and long queues at polling centres rated fifth with 1.3%. Since democracy can only be established, maintained and sustained on the kernel of active involvement and participation of the people, the low voter turnout experienced during the 2019 general elections showed that Nigerian democracy is without the people. Thus, Nigerian democracy is susceptible to elite capture and manipulation with grave consequences for the legitimacy of the electoral outcomes and the quality of democracy.

Recommendations

From the foregoing findings, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. INEC should ensure the easing of the stressful, time-consuming and tedious Continuous Voter Registration exercise in Nigeria. This can be achieved through digitization of the registration process in a way that prospective voters can use computers or mobile devices to register on a portal specially created for that purpose. Furthermore, INEC can develop an accurate cartographic and geographic information system to allot sufficient registration and polling units strictly based on population. Residential areas with large populations should have not more than 500 registered voters in a polling unit.

2. There is a need for the ongoing review of the 1999 Constitution to unbundle INEC into smaller agencies with specialized and manageable mandates. Voter registration, education and mobilization should be handled by a separate independent organization rather than the present omnibus structure that seems to have too much to chew simultaneously. Unbundling INEC into smaller manageable agencies may be an attractive reform trajectory that will improve the effective and efficient voter registration process.

3. The INEC, the mass media, political parties, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), development partners and other election stakeholders should engage more in voter education and enlightenment to sensitise the public on the importance of voter registration and turnout in elections.

4. Another important way to optimize voter turnout in Nigerian elections is to accommodate Early Voting in the Nigerian electoral system. The National Assembly should give legislative support to amend the Electoral Act 2022, to enable election-day workers such as election officials, observers, security and medical personnel and others on essential duties to cast their ballot earlier before the day of the election.

5. An effective way of altering the cost-benefit calculus in the voting process is to ensure that a voter's card is an indispensable means of identification in some critical transactions. Issuance of a

Driver's License, vehicle documents, international passport, bank transactions, mobile phone registration and others could be tied to possession of a voter's card. To make this effective, banks, mobile telecommunication companies, Nigeria Immigration Service, travel agents and other stakeholders should as a matter of policy demand voter's cards as part of the identity verification criteria.

6. The Federal government should make it compulsory for all adults of voting age to vote during elections. This can be achieved by altering the 1999 Constitution and amending the Electoral Act 2022.

7. The INEC, political parties and other stakeholders in elections should be committed to the total reformation of the Nigerian electoral system by ensuring that votes count during elections. Deliberate efforts should be made to address all forms of electoral malpractice, political thuggery and violence. This can be achieved through the arrest and diligent prosecution of election offenders by an Election Offences Tribunal/Commission to be established through an Act of the National Assembly. Stiffer punishments should be provided in the Electoral Act for electoral offenders, and INEC should also be empowered to sanction erring political parties and their candidates as may be spelt out by the enabling legal framework to ensure accountability.

8. To make INEC truly independent, the process of nomination of INEC Chairmen by the President should be stopped. The nomination of candidates for the Chairmanship of INEC should be done by the Committees on INEC of both chambers of the National Assembly. The Committees would then present shortlisted candidates at the plenary for screening and confirmation.

9. Digital security surveillance and image-capturing devices should be deployed at polling areas for effective policing during elections.

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ARTICLE

4

XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS ON FOREIGN NATIONALS IN SOUTH AFRICA: A THREAT TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Abstract

This study examines the concept of discrimination based on Xenophobia, and its history as well as the factors that led to its growth in contemporary South Africa. Migration of people from other African countries and outside African nations has been on the increase since the end of apartheid in 1994. The increased migration also led to increasing in hostility towards immigrants, especially towards Africans from other nations, particularly West Africans but mostly Nigerians because of the perception that they are criminals and are to be attacked and deported. This study explains the political, economic and socioeconomic implications of xenophobic attacks on foreigners and the best approach to managing the huge inflow of migrants into South Africa. The study also examines the perceived role of government agents such as the police; the statements of government officials; and the opinion of leaders who offered insight into the audacity of attackers.

Introduction

Before 1994, immigrants from other parts of Africa and beyond faced discrimination and violence in South Africa. After the attainment of majority rule in 1994, immigrants felt that the incidence of xenophobia would reduce but on the contrary, the incidence of xenophobia increased. Between 2000 and March 2008, at least 67 people died in what was identified as xenophobic attacks. In May 2008, a series of attacks left 62 people dead; 21 of those killed were South African citizens (International Organization for Migration, 2019). Between 2010 and 2017, the immigrant community in South Africa increased from 2 million people to 4 million people (SAHO, 2019). In 2015, another nationwide spike in xenophobic attacks against immigrants, in general, prompted several foreign governments to evacuate their citizens. In 2019, a study conducted by SAHO revealed that 65% of South Africans viewed immigrants as parasitic and a burden on society because they had come to take jobs and social benefits and that 63% of South Africans thought that more immigrants were involved in criminal activities than other groups (SAHO, 2019). In its attempts to overcome the divisiveness of the past and build new forms of social cohesion, the South African government embarked on an aggressive and inclusive nation-building project. One unanticipated by-product of this project has been a growth in intolerance towards outsiders, and violence against foreign citizens and African refugees. This problem has become increasingly common and communities are divided by hostility and suspicion. Following the riots and murder of other Africans in 2017, violence again broke out in 2019 (SABC, 2019).

Due to wars, unrest, economic hardships and hostilities in most African countries, some African and non-African people migrated to South Africa in search of safety and a better life. Some were denied refugee status but others from contiguous countries like Mozambique were, on technical grounds, allowed to settle in the 'bantustans' or black homelands created during the apartheid system. Unrest and civil war also drove a large number of Congolese to South Africa. Many of the Congolese became illegal migrants. Over time, the host communities began exhibiting xenophobic attitudes towards refugees such as denying them access to the primary

healthcare to which they were technically entitled. The commonly exhibited attitude of police officers against foreigners in cities like Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban to crimes is that most of the undocumented immigrants in those cities were involved in crime despite a lack of statistical evidence to substantiate the claim. Such a misperception as well as the vulnerability of illegal immigrants led to abuse, violence and extortion (Michael, 2019). In January 1995, the immigrants from Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique living in the Alexandra township were "physically assaulted for several weeks as armed gangs identified suspected undocumented migrants and marched them to police stations in an attempt to 'clean' the township of foreigners (Human Sciences Research Council, 2018).In September 1998, a Mozambican national and two Senegalese citizens were thrown out of a train. The assault was carried out by a group returning from a rally and the group blamed foreigners for unemployment, crime and the spread of AIDS (Human Rights Watch, 1998).

In 2000, seven foreigners were killed on the Cape Flats over five weeks in what police described as xenophobic murders possibly motivated by the fear that outsiders would claim property belonging to locals. In the last week of 2005 and the first week of 2006, at least, four people, including two Zimbabweans, died in the Olievenhoutbosch settlement after foreigners were blamed for the death of a local man. Shacks belonging to foreigners were set ablaze and locals demanded that police remove all immigrants from the area. Attacks on foreign nationals increased markedly in late 2007 and it is believed that there were, at least, a dozen attacks between January and May 2008. The most severe incident occurred on the 8th of January, 2008, when two Somali shop owners were murdered in the Eastern Cape towns of Jeffreys Bay and East London (Human Sciences Research Council, 2018). In March 2008, seven people were killed including Zimbabweans, Pakistanis and a Somali national after their shops and shacks were set ablaze in Atteridgeville near Pretoria it resulted in the death of several people and hundreds were injured. This tragic incident prompted the voluntary deportation of immigrants to their home countries and the destruction of immigrant-owned properties. In 2015, another widely documented series of

xenophobic attacks occurred in South Africa, mostly against migrants from Zimbabwe. This followed remarks by Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithinika Bhekuzulu stating that the migrants should "pack their bags and leave." As of the 20th of April 2015, 7 people had died and more than 2000 foreigners had been displaced. Following the riots and murder of other Africans in 2008 and 2015, violence again broke out in 2019 (SAHO, 2019).

The economic and political challenges in most African countries are predominantly the major causes of migration to South Africa in search of greener pastures. According to Evans (2009), the negative effects of apartheid which did not support the development of the human capacity of black South Africans did not prepare them adequately to hold jobs. As a result of their incapability, foreigners have been found more suitable for employment. This has resulted in agitation and frustration for the indigenous South Africans who have then resorted to violence to settle the score.

So, the focus of this study is the negative implications of xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa. Migration has its cultural, political, and economic challenges but has huge negative effects on international relations. This study interrogates the danger of using violence to address issues that require policy changes in the country (Haffajee, 2019).

In addition, this study examines the causes of xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals, the impact of such attacks on South Africans, and the implications on the relationship between South Africa and other African countries, as well as with non-African countries. The study also investigated the seriousness of xenophobic attacks on victims and the reactions and interventions by government/role players.

Conceptual Framework/Literature Review on Xenophobia in South Africa
The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) definitions of xenophobia include deep-rooted fear towards foreigners and "fear of the unfamiliar." In ancient Greece, the terms that underlie the word xenophobia, literally means "stranger fearing." Xenophobia, an elegant-sounding name for an aversion

to persons unfamiliar, ultimately derives from two Greek terms *xenos* which can be translated as either "stranger" or "guest," and *phobos*, which means either "fear" or "flight." *Phobos* is the ultimate source of all English-phobia terms but many of those were coined in English or New Latin using the combining form -phobia (which is traceable to *phobos*). Xenophobia itself came through New Latin and first appeared in print in English in the late 19th century (*Webster Dictionary*). Xenophobia is the fear or hatred of that which is perceived to be foreign or strange. Xenophobia can involve perceptions of an in-group or toward an out-group and can manifest itself in suspicion of the activities of others, and a desire to eliminate their presence to secure a presumed purity and may relate to a fear of losing national, ethnic or racial identity. Xenophobia can also be exhibited in the form of an "uncritical exaltation of another culture" in which a culture is ascribed "an unreal, stereotyped and exotic quality". According to UNESCO, the terms xenophobia and racism often overlap but differ in how the latter is generally centred on prejudice based on physical characteristics while the former encompasses behaviour based on the notion of a specified people being averse to the culture or nation (Michael, 2019).

In South Africa, xenophobia existed in both the apartheid and post-apartheid era. Hostility between the British and Boers exacerbated by the Second Boer War led to rebellion by poor Afrikaners who looted British-owned shops. South Africa also passed numerous acts intended to keep out Indians, such as the Immigrants Regulation Act of 1913, which provided for the exclusion of "undesirables", a group of people that included Indians. This effectively halted Indian immigration (Michael, 2019). The Township Franchise Ordinance of 1924 was intended to "deprive Indians of the municipal franchise." Xenophobic attitudes toward the Chinese have also been obvious, sometimes in the form of robberies or hijackings, and a hate speech case in 2018 was put to court and a year later 11 offenders were put on trial. In 1994 and 1995, gangs of armed youth destroyed the homes of foreign nationals living in Johannesburg, demanding that the police should repatriate them to their home countries (Human Sciences Research Council, 2018).In 2008, a widely documented spate of xenophobic attacks occurred

in Johannesburg. It is estimated that tens of thousands of migrants were displaced; and property, businesses and homes were widely looted. The death toll after the attack stood at 56. In 2015, another widely documented series of xenophobic attacks occurred in South Africa, mostly against migrant Zimbabweans. This followed remarks by Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithinika Bhekuzulu stating that the migrants should "pack their bags and leave." As of 20th April 2015, 7 people had died and more than 2000 foreigners had been displaced. Following the riots and series the murder of other Africans from 2008 and 2015, violence again broke out in 2019 (SABC, 2019).

Xenophobia in South Africa before and after 1994

According to the Southern African Migration Project, between 1984 and 1992 estimated 50,000 to 350,000 Mozambicans fled to South Africa. They were not granted refugee status but were technically allowed to settle in the Bantustans or black homelands created during the apartheid era. However, the reality was varied, with the homeland of Lebowa out rightly banning Mozambican settlers while Gazankulu welcomed the refugees with support in the form of land and equipment. However, those in Gazankulu found themselves confined to the homeland and liable to deportation should they officially enter South Africa, and evidence exists that their hosts denied them access to economic resources (Wimmer, 1997). Furthermore, the study reveals that unrest and also civil war saw a large number of Congolese people illegally migrate to South Africa in 1993 and 1994. Subsequent studies found indications of xenophobic attitudes towards these refugees, typified by their being denied access to primary healthcare to which they were technically entitled (SAMP, 2016).

It was found that xenophobia in South Africa is perceived to have significantly increased after the election of a black majority government in 1994. The study was based on a citizens survey across member states of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and found South Africans expressing the harshest anti-immigrant sentiment, with some South Africans in favour of a complete ban on foreign entry and many in favour of strict limitations on the number of emigrants permitted (SADC, 2000).

In 2008, there were incidences of riots and murders of other Africans, and a widely documented spate of xenophobic attacks occurred in Johannesburg. Another incident of attacks and killing of African migrants occurred in 2015. In 2018, hate speech and xenophobic attitudes were directed against Chinese migrants in South Africa. Also in 2018, there were targeted attacks on foreign-owned businesses, including businesses owned by Nigerians, and incidences of robberies and hijackings also occurred. In 2019, violence broke out and many lives were lost just as foreign-owned businesses were torched (SABC, 2019).

Foreigners and the South African Police Service

The attitude of the police officers towards foreign nationals in South African cities such as Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town was an indication of misperception that most undocumented immigrants in these cities are involved in crime, despite the lack of statistical evidence to substantiate the perception. According to analysts, such views combined with the vulnerability of illegal aliens led to abuse including violence and extortion. In March 2007, a representative of Burundian refugees in Durban; claimed that immigrants could not rely on the police for protection but instead found police mistreating them, stealing from them and making unconfirmed allegations that they sell drugs (Times Live, 2019).

Methodology

This study uses a case study technique for data collection. The case study requires the collection of extended data to obtain an in-depth understanding of the entity being studied. This means that the data collected are more detailed, varied and comprehensive in nature. In this study, social units such as individuals, groups, organizations, forums, specific incidents or geographic units were investigated. . A total of fifty (50) participants were selected for this study. Data were collected from South African Police, Non-Governmental Organizations, and Select-Representatives of African States. The data collection process and observation were carried out within

three weeks. The above-focused groups were selected on the 5th of April, 2021 from Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg and Durban, three different cities in South Africa. Data were collected by various techniques such as observation of the respondent's physical characteristics, social qualities or conduct, data reported in newspaper, court and school reports, as well as from extant literature and document analyses. In addition, data was also collected through interviews with select focus groups comprising victims of xenophobic attacks. The data was analyzed qualitatively and categorized according to research questions, cases studied and information obtained from the focus groups. It was then transcribed verbatim.

Findings and Discussions

Reactions and Interventions by Government and Role Players in Addressing Xenophobic Attacks

Some of the interviewees stated that in most townships and cities like Khutson, in Gauteng Province, various shack settlements governed by Abahlali base Mjondo, also, in KwaZulu-Natal social movements, were able to ensure that there were no violent attacks against foreigners. Respondent (14) pointed out that the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign also organized campaigns against xenophobia. The Active grassroots interventions contained the last wave of xenophobia. Respondent (20), a highly ranked South African Police Officer who was interviewed on the 24th of October 2019 at Pretoria Central Police Station reports as follows:

> …Many suspects were arrested in connection with the violence. Months after the attacks a notable number of individuals had been convicted and some were not found guilty in already concluded court cases.

The respondent (20) also stated that some of the cases had been withdrawn and some were still being heard, months after the attacks because prosecutors said that some of the accused had been convicted, and cases had been withdrawn since witnesses or complainants had left the country.

Respondent (18), a professional caregiver from a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in Johannesburg was interviewed on the 26th of October, 2019. The respondent pointed out that there were provisions of tents at a refugee camp of UNHCR in Olifantsfontein, Midrand, and Johannesburg for the xenophobia attack victims. After being housed in temporary places of safety (including police stations and community halls) for three weeks, those who fled the violence were moved into specially established temporary camps. Conditions in some camps were condemned on the grounds of location and infrastructure, highlighting their temporary nature.

The Majority of the respondents concurred that the South African government adopted a policy of quickly reintegrating refugees into the communities they originally fled and subsequently set a deadline by which refugees would be expected to return to their communities or countries of origin. After an apparent policy shift, the government vowed that there would be no forced reintegration of refugees and that the victims would not be deported, even if they were found to be illegal immigrants. According to UNHCR (2008), South Africa's President approved a request from the SAPS for the deployment of armed forces against the attacks in Gauteng. Several political parties blamed each other for the attacks. The Gauteng provincial branch of the ANC alleged that the violence was politically motivated by a "third hand" that was primarily targeting ANC for the general elections. Respondent (19) agreed with Misago (2009) that some of the politicians backed the Gauteng ANC's allegations that the anti-immigrant violence was politically motivated and targeted at ANC. One of the politicians said that the violence was being stoked primarily within hostel facilities by a third party with financial incentives.

Respondent (7) asserts that radical grassroots movements and organizations came out strongly against the 2008 xenophobic attacks calling them pogroms promoted by government and political parties. Moreover, respondent (4) argues that some had claimed that local politicians and police sanctioned the attacks. At a time, it was reported that there was a call for the closure of the Lindela Repatriation Centre which was seen as an example of the negative way the South African government treats African foreigners. In

other words Respondent (13) points out that grassroots groups like Abahlali base Mjondolo and the South African Unemployed Peoples' Movement also opposed the latest round of xenophobic attacks in South Africa.

The majority of the respondents agreed that to show concern about the incessant attacks against foreigners in South Africa, there was an anti-xenophobia walk on Mandela Day, which took place in Cape Town and other cities like Pretoria and Rustenburg. The march was a result of reports regarding a possible resurgence of xenophobic-related activity and the organising of attacks in the Western Cape, Pretoria, Cape Town and Rustenburg. Respondent (16) stated that there were secret meetings by local businessmen in townships like Khayelitsha, Philippi, Mamelodi, Alexandra, Soweto and Cape Town. Respondent (11) reported that in Gugulethu, there was a secret meeting by local businessmen discussing what to do about Somali shopkeepers. According to the report by Business Day (2010), the Anti-Eviction Campaign brought these issues to the open by organizing a series of anti-xenophobia meetings attempting to find the root causes of the attacks.

Gastrow et.al. (2015) reported after the death of Emmanuel Sithole on the 18th of April, 2015, that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) was deployed in Alexandra Township, following the publication of the images. On the 23rd of April of the same year, thousands of demonstrators marched through the central streets of Johannesburg to protest the spate of deadly attacks on immigrants. They sang songs denouncing xenophobia and carried banners that read: "We are all Africans" as migrant workers crowded balconies, showing their support. Moreover, respondent (5) points out that there have been international reactions towards xenophobia attacks on foreigners. According to respondent (5), the attacks were condemned by a wide variety of organizations and government leaders throughout Africa and the rest of the world.

The study reveals that all the respondents interviewed concurred that the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees expressed concerns about the violence and urged the South African government to

cease the deportation of foreign nationals and allow the refugees and asylum seekers to regularize their stay in the country.

Seriousness and Predominance of Xenophobic Attacks around South Africa

Human Rights Watch (1998) reported that immigrants from Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique living in the Alexandra township were "physically assaulted over a period of several weeks in January 1995 as armed gangs identified suspected undocumented migrants and marched them to the police station in an attempt to 'clean' the township of foreigners." The campaign, known as "Buyelekhaya" (go back home), blamed foreigners for crimes, unemployment and sexual attacks. In September 1998, a Mozambican national and two Senegalese citizens were thrown out of a train. The assault was carried out by a group returning from a rally that blamed foreigners for unemployment, crime and the spread of AIDS. Respondent (19), a police investigator interviewed on the 27th of October 2019 reports:

> …. in the year 2000, seven foreigners were killed on the Cape flats over a five-week period in what police described as xenophobic murders possibly motivated by the fear that outsiders would claim property belonging to locals.

The majority of respondents interviewed, agreed that in October 2001, residents of the Zandspruit informal settlement gave Zimbabwean citizens ten days to leave the area. When the foreigners failed to leave voluntarily, they were forcefully evicted and their shacks were burned down and looted. Community members said they were angry that Zimbabweans were employed whilst locals remained jobless and blamed the foreigners for several crimes. No injury was reported among the affected Zimbabweans

Respondent (21) states that in the last week of 2005 and the first week of 2006, at least four people, including two Zimbabweans died in the Olievenhoutbosch settlement after foreigners were blamed for the death of a local man. Shacks belonging to foreigners were set ablaze and locals demanded that police remove all immigrants from the area. Respondents

(23) reveal that in August 2006, Somali refugees appealed for protection after 21 Somali traders were killed in July of that year and 26 more in August. The immigrants believed that the murders were motivated by xenophobia, although police rejected the assertion of a concerted campaign to drive Somali traders out of townships in the Western Cape.

Respondent (2), a notable caregiver that takes care of victims in Pretoria, Durban and Cape Town, revealed that attacks on foreign nationals increased markedly in late 2007 and it is believed that there were, at least, a dozen attacks between January and May 2008. The most severe incident occurred on the 8th of January 2008 when two Somali shop owners were murdered in the Eastern Cape towns of Jeffrey Bay and East London. In March 2008, seven people were killed including Zimbabweans, Pakistanis and a Somali national after their shops and shacks were set ablaze in Atteridgeville near Pretoria. The incident led to the death of many people, several others being injured, the voluntary deportation of immigrants to their home countries, and the destruction of immigrant-owned property. According to respondent (1):

> …on the 12th of May 2008, a series of riots started in the township of Alexandra (in the north-eastern part of Johannesburg) when locals attacked migrants from Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, killing two people and injuring 40 others".

Respondent (25) reveals that during the incidence of xenophobia attacks on foreigners, some of the attackers were singing Jacob Zuma's campaign song Umshini Wami (Zulu: "Bring Me My Machine Gun"). In the following weeks, violence spread, first, to other settlements in the Gauteng Province, then to the coastal cities of Durban and Cape Town. Attacks were also reported in parts of the Southern Cape, Mpumalanga, the North West and Free State.

BBC News (2015), reported that on the 30th of May, 2013, 25-year-old Abdi Nasir Mahmoud Good was stoned to death. The violence was captured on a mobile phone and shared on the Internet. Three Somali shopkeepers

were also killed in June 2013 and the Somali Government requested the South African authorities should do more to protect Somali nationals. Among those murdered were two brothers who were allegedly hacked to death. The attacks led to public outcry and worldwide protests by the Somali diaspora in Cape Town, London and Minneapolis. The reports also revealed that on the 7th of June 2014, a Somali national, in his 50s, was reportedly stoned to death and two others were seriously injured when an angry mob of locals attacked their shop in Extension 6 on Saturday evening. Three more Somalis were wounded by gunshots and their shops were looted. After another round of xenophobic violence against Somali entrepreneurs in April 2015, Somalia's government announced that it would evacuate its citizens from South Africa. It was gathered that in April 2015, there was an upsurge in xenophobic attacks throughout the country. The attacks started in Durban and spread to Johannesburg. Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini had been accused of fuelling the attacks by saying that foreigners should "go back to their countries." Locals looted foreigners' shops and attacked immigrants in general, forcing hundreds to relocate to police stations across the country. The Malawian authorities subsequently began repatriating their nationals, and several other foreign governments also announced that they would evacuate their citizens. More than 300 people were arrested in connection with the attacks (*BBC News*, 2015).

Report stated that on the 18th of April, 2015, James Oatway, a photographer from the *Sunday Times*, photographed a brutal attack on Emmanuel Sithole, a Mozambican street vendor in Alexandra Township. According to the report, Sihole died from his wounds. Four suspects were arrested within days of the publication of the photographs in the *Sunday Times* edition of 19th of April that had earlier reported the murder of Sithole, the previous day. But Sithole's name is not included in the official list of seven victims killed in the April 2015 attacks, including an Ethiopian, a Mozambican, a Bangladeshi, a Zimbabwean and three South Africans who were all killed in KwaZulu-Natal (*Sunday Times*, 2019).

In the same vein, most of the respondents revealed that in October 2015, there were sustained xenophobic attacks in Grahamstown in the

Eastern Cape. It was reported than more than 500 people were displaced and more than 300 shops and homes were looted and, in some cases, destroyed. In these attacks, Muslims were specifically targeted. The above respondents further stated that the Grahamstown xenophobic attacks took place on the 21st of October, 2015, and coincided with the "Fees Must Fall" protest at Rhodes University, which lasted for several days. One of the respondents' reports:

> …the attacks were instigated by the taxi drivers' protests, where the drivers' were protesting over the terrible state of roads, the rise in crime and rumours of murders committed by foreigners. Their demands were that the mayor ought to do something about their grievances. Their grievances were not addressed by the mayor.

According to Jonathan and Wade (2016), it was revealed that on the 21st of October, 2015, taxi drivers attacked Spaza shops owned by Pakistani, Somali, Bangladeshi and Ethiopian residents of Grahamstown. The taxi drivers mobilising people intending to attack and loot shops owned by foreigners. There was a rumour that foreigners were responsible for the rampant murders in town: that an "Arab man had killed and mutilated women" around town and that the police had not done anything to address these rumours. Grahamstown residents in the townships were angry at the police for not doing anything to dispel the rumours despite having been warned by the councillors that the residents might end up taking the law into their own hands. Thus, it was the rumours that incited the attacks on foreigners.

Most of the respondents agreed that there were incidences of xenophobia attacks in different areas in South Africa. According to them, in June 2016, a wave of riots hit the City of Tshwane. Although the riots were sparked by political discontent within the ANC, Somali, Pakistan and other foreign-owned shops and micro enterprises were targeted for looting and several foreigners were attacked. 40% of respondents stated that "On the 24th of February, 2017, a large scale and officially sanctioned anti-

immigrant protest was organized and held in Pretoria. Protesters marched to the Foreign Ministry and handed a petition to government representatives. Protesters accused immigrants of taking jobs from South Africans, causing crimes, and complained that "they are arrogant and don't know how to talk to people, especially Nigerians." Consequently, one hundred and thirty-six (136) protesters were arrested during the march.

SAHO (2019) reported that on the 25th of March, 2019, xenophobic riots targeting African immigrants broke out in Sydenham, Jadhu Place and Overport areas of Durban. Around one hundred (100) people attacked businesses owned by foreign nationals and this led around 50 people to seek shelter in a local police station and mosque. Three people were killed in the riot.

Respondent (27), one of the representatives of migrants from Somalia argued that the speech given by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the ANC's election manifesto for the 2019 South African general election inflamed xenophobic feelings alleging Ramaphosa announced his commitment towards cracking down on undocumented foreigners involved in criminal activities. The attacks on foreigners were criticised by both the South African government and political parties amidst calls to ensure that xenophobic sentiment was not exploited for electoral purposes.

55% of the respondents agreed that xenophobia and discriminatory speeches by some of the politicians at local, provincial and national levels were responsible for triggering xenophobia attacks in different townships and cities in South Africa. On the 1st of September, 2019, riots and looting targeting shops owned by foreign nationals broke out in Jeppestown and Johannesburg CBD following the death of a taxi driver. By the 3rd of September, police had made 189 arrests for looting. Around 50 businesses predominantly owned by Africans from the rest of the continent were reportedly destroyed or damaged during the incident. The riots coincided with a nationwide truck driver strike protesting the employment of non-South African truckers. In September 2019, 640 Nigerians signed up to take free flights back to Nigeria amidst attacks on foreigners (SAHO, 2019).

The Impact of Xenophobia Attack on South Africa's Relationship with Other Africans and Non-Africans

Most of the respondents interviewed were of the view that immigrants from other parts of Africa and beyond were faced with discrimination and violent attacks in different townships and cities of South Africa. The attacks have caused the death of about 200 people (both South Africans and foreigners), in what was identified as xenophobic attacks. Due to the recent spike in xenophobic attacks against immigrants in general, several foreign governments have started to repatriate their citizens.

McMichael (2018) asserts that in November 2009, about 1500-2500 Zimbabwean farm workers were forcibly evicted from their homes in the informal settlements of De Doorns, a grape-farming town in the Western Cape. No person was physically assaulted but homes were trashed and looted and this led to the biggest displacement of foreign nationals since May 2008. The Zimbabweans were then housed in a displaced persons' camp where some remained for a year until it was closed. McMichael (2018) identified the role of a ward councillor, Mpumelelo Lubisi, in inciting the attack in possible collusion with informal labour brokers who had financial interests in getting rid of their Zimbabwean competitors. South African workers also accused farmers of employing Zimbabweans at less than minimum wage farmers and Zimbabwean workers denied the allegations. According to McMichael:

> …South Africa's borders have been militarized, this shared state-corporate project of building up a 'fortress South Africa' also reveals a deeply entrenched seam of xenophobia, in which undocumented migrants and refugees from African countries are painted as a security risk akin to terrorism and organized crime.

Most of the respondents opined that parliamentary discussions on border security are rife with claims that foreign nationals are attempting to drain social grants and economic opportunities from citizens. The portrayal of illegal immigration as a national security threat, which often relies on unsubstantiated claims about the inherent criminality of foreign nationals,

provides an official gloss on deeply entrenched governmental xenophobia, in which African immigrants are targeted for regular harassment, rounding up and extortion by the police. This normalization of immigrants as figures of resentment may also fuel outbreaks of xenophobic violence.

One year after the 2008 xenophobic attacks, the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CORMSA), said that foreigners remained under threat of violence and that little had been done to address the causes of the attacks. The organization complained of a lack of accountability for those responsible for public violence, insufficient investigations into the instigators and lack of a public government inquiry (CORMSA, 2009).

The Causes of Xenophobic Attacks on Foreign Nationals in South Africa
Human Sciences Research Council identified four broad causes of the violence. They include relative deprivation, specifically intense competition for jobs, commodities and housing; group processes, including psychological categorization processes that are nationalistic rather than super ordinate, South African exceptionalism, or a feeling of superiority in relation to other Africans; and exclusive citizenship, or a form of nationalism that excludes others (Human Sciences Research Council, 2018).

The International Organization for Migration found that poor service delivery or an influx of foreigners may have contributed but blamed township politics for the attacks. It was also found that community leadership was potentially lucrative for unemployed people, and that such leaders organized the attacks. Local leadership could be illegitimate and often violent when emerging from a political vacuum or fierce competition, the report said that such leaders enhanced their authority by reinforcing resentment towards foreigners (International Organization for Migration, 2019).

On the causes of xenophobic attacks on foreigners in South Africa, 70% of the respondents agreed that in some of the cities of South Africa, xenophobic attacks were instigated by taxi drivers who were protesting the terrible state of roads, the rise in crime and rumours of murders committed by foreigners.

They stated that an inquiry by the Competition Commission found that the country's anti-trust regulator had indicated that a difference in performance between foreign and local business owners has created a perception that foreigners were more successful than locals. While there is nothing wrong with examining the dynamics of competition, the insinuation that foreign business owners were to blame for the decline of South African-owned small businesses was worrying.

Gastrow (2018), in a study on the economics of small traders in South Africa, entitled "Somalinomics" outlined the trade practices of Somali traders in South Africa. The study found nothing distasteful about the business practices of foreign small traders. Rather, the foreigners adopted savvy business principles, where smallest foreign retailers set a low mark-up to make a high turnover, most foreigners; especially Somalians locate their businesses in highly trafficked pedestrians' areas. They open early and close late and have a wider product range. Foreigners adopted customer-focused business practices that make them different from their South African counterparts. Furthermore, Gastrow's report found that Somali retailers invest considerable efforts into sourcing low prices for their products, using sourcing techniques like buying in bulk in order to get discounts from wholesalers. Almost all the Somali traders in the study pool their resources each month to source goods. Each retailer procures specific goods for their store individually but the costs associated with restocking, like transport and labour, are shared among themselves.

Respondent (8) states:

> …most small foreign retailers set a low mark-up to make a high turnover, they locate their businesses in highly trafficked pedestrian areas, and they open early and close late and have a wider product range, due to the marketing strategy adopted by the foreigners, the South Africa counterparts are not happy with it and thus became jealous".

In this respect, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) conducted an interview with social media analyst Preetesh Sewraj who warned of the impact of fake news stories which were being used to create panic amongst South Africans and the fake news prompted attack on the foreigners in various towns and cities. According to the media report, it was revealed that Helen Zille, leader of Democratic Alliance (DA), the official opposition party pointed to instances of crowds of rioters singing "Umshini wami", a song associated with then-president of the ANC Jacob Zuma, and noted that the rioters also hailed from the rank and file of the ANC Youth League. She alleged that Zuma had, years before, promised his supporters to take measures against the immigration of foreign nationals to South Africa and that Zuma's most recent condemnation of the riots and distancing from the anti-immigration platform was not enough of a serious initiative against the participation of fellow party members in the violence. Both Zille and Sandra Botha, the parliamentary leader of the DA slammed the ANC for shifting the blame concerning the violence to a "third hand", which is often taken in South African post-apartheid political discourse as a reference to pro-apartheid or allegedly pro-apartheid organizations.

According to report of *SABC News*, 2019, in KwaZulu-Natal province, Bheki Cele, provincial community safety minister, blamed the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), a nationalist Zulu political party, for stoking and capitalizing on the violence in Durban. Both Cele and premier S'bu Ndebele claimed that IFP members had attacked a tavern that catered to Nigerian immigrants en route to a party meeting. The IFP, which is based primarily in the predominantly ethnically Zulu KwaZulu-Natal province, rejected the statements, and had engaged in an anti-xenophobia meeting with the ANC.

The study revealed that the historical culture of violence contributes to the high levels of criminality in South Africa. In some places, violence has become an acceptable means of resolving conflicts. Poverty and unemployment are contributory factors that brought increase in crime. Although poverty does not directly lead to higher crime level, rather it coalesces with socio-political and cultural conditions for an increase in growth of crime and

crucial syndicate and gang. Marginalisation of the youth, combined with the slow growth in the job market, has contributed to the creation of a large number of youth at risk (Carter, 2009).It is crucial to point out that poorly managed development itself has contributed to increase in crime rate and inadequate services to victims of crime create a negative impact on individual, family and community believing that the victim is ignored. This scenario contributed to the incidence of repeat victimisation, which led to retribution violence or perpetrators of other crime. Gender inequality, both in terms of popular attitude and the inadequate services offered by the CJS to women, contributed to the high level of violence against women. In this regard, Hutson (2007) noted that "gender discrimination in South Africa is deeply rooted in the ethnic traditions of the multi-cultural communities, as well as by the compliance of women themselves, and also each culture's values perceive women as inferior to men. Also, many forms of prejudice, discrimination on the basis of gender can originate from a wide variety of different sources. These can include outmoded social expectations, distorted beliefs, personal senses of entitlement, and outright bigotry. The proliferation and easy accessibility to firearm is a major contributor to violent crime (Criminal Intelligence Service Canada,2007).

Recommendation

- The South African government and criminal justice officials must take a giant stand on xenophobic attacks against foreigners in South Africa, which includes immigrants from Malawi, Zimbabwe, Somalia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Ethiopia, China and India and Mozambique amongst other countries. Most of these foreign nationals living in the cities and townships around South Africa were physically assaulted, and their businesses destroyed during xenophobic attacks in South Africa.

- It is necessary that all those that have been identified or suspected as having undocumented status in South Africa should be legalized, with the aid of their consular and embassies in South Africa.

- The National Crime Prevention Strategy (1996) reveals that the crime

level in South Africa is affected by different situations or conditions and South Africa's history has contributed to the range of factors that escalated crime in different communities of South Africa. The government of national unity inherited the entire public services including radically based, misappropriate distribution of criminal justice resources, insufficient and ill-equipped personnel combined without dated system, and fragmented department have contributed to a system that has been unable to cope with the demands created by the need to provide services to all the people of South African. Also, the political transition generated material expectations which were largely beyond the immediate delivery capacity of the new government. Therefore, there is a need for the government to tackle the situation or the condition that escalates crime in South Africa and educate the masses against blaming foreigners for their socio-economic predicaments.

- There is need to tackle conditions and situations that precipitate xenophobic attacks on foreigners. Historical culture of violence contributes to the high level of criminality in South Africa. In some places, violence has become an acceptable means of resolving conflicts. Poverty and unemployment are contributory factors that increase crime. Although poverty does not directly lead to higher crime level, rather it coalesces with socio-political and cultural conditions for an increase in growth of crime and crucial syndicate and gangs. Marginalization of the youth, combined with the slow growth in the job market, has contributed to the creation of a large number of youth at risk. It is crucial to address these conditions in order to reduce tensions that are associated with the culture of violence, as means of resolving conflicts.

- There is a need for change in attitudes of South African police officers and some of the South Africans towards foreign nationals. The perception that most undocumented immigrants in some of townships and cities are involved in crime has no statistical evidence to substantiate the perception. Therefore, such views combined with the vulnerability of illegal aliens led to abuse,

including violence and extortion. The perception needs to change and the authorities should deal with undocumented foreigners within the confines of the law.

- South African government should ensure that incidences of xenophobic attacks are kept under control and ensure that its relationship with other nations is re-established. The government must ensure that South Africa, as a nation, is environmentally friendly to be able to attract foreign investors and tourists who have branded the country as a hostile destination.

Conclusion

This study has revealed that different situations or conditions, and South Africa's history have contributed to the range of factors that escalated crime and xenophobic attacks on foreigners in different communities of South Africa. The study revealed that there is no single cause of crime but searching for specific causes may lead to ineffective solution because different types of crimes have different causes. The government of national unity inherited the entire public services including radically based, misappropriate distribution of criminal justice resources. In addition, insufficient and ill-equipped personnel as well as dated system, and fragmented departments have produced a system that has been unable to cope with the demands created by the need to provide services to all the different people in South Africa.

Moreover, some of the South Africans who engaged on xenophobic attacks against foreigners have transferred their aggression onto foreign nationals and neglected the fact that the political transition generated material expectations which were largely beyond the immediate delivery capacity of the new government. This has frustrated their great expectations. Also, high and unrealised expectations associated with political transition contributed to the justification of crime. Legitimisation of violence associated with political causes served to decriminalise certain categories of crime related to inter group conflict or political rivalries. Criminalisation of political activities and protest has also contributed to blurring between legitimate protest and criminal activity. All these factors contributed to the xenophobic attacks on

foreigners and their businesses. Therefore, the government of South Africa should address the root causes of xenophobic attacks against foreigners, respond swiftly, stop future occurrences, and rebuild its international reputation and relations with other nations.

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ARTICLE
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CONSTITUENCY REPRESENTATION IN NIGERIA: AN ASSESSMENT OF TARABA STATE FEDERAL LEGISLATORS (2013 – 2019)

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Abstract

This paper interrogates the representation of Federal legislators in Nigeria using Taraba Federal Legislative Constituencies as the area of study. The objective was to establish coherence between the actions and functions of the federal legislators in Nigeria and their constituents. Guided by the Principal-Agent Theory, the paper assessed the identified indicators of representation: law-making process and opinion of the constituents, presence in the constituency, and accessibility to the constituents, etc and finds out that, the members of the House of Representatives from Taraba state are not effectively representing their constituents in the performance of their duties as legislators. Again, that hiding under the cover of the identified encumbrances in communication with the people, the Taraba State Federal House of Representative legislators as agents of their constituents have congenially built on the two agency problems of moral hazard (hidden action), which has always made it possible through the electoral ills for many of them to have the chance of re-emerging and retaining their seats in the House despite the obvious poor representations. Second is the adverse selection (hidden knowledge) which is usually an advantage to many agents. Through this advantage, they have and will always continue doing their wishes in the affairs that ordinarily should be a public matter. The paper recommends a constitutional insertion that would compel legislators (as a matter of process) to consult with their constituents in matters of formulating new policies that would affect the people's life.

Introduction

Modern governments, especially democratic governments are made up of three arms. They are the legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. The legislature is a unique institution in a democratic setting, composed of elected representatives of the people. It occupies a prominent position in modern democracies. The legislative arm of government bears the responsibility not only to make a law which is its primary function but also to perform other important functions which include the following: enacts laws, represents the interests of the people, oversee the activities of the executive, safeguards public finance and provides an avenue for redressing public grievances. These roles could be summarized in three basic functions: lawmaking, representation and oversight. The importance of the legislature is indeed not unconnected with the fact that good governance today is extensively measured by the quality of laws made by government institutions. Thus, effective legislature contributes to effective governance by performing functions necessary to sustain democracy in complex and diverse societies (Johnson & Nakamura, 1992: 2).

Looking at Nigerian Legislators, several things strike a probing mind. The issue of the quality of the legislators easily comes up. Quite a good number of the legislators have good credentials (good training, good practices, and good background) (as required by the 1999 Constitution as amended). Yet again, looking at the nature and rots in the electoral system in Nigeria there are tendencies that a sizable number might have emerged from the faulty processes. Again is the monstrous impact of corruption in the working of the various Houses of Parliament in the country (see Olufemi, Akinwumi & Ugonna, 2018; Alabi & Fashagba, 2010; Joshua & Oni, 2014; Arowolo, 2010). Yet again, we get consoled by the fact that despite that there are quite a sizable number of relatively good and upright legislators at all levels even in the face of the widespread nature of corruption across the entire governmental system. Those few good ones have in unimaginable measure constituted a fetter to the legalization of corruption at the various levels of legislative houses. This could probably establish the makeup of the legislative houses in Nigeria.

Measuring the performance of the legislators and the legislature in Nigeria has also been a subject of critical and emotive debates among academics and public analysts. The legislative functions of lawmaking have always been assessed through the nature of debates that takes place in the various houses (and in the committees), and more so, in the quality and quantity of bills that come out of the Houses, especially in their relevance with the opinions and wishes of the constituents (see Nwanegbo & Udoh, 2017).

Their oversight functions can be assessed in the reports of the visits and interactions, supervision and monitoring of agencies of government and bodies that operate in Nigeria by the legislators at all levels. Expectedly, the outcome ought to manifest in the regulation and responsibility of the Executive and Judicial institutions in the country. Put differently, it should reflect in (good) governance, otherwise, it should be noticed in the efforts to correct misconduct.

The third and most important under the representative democracy is the quality of representation by the legislators in the conduct of their legislative duties. Perhaps, the legislators, through their conduct appear not to understand their duties as representatives of the people, their constituents, that is, those that supposedly elected them. This is shown in the dearth of consultation and feedback between the people and their representatives in the parliamentary houses (Ikejiani-Clerk and Nwanegbo, 2010).

Two basic functions are fundamental in the assessment of the legislator. They are the legislation and representation and as Akzin (1936) explained the function of legislating is performed authoritatively by the legislature because they act as representatives of the people. He argues further, 'if, by representation, the legislators participate in legislation, and the represented accept legislative decisions as authoritative', (then) legislation and representation are therefore closely related. Hence, representation is uniquely fundamental to the function of the legislatures or even the behaviour of the legislators.

Interestingly, Wahike (1962, p. 7) explained that the basic functions of the legislature are four. They do perform decisional, legitimizing, representative and other functions. Using the functional pattern in the British House of Commons, Stewart (1955) stressed that the parliament has four definable functions.

1. To make law

2. To watch and criticize the government (policies)

3. To hold debates, which will focus attention on politics and make clear to the people what are the questions; which they will have to decide

4. The control of the raising and spending of money (Stewart, 1955:106)

Considering the earlier stated and these four functions of the British House of Commons, it could be deduced that the bulk of the activities of the legislators is performed in their capacity as a representative of the people. With this in mind, and considering the earlier research reports in South Western Nigeria by Lefenwa (2006), Nwanegbo and Obiora (2008), Ikejiani-Clerk and Nwanegbo (2010), Nwanegbo and Udoh (2017) and others, this study seeks to assess the extent the Taraba legislators in the Federal House of Representatives has represented the people with a particular focus on the activities of the Members through the identified activities and processes, visible existence within the constituency, accessibilities to the constituents, interface with the constituents, etc. The period (2013-2019) is good because it falls within two legislative periods and it covers the period that Taraba state presented legislators from different political parties' backgrounds to the House. The time may look short but it is enough to indicate what a representative can do in terms of developing and sustaining contact with constituents.

Representation: Conceptual and Operational Overview

There seems to be a consensus among scholars that difficulties in accommodation or limitations of participation of all in policymaking

processes in society form the bases for the use of the principle of representation (Schumpeter, 1942; Medearis, 2001; Verba, 1999; Roust & Shvetsova, 2007; Kateb & College, 1979; Svensson, 2007). Since its adoption especially in the modern government, the concept of representation appears germane in democratic practices as it creates a link between the people and leaders who represents the entire people. Representation can be mainly viewed as an intrinsic aspect of what makes democracy possible and functionally responsive. In this regard, Veit (2008) explains that it is through representation that policymaking becomes a political process in which professional policymakers balance competing and sometimes contradictory interests. For Riggs (1967, p.13), the representational activity of the legislator could come about in various ways;

i.   Expressive function: This involves expressing the minds of the people on matters of public concern. This bothers on "interest articulation". It posits that consistent, vigorous articulation of constituency needs will produce policy from those who have policy-making powers.

ii.   Intermediary between the citizens and government officials.

Similarly, Castiglione and Warren (2006:1) viewed democratic representation as having three key characteristics. For them, representation in a democratic setting could be characterized as:

• Representation invokes a principal-agent relationship (the representatives "stood for" and "acted on behalf of" the represented), mainly though not exclusively on a territorial and formal basis, so that governments could be said to be responsive to the interests and opinions of the people.

• Representation identifies a place for political power to be exercised responsibly and with a degree of accountability, in large part by enabling citizens to have some influence upon and exercise some control over it.

• The right to vote for representatives provides a simple means and measure of political equality.

Following from the above, it could be asserted that representation embodies enormous tasks and practices that place the onerous duty of projecting and balancing the constituency demands and interests with other competing interests in the policy-making process. Thus, a representative of the people advocates for them, and lobbies colleagues, bureaucrats and agencies of the state in solving the constituency needs. For Veit (2008, p. 11), representation is the heart of a positive cyclical policy process linking citizens to government. In representative democracies, good governance is a virtuous relationship between active citizens and strong government based on the representation of people's needs and aspirations in policy-making and implementation processes. Hence, accountability and responsiveness are the building blocks of representation from which good government and good governance follow. Such building processes could be represented as follows:

Figure 1: Accountability and Responsiveness are the Building Blocks of Representation
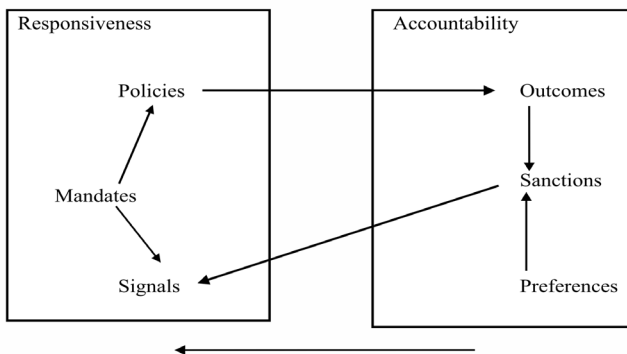
Source: Ribot 2006 adopted from Veit (2008:11)

Effective legislative representation, therefore, can be described as the successful execution of legislative functions that are expected of legislators as representatives of constituencies. Most scholars agree that to ensure effective representation, it is important for the political system in place needs to provide for a parliament that is socially and politically representative. Legislators often represent diverse and sometimes competing interests that

may be defined by ethnicity, religion, political identification, gender, or other characteristics, and these interests must be balanced.

According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), legislators represent all parts of their society or constituents – including men and women, minorities and marginalized groups and therefore, effective representation implies "articulating and mediating between the competing interests of these groups" as well as, guaranteeing equal rights for all parliamentarians, particularly those belonging to the minority party within a legislative assembly. Effective representation can also mean that legislators possess or acquire the resources, skills and characteristics that they need to execute their representative duties and consistently apply them in delivering service to their constituents (Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre [PLAC] (2016).

Thus, "a government is 'responsive' if it adopts policies that are signalled as preferred by citizens and governments are accountable if citizens can sanction them appropriately. In the policy process, preferences expressed through voice and various signals (regarding citizen views, perspectives, interests, and needs) become mandates and are translated by government officials into policies and then outcomes that generate a new set of citizen preferences (Veit, 2008). This further explains the fact that an institutionalised form of representation encourages active participation and seems to be the most effective means of bringing citizens' input into policy processes.

In her view, Pitkin (1967) sees political representation as a social relationship, constituted in part by shared meanings. Looking at the concept from two contending perspectives, she drew a line between "formalistic" and "substantive" understandings of political representation. For her, formalistic understandings and theories focus on the presence of the formal features of authorization (by the "principal") and/or accountability (of the "agent"). And the substantive theories, instead, are concerned with how the relationship works. She further divided substantive approaches between those that understand representation as "standing for" someone or something else, and others that conceive it as "acting for" someone else (or

a collectivity). The former she further distinguished between "descriptive" and "symbolic" ways of "standing for". The latter she treated as a single group, though recognising that there are different ways in which one can "act for" someone else (Pitkin 1967:18).

Indeed, the relevance of representation lies mostly in its strength of consultative engagement of the people before formulating policies that affect their lives. And also the extent the representative carries out the duty and the extent it translates to the general will of the people makes representation potently useful. Representation could therefore be seen as the principal function of the legislature.

Most public and private organisations are organised hierarchically. The key relationship in a hierarchy is the one between a subordinate employee (agent) and his or her superior (principal). The assumption of Principal Agent Theory is predicated on the existence of a relationship involving two parties; the principal (who proposes the contract) and the follower (the party who just has to accept or reject the contract) called the Agent. An agency relationship is created when an individual or party who acts as a principal, instructs or deputizes to another person who acts as the agent, with the authority to act on his or her behalf (Moe, 1984; Rees, 1985a; Williamson, 2000 in Roach, 2016). The agent will be expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with the desires of the principal (Moe, 1984). The agent on the other hand can be defined as the person recruited by the principal to accomplish the latter's goals and objectives (Rees, 1985a; Rees, 1985b; Williamson, 2000 in Roach, 2016).

The principal can be an individual, party or body who acts consistently or cohesively (e.g. government agencies or public officials in the same), to recruit an agent or agents (e.g. contingent/contract employees) to achieve the expected results of the former. Generally, a principal will select an agent (s) to execute tasks that may vary in specialized skills, task complexity, the scope of the task and other requirements. In a world of politics based upon perfect and symmetric information, an imaginary world of politics along Downs' 1957 well-known model of two-party system competition

in a presidential type regime, the demos as principal would contract with the correct politicians as agents, promising the making of the policies that majority group in the principal favours. Politicians would be paid a decent salary, somehow above their fixed reservation price. But there would be no need for rents or quasi-rents. Politicians who performed better in terms of a goal like for instance affluence or GDP growth would be favoured ahead of politicians who performed badly, the re-election mechanism doing the selection of agents for the demos. Given perfect knowledge, voters would pick political agents based on the proximity rule, minimising the policy distance between their political preferences and those of the politicians in government and the legislature.

The theory makes two assumptions: that goal conflict exists between principals and agents and that agents have more information than their principals, which results in an information asymmetry between them (Waterman and Meier, 1998). And that agency problem occurs when cooperating parties have different goals, information, and division of labour (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). Specifically, principal-agent theory concentrates on the ubiquitous agency relationship, "in which one party (the principal) delegates work to another (the agent), who performs that work on behalf of the principal" (Eisenhardt, 1989). And principal-agent theory seeks to portray this relationship using the metaphor of a contract (Jensen & Meckling, 1976).

As a consequence, the central dilemma explored by principal-agent theorists is how to stimulate the employee or contractor (agent) to behave in the best interests of the principal (the employer) when the employee or contractor has an informational advantage over the principal and has different interests from the principal. From the agency perspective, "most organizations are simply legal fictions which serve as a nexus for a set of contracting relationships among individuals" (Jensen and Meckling, 1976). The basic premise of the theory is that "if both parties to the relationship are utility maximisers, there is good reason to believe that the agent will not always act in the best interests of the principal" (Jensen and Meckling, 1976).

In determining the most efficient contract, principal-agent theory brings up certain hypotheses about people, organizations and information. It assumes that agents and principals will act in their self-interest to maximize their welfare. Agents possess more information than their principals possess. As a result, it identifies two impediments to effective contractual performance: moral hazard and adverse selection. Moral hazard refers to the agent doesn't put agreed-upon efforts into the tasks. That is, the agent is shirking. An adverse selection which refers to "the misrepresentation of ability by the agent" (Eisenhardt, 1989), arises because the principal cannot completely verify these skills, experiences, or capabilities either at the time of recruitment or while the agent is working (Eisenhardt, 1989). Some other conditions also do affect the agent which has to be noted. If a legislator is working in the house from the minority position, he is somewhat encumbered, as equality which is required in the environment of representation will be lacking.

In this circumstance, the principal is the group of the electorate who decides to recruit through election (choosing) from among several (applicants) candidates requesting and flaunting their various acquired knowledge, qualifications, aptitudes, abilities and other characteristics given the complexities of the job; representation. The agent (s) is required to execute the tasks within certain periods (four years in the House) and return for the renewal of the contract. As it is applied to legislative politics, we should focus on the position of the constituents as principals who engages the services of the chosen representatives through an election, requiring their representation in a manner that would make them the determinants of the policy choice through the output of legislation (advocate for them, lobby colleagues, bureaucrats, agencies of the state in solving the constituency's need. Determining the actual value of representation has a lot to do with some of the earlier identified variables which indicate the closeness of the agent (legislator) to the principal (constituents). However too, it is bedevilled with agency problems as it is with the government problems of choice of agents who will handle the provision of services and moving then to the choice of the electorate of political agents with different policy preferences. This is essential because given asymmetric information—hidden actions and

hidden knowledge; one has to face suboptimal solutions. In non-democratic politics, the rulers monopolize the benefits in politics, sometimes reducing the population to a form of political slavery (Burma), but always restrict the choice of the electorate, to make looting easier. Between these two extreme solutions, exploitation by the principal versus looting by the agents, one finds all kinds of varying solutions concerning both the value produced and the division of the mutual gains from the interaction.

The incentive for principal-agent theory is to highlight the importance of divergent objectives, asymmetric information, incentives and penalties, recruitment and salaries etc. A lack of information, for example, makes it difficult for the principal to monitor the agent's actions and hold the agent accountable. The theory has been used to construct micro-economic explanations of corruption and relevant institutional reforms.

The Legislators and Constituency Representation in Taraba State: The Problems

Determination of what makes representation is always a difficult one. This is essentially a result of the difficulties in deciphering even what the public wants. In the views of Elekwa (2006), several publics exist in the political society and this is because opinions of individuals, socio-cultural and political groups differ and virtually all see their standpoints as right while condemning others. When therefore issues come up, they tend to see them from their advantaged position.

For representatives to actively respond to their constituents' views they clearly must both be motivated to ascertain what those views are and be able to ascertain these views correctly. However, as Broockman and Skovron (2013, p. 6) rightly observed, the relationship between public opinion and politicians' perceptions of it remains murky at best.

The weak connection between public opinion and public policy remains an important concern for students of democratic politics. As

Fiorina and Abrams (2009), and Bafumi and Herron (2010) found out, many politicians appear to routinely support policies that a majority of their constituents do not. As disturbing as that may be to the health of democratic representation, Broockman and Skovron (2013) conclude unfortunately that the possibilities of improving the slim relationship between them are very bleak, and this is not unconnected with the already established position that the representatives in Nigeria have acted more as principals and less as agents of their constituents. Walter Lippmann (1922) famously observed that, although the public wields ultimate political authority in democracies, "the world that [the public] deal[s]with politically is out of reach, out of sight" and "Man is no Aristotelian god (capable of) contemplating all existence at one glance". Hence, giving room to the manipulation occasioned by the asymmetrical information which characterises the general and specific application of principal-agent arrangements created by the two agency problems of moral hazard (hidden action) and selection (hidden knowledge).

Taraba state is one of the six (6) North East states of Nigeria, but geographically it lies along the Benue valley where Middle-Belt communities inhabit. Created on 27 August 1991 from the old Gongola state, Taraba covers a total area of 21,032sqm with an estimated population of over 2,688,944 (NPC, 2005). Bounded by six Nigerian states (Nasarawa, Benue, Plateau, Bauchi, Gombe and Adamawa) and situated on an International boundary with Cameroon, it is a multi-ethnic state with a majority of the population being involved in farming and has one of the most fertile agricultural lands in the country (Taraba State Official Diary, 2017). Taraba is made up of sixteen (16) Local Government Areas, with six (6) Federal Constituencies evenly distributed among the three (3) senatorial zones in the state (see table 1 below).

Table 1: Taraba Federal Constituency

Senatorial Zones	Federal Constituencies
North	Jalingo/Yorro/Zing
	Lau/Lamido/Ardo-Kola
Central	Gashaka/Kurmi/Sardauna
	Bali/Gassol
South	Ibi/Wukari
	Donga/Ussa/Takum/Special Areas

Until the 2015 general elections when the number of other political parties increased with more members of the Senate and Federal House of Representatives emerging from All Progressive Congress (APC) and All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA), the People's Democratic Party (PDP) has dominated the representation of the state since 1999. This made the analysis of representation more balanced as the majority of the legislators have worked under the condition that made them representatives under the party in government (when PDP was in majority in the House) and is still not disadvantaged now under APC majority in the House as some of them are also representing their constituencies from the platform of APC. More so too, the makeup of the House now did not show any character of creating undue disadvantage to members based on their political party affiliation as the House is near balance in the number of the members and they appear to be collaborating among themselves across political parties line.

Law-making processes and opinions of constituents

Traditionally, law-making remains the exclusive preserve and concern of the legislature. In contemporary societies, many ministries, and institutions that are not part of the legislature get to perform some very important functions in the law-making process and observe the practices and procedures in doing this. The outcome of this is that many issues emanating outside the legislature, play a vital role in shaping, determining and forming what is generally seen as legislative output or what is simply called an act of the parliament. Thus, the theory of separation of power between the executive

and legislature tends to give way to the practice whereby the executive or the government takes a considerably large initiative in introducing, initiating and drafting proposed bills to the legislature and sometimes gives impetus to unbearable executive influences. A bill is a draft or proposal law waiting for consideration by the legislators. A new bill or bill tends to repeal, change or make new law, if considered and assented to.

Thus, sections 58 and 100 of the 1999 constitution (as amended) state that the exercise of legislative powers is using bills passed into law by the legislature (be it the State or National legislature) and assented to by the chief executive (president or governor). Legislative practices have shown that legislative bills can be initiated through three principal sources. According to Udoh (2009), the three principal sources are the executive, the legislators themselves, and interest, professional groups or private individuals. He further stated:

(a) Executive: the president or in the case of a State, the governor, can initiate in the House what is known as a government or executive bill. The contents of such bills are formulated by heads of parastatals, ministries and corporations, assisted by civil servants (in some cases) and are usually deliberated and approved by the cabinet before they are presented or forwarded to the legislature.

(b) Members of the legislature: any member of the legislature acting alone or in conjunction with a number of his or her colleagues can come up with a private member bill. The bill, which may seek to make a new law, amend or out-rightly repeal an existing one, may arise from sundry sources including campaign promises made during elections and the observation of lapses in the application of the existing laws.

(c) Interest or pressure groups associations who feel concerned with the making or amendment of a particular law can initiate a bill through a member of the House who would sponsor it (Udoh, 2009: 36-37).

In the practice here, the bills that come to the House of Representatives (just like in the Senate too) have both inputs of the executive and private members. While some come as government bills, many others also come from private members (which should ordinarily represent the opinions of groups in the society and the various constituencies represented in the House). Looking at the impact of governance in Taraba state, it does not appear as if the Taraba Federal Legislator (especially House of Representative members) has done much with legislation for their people. Looking at the hollow nature of the contact line with the people as explained earlier, one may safely infer that even the few efforts that might come from them to the floor of the House would not have been done with the full participation and knowledge of the constituents.

The very reason for representation seems to be defeated in a situation where constituents are not consulted for laws purportedly meant for them. A true representation is not only expressed by the presence of someone but by the degree to which the representative carries along the opinions and aspirations of his/her constituents. Democratic representation according to Urbinati (2006: 42) "… is fair or just representation insofar as it involves issues of advocacy and representativity; issues of a meaningful presence, not simply presence alone, in the game of discord and agreement that is democracy". Representatives mostly do not rely on the opinions of their constituents owing to the absence of broad-based consultation. People are either not consulted, not informed of the importance of the policy or the policy seems to be different from the priority needs of the people. Even when some levels of contacts are claimed, it is with a section of the constituents, those usually classified in Nigerian political parlance as 'stakeholders'. Such undermines the essence of the constituency, representation and representative governance in Taraba state and Nigeria in general. It does not provide a broad platform for representation, enough to serve all. Indeed, representation raises the question of equal opportunity among citizens of a political community, by providing access and chance for peoples' aspirations, not some.

Presence in the Constituencies

The other considerable factor, which increases the chances of adequate representation, is the presence of the legislator within the constituency. The legislator staying among the constituents will enhance his knowledge of the wishes and desires of the constituents. He would properly understand them and be able to generate inputs from them at all times. These virtuous practices are impeded, especially in this part of the world by the difficulties in operating from the localities to attend parliamentary businesses due to the high cost of transportation in Nigeria (which from places like Taraba state) has to be by air transport, poor transportation system that even if one decides to spend all he has on transport, he will still not be able to coordinate such movements and meet up with plenary sessions of the House. This is in addition to the fact that legislative business involves committee work and oversight duties. All these combined to make their presence difficult as would be required to make the desired impact.

The other way of covering up on this, which could be to make regular visits to the constituencies is also facing some challenges as the level of financial and other personal demands from the constituents on the legislator (as a result of the palpable poverty state of the constituent) scare the legislator away from the constituencies. The option left for them is to maintain contact with a few members of the constituency if they so wish and where necessary consult with them. This indeed makes it difficult for them to operate as it hinders their capacity to give broad-based representation. There seems to be consensus in the literature that democratic representation requires representatives who share experiences, understand issues from the perspective of disadvantaged groups, and can constitute a representative "voice" within deliberations and decision-making (Williams, 1998).

Accessibility to the constituents

There are other measures open to the legislator to cover for the obvious challenges of closeness to the constituents and getting inputs from them without necessarily being personally present at the constituency. The most established approach is maintaining a functional constituency office in

the constituency. The constituency office is a functional contact office with the legislator which should be staffed with some persons of the constituency who should be receiving inputs, transmitting such and disseminating vital information from the legislator to the constituent on a regular albeit daily basis. Just like any other functional government office, it should be opened and functional daily. To help the legislator to maintain this contact, the government builds the cost of running such office into the finances of the legislator and therefore, is mandatory for a legislator to have that structure put in place.

A look at the constituency offices in Taraba states how most of these offices merely exist but not are functional. As is the situation, the offices would come alive during elections as campaign coordinating offices of the legislator. Hence, the benefits derivable from the existence of such an office are swallowed by its non-functionality and thereby leave the people still with no good medium of contact, making a contribution and taking information from the legislators. The legislator can interface with the constituents through meeting/receiving constituents at the House as they do not come to the constituency offices to do that but the distance and difficulties in making such a trip make it not a good and workable measure.

Another means could be through having regular constituency and or town hall meetings. Beyond the selective nature of such meetings, there are also very limited records of such meetings in Taraba state. This is not unconnected with the earlier explained challenges the legislator encounters in coming to the constituency.

The world of ICT has revolutionalised every aspect of human endeavour thereby making it easy for a legislator that wants to interface with the people to do that. A legislator can be in very functional contact with the people by opening up a dedicated and assessable e-mail, Facebook accounts, WhatsApp and Twitter handle, phone lines, etc. These do not exist among the contact platform of the Federal legislators from Taraba state.

Findings and Conclusion

From our analysis, two conclusions can be arrived at. First is that the House of Representatives members from Taraba state are not effectively representing their constituents in the performance of their duties as legislators. This has nothing to do with their being vibrant in the debates on the floor of the House and or in their making personal gains or prudent in ensuring that the constituency projects fund is used prudently. This study did not look at that though. The concern of the study is on the representativeness of their actions. Even the determination of what is selected as the constituency project ought not to be left to the whims and caprices of the legislators as is the case in 2018. Several factors have been identified as making this exclusiveness imminent and possible and those factors have simply strengthened the conclusion that indeed the legislators are less representative in their conduct and that reduces the values attached to the office of a legislator as an agent of the people.

Secondly, hiding under the cover of the identified encumbrances, the Taraba state Federal House of representative legislators as agents of their constituents have congenially created the two agency problems of moral hazard (hidden action), which is made possible by the electoral ills and still would have the capacity to re-emerge and retain their seats in the House and selection (hidden knowledge) which they have and will always capitalise on to continue doing their wishes in the affairs that ordinarily should be a public matter.

Conventionally, and in line with the workings of the Principal-Agent theory, one would expect this nature of performance to attract negative rewards during elections. Unfortunately, the setting of local politics in Taraba is likely to bear more on the electoral choice during the 2019 general election as it has always done in the past. The factor of zoning, religion, ethnic considerations and money would naturally make more impact in the coming election in Taraba than the ordinarily expected factor of performance as envisaged by the architects of the Principal-Agent theory encapsulated in its basics. This is aligned with the common practices in Nigerian elections,

which also could make someone with no positive political value be returned elected through election to represent the constituency he/she failed to effectively represent. That is one basic weakness of the principal-Agent theory in its application in this study as this inordinate pattern of rewards and punishment associated with the Principal-Agent theory did not envisage the position of developing democracies like Nigeria in the theorising practice.

From our analysis, it needs to be stated that this study does not intend to discredit the performance of Taraba State legislators in the House of representative, rather it has simply revealed the inefficiencies that characterized legislative representations which are anchored in the ills associated with the principal-agent relationship in politics. Again, it explains the effects of poor representation and the consequences of neglecting peoples' views by the representatives in policy inputs on the value and quality of legislation. Such is also attributable to electoral pitfalls that have not only been monetized but preclude the people from speaking through the ballot box, therefore creating an adverse selection problem (misrepresentation of the ability of the agent). It has created exclusivity in legislative activity, ousting the great number of constituents on the pretence of difficulties in collating majority opinions.

Based on the above, we recommend that there should be a section in the constitution (law) where the legislators should in a referendum inform, and consult their constituencies in matters of formulating new policies that affect people's life.

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ARTICLE

6

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE, UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: RETHINKING POSSIBILITIES

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Abstract

This paper presents a strong advocacy for change and advancement. It argues that understanding the extent to which the symbiotic relationship between democratic governance and university education impacts the Nigerian economy and economic development will provide the challenges for National leaders and stakeholders of university education in Nigeria to rethink possibilities for further development of the education sector and citizenry. It is a descriptive analysis which used an online survey to examine the perceptions of Nigerians accordingly. The mixed method research design was adopted and the Ordinary Least Square Method (OLS)] of the classical linear regression model was used to test the stated hypothesis. Findings reveal that Democratic Governance and University Education significantly impact economic development negatively indicating a disconnect between democratic governance and meeting the core needs of the citizenry, amongst others, and a significant positive impact of the variables of the economic development: quality of university education, healthcare services, poverty level and youth unemployment on economic development. Repositioning of democratic governance and the university education system are recommended, amongst others, for the economic and social wellbeing of the citizenry.

Keywords: Democratic Governance, University Education, Economic Development, National Development, Possibilities

Introduction

The role of universities in enhancing the active participation of the citizenry in the society for economic growth and economic development is well documented in Political Science literature. While the process of democracy which has participation at its core is simply governance that meets people and societal needs as well as a system of power controlled by the people. Education, on the other hand, and university education in particular, has contributed immensely to the growth of democracy and political changes in Nigeria, having both social and developmental impact on the citizenry as it enhances their capabilities and capacities to be productive to themselves and their immediate society as well as increase the extent of their support for democratic principles and involvement in building strong and inclusive institutions for political and social processes.

Dewey (1918) sees democracy as the developmental process whose elements take part in directing things which are of the group's interest allowing the members the privilege of actively building communities through processes of communication and shared actions. Global Development Research Centre (2021) broadly defines governance as an instrument of public affairs management; a gauge of political development and useful mechanism to enhance the legitimacy of public realm as well as an analytical framework for comparative politics.

UNESCO International Bureau of Education (2022) defines governance as structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation. Governance also represents the norms, values and rules of the game through which public affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive. In the same vein, the Global Monitoring Report (2009); Francis Fukuyama (2013) and International Bureau of Education (2021) define governance as 'power distribution relationships,' 'formal and informal processes of formulating policies and allocating resources,' 'processes of decision-making' in order to manage a country's economic, political and administrative affairs as well as 'mechanisms for holding stakeholders

accountable.' Similarly, Governance Institute of Australia (2021) avers that *g*overnance encompasses the system by which an organisation is controlled and operates, and the mechanisms by which it, and its people, are held to account with ethics, risk management, compliance and administration as elements of governance.

When considered as political processes that exist in and between formal institutions, Governance has been defined to refer to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation. Democratic governance therefore is an open participatory governance process in which the citizens are part of the decision-making process that responds to their individual needs and that of the business environment. Similarly, Leister (2008) describes democratic governance as a new movement which seeks to mobilise citizens to make decisions, overcome conflicts and solve critical public problems. According to Lawal and Tobi (2006), the quality leadership in democratic governance plays a vital role in determining the level of development. The concept of modern development includes improvement of the economic, health, cultural, environmental and political aspects of the society and people are usually at the center of development, particularly when it involves meeting their basic needs such as food, clean drinking water, education, health care services and so forth.

Economic development is said to occur when the economic wellbeing and the quality of life of the citizens, a community or a nation is improved. Hence, counties with more wealth and high standard of living are usually referred to as 'More Economically Developed Countries' while those with lower standard of living are referred to as Less Economically Developed Countries.' Generally, the development of any country is difficulty to measure. However, some data such as social data (Level of services used by the citizens such as education, health care), population data (life expectancy, infant mortality, and so on and economic data (employment structure and ease of doing business) have

served as measures of development. In the same vein, common indicators of economic development, amongst others, include quality of education/school enrolment ratio/percentage of population in tertiary education, poverty rate (percentage of citizens living on less than $1.25 per day), quality health care/life expectancy, unemployment rates, national income index, Per Capita Real Income, Human Development Index, Gender Inequality Index, and so on. In other words, development is a vital aspect influenced by governmental actions.

Furthermore, Bujus (2021) and E-Collaborative for Civic Education (2020) posit that democratic governance is characterised by respect for human rights, individual freedom, rule of the law, transparency, accountability processes and institutions, social justice, equality in political processes as well as effective people participation in development process. The strength of democracy depends on the character and intelligence of her citizens provided by the education system. Through education the citizens are exposed to their basic rights and responsibilities. A functional education system is expected to enhance the productive capabilities of the individuals to contribute to the development of the economy as well as create informed and courageous citizenry to know their civic rights and responsibilities and empowers the people to deal with social and economic issues. In the democratic trajectory, effective education system opens up the democratic space and respect for human rights, safety of voters: void of fear and intimidation.

Democratic governance when applied to education provides for the participation of stakeholders in the design of national education system as well as determines the overall quality of the education system through the provision of the required educational resources. This explains, in part, why the governments of some nations including Nigeria invest in the education of its citizenry as well ensure quality education delivery. Despite these government investments, the delivery mission of universities in enhancing the capabilities of individuals for civic participation and economic productivity as well as the impact of democratic governance on the education system in Nigeria and economic development are still in doubt. This study therefore examines the extent to which the symbiotic relationship between democratic governance

and university education impacts the Nigerian economic development; seeks to provide the challenges for National leaders and stakeholders of university education in Nigeria to rethink possibilities for further development of the education sector and the wellbeing of the citizenry.

This paper is guided by the following research questions:

i.   Are Nigerian Universities delivering on its mission in developing the capabilities of individual for civic participation that is critical to the functioning of modern democracy and economic productivity?

ii.   Is Governance in Nigeria participatory enough and delivering on its economic development objectives as stated in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria?

iii.   What are the resultant effects of the role of democratic governance and education on economic development (Wellbeing of the citizens)?

iv.   How do we strengthen the democratic Institutions and Processes for full social participation of the citizenry and economic development?

2.0 Concept of Exploration on Democratic and Governance

Several scholars have viewed the subject of democracy from different perspectives. Historically, the word democracy is derived from the Greek word *demos*, or people, is defined, basically, as government in which the supreme power is vested in the people. According to the U.S., Department of State sees democracy as a form of government in which power and civic responsibilities are exercised by all adult citizens, directly or indirectly through their freely elected representatives. As phrased by President Abraham Lincoln, democracy is government of the people, by the people, and for the people (web-Archive, 2017).

The success of democracy in a country is dependent on functionality of the major arms of government such as the Legislature, Executive and Judiciary. While the legislature is invested with responsibilities of legislation (power to make laws for the citizens), effective representation of the people (serving as the link between the government and the people) and overall scrutiny and oversight; the executive arm of government is responsible for

the implementation of the laws and policies made by the legislature as well as provide leadership at the highest level of government. And the judiciary arm of government interprets the laws as well as ensure equity and fairness for all the citizens.

Generally, governance involves decision-making and implementation process as well as the authoritative management of a country's resources through a well-designed, formulated and implemented policies for the welfare of the people. As avers by Anyadike and Ikechukwu (2014), governance is primarily about problem identification and solving; and the extent to which the society's problems are solved. Most societal problems when solved by good governance will lead to higher and sustainable economic development.

Today, democratic governance is representative in nature where the citizens elect officials to rule, make political decisions on their behalf, formulate laws, and implement the programmes for the good of the general public as well as ensure equity and fairness to all. These representatives are expected to establish an effective link between the government and the governed. The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, 2021) sees Democratic governance as a system of government where institutions function according to democratic processes and norms, both internally and in their interaction with other institutions. National Democratic Institute (2021) and UNESCAPC (2009) identify transparency, responsiveness, inclusion, integrity, strict adherence to the rule of law for equity/fairness and accountability as core democratic values for effective, 21st-century public-sector institutions and governance processes. Through improved governance the benefits of democratic development most directly impact the lives of citizens.

Conversely, when governments and parliaments fail to meet public expectations, citizens can lose confidence in democracy's virtue and may turn to alternative models that rely on authoritarian methods or illiberal models to achieve results (National Democratic Institute [NDI], 2021).

The economist perspective of democratic governance and economic development is that political institutions impact the effectiveness of market

reforms which in turn affects efficiency and effectiveness of the nations' economy as well as the overall well-being of the citizens (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2021). The basic pillars on which democratic governance rests include citizens' participation in decision making process on matters that affect them; equality before the law and opportunities irrespective of gender, ethnicity and religious background; accountability, transparency, economic freedom, respect for human rights and freedom to vote as well as participate in the political system.

Governance in Nigeria: The Constitution (1999) Amended

The political, economic, social, educational, security aspects of the national objectives as contained in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria as amended (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2011) are as follows:

Political objectives

(1) The motto of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress.

(2) Accordingly, national integration shall be actively encouraged, whilst discrimination on the grounds of place of origin, sex, religion, status, ethnic or linguistic association or ties shall be prohibited.

(3) For the purpose of promoting national integration, it shall be the duty of the State to:

(a) provide adequate facilities for and encourage free mobility of people, goods and services throughout the Federation.

(b) secure full residence rights for every citizen in all parts of the Federation.

(c) encourage inter-marriage among persons from different places of origin, or of different religious, ethnic or linguistic association or ties; and

(d) promote or encourage the formation of associations that cut across

ethnic, linguistic, religious and or other sectional barriers.

(4) The State shall foster a feeling of belonging and of involvement among the various people of the Federation, to the end that loyalty to the nation shall override sectional loyalties.

(5) The State shall abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power.

Economic Objectives

(1) The State shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constitution.

(a) harness the resources of the nation and promote national prosperity and an efficient, a dynamic and self-reliant economy;

(b) control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity;

(c) without prejudice to its right to operate or participate in areas of the economy, other than the major sectors of the economy, manage and operate the major sectors of the economy;

(d) without prejudice to the right of any person to participate in areas of the economy within the major sector of the economy, protect the right of every citizen to engage in any economic activities outside the major sectors of the economy.

(2) The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring:

(a) the promotion of a planned and balanced economic development;

(b) that the material resources of the nation are harnessed and distributed as best as possible to serve the common good;

(c) that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to

permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group; and

(d) that suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment, sick benefits and welfare of the disabled are provided for all citizens.

(3) A body shall be set up by an Act of the National Assembly which shall have power;

(a) to review, from time to time, the ownership and control of business enterprises operating in Nigeria and make recommendations to the President on same; and

(b) to administer any law for the regulation of the ownership and control of such enterprises.

(4) For the purposes of subsection (1) of this section -

(a) the reference to the "major sectors of the economy" shall be construed as a reference to such economic activities as may, from time to time, be declared by a resolution of each House of the National Assembly to be managed and operated exclusively by the Government of the Federation, and until a resolution to the contrary is made by the National Assembly, economic activities being operated exclusively by the Government of the Federation on the date immediately preceding the day when this section comes into force, whether directly or through the agencies of a statutory or other corporation or company, shall be deemed to be major sectors of the economy;

(b) "economic activities" includes activities directly concerned with the production, distribution and exchange of weather or of goods and services; and

(c) "participate" includes the rendering of services and supplying of goods.

Social Objectives

(1) The State social order is founded on ideals of Freedom, Equality and Justice.

(2) In furtherance of the social order-

(a) every citizen shall have equality of rights, obligations and opportunities before the law;

(b) the sanctity of the human person shall be recognised and human dignity shall be maintained and enhanced;

(c) governmental actions shall be humane;

(d) exploitation of human or natural resources in any form whatsoever for reasons, other than the good of the community, shall be prevented; and

(e) the independence, impartiality and integrity of courts of law, and easy accessibility thereto shall be secured and maintained.

(3) The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that-

(a) all citizens, without discrimination on any group whatsoever, have the opportunity for securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunity to secure suitable employment;

(b) conditions of work are just and humane, and that there are adequate facilities for leisure and for social, religious and cultural life;

(c) the health, safety and welfare of all persons in employment are safeguarded and not endangered or abused;

(d) there are adequate medical and health facilities for all persons:

(e) there is equal pay for equal work without discrimination on account of sex, or on any other ground whatsoever;

(f) children, young persons and the age are protected against any

exploitation whatsoever, and against moral and material neglect;

(g) provision is made for public assistance in deserving cases or other conditions of need; and

(h) the evolution and promotion of family life is encouraged.

Educational Objectives

(1) Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels.

(2) Government shall promote science and technology

(3) Government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy; and to this end Government shall as and when practicable provide

(a) free, compulsory and universal primary education;

(b) free secondary education;

(c) free university education; and

(d) free adult literacy programme.

The foreign policy objectives are:

(a) promotion and protection of the national interest;

(b) promotion of African integration and support for African unity;

(c) promotion of international co-operation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations and elimination of discrimination in all its manifestations;

(d) respect for international law and treaty obligations as well as the seeking of settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication; and

(e) promotion of a just world economic order.

Security Objectives:

The State shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air and land, forest and wild life of Nigeria.

The State shall -

> (a) protect, preserve and promote the Nigerian cultures which enhance human dignity and are consistent with the fundamental objectives as provided in this Chapter; and

> (b) encourage development of technological and scientific studies which enhance cultural values.

The national ethics shall be Discipline, Integrity, Dignity of Labour, Social, Justice, Religious Tolerance, Self-reliance and Patriotism.

The Duty of Every Citizen: Shall be to -

> (a) abide by this Constitution, respect its ideals and its institutions, the National Flag, the National Anthem, the National Pledge, and legitimate authorities;

> (b) help to enhance the power, prestige and good name of Nigeria, defend Nigeria and render such national service as may be required;

> (c) respect the dignity of other citizens and the rights and legitimate interests of others to live in unity and harmony and in the spirit of common brotherhood;

> (d) make positive and useful contribution to the advancement, progress and well-being of the community where he resides;

> (e) render assistance to appropriate and lawful agencies in the maintenance of law and order; and

> (f) declare his income honestly to appropriate and lawful agencies and pay his tax promptly.

Symbiotic Relationship between Democratic governance and University Education

The symbiotic relationship between democratic governance and education is such that while universities through inculcating knowledge, skills and values are able to produce the needed human capital for economic and national development as well as provide the citizens with learning opportunities on the values of democracies and civic participation; democratic governance, on the other hand, impact the quality of the education system, for instance, democratic leadership may either free up or restrict the availability of educational resources (financial resource, facilities, the quality human resources and learning environment) in the education system. In other words, the quality of democratic leadership impacts the quality of educational spending leading to quality teaching, provision of quality educational services; quality educational outcome and, by extension, impacts national development.

Acemolugu and Robinson (2006) reports that while democratic constitution has direct impact on the economic performance of nations, the level of a country's economic development had proved to be one of the best predictors of a durable democracy.

Role of University Education in Democratic Process and Economic Development

Universities, as complex institutions, play vital roles in the democratic process and economic development. These roles range from providing formal education which is capable of increasing society-wide literacy levels, enhance individual's interest in democratic legislative or executive leaderships and political party membership to communicating effectively in political discourse as well as individual and societal productivity. According to Robert and Thierry (2012), Dalton (2008) and Magalhaes (2008), formal educational attainment and university education is an explanatory variable for citizen's characteristics, productivity and behaviour such as voting during election, exhibiting political tolerance in working with other citizens and upholding the virtues of democracy.

Similarly, Ghani and Lockhart (2008); Paris and Sisk (2009) opined that higher education can also contribute to establishing the rule of law, which is often viewed as the most important institution upon which the success or failure of state building efforts hinges through legal education. Education has been shown to increase voter turnout and civic engagement in several different developing world contexts (Magalhaes 2008; Lam & Kuan 2008). In many developing countries particularly Nigeria, education is the explanatory variable for citizens' productivity as well as support of democracy (Larreguy & Marshall (2013); Bratton (2007). Similarly, Dalton (2008) and Dee (2004) aver that university education, when combined with high levels of political interest significantly contributes to citizen's ability to vote, volunteer and participate in political parties and election campaigns.

Some scholars have also questioned whether the education system in developing society is producing a sufficient mass of people capable of running for and holding electoral offices and productive enough to influence the economic activities for economic development? Barkan (2009) reporting on the educational background of African Legislators, affirmed that countries with higher aggregate levels of education have higher levels of democracy. Mattes and Mughogho (2010) posit that education impacts the citizen's commitment to democracy, democratic values such as critical citizenship, the rule of law, freedom of expression, political and gender equality, accountability, opposition to corruption and the well-being of the citizens. And the general wellbeing of the citizenry is one of the consequences of economic development.

The Challenges

Scholars of political economics have identified the problem of the "Failed States" as the major challenge of democratic governance in Nigeria. This is the inability of democratic governance to discharge basic constitutional duties such as security, job creation, quality education and healthcare services; reduced poverty rate, and so on. Appraising democracy in Nigeria, Adejumo & Okewale, (2010) and Babawale (2006) highlighted the challenges of democracy in Nigeria to include: Godfatherism, ethno-religious

crisis, national integration, monetization of political process, corruption, lack of good governance and accountability and unhealthy Legislative- Executive relations. This is in line with Chomsky (2006) who perceived failed states as the assault on Democracy; wanton abuse of power by leaders who also fail to protect the citizens from violence and destruction but regard themselves as above the law, and that suffer from a 'democratic deficit' (having democratic forms but with limited substance). Chomsky further states that, such state failure creates a false sense of stability but underneath is a massive reality of deep fear, hopelessness, and outbursts of lawlessness and violence with the state power or authority overwhelmed by competing armed groups engaged in armed struggle and power grabs.

Ghani and Lockhart (2008) and Olu-Adeyemi (2012) argued that every democratic governance must recognize state building as the central goal and accountability to citizens. They attributed the reason for which many nations fail to the undemocratic nature of their leaders who are corrupt, despotic, unaccountable, and lacking transparency; who focus primarily on personal aggrandizement while the state failed to provide or perform essential services. Such failures take a toll on citizens, as well as the wellbeing of its neighbors—economically, environmentally, and politically.

Ufiem, Oyetunji and Nnadozie (2012) examined the nature and dimension of the challenges of democratic governance in Nigeria such as electoral malpractices, inter- and intra-ethnic cleavages, religious crises and insecurity, weak democratic institutions and institutionalized corruption, and found out that these challenges threaten the consolidation of democratic formula capable of carrying the Nigerian state out of its endemic cycle of democratic and leadership crises. They, however, posit that despite these challenges, democracy in Nigeria has the prospects of creating enabling environment for good governance.

Iheanacho (2013) avers that democratic governance crisis in Nigeria has adversely affected the economic and social transformation of the country. He further identified excessive corruption, acute unemployment, poverty, ethno-religious conflicts and lack of instructional facilities as some

of the challenges worth paying attention to. Similarly, Kalu (2016) states that it is difficult for Nigeria to derive the dividends of democracy due to her inability to curtail corruption leading to poverty and election violence as jobless and desperate youths are used as thugs and body guards of political office holders. Kalu further identified other challenges as lack of adherence to ethos, rule of law and constitutionality, ethnicity and maladministration.

Also, Igbokwe (2012) identifies the challenges of democratic governance to include lack of transparency and accountability, lawlessness, under development, economic instability and human rights violations,

3.0 Methodology

The study adopted the mixed method research design. An online survey tagged "Democratic Governance, University Education and Economic Development in Nigeria Questionnaire (DGUEEDQ) was used to ascertain the perception of some Nigerians on the impact of the symbiotic relationship between democratic governance and university education on the Nigerian economic development and Two Hundred and One (201) people responded to the survey. The Ordinary Least Square Method (OLS)] of the classical linear regression model was used to test the stated hypothesis.

MODEL 1:
ED = f(QE, QHC, PR,YUE)
Where:
ED = Economic Development
QE = Quality Education
QHC = Quality Health Care
PR = Poverty Rate
YUE = Youth Unemployment Rate
MODEL 2
ED = f(DG, UE)
Where:
ED = Economic Development
DG = Democratic Governance
UE = University Education

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Status

STATUS	NO.
EMPLOYERS	19
EMPLOYEES	30
SELF EMPLOYED	22
UNEMPLOYED	41
STUDENTS	89
TOTAL	**201**

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by status:

19 Employers, 30 employees, 22 Self-employed,

41 unemployed and 89 students responded to the online survey

Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Status
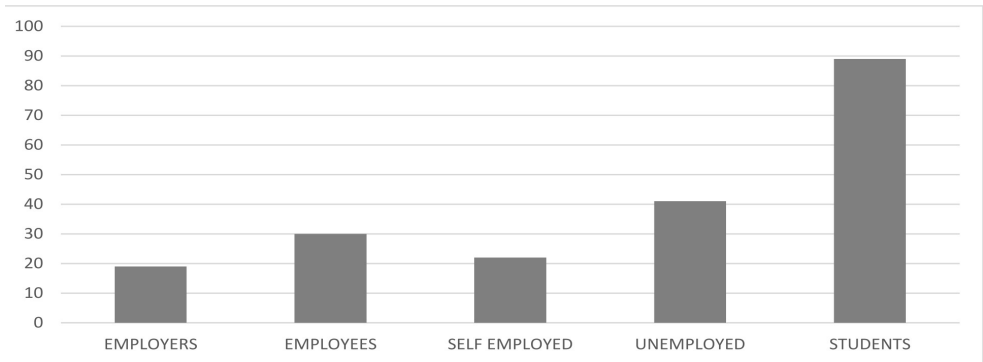
Answers to Research Questions

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents' perception on the Role of Universities in Democratic Governance and National Productivity

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	YES	A BIT	NOT AT ALL	TOTAL
Are Nigerian Universities delivering on their mission in developing the capabilities of individual for civic participation that is critical to the functioning of modern democracy and economic productivity?	51	87	63	**201**
	25.4%	43.3%	31.3%	

From Table 2, the highest number of respondents (87 representing 43.3%) agree that universities are, to an extent, delivering on its mission. This, in part, can be explained by the high graduate unemployment in Nigeria (Akinyemi, Ofem & Ikuenomore 2011; Anah, Nwosu & Ezeji, 2017).

Figure 2: The Pie Chart showing the distribution of respondents on Table 2

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents' perception on the Participatory Role of Governance in delivering on its national development promises

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	YES	A BIT	NOT AT ALL	TOTAL
i. Is Governance in Nigeria participatory enough to delivering on its economic development objectives as stated in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria?	13	43	145	201
	6.5%	21.4%	72.1%	

From Table 3, the highest number of respondents (145 representing 72.1%) shows that Governance in Nigeria is not participatory enough to deliver its economic development objectives as stated in the amended 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This report is at variance with the report of Walter and Uhunmwuangho (2017) whose research report revealed that there is slight improvement in governance in Nigeria; however, Nigerian political leaders will need to change their dispositions in the handling of state affairs which is believed when done will lead to improvement of the standard of living of the people.
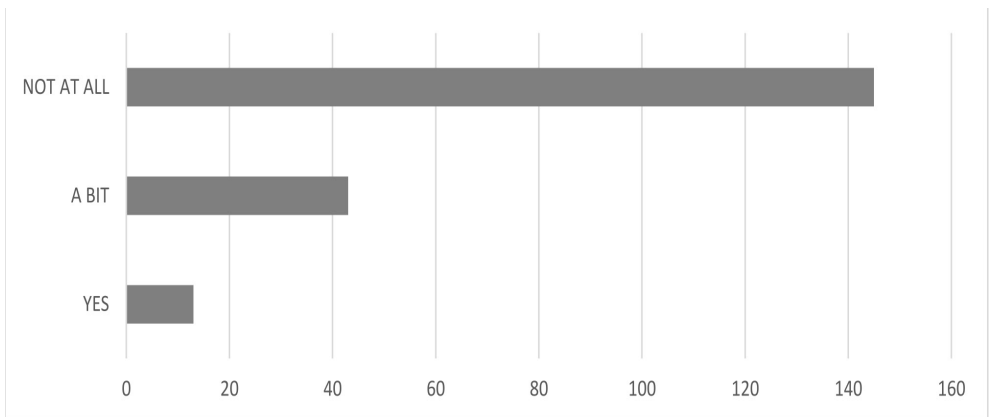

Figure 3: The Bar Chart showing the distribution of respondents on Table 3

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents' perception on the resultant effects of the role of Governance and education on economic development

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	POSITIVE	NEITHER POSITIVE NOR NEGATIVE	NEGATIVE	TOTAL
What are the resultant effects of the role of Governance and education on economic development (Wellbeing of the citizens)?	1	34	166	201
	0.5%	16.9%	82.6%	

From Table 4, the highest number of respondents (166 representing 82.6%) shows the Respondents' perception of negative resultant effects of the role of Governance and education on economic development. This implies that the Government is not providing enough for the university education system to achieve its objectives of producing quality human capital for improved economic productivity, amongst others.
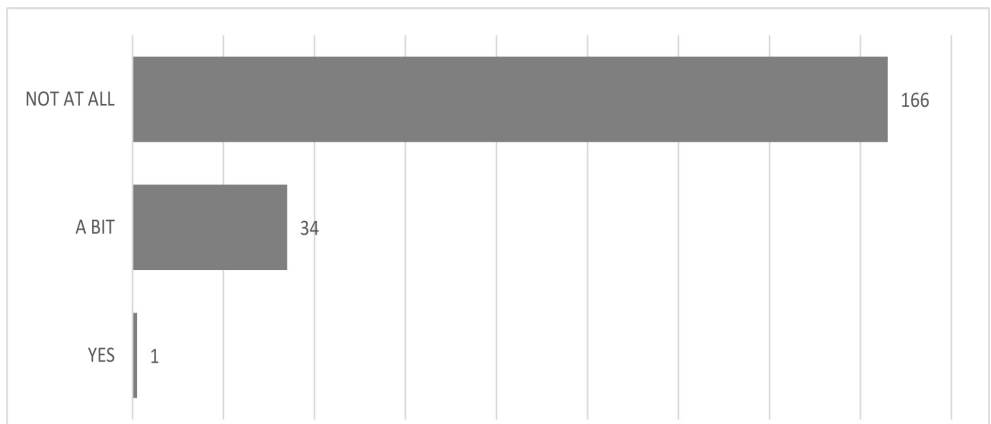

Figure 4: The Bar Chart showing the distribution of respondents on Table 4

Research Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant impact of Democratic Governance and University Education on Economic Development.

Table 5: The Ordinary Least Square Estimation the key variables of Economic Development

Dependent Variable: ED

Method: Least Squares

Date: 10/29/22   Time: 14:02

Sample: 1 201

Included observations: 201

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	0.777387	0.474138	1.639580	0.110051
QE	0.007411	0.104024	-0.071285	0.941790
QHC	0.065135	0.086597	-0.752406	0.456230
PL	-0.300007	0.103110	2.928571	0.006221
YU	-0.712672	0.117498	6.237180	3.7527613

R-squared	0.9926100	Mean dependent var	13.8
Adjusted R-squared	0.985997	S.D. dependent var	2.857289
S.E. of regression	0.338106	Akaike info criterion	0.7855566
Sum squared resid	4.001058	Schwarz criterion	0.9966668
Log likelihood	-10.711133	Hannan-Quinn criter.	0.8618871
F-statistic	621.265658	Durbin-Watson stat	1.0561680
Prob(F-statistic)	9.9543174		

Source: Researcher's computation

R^2 = 0.926, F(3, 201) = 621.265; DW = 1.056

Results Interpretation

The findings from Table 5 shows that Quality Education (QE) has a co-efficient of 0.0074; Quality HealthCare (QHC) has a coefficient of 0.0651, Poverty Level (PL), a coefficient of -0.300 and Youth Unemployment (YU) had a co-efficient of -0.712. According to the results, the positive coefficients indicates a positive relationship between Quality Education and Economic Development as well as a positive relationship between quality Health Care Delivery and Economic Development. This implies that the higher the level of quality education and healthcare delivery, the higher the living standards of the citizens and the higher the level of Economic development. In a similar manner, the negative coefficients for Poverty Level and Youth Unemployment indicates their negative relationships with Economic development. This implies that the lower the poverty and youth unemployment rates, the higher on the average the rate of Economic development. However, the t-statistics shows that the calculated t-value for PL (2.929) and YU(6.237) are greater than the critical t-value (1.960)at 0.05 level of significance whereas the calculated t-value for QE (-0.0712) and QHC(-0.0752) are less than the critical t-value (1.960)at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the poverty level and youth unemployment have greater impacts on the economic development in Nigeria.

Also, the coefficient of determination R^2 which has a value of 0.962 shows that the dependent variable (ED) was perfect and adequately explained the behaviours of the independent variables (QE, QHC, PL and YU). It shows that approximately 92.6% of the variation in the dependent variable (Economic Development) was explained by the independent variables (Quality of Education, Quality Health Care delivery, poverty Level and Youth Unemployment).

Furthermore, the Darbin Watson value of 1.056 indicates the absence of serial Auto- Correlation among the variables used in the model.

Table 6: Ordinary Least Square Estimation of Democratic Governance, University Education and Economic Development

Dependent Variable: ED
Method: Least Squares
Date: 10/29/22   Time: 14:38
Sample: 1 201
Included observations: 201

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	1.319095	0.739690	1.783307	0.0825
ED	-0.921172	0.052514	18.21057	0.0000

R-squared	0.796197	Mean dependent var		14.62500
Adjusted R-squared	0.896031	S.D. dependent var		2.906116
S.E. of regression	0.937056	Akaike info criterion		2.756560
Sum squared resid	33.36683	Schwarz criterion		2.841004
Log likelihood	-53.13120	Hannan-Quinn criter.		2.787092
F-statistic	326.0001	Durbin-Watson stat		1.224103
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000			

Source: Researcher's computation

$R^2 = 0.796$, $F(3, 201) = 326.00$; DW = 1.224

Results Interpretation

Table 6 showing the Ordinary Least Square Estimation of Democratic Governance, University Education and Economic Development reveal that Economic Development (ED) has a negative co-efficient of 0.921; which indicate negative relationships with Democratic Governance and University Education. This implies that the lower the intervention of Democratic

Governance and University Education the higher on the average the rate of Economic development and vice versa. Also, the t-statistics shows that the calculated t-value for ED (18.21) is greater than the critical t-value (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance which implies that Democratic Governance and University Education have significant impact on the Economic Development in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the coefficient of determination R^2 of 0.796 shows that the dependent variable (ED) was perfect and adequately explained the behaviours of the independent variables (DG and UE). This implies that approximately 79.6% of the variation in the dependent variable was explained by the independent variables. The Prob(F-Statistic) value of 0.000 at 5% level of significance implied the model is well specified and adequate for forecasting and policy analysis and the Darbin Watson value of 1.224 indicates the absence of serial auto-correlation among the variables used in the model.

Rethinking Democratic Governance Possibilities for Education System and National Development

Given the numerous challenges of democratic governance in Nigeria, a politically reconstructive and transformative democratic agenda is inevitable for a sound educational system as well as economic and national development. Walter & Uhunmwuangho (2017) in search of the way forward to the challenges of democratic governance in Nigeria, used qualitative research method of gathering data though secondary source was adopted to infer that for there to be significant improvement in the democratic processes, amongst others, Nigerian political leaders should change their dispositions in the handling of state affairs. Furthermore, in rethinking possibilities of Democratic Governance for the Education System and National Development in Nigeria, the following is suggested:

• The Nigerian Government should set collective and realistic goals and agenda that will promote the democratic governance, social and economic well-being and governance as well as the rule of law which will aim at rebuilding the failed state of the nation. Higher education in Nigeria,

particularly universities should be given priority attention in order to ensure effective democratic governance and the overall well-being of Nigerians.

• A strong national identity that recognizes the diversity and historical narratives of the Nigerian people should be created.

• There should be deliberate efforts by all national stakeholders on all fronts at ensuring ethnic and religious unity.

• A holistic approach in embracing reforms that affect security, economic wellbeing, institutional development, and democracy should be adopted.

• Leadership at all levels should be dedicated on purpose as this will go a long way to inspire the citizenry, assure legitimacy as well as ensure that the leaders are held accountable. This is in line with Haque (2014), that legitimate state, enhances the collective mobilization, cooperation, and trust of the citizenry.

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DOMINANT POWER POLITICS AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN ZIMBABWE CIRCA, 1980-2017 A.D

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Abstract

This paper examines issues in principles and practices of democratic consolidation in Zimbabwe. The political system in Zimbabwe theoretically upheld a multiparty system and has held periodic elections since 1980 but undermined reforms that could have put democracy and politics on a progressive trajectory. This is not peculiar to Zimbabwe alone but is a general political culture on the continent. Gleaning on evidence from diverse sources, the paper finds that the separation of powers in Zimbabwe existed on paper but in practice, the ruling party makes all the decisions. Part of the implication of this is that the House of Assembly became a rubber stamp for executive decisions, while cabinet members just pandered to the executive. This culminated in a deadlock over constitutional reform between 1999 and 2000. The deadlock further degenerated into authoritarianism as then-President Robert Mugabe hung to power and undermined a series of organised protests. The inability to de-militarize Zimbabwean political mobilisation techniques and the management of state institutions brings the nature of the inherited structures bequeathed to the people by the retreating colonial settler state into a sharp focus. The crux and summary of the argument are that both government and politics in Zimbabwe were centred on Robert Mugabe, a single political father figure, who refused to relinquish power to the people and got enmeshed in the web of autocratic rule. Therefore, the paper theorises that Robert Mugabe succeeded in allotting power to himself and his party, the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) while undermining the task of consolidating democracy in the country. This paper concludes that Mugabe remained a traditional autocrat and a strongman who ignored protests and disaffections that would have helped in deepening democracy and strengthening the dynamics of the politics of Zimbabwe. The paper recommended that democratic guidelines, protocols and terms of presidency need to be drawn to prevent a recurrence of Mugabe's years in the post-Mugabe era.

Introduction

Countries, the world over, appear to have transited from authoritarian regimes to democratic rule. This political transition (which is a positive development) is usually confronted by challenges of sustaining and consolidating democratic governance. Worldwide, the immediate aftermath of the transition is the challenge of how strengthening and stabilising the tenets of democracy. In other words, the challenges of deepening and consolidating democracy have been a major concern to political actors and scholars of developing nations. Early scholarly discussions in the 20th century largely examined democratisation processes and how democratically elected governments should be constituted. However, in the 21st century, the narrative appears to have changed as attention has shifted to a critical assessment of the prospects of post-democratic transitions and political institutions. The argument that has arisen from investigations is this: Are there possibilities of reverting to a new round of authoritarian regimes arising from the inability of states to stabilise and consolidate democracy?

In over 37 years of independence, Zimbabwe has confronted the task of consolidating democracy. From 1980 to 2017, the country has been ruled by President Robert Mugabe who dominated the nation's politics. His prolonged stay in power has more or less built the country's leadership process around him. The octogenarian, for instance, has repeatedly won all the elections conducted in Zimbabwe since independence including that of 2013. The focus of this paper is to examine the extent this landlocked country has been able to consolidate or deepen democracy within the period under review. The work is structured into the following: introduction, background to Zimbabwe's political development, theoretical framework and perspectives on democratic consolidation, father figure and democratic consolidation in Zimbabwe and conclusion.

Background to Zimbabwe's Political Development

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in the Southern African region. It is situated within the tropics and has a population of about 12 million people. The country shares borders with Botswana, Mozambique, and Namibia at

its westernmost point. It is the 61st largest country in the world (although below average size for Africa), just larger than Japan or Montana but smaller than Paraguay, with a total area of about 390,580 km², of which 3,910 km² comprises lakes and reservoirs (Afrobarometer & MOIP 2006, p.25).

The first British explorers, colonialists and missionaries got to Zimbabwe in the 1850s. The massive influx of foreigners led to the establishment of the territory of Rhodesia, which was named after Cecil Rhodes of the British South Africa Company. In 1923, European settlers voted to become a self-governing British colony of Southern Rhodesia. After a brief federation with Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), and Nyasaland (now Malawi), in the post–World War II period, Southern Rhodesia (also known as Rhodesia) chose to remain a colony when its two partners voted for independence in 1963. On November 11, 1965, the conservative white-minority government of Rhodesia declared its independence from Great Britain (Makumbe 1998, p.33). The country resisted the demands of the black Africans, and the Prime Minister, Ian Smith withstood British pressure, economic sanctions, and guerrilla attacks in his efforts to uphold white supremacy. On March 1, 1970, Rhodesia formally proclaimed itself a Republic. The heightened guerrilla war and tactical withdrawal of South African military aid in 1976 marked the beginning of the collapse of Ian Smith's 11 years of resistance. Black Nationalist movements were led by Bishop Abel Muzorewa of the African National Congress (ANC) and Ndabaningi Sithole; the moderates and the guerrilla leaders, Robert Mugabe of the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and Joshua Nkomo of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) that advocated for a revolution. Zimbabwe came out of the colonial womb as an independent state on the 18th of April 1980, with Robert Mugabe as Prime Minister and Canaan Banana as ceremonial President (Agere,1998, p.35).

During the colonial period, nationalist politics was frequently characterized by violent altercations between and within nationalist parties. Extant literature shows that the new Zimbabwean state under the ZANU-PF government failed to break with the nationalist authoritarian tradition of violence, as well as not parting with the methods and techniques of

colonial settler oppression (Ndlovu, 2004, p.45). Failing to "demilitarise" its political mobilisation methods and management of state institutions, the new government covertly and overtly inherited the colonial and security-oriented structures left by the receding settler state–with serious implications for democracy, human rights and human security. Matlosa, (2005, p.34), avers that political developments after independence consisted of both change and continuity in government and leadership personnel, repressive state structures and practices. This limited space of transformation was equally buttressed by the provisions of the Lancaster House Independence Constitution, which placed serious restrictions on socio-economic redistribution as well as on major constitutional change before 1990. The uneasy amalgam of the new (political players) and the old (state structures geared to repression) structures created and compounded the challenges of conflict prevention and resolution. Although ZANU-PF had comfortably won 57 per cent of the vote in 1980, it was not magnanimous enough to the rival PF ZAPU with 20 per cent to avoid a five-year civil war from 1982 to 1987.

As a result of this, several ambitious institutional changes took place in the first decade of independence in Zimbabwe. Agere (1998, p.37) captures the changes succinctly: first was the abolition of 20 seats reserved for whites in the House of Assembly, and 10 in the Senate. The Senate itself was then abolished in 1989, only to be reinstated in 2005. Secondly, the ceremonial presidency gave way to an executive presidency in 1987, while provision was made for the introduction of eight provincial governors, 10 chiefs and 12 presidential nominees into the House of Assembly. In reality, these 30 non-constituency members of the Assembly were beholden to presidential patronage in a system that became more politically centralised than before. Thirdly, in 1987, there was the formal merger of ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU and it effectively brought the conflict in the Matabeleland provinces to an abrupt end.

Though opposition parties mounted pressure to take over power in the late 1980s and early 1990s, their effort was not quite different from the small and ineffective older parties, such as the United African National Council and Zanu-Ndonga led by Bishop Muzorewa and Reverend Sithole,

respectively. It was not until 1999, with the founding of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) that the opposition movement became better organised and focused (Raftopoulos, 2006, p. 18). Elections have been characterised by political violence and intimidation, along with the politicisation of the judiciary, military, police force and public services. Statements by the President and government officials have referred to a state of war against the opposition political parties, particularly the Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai (MDC-T). It was under this tense political atmosphere that Zimbabwe went into a general election in 2013, in which the president, Robert Mugabe won amidst serious controversies.

Theoretical framework

This paper considers the roles of institutions in the mechanics of democratization using the consolidation of democracy in Zimbabwe as a case study. It further argues that formal political institutions cannot and do not play a decisive role in democratic consolidation as several theorists suggest. This is because institutions – "electoral systems, constitutional provisions governing relations between the legislative and executive branch, and degrees of decentralization"–are more contingent and susceptible to revisionism than assumed by several theoreticians, (Colomer, 1995, p. 29). Proponents of the theory emphasize institutional contingency as being more plausible today than in earlier decades, given the substantial constitutional changes in numerous countries in the past years. Formal political institutions play two prominent roles in theorizing democratization. First, analysts portray them as outcomes, specifically the products of strategic interaction. Many authors, while acknowledging that limited information and, at least, partial uncertainty plague institutional engineers, concur with Lijphart and Waisman (1997: 17), that "the evidence points point up to the preponderance of self-interested motivations in the design of democratic institutions" in several regions. To simplify the findings of studies, transitions dominated by strong and electorally self-confident groups frequently result in plurality or majoritarian decision rules, while more evenly contested transitions (or ones whose pace is set by cautious oppositions) have often resulted in designs less punishing to minorities (Colomer, 1995: 29; Geddes, 1996: 23; Elster *et al*., 1998: 32; Boix, 1999: 15). These suggest that a potentially decisive factor for

both easing authoritarian sectors out of power and enticing major political groups to cooperate with democratic processes against the backdrop of the versatility and malleability of political institutions. This is an adoption of the concept that "rules are adaptable."

Political institutions also play other major roles in democratization, not as contingent effects, but as stable platforms from which contending groups could predict policy outcomes. Several studies concur that proportional representation (PR) and parliamentarianism provide the best institutional prospects for democratic stability by offering "losers" enhanced blocking powers and chances for entry into office (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 35 Linz and Valenzuela, 1994: 21). In one of the most forceful expressions of this view, Przeworski, (1991, p.58) concludes that such designs "reduces the stakes of political battles" by making unilateral and maximalist policies less likely. Actors who anticipate the effects of stakes-reducing institutions may calculate that even current defeat in democracy is preferable to the risks inherent in potentially violent overthrow attempts and even successfully-implanted (and unaccountable) authoritarian regimes. Actors can afford to abandon access to coercive instruments for exiting democracy when they detect low political risks in a regime.

This paper has adopted this theory because of its relevance in explaining democratic consolidation. In Zimbabwe, political institutions are in place but only in theory. In practice, available evidence point to the preponderance of self-interested motivations in the design of democratic institutions in Zimbabwe. The institutions are instruments by which President Mugabe perpetuated himself in power within the period under review. The electoral umpire, the judiciary and the legislature were used to ensure that President Mugabe retained power in the country. This position appeared plausible but it also had shortcomings. For instance, it emphasises only the role that electoral institutions play in consolidating democracy neglecting other factors that are vital in deepening democracy, other political cultures and states. It is suspect because it is silent on the place and roles that sound economy, transparent and fair elections, rule of law, human rights and freedom, political culture, civil society, good governance and competent leadership play in consolidating democracy.

Perspectives on Democratic Consolidation

Democratic consolidation is often associated with stability. Since whatever is "consolidated" has the quality of appearing immune to disintegration there is a tendency to associate it with durability especially if there are no regime reversals and the absence of potentially destabilizing factors. While the durability of a democratic era is a fundamental attribute of consolidation, this characteristic does not provide an adequate basis for the notion of consolidation. The retention of a democratic government after a process of transition does not necessarily ensure the consolidation of a democratic government. In some instances, democratically elected governments may succeed one another for a considerable period without recourse to absolutism due to leadership caution not to challenge the idea of democratic accountability. In recent times, challenges have emerged and added other tasks to the process of consolidating democracy. This task, according to Andreas, (1998, p. 10) has come to include divergent items such as popular legitimacy, the diffusion of democratic values, the neutralization of anti-system actors, civilian supremacy over the military, the elimination of authoritarian enclaves, party building, the organization of functional interests, the stabilization of electoral rules, the routine of politics, the decentralization of state power, the introduction of mechanisms of direct democracy, judicial reforms, the alleviation of poverty, and economic stabilization. In contemporary times, the concept of democratic consolidation transcends the establishment of political institutions to deepen it by granting the same autonomy to perform their assigned duties and functions. Political analysts have also identified four cardinal areas of democratic consolidation as follows: one, democracies that are strongly consultative and consensual, as Lijphart (1977, p. 9) has argued, deliberately restrains the influence of electoral majorities in areas of policy that are of specific interest to minority segments of the political community. Two, elements that prevent full governmental empowerment are the existence of what should be called reserved domains of authority and policy-making. The reserved domains remove specific areas of governmental authority and substantive policy-making from the purview of elected officials. Again, there are many instances in which policy areas are excluded from elected government officials' control or from the scope of electoral majorities in regimes that can be considered, nonetheless, democratic.

Turning to the means of selecting those who will form governments as well as occupy legislative seats, a third way in which the operations of minimal democratic procedures can be vitiated is through major discrimination in the electoral process (Linz and Stephan 1989, p.13). Essentially, most electoral system in democracy is biased in the sense of under-representing minority parties and candidates. Finally, the fourth problem pertains to the centrality of the electoral means to constitute governments. Free elections must indeed be the only means through which it is possible to do so. Democratic consolidation cannot occur if military coups or insurrections are also seen by significant political actors as possible means to substitute governments.

In the final analysis, the consolidation of democracy is linked to the improvement of the socio-economic well-being of citizens. Substantive democracy is only possible with sustainable development along equitable lines, according to this perspective. According to Newland, the current perspective may be summarised as follows:

> economic development leads to a higher level of education and a more democratic political culture; the citizens develop tolerant and moderate attitudes, behaviour and values resulting in a more rational and restrained political style on the part of those governing towards oppositional tendencies; increased social prosperity reduces extreme economic inequality, lessens differences in standing, class and status between the upper and lower classes, and leads to the creation of a strong middle class, which effectively calls for political participation, (Newland, 1982: 12).

Therefore, the above destabilises autocratic regimes and forms of government and opens the ground for democratic culture to thrive.

Essentially, democratic consolidation is not an irreversible condition, but a relatively stable equilibrium or balance of a democratic system's defining components. Yet, even a "maximally" consolidated democratic

system is not completely impervious to potential tendencies toward deconsolidation. Nevertheless, a consolidated democracy possesses vast reserves of resistance to destabilizing exogenous shocks, such as those that could develop from crises in the economy and foreign conspirators. In this sense, a concept of democratic consolidation, which encompasses people's political attitudes and values has greater futuristic potential (Klingemann, and Zielonka, 2006: 25), than minimalist concepts, in which legitimisation is suspiciously considered as tautological baggage of transformation based on systems theory.

Father figure and Democratic Consolidation in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe transited from colonial domination to democratic rule some decades ago in an election that gave the ZANU-PF party a landslide victory. The party led by Robert Mugabe consistently won all elections conducted in the country and had remained in power since independence. Zimbabwe, as political scholars observed, is only minimally adhering to the standard of democracy as the country has been subverting substantially the main tenets of rule of law, basic freedoms, and respect for human rights. Lloyd, Sachikonye, *et al* (2007: 37), argued that Zimbabwe's case illustrates a polity that has nominally upheld a multiparty system sustained by regular elections since 1980. The country did not undergo the motions of reforms experienced by countries such as Malawi, Mozambique Tanzania and Zambia, amongst others in the 1990s. There was, therefore, no similar transition in qualitative terms in Zimbabwe during that era. Instead, a stalemate over constitutional reforms occurred between 1999 and 2000 and degenerated into a swing towards authoritarianism as the incumbent government sought to consolidate its precarious grab for power in the face of broad, but heterogeneous protest movements under the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). The stalemate was protracted and debilitating but reflected democratic deficits in political and economic governance, local and corporate governance as well as in citizenship participation.

Democratic governance in Zimbabwe may aptly be likened to what, Valenzuela (1990: 10) describes as "dominant-power politics". The key political problem in dominant power politics countries is the blurring of the

line between the state and the ruling party (or ruling political forces). The state's main asset-that is to say, the state is seen as a source of money, jobs, public information (via state media), and police power, which are gradually put in the direct service of the ruling party. Rather than giving judiciaries and other political institutions independence, the judiciary in dominant-power countries is typically cowed, as part of the one-sided grip on power. As a typical dominant-power country, elections in Zimbabwe have not only been dubious but outrightly fraudulent in a manner that the ruling party tries to put on a good-enough electoral image to gain the applause and approval of the international community, while quietly tilting the electoral playing field to its favour to ensure victory. Elections in the country are hardly free and fair. Thus, elections become how leaders in countries such as Zimbabwe, hold on to power and where the minimal adherence to democratic standards – an election – suffices to keep the world at bay. Logan and Cho (2009: 18) are of the view that a situation like this could lead to a lack of trust in the institutions of the state, and willingness to defend democracy and, by implication, the durability of democracy. A study by Logan and Cho, further revealed that less than half the respondents are optimistic that democracy would survive, and that the mean score of a survey carried out in Zimbabwe, for optimism in the survival of democracy, is merely 56 per cent.

In Zimbabwe, it is observed that democratic consolidation is seen as a mirage as the country has been under an authoritarian regime since her independence (Tinhu, 2013: 27). The father figure or godfather politics played in Zimbabwe by Robert Mugabe remains a crucial factor inhibiting democratic consolidation in the country. His utterances, suppression of opposition political parties, non-adherence to the rule of law and other tenets of democracy are indications that democratic consolidation in Zimbabwe remains a far cry. Throughout his administration of 37 years, Mugabe was not only larger than life in the exercise of power; he was power and politics rolled into one. Nothing seems to have worked without him. The judiciary and legislature operated by his directives. Zimbabweans appeared to have lost faith in democracy as Mugabe imposed himself on them through the use of political institutions, military power and the judiciary. Again, the effects of Operation Murambatsvina, the near-total collapse of the Zimbabwean

economy, the extreme hyperinflation between 2006 and 2008, and the continued political violence saw a sustained diminution in the affections of the citizenry, and eventually by the voters' affection for Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF (Sachikonye, 2005: 17). However, the politics of incumbency appeared very slow to disappear as the former ruling party was wholly reluctant to cede any real power; insisted on the paramount status of the then President, and demanded more vociferously that another term in office for the incumbent was non-negotiable. Thus, despite the Global Political Agreement, "dominant power politics" remain in force and Zimbabwe remained hostage to the "Big Man" syndrome.

The centralisation of authority and power in the presidency was to the disadvantage of other institutional centres of power such as the parliament and the judiciary. Raftopoulos, (2006: 32) concluded that in general, there is a low level of public trust in government and its institutions. The report further revealed that Zimbabwe's political culture has been characterised by intolerance towards divergent views and dissenting voices even in the same ruling party as well as in the opposition party.

Conclusion

Democratic consolidation in Zimbabwe showcased a political system that theoretically upheld a multiparty system but nominally held regular elections since 1980, and fell short of the motions of reform for deepening democracy in the country. This undemocratic practice transcends Zimbabwe to other states in Africa. As seen in Zimbabwe during Mugabe's administration, political institutions were merely established as a make-belief of the country's readiness to embrace democracy but in reality, it was just a decoy because democratic consolidation was not in Mugabe's agenda. In Zimbabwe, the separation of powers only existed on paper, it was not in practice. Democracy's power resides with the people but Mugabe ensured that the people never took hold of it rather; he usurped all political powers and reigned as an emperor rather than a democratically elected president. Thus, In Mugabe's administration, power revolved around his personality and the ZANU-PF. This was contrary to the idea of deepening democracy and consolidating democratic culture.

For the consolidation of democracy in Zimbabwe, political authority and power must be unbundled. As president, Robert Mugabe played the role of a traditional autocratic strongman with far-reaching powers and control. He did not allow the executive to flourish rather, he used authoritarian structures and practices to contain protests and disenchantment during his administration but there is no assurance that this "artificial construct" would not implode in future. Zimbabwe needs institutionalised guidelines and procedures for succession and restricted terms for the presidency.

Recommendations

Robert Mugabe's 37 years in power as the president of Zimbabwe prevented the deepening of democratic culture. To forestall a recurrence, this paper is offering the following recommendations:

- There is a need for extensive political and civic education to address pervasive intolerance. A combination of separation of powers and consensual constitutional reform would provide a structure for more tolerant values while fostering a spirit of collectivism and solidarity in the society.

- There will also be the need to revisit the electoral system and strive for a mix of first-past-the-post (FPTP) and proportional representation (PR) systems to provide better representative parliament.

- To effectively consolidate democracy in Zimbabwe, international organizations like the Southern African Development Community (SADC), African Union and European Union need to form a synergy with nation-states like the United States, China and South Africa to upturn some of the democratic tenets destroyed by Mugabe and his government.

- Post-Mugabe transition may be heavily problematic except if there is a coalition or workable alliance between Mugan Tsvangirai and Mujuru so they can both overcome the desperate acts of securocrats.

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ARTICLE
8

HISTORIC PATTERNS OF DEMOCRATISATION IN GHANA AND NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper examines the historic pattern of democratisation in Ghana and Nigeria, respectively. Election management and subsequent transfer of power have been largely problematic in Africa. It also follows the trend that the pattern of power rotation has been tilted and lopsided, often taking place within the ruling political parties and incumbent governments, usually via manipulation of the process. This paper adopts an exploratory research design and collected primary data via 20 semi-structured interviews to empirically interrogate the historic pattern of democratisation in these very prominent countries of the West African sub-region. This was with the view to harnessing the inherent lessons for the rest of the continent; identifying and seeking to build on areas which need improvements concerning democratisation in the countries studied. The paper found, among others, that Ghana has enjoyed a more peaceful and seamless power rotation and a more successful democratisation process than Nigeria.

Introduction

The advent of democracy in Africa ensured that democratic transition also came to the limelight. Democratic transition is the process by which a new government emerges through the conduct of elections, to take over power from a government just defeated in an election and is leaving the seat of power. This implies that the emphasis in democratic transition is on the process of election. Nonetheless, given the quality of the process (election), the democratic transition in Africa has been largely problematic (Idowu, 2018). In some instances, to use Guo's (1999, p. 133) description of Eastern Europe and the former USSR, most of Africa's democratic transitions are "complicated and far from completed." Furthermore, despite the claim to democratic practice, experiences of democratic transition from incumbent government to the opposition are few on the continent. The most recurring pattern of democratic transition on the continent has been those involving transfer of power from an incumbent president to candidates of ruling political parties. In many of the instances where transitions had to be from an incumbent president to the opposition, they were "forced" transitions and often met with restrictions (Idowu, 2018; Idowu & Mimiko, 2020a, p. 89). In another development, some African political leaders, like Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of Congo and Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, among others, have made any form of democratic transition virtually impossible in their countries (Idowu, 2018). Two years after his tenure ought to have expired; Joseph Kabila remained in office in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

However, some successes have been recorded in patterns of democratisation in some parts of Africa, with some countries experiencing a transfer of power from the incumbent to opposition political parties (Mungai, 2014; Songwe, 2016), albeit, Ghana and Nigeria possess certain unique qualities that deserve specific focus. Both have experienced a transfer of power from an incumbent president who was seeking re-election, to an opposition party (2017 for Ghana; and 2015 for Nigeria), rather than from an incumbent party (where the incumbent president was not seeking re-election) to an opposition party (Idowu & Mimiko, 2020b). Ghana is far

ahead in West Africa in the transfer of power from the incumbent party to an opposition party, having experienced it three times (Songwe, 2015, p. 2016).

Nigeria and Ghana share certain qualities that make both countries comparable. In the West African sub-region, both Ghana and Nigeria were part of the first set of countries to gain independence from Britain and have also witnessed the highest incidents of military coups (Idowu & Mimiko, 2020a, p. 89; Souaré, 2010). Both countries top the West African sub-region in many aspects and one of them is population (Nigeria tops with 218.4 million, and Ghana is next with 32.6 million) (Worldometers, 2022). Furthermore, both have the largest economy in the sub-region (Nigeria tops with a nominal GDP of $504.203 billion, and per capita of $2,326.230; and Ghana follows with a Nominal GDP of $75.996 billion, and per capita of $2,368.814) (IMF World Economic Outlook, 2022). It, therefore, becomes pertinent to juxtapose Nigeria with Ghana in a study of this nature, as a basis for comparative analysis. Hence, with a focus on the Fourth Republics of the countries of study, we do a comparative analysis of the historic pattern of democratic transition in both countries.

The paper is structured into six sections. The introduction is followed by a review of the literature on elections and trends in democratisation in Africa. The subsequent section presents the research method, while the fourth section presents the results. The final sections focus on the discussion of the findings and the concluding remarks/recommendations, respectively.

Elections and Democratisation Trends in Africa

Some changes have been observed in democratic transition programmes (one of continuous gains and reversals) across the Anglophone West African states of Ghana, Nigeria, the Gambia, Sierra Leone and Liberia (Ibrahim, 2003). The people of Anglophone West Africa, just like other Africans, are in the main, highly supportive of democratic transition. Such transitions are not mere facades because when properly implemented, they respond to the needs of the populations for civic and political rights, freedom

of speech, assembly and association, as well as the right to vote and be voted for, freedom from arbitrary arrests and the right to a fair hearing (Ibrahim, 2003). The attainment of these freedoms has not been easy, as too many obstacles have constantly and continually restricted the process, even where the basic principles of democratic rule have been conceded. The military, the security forces and the associated armed gangs are some of the serious obstacles that thwart the people's will in Anglophone West Africa. The main challenge of democratic transition in the region has been "the militarization of society and the rise of the security state" (Ibrahim, 2003, p. 65). However, the beacon of hope for the future is that these challenges of militarization have reached their limits, and across the Anglophone West African region, there is a consensus that military rule can only make matters worse. Albeit, the fact also remains that the beacon of hope remains dimmed in some cases, largely due to the militarization of society which has severely damaged civil society and the institutions of Constitutional rule.

For a democratic future for the African people, the crafting of democratic institutions must be given a prominent place on the continent. Also, because Anglophone West Africa and its civil society have suffered excessively from state arbitrariness and violence, the first phase of the democratic transition consists of peace-building and tolerance. Hence, the recommendation that education and particularly civic education, must be given a major role in reconstituting West African society; plus, a central aspect of civic education must be oriented towards the rehabilitation of the concept of politics and liberal democracy (Ibrahim, 2003).

For Africa at large, there is the question of whether the level of democratization on the continent should be considered merely as political liberalization or genuine democratic transition. Political liberalization which is prevalent in Africa is part of the process of democratization however; the process itself can undergo reversals (Diouf, 1998). The essential elements of democratic transition have been identified as the establishment of Constitutional rule and the operation of a multiparty political system (Diouf, 1998). The transition could also be expected to involve socio-political transformation that allows freely elected leaders and the majority of the civil

population to impose their supremacy over ruling oligarchies of the military or civilian ethnic cabals.

The most urgent and immediate challenge confronting the process of democratic transition in Africa is ensuring that democratization is accompanied by the institutionalisation of constitutional rule. This is correct to the extent that constitutions do not, in themselves, make democracy or make the democratic transition possible. What seems glaring in Africa is the fact that most African democracies are not based on constitutional rule; rather, they are "tinted authoritarianism". Oftentimes, most of the alleged democratic transitions that have been experienced in Africa have not led to constitutional rule (Diouf, 1998).

Lindberg (2004) has established and provided evidence that elections have a colossal impact on improving the quality of democracy and democratic transition in Africa. There is no general negative trend either in the frequency or the quality of elections in Africa. What this implies is that the frequency and quality of elections vary between good, bad and worse experiences. It would, therefore, be misleading to conclude that the frequency and quality of elections in Africa hold the same and common trend across the continent (positive and negative). Elections play sacrosanct roles in democracies. Elections are not the end of a transition process, nor are they merely formal procedures (Elklit & Reynolds, 2000). Rather, the introduction of a multiparty system and frequent elections provokes liberalisation which, in turn, fosters the expansion of democratic qualities. Furthermore, a series of elections not only contribute to increasing democratic quality but also have positive effects on broadening and deepening *de facto* civil liberties in society (Lindberg, 2004).

Institutional factors and institutional choices and the ensuing administrative and political behaviour (regarding election management) contribute both to the transition and the consolidation of new democracies. This approach "inevitably leaves aside a whole array of other issues that will also influence how the first democratic election is perceived, and later, the democratic regime is accepted as "the only game in town" (Elklit & Reynolds,

2000, p. 2). Elections play a crucial role in the above development, as they serve as a germane condition for democratic transition and democratic regimes.

Evidence from Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia show that the quality of electoral administration has a direct impact on how elections, especially in the developing world, and their outcomes are regarded (Elklit & Reynolds, 2000). Such regard for electoral outcomes is not only from international observers but more importantly, by domestic actors; such as voters, political parties, media and local observers. Mexico and Ghana have been able to demonstrate that a "conscious, positive and professional approach to election administration is crucial for the outcome of the electoral process and the way it is perceived by political actors at all levels" (Elklit & Reynolds, 2000, p. 2). Individual experiences in several fields related to the conduct of elections have a direct bearing on how the sense of political efficacy develops in individual citizens. Furthermore, such individual experience in election management is an important factor behind the eventual development of legitimacy and a principled commitment to democracy, that is, progression towards democratic consolidation. Hence, cases with low perceived legitimacy of the electoral process illustrate flaws in the electoral steps (Elklit & Reynolds, 2000).

Election administration in Africa continues to be beset by a series of problems and challenges (Idowu, 2021). Jinadu (1997) avers that Africa is faced with the problem of conducting elections of indeterminacy; that is, elections which ensure that erstwhile winners become losers and erstwhile losers become winners. There is a weakness in electoral administration in Africa (a situation which produces elections devoid of indeterminacy), poised with challenges which are by no means insurmountable. Elections are central to competitive politics. This is because, ideally, elections should "provide an opportunity for yesterday's winners to become today's losers, and for yesterday's losers to become today's winners" (Jinadu, 1997, p. 1-11), albeit, this is the very challenge with African elections.

Some of the challenges of African elections, and therefore, their inability to meet the indeterminacy criterion include, among others: the fragile and stunted character of electoral machinery inherited at independence; the politicisation of electoral administration, bureaucracy and the judiciary by the ruling party. Also, constituting such challenges are the composition and mode of appointment of electoral bodies, their structure, independence and their tenure of office. Concerning composition and mode of appointment, it is a "critical issue that bears on the autonomy of these electoral bodies and, therefore, on the possibility of ensuring the indeterminacy of African elections" (Jinadu, 1997, p. 5). These issues, for instance, eroded the pre-election discussions by opposition parties and civil society groups in the Zimbabwe elections of 1991 and the Kenyan and Ghanaian elections of 1992, respectively. Also confronting African elections are the challenges of underdevelopment and economic crises which appear to be the roots of other challenges. Thus, the submission that "a number of the weaknesses and constraints of electoral administration [in Africa], are fundamentally due to underdevelopment" (Jinadu, 1997, p. 3). This is often due to the reality that electoral administration entails huge economic costs and financial commitments which the weak economies of most African states find difficult to cope with. Also, poverty often makes the electorate susceptible to the influence of money, thus, resorting to voting to sell and buy on Election Day. If Africa must make tangible democratic progress, the problem of election management on the continent in ensuring transitions from incumbent to the opposition, "must be realistically set against the problem of underdevelopment and the economic crises of the state" (Jinadu, 1997, p. 4).

The Trends in Transition Elections and Democratisation in Ghana and Nigeria's Fourth Republic

The Ghanaian Fourth Republic was inaugurated on January 7 1993, with the swearing-in of Flight Lt. John Rawlings as the president. The newly elected Parliament was opened on the same day. It elected Justice D. F. Annan as Speaker. In 1996, Rawlings was re-elected for a second term. The 1996

election marked a milestone in the fledgling democracy in Ghana because, for the first time in the country's political history, an elected government completed its term in office, had an election contest, and secured a renewed mandate in a democratic manner (Adedeji, 2001).

In the December 7, 2000 elections, John A. Kufuor of the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) led in the presidential election with 48.17% of the total 6,500,870 valid votes (Ghana web, 2017). A run-off election had to hold as no candidate got up to 50% of the total votes cast to be declared the winner. In the run-off election, Kufuor defeated Atta Mills, Rawling's deputy and candidate of the ruling party, by winning 56.73% of the total 6,381,387 valid votes. President Kufuor took the oath of office on January 7, 2001, and became the first opposition candidate in Ghana's political history to defeat an incumbent party and succeeded the ruling government. This marked a major turning point in Ghana's democracy in particular, and the democracy project in Africa, in general. He was re-elected in December 2004 for a second four-year term and became the first civilian president (without a military background) to fully serve his tenure and go ahead to be re-elected (African Elections Database: 2000 and 2004 Ghana Elections).

President Kufuor was succeeded by John Atta Mills of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), following the presidential election of 2008. This meant a second transfer of power from an incumbent government to the opposition party in the country. John Atta Mills was inaugurated as the third (3rd) president of the Fourth Republic and sixth (6th) president on January 7, 2009 (Kokutse, 2009). Mills died in office and was succeeded by his vice, John Dramani Mahama on July 24, 2012 (Nossiter, 2012). Mahama won the 2012 election and was inaugurated as the fourth (4th) president of the Fourth Republic and seventh (7th) president on January 7, 2013 (African Elections Database: 2012 Ghana Election). Nana Addo of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) defeated the incumbent president in the presidential election of December 2016 and was inaugurated on January 7 2017, for a four-year term. This marked the first time in the history of Ghana that an incumbent president seeking re-election was defeated, and he conceded defeat and handed over power to the opposition party. Before the 2017 transition, the

2001 and 2009 transitions had been from incumbent parties to opposition parties, the incumbent presidents were not competing in the elections (Idowu & Mimiko, 2020b). The 2017 election was most significant because the incumbent president contested, lost, and handed over power. In 2020, incumbent President Nana Addo of the NPP won his re-election and the new government was inaugurated on January 7 2021.

Nigeria returned to democratic rule in 1999 when Olusegun Obasanjo, a former military Head of State was elected president. This ended the almost 33 years of military rule (from 1966 until 1999), excluding the short-lived Second Republic (between 1979 and 1983). The election, which brought Obasanjo to power in 1999 and for a second term in 2003 was condemned and described as unfair and unfree (Transition Monitoring Group, 2003; Carter Centre, 1999). Umaru Musa Yar'Adua of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) came to power in the general election of 2007, after an election also adjudged to be severely flawed (European Union, 2007; Human Rights Watch, 2007).

President Yar'Adua died in office on May 5, 2010, and his deputy, Dr Goodluck Jonathan was sworn in as his replacement on May 6, 2010 (BBC News, May 6, 2010), and became Nigeria's 14th leader. Goodluck Jonathan served out Yar'Adua's term until April 16, 2011, when a new presidential election was conducted. President Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP was declared the winner on April 19, 2011, with 22,495,187 of the total 39,469,484 vote cast, ahead of Muhammadu Buhari from the main opposition party, the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), who got 12,214,853 votes (African Elections Database: 2011 Nigeria Election; Purefoy, 2011). In the March 2015 election, Muhammadu Buhari defeated President Goodluck Jonathan by roughly 2 million votes (African Elections Database: 2015 Nigeria Election). Observers generally reported that the election was fair, and Jonathan was globally commended for conceding defeat and limiting the risk of unrest (The Nation, April 3, 2015). On March 23, 2019, Nigeria held another general election which, again, saw the incumbent President Muhammadu Buhari win the election. The election was relatively free and fair but was adjudged as retrogression over the previous election in terms of management and

general credibility of the process in some quarters (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2019; EU EOM, 2019).

Research Method

This study adopted an exploratory research design. It relied on primary data sourced from Ghana and Nigeria. Data were sourced through semi-structured interviews. A total of 20 key informant interviewees (KIIs) were purposively selected from top officers of Election Management Bodies (EMBs), heads of election observer groups, key officers of electoral institutes and high-ranking members of key political parties in Ghana and Nigeria. The sample size and sample technique adopted were informed by the assumption that in this type of qualitative research, statistical representativeness is not the aim. Rather, respondents were selected because they are likely to generate useful data for the study (Patton & Cochran, 2002, p. 9). Thus, respondents were selected based on their specialization, expertise, experience, practical involvement and observation of the transition processes in both Ghana and Nigeria. While telephone and email interviews were administered to Ghanaian respondents from November 5 2017 to February 17 2018, one-on-one interviews were administered to Nigerian respondents from December 15 to December 27, 2017. Each interview lasted between 18 to 54 minutes. Data collected were subjected to thematic analysis.

Research Results

This section provides the results from the interviews administered to interviewees in the countries of study to highlight the historical accounts of democratic transition experiences in Ghana and Nigeria since the countries' return to democratic rule in 1992 and 1999, respectively.

Historic Patterns of Elections and Democratisation in Ghana

Since its return to democratic rule in 1992, Ghana has experienced a total of six democratic transitions within ruling parties and from incumbent

governments to opposition parties. The 1979 election was one of the best elections conducted in Ghana, however, since the country's return to democracy in 1992, her first transition election was highly problematic (Asante-Kissi, Interview, 2017). The first transition in Ghana from military to democratic rule in 1992 was accompanied by so much scepticism on the part of political observers and the generality of the citizenry. The prevailing scepticism emanated from past experiences in Africa where leaders devise means to hold on to power at all costs. The transition was ridden with scepticism by the citizenry on whether Rawlings was going to attempt to manipulate the constitution and hold onto power but he did not and that set the tone for democratic transitions in the country (Akwetey, Interview, 2018). After the 1992 transition in Ghana, the country has not looked back on ensuring smooth transitions. There have been a lot of reforms in the country's electoral system since then, and the system has greatly improved over the years (Asante-Kissi, Interview, 2017). It was not only the 1992 election that suffered scepticism from the citizenry. Indeed, all the subsequent elections that had led to the various transitions in Ghana were fraught with various challenges, including the sense in which the opposition felt cheated, agitations with the Electoral Commission (EC), and how to deal with the advantages conferred by incumbency. Yet, all of Ghana's elections were relatively peaceful, and the transitions were seamless. As such:

> In 1992, presidential and parliamentary elections became controversial. The opposition was not satisfied because the voters' register was flawed and there were lots of grievances and the process was not transparent… the incumbent government…had undue advantage; there was no level playing field. So, it was a trust issue, but the Electoral Commission then was able to meet the parties through the IPAC, and systematically addressed the problem (Akwetey, Interview, 2018).

Nimako (Interview, 2018) of NPP, Ghana, noted that in the 1992 presidential election, the then-major opposition party (NPP) boycotted the election because it felt cheated. Interestingly, however, the party (NPP)

went ahead to win the 2000 presidential election, defeating the incumbent party. The reforms introduced by the EC to address some of these challenges covered issues relating to the compilation of a new register, the introduction of transparent ballot boxes, the counting and declaration of results and collation at polling stations, and constituency collation centres and their transmission and the use of strong rooms (Akwetey, Interview, 2018). Furthermore, there have been various reforms in the transition programme of Ghana regarding elections and the transition programme proper. From1996, Ghana has moved from opaque balloting to transparent balloting, and to curb cases of impersonation during voting, the voters' ID card now bears the owner's thumbprint and picture (Kofi, Interview, 2017). It would seem that overall, Ghana has conformed to the dominant thought in the literature that transfer of power should be anchored on a clear and unambiguous policy, laid down processes and procedures, and guided by a culture of tolerance, accommodation, and respect for fundamental human rights (Huntington, 2009, p. 31-69). Before 2012, before Ghana adopted a Transition Act, the transitions had been rancorous and incidences of conflict and disagreements between the incoming and the outgoing government. However, the Transition Act has been able to address this challenge (Akwetey, Interview, 2018).

In 1992 and 2012, serious questions were raised over electoral credibility in Ghana. In 2012, the opposition refused to concede defeat but for the intervention of the Supreme Court (Acheampong, Interview, 2017). There are two unique features of Ghana's experience in the transition of power. First, is the fact that most of such transitions have been via re-run. This signals the level of political competitiveness in the country. Except for the 2017 transition where the opposition won in the first-round elections, anytime there was a transition, it had been through a re-run (Arhin, Interview, 2017). Second, is the margin of votes for deciding the victor. The 2008 presidential election was the closest, with only a 40,000 votes' margin between the winner and the runner-up. In 2012 and 2016, the margin of the votes was 300,000 and 150,000, respectively (Akwetey, Interview, 2018).

Of concern to the Ghanaian transition programme is the shortness of the period between the elections and the transition, which often hampers a

proper transition, especially from the incumbent president to the opposition party. Baffoe (Interview, 2017) posits: "[In] Ghana, our problem is the shortness of the period…the election is conducted 7th December…the transition takes place January 7th the following year. So, that constitutes a serious problem because it does not give room for proper transition…" Another issue with the Ghanaian democratic transition pattern over the years is the fact that during transition periods, there are always a few instances of supporters of the candidate who had lost trying to take the law into their hands, albeit, these had been isolated cases (George, Interview, 2017).

The 2017 transition in Ghana, in a way, was unique because there had been transitions from incumbent to opposition in Ghana in 2001 and 2009. 2017 was the first time an incumbent president was seeking re-election for a second term and he was defeated (Tettey, Interview, 2017). The transitions of 2001 and 2009 were from incumbent party to opposition party and not from incumbent president to opposition presidential candidate, as was the case in 2017. The 2017 transition from incumbent president to an opposition presidential candidate who had won the 2016 presidential elections was full of intrigues. However, it just did not stop there; rather, it seemed to have been accompanied by fears, tension, suspicion and all sorts of allegations. The appointment of the chairperson of the EC was another issue which aroused fear within the then-major opposition party, the NPP. Because the electoral chairperson was appointed by the ruling party, there was a strong suspicion, especially from the opposition that she was going to work in favour of the ruling party (Akwetey, Interview, 2018).

Nevertheless, the 2017 Ghanaian transition was very peaceful and the political Transition Act which institutionalises transitions played a major role and ensured the process was not rancorous (Esebagbon, Interview, 2017). The transition success that Ghana enjoys today, was not a mirage, it had come through a series of reforms and to a point where the culture of democracy has now been instilled in the people. A history of a vibrant civil society, endearing civil society has also been identified as important in the Ghanaian transition programme (George, Interview, 2017).

The above account of the historic pattern of democratic transition in Ghana reaffirms Ghana's achievements in the peaceful transition from incumbent presidents/parties to the opposition. It also strengthens the argument that Ghana has enjoyed more seamless democratic transitions from incumbent presidents/parties to opposition parties in Africa (Idowu & Mimiko, 2020b; Songwe, 2015; 2016).

Historic Patterns of Elections and Democratisation in Nigeria

Since its return to democratic rule in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed five democratic transitions, with 2015 being the very first instance of an incumbent president losing to an opposition presidential candidate. Elections and democratic transitions in Nigeria have come a long way and have had numerous challenges. Giving a highlight of the electoral processes and the transitions that followed since 1999, Abati (Interview, 2017) observed that:

> For the 1999 elections…People wanted democracy by all means possible…and President Obasanjo came to power, one of the issues was with the integrity of the Electoral Commission…the Obasanjo government won again in 2003…there was again litigation… The 2007 election that brought Goodluck Jonathan and Yar'Adua to power, even the president himself was so embarrassed that he said "well, we may have won, but we have issues with our electoral process." …the 2011 election that brought him [President Jonathan]to power, one of the achievements claimed by that administration was that it should be the first time that election would be adjudged free and fair in Nigeria… In the 2015 election, there were people complaining; the whole of the East. They were complaining that they could not get the electronic voters' card, and that became an issue even during the election… in the Northern parts of the country, the electronic voters' card system which was being tested for the first time, did not work. INEC had to abandon the ECR [Electronic Card Reader] in many parts of the North, and there were reports of underage voting and multiple voting.

Reaffirming the above claim, Ibrahim (Interview, 2017) of CDD, Nigeria, submitted that:

> Election management has been a problem historically. First round elections, you have good election management, second round elections; you have deterioration in the quality of election management. But in the Fourth Republic, that deterioration of election management did not lead to a collapse of the regime… The 1999 elections were considered relatively free and fair, but the 2003 and 2007 elections were heavily rigged… 2011 was the first election that was better than the previous one... By the time we came to 2015, especially the mechanisms introduced to reduce electoral fraud, created conditions in which in general, Nigerians believed that the incumbent had lost the elections and then the opposition candidate had won. And of course, at that point, it became very difficult for President Jonathan to do anything about it. That is not to say he could not have refused the results. He could have, but that would have precipitated a major political crisis for the country.

The above opinions corroborate scholarly research and reports given on these processes and the transition which followed, each year there was a transition (see, for instance, Transition Monitoring Group, 2003; Human Rights Watch, 2007; Carter Center, 1999; Oyekanmi, 2015; ECOWAS EOM, 2015; and Commonwealth Observer Group, 2015). The fact that Nigeria has equally made significant progress in her election management and transition programme has also been stressed by various political observers and stakeholders in the polity. Right from 1999 and after the 2007 election which was regarded as the worse election in the history of the country, there has been significant progress in election management and transition in the country (Abdullahi, Interview, 2017). The introduction of technology into the 2015 elections greatly improved the system and produced a more credible electoral outcome which, in turn, birthed a unique transition (Abati, Interview, 2017). The trend in election litigations in the country also points to

the progress in the electoral process. In 1999, there was no election litigation; in 2003, it rose to 574; it was 1,291 in 2007 with eight of them contesting the presidential election; and it was 731 in 2011 with only two contesting the presidential election (NDI, 2008; Electoral Reform Committee, 2008; NDI, 2012; IRI, 2014). For the 2015 election, there was no election litigation concerning the presidential election, but election litigation came up again after the 2019 presidential elections.

Being the first-time power was transferred from an incumbent president to an opposition party in the country, the 2015 transition programme was particularly of interest to many observers. The intrigues and the circumstances surrounding the 2015 transition in Nigeria ranged from hate campaigns, ethnoreligious conflict, and unending communal clashes in several Northern states and parts of the North Central, to the Boko Haram insurgency (Adebiyi, 2015). There were also predictions that the transition process was not going to be successful should the incumbent president lose the elections (The Nation, 2015; Ameh, 2014), and suggestions that the country was going to break up (Oyekanmi, 2015; Oladesu, 2014). The opinions of respondents regarding the 2015 election management and transition were not different from what the literature hold. During the 2015 election, for instance, there was a lot of tension because people threatened that if their candidates did not win, there would be bloodshed. With President Jonathan's concession, the tension was doused and the impending crisis was averted (Abdullahi, Interview, 2017).

On the issues that had to do with the 2015 transition, and the need for the country to improve her transition programme, especially when it comes to the transition from incumbent president to the opposition party, Esebagbon (Interview, 2017) observed that the 2015 transition was not smooth and was thus, rancorous, because both the incoming and outgoing governments refused to cooperate to ensure a smooth transition. Aligning his views with the above submission, Adesina (Interview, 2017) of APC also submitted that the outgoing government wanted to prove that they were still in power until the last day and as such refused to engage with the incoming government to organise a smooth and seamless transition. This led to the late settling

down of the new government, having been given the bulk of handover notes only a few days before the transition (Kuna, Interview, 2017). The incumbent government also blamed the delay in picking his cabinet on the late handing over by the outgoing government (Shehu, as cited in Opejobi, 2018).

Albeit, the circumstances surrounding the 2015 transition from incumbent president to the opposition party in Nigeria are quite understandable, being the first experience of such a Transition pattern. Esebagbon (Interview, 2017) buttressed it thus: "it was the first time we [Nigeria] had a transition from one administration to the opposition. That was a real transition test case… So, relatively, our experience in this area is very, very new. So, I would say that our transition processes have been very smooth, but the last one [2015] was not very smooth." In 2019, the incumbent president and party retained power.

Discussion of Findings

From the foregoing results in line with the specific objective to trace the historic pattern of democratic transition and democratisation in the study areas, the paper finds concerning Ghana, that the country has had a very peaceful, smooth and seamless transition history. The study still observed some challenges but they did not undermine the peace and seamlessness of the transition in the country. Since Ghana's return to democratic rule in 1992, the country has experienced six (6) democratic transitions and they were all peaceful and seamless. Of the six (6) transitions, three (3) have been from incumbent presidents/parties to incumbent or ruling parties/presidents (1996/97 and 2004/05, 2012/2013), and the other three (3) (2000/01, 2008/09 and 2016/17) had been from the ruling presidents/parties to opposition parties/candidates. The study also found that of all the three democratic transitions from incumbent to the opposition in Ghana, 2017 was the first time an incumbent president sought re-election, lost the election, conceded defeat and handed over power to the opposition. In all other transitions, the incumbent presidents either won or did not seek re-election. To ensure a smooth democratic transition, Ghana had embarked on several reforms in its electoral system and transition programme (see also, Debrah, 2001; Gyimah-

Boadi, 1999; Ayee, 1997) which has instilled the culture of democracy into the people.

While all other transitions from 1992 had been done without a proper Transition Act, during the 2012 democratic transition, Ghana adopted a Transition Act which has contributed immensely to the country's seamless transition programme. A major problem with the Ghanaian transition programme is the shortness of the period between elections and transitions. This is usually a month-long period (in the case where there are no re-run elections), and less than a month where there is a re-run election. This does not give enough room and time for proper and hitch-free documentation and transition. Indeed, the historic pattern of democratic transition in Ghana puts Ghana ahead in Africa (Idowu & Mimiko, 202b; Songwe, 2015; 2016). On the whole, the Ghanaian democratic transition history has been fraught with a few challenges (Gyimah-Boadi, 1999; Idowu & Mimiko, 2020y; 2020b; Idowu, 2021), albeit, generally, the country's democratic history shows a pattern of a peaceful and seamless process.

On the other hand, since Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999, the country has had five (5) democratic transitions. While four of the elections heralding these (2003, 2007, 2011 and 2019) had been from incumbent presidents/parties to incumbent candidates/parties, the 2015 transition was from an incumbent president to an opposition political party. However, unlike the Ghanaian democratic transition history, Nigeria's transition has been characterised by violence and tension (see also, Adeniyi, 2017; Idowu, 2021; Naswem, 2017). The process leading to democratic transitions in Nigeria has been fraught with irregularities, manipulations and the abuse of power of incumbency; a fact that studies such as Moveh (2015); Idowu and Mimiko (2020a); Idowu (2021) and Carter Center (1999) affirm. Furthermore, there have been a lot of reforms to make the transition process much more seamless. Such reforms, among others, include more open transparent procedures, such as the use of biometric technologies (INEC, 2014). Although all other democratic transitions since 1999 have been characterised by violence, the election of 2015 from an incumbent president to an opposition political party was relatively peaceful, though there were

some post-election violence and exchange of inciting statements among politicians. The 2015 democratic transition was the first time an incumbent president lost the election in Nigeria, and handed power to the opposition presidential candidate. So, this transition became the most significant in the country's democratic transition history. The periods leading up to the 2015 transition were very critical and threatened the continued existence of the country, owing to the ethnoreligious tensions, Boko Haram insurgency and tribal intolerance which characterised the period. The study finds that even though the 2015 democratic transition was, perhaps, the tensest in the history of Nigeria; it turned out to be the most peaceful.

Unlike Ghana, which has a Transition Act, Nigeria lacks a Transition Act. This often hampers smooth and seamless transition, especially from incumbent to opposition as it played out in 2015. The major issue with the 2015 democratic transition in Nigeria was that it had to do with the transition programme itself, wherein both the incoming government and the incumbent government had their separate transition teams. Both teams refused to work harmoniously and often clashed. Whereas one was eager to demonstrate that it was in power till the final day of the administration; the incoming team was desperate to start calling the shots as soon as it was proclaimed the winner. This accounted for the tension. One grave effect of this was that the incoming government settled down late in the office and had to find and spend considerable time studying the handover notes just a few days before the transition. In all, the pattern of democratic transition in Nigeria has largely been rancorous for much of the time, with 2015 being the most peaceful, though it had hitches too. In 2019, the incumbent government returned to power for a second term; the maximum permitted by the constitution.o

Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

Over the years, the democratic transition pattern in Ghana has been seamless and relatively violence-free. The country has a Transition Act which guides and ensures a smooth transition. Nevertheless, the period between presidential elections and the actual transfer of power is relatively too short, which often makes transitions disorderly, devoid of proper documentation and handing

over the programme. In the case of Nigeria, the study found that the history of democratic transition in the country has been characterised by wobbling, rancour, tension and heating up of the polity before and during the transition. Nigeria does not have a proper transition plan to help midwife a seamless and violence-free transition. It is also worth noting that the various patterns of democratic transition observed, and the political environment during such transitions in both countries, were largely products and consequences of the election process leading up to them.

Nigeria needs to emulate Ghana when it comes to the country's transition programme. There is a need for a transition plan to guide the process of handing over to an incoming government by the outgoing one. The study, therefore, recommends that before the country's next transition, the legislative arm of government should, as a matter of exigency, pass a bill to establish a Transition Act in this regard. For Ghana, the EC and the Parliament should review the country's Electoral Act to give enough room, say 3 months between the election and transition to give enough room for proper documentation and handing over. This is usually the trend in some leading democracies such as the United States (two months) and Mexico (six months).

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