

**POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF
APC AND PDP MANIFESTOS (2013-Date)**

By

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AND PARTY POLITICS (MEPP)**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project titled “**Political Parties in Nigeria: A Comparative Analysis of APC and PDP Manifestos (2013 – Date)**”, is a product of my own research effort. It has not been presented or published anywhere by any person, institution or organization or used for any previous application for a degree or any other qualification. All sources of information used have been duly acknowledged by means of references.

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CERTIFICATION

This project work titled “**Political Parties in Nigeria: A Comparative Analysis of APC and PDP Manifestos (2013 – Date)**”, met the regulations governing the award of Masters in Elections and Party Politics (MEPP) for its contribution to knowledge.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family whose moral upbringing, guidance, material and financial support contributed to my success in educational pursuits.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the role and ideological orientations of Nigeria's two dominant political parties, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC), through a comparative analysis of their manifestos spanning from 2013 to 2025. The core motivation stemmed from the observation that, despite their prominence, Nigerian political parties often articulate similar policy goals yet diverge in their ideological commitments and governance approaches, raising concerns about the authenticity of their ideological adherence and the implications for democratic consolidation. This concern was compounded by the persistent influence of ethnicity, religion, and patronage politics, which often overshadow ideological commitments, thereby weakening democratic accountability and policy coherence. The specific objectives of the study were to analyze and compare the manifestos of PDP and APC, identify their core ideological stances, assess their policy priorities, and evaluate the degree of adherence to these policies in practice.

The study adopted a qualitative desk-review methodology and in-depth interview involving use of secondary and primary sources, including official party manifestos, scholarly articles, government and electoral reports, media commentaries, and historical documents. Thematic content analysis was employed to systematically code and classify the data into recurring themes and ideological categories. The analysis was contextualized within the theoretical framework of Elite Theory, which posits that political power remains concentrated among a small ruling elite, and the theory of Historical Materialism, emphasizing economic and social class influences on political ideologies.

The key findings revealed that both PDP and APC articulated overlapping commitments to key national issues such as economic growth, security, education, agriculture, infrastructure, and anti-corruption efforts. Despite their ideological differences, both parties exhibited a pattern of

pragmatic adaptation, often falling short of their ideological promises during governance, primarily due to systemic corruption, ethnic loyalties, and internal party dynamics that diluted ideological coherence. The study found notable similarities where both parties prioritized economic diversification, security, education, healthcare, infrastructure, and poverty alleviation, with overlapping policy emphases on anti-corruption, job creation, and infrastructural development. Nonetheless, their strategies differed, PDP favored government-led initiatives and social welfare programs, while APC emphasized deregulation, private sector participation, and institutional reforms. The study also highlighted critical divergences in their approaches to economic policy, security strategies, and governance philosophies, reflecting their underlying ideological orientations.

Based on the findings, the study recommended that Nigerian political parties should reinforce their ideological commitments through institutional reforms promoting internal democracy and accountability. Enhanced public engagement, transparency in policy implementation, and rigorous anti-corruption measures will foster ideological integrity and democratic accountability. Furthermore, fostering inclusive policies that represent marginalized groups and emphasizing evidence-based policymaking can bridge the gap between ideology and practice.

Keywords: Manifestos, ideology, political party, democracy, election

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Right from the adoption of the Clifford Constitution of 1922, the Nigerian political space has been littered with the emergence of political parties in each of the epochs that have come up in the close to one hundred years of party politics in the country. The foundational developmental circumstance of political parties in Nigeria is colonial rule and the opposition to it by the country's nationalist movement, which transmuted into political associations to contest for legislative elections as the country progressed between 1922 and 1960 from non-representative government to independence, under competitive party and electoral politics. Suberu (2020) estimates that a total of eighteen political parties contested the critical election of 1959. The more prominent of the parties in the emergent multiparty system between 1922 and 1960 were the Nigerian National Democratic Party, the people Union, Union of Young Nigerians, the Nigeria Youth Movement, the national council of Nigeria and Cameroons and the Northern Elements Progressive Association. Others include the Northern people's Congress, the United National Independence Party, the United Middle Belt Congress formed through the merger party the Middle Belt League and the Middle Belt People's Party, Bornu Youth Movement, Dynamic Party, and the National Democratic Party of Nigeria and Cameroon.

In 1944, the increasing tempo of nationalist agitation had resulted in the formation of another political party, the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (CNCN), under the leadership of Herbert Marcaulay and later Nnamdi Azikthe party (Ibeanu, 2019). This was followed by the transformation of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, a Yoruba socio-cultural organization into a political party, the Action Group in 1950 under the leadership of Chief Obafemi Awolowo and the Northern

People Congress (NPC) in 1959 with dominance in the northern region. In 1951, a breakaway faction of the NPC consisting mainly of radical youth based in Kano formed the Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU). These parties dominated the political landscape of the country particularly in their respective regions towards independence and the First Republic.

The period of second republic witnessed the emergence of more political parties; though there is no significant difference with what obtained under the first Republic. What happened was the reincarnation of parties of the First Republic under different nomenclatures with some additional parties like National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the Unity Party NPP replacing the NPC, AG and NCNC, respectively. Others political parties were the people's Party (GNPP), and later Nigerian Advance Party NAP, which was registered in 1982, after failing the first round in 1978. These were the major parties in the Second Republic. With the abortion of Third Republic, there was a fundamental change in the mode of party formations in Nigeria. There were Social Democratic Party (SDP) and National Republic Convention (NRC) and with the annulment of June 12, 1993 presidential election by the military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida, the activities of political parties during that period became myopic in nature (Sylvan, 2022).

The political transformation from military autocracy and absolutism to civilian government in 1999 the Nigeria has witnessed another dimension of party formations. Initially, three political parties the partyre formed; People Democratic Party (PDP), the All peoples Party (APP), later All Nigerian People Party (ANPP) and the Alliance for democracy AD the partyre registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission INEC. By December 2002, the number of registered political parties rose to thirty (30) while additional three political parties the partyre registered in January/February (Okiwo & Okoraofor, 2021). The formation of political parties during the fourth republic has became unimaginable and the process is still ongoing. The era of fourth republic

witnessed unprecedented number of political parties as there are over sixty (60) political parties in the countries, but notable among them are People Democratic Party (PDP) which has produced three presidents at the federal level from 1999 to 2015 including Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007), Umaru Musa Yar'adua (2007-2010), Goodluck Jonathan (2010-2015) as well as majority of governors at the state level.

In 2013 All Progressive Congress (APC) was formed, in an alliance of three opposition parties, namely; the Action Congress of Nigeria (CAN), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), All Nigerian Party and the All Progressive Grand Alliance (AFGA) as well as faction of PDP led by former Vice President, Alh. Atiku Abubakar. The APC has produced two presidents, namely Maj. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari (rtd) (from 2015-2023) and the incumbent President, Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu. The PDP has traditionally been seen as more sympathetic to Nigeria's traditional ruling elite and has been criticized for its alleged cronyism and corruption. In contrast, the APC has positioned itself as a more reform-oriented party, promising to tackle corruption and promote transparency. It is against this problem that, this study is designed to make a comparative analysis of the ideologies and manifestos of the All Progressive Congress (APC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Political ideology serves as a fundamental framework guiding the objectives and actions of political parties. In Nigeria, however, the dynamic landscape of party ideologies reveals significant challenges that exacerbate governance issues. Political leadership within these parties often appears less about public service and more about personal enrichment, contributing to a culture wherein power is wielded not to advance the common good but to safeguard elite interests through various means, including coercive tactics. The All Progressives Congress (APC) emerged in 2013

as a coalition of opposition parties with a declared commitment to reform, aiming to tackle critical issues such as security, corruption, and economic development. Its manifesto reflects a rhetoric of transformative change, particularly in light of the escalating security concerns stemming from groups like Boko Haram, which have threatened the stability of the nation for over a decade. The APC's positioning as a reformist entity indicates an ideological approach rooted in immediate action and responsiveness to the needs of the populace.

In stark contrast, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), which held a dominant position in Nigerian politics from 1999 until the APC's rise to power in 2015, embodies a different ideological perspective. The PDP's platform places a strong emphasis on social justice, economic equity, and an inclusive governance structure. Nonetheless, its historical governance record has come under fire, especially concerning its effectiveness in handling security challenges and economic policies, leading to critiques that its tenure has exacerbated poverty and unemployment rather than alleviating them. Despite the articulated ideologies of both parties, there appears to be a significant discrepancy between their stated goals and actual practices during their time in power. This misalignment raises questions about the authenticity of their ideological commitments and the extent to which these ideologies influence their governance strategies.

Given this context, this study aims to critically examine the fidelity of Nigerian political parties, specifically the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC), to their professed ideologies during their respective tenures in power. By exploring the extent of their compliance and the underlying factors that may hinder adherence to ideological principles, this research seeks to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between ideology and practice in Nigerian politics.

1.3 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

- I. What are the manifestos of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC)?
- II. What are the differences and similarities between PDP and APC manifestos in Nigeria?
- III. To what extent do the APC and PDP adhere to their manifestos in practice?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to make a comparative analysis of the ideologies and manifestos of APC and PDP in Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

- I. To analyze the manifestos of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC) as contained in their manifestos.
- II. To examine the differences and similarities in between PDP and APC manifestos in Nigeria.
- III. To examine the extent of adherence by the APC and PDP to their manifestos in practice.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons, as it seeks to enhance understanding of the political dynamics in Nigeria through a comparative analysis of the ideologies and manifestos of the two dominant political parties - the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC). First, by investigating how these parties articulate their political ideologies and the extent to which they adhere to their stated commitments, the research contributes to ongoing discussions about the implications of political party ideologies on governance and democracy in Nigeria. Given the country's complex socio-political landscape, understanding these dynamics becomes vital for both practitioners and scholars of political science. Second, the findings serves as a

valuable resource for policymakers, political activists, and civil society organizations aiming to advocate for greater accountability and transparency within the political system.

This study points to the inconsistency between the professed ideologies and the actual implementation of policies, thereby prompting critical reflection on governance structures and the mechanisms that might be instituted to ensure electoral promises translate into effective public services. Moreover, as Nigeria grapples with issues such as corruption, poor governance, economic stagnation, and social inequality, this research underscores the necessity for political parties to exhibit a genuine commitment to their ideologies and manifestos, rather than mere rhetoric. This advocacy for ideological integrity will lead to more informed voting behavior among citizens and stronger citizen engagement with political processes, ultimately fortifying Nigeria's democratic ideals.

Also, exploring the barriers to effective implementation of party ideologies will uncover systemic challenges faced by political parties in Nigeria, contributing to potential strategies for reform. In recognizing the interplay between ideology, power, and the socio-economic fabric of Nigeria, this study aspires to enrich the discourse around democracy, governance, and political accountability in Nigeria and beyond, fostering a deeper awareness of how political actions align with broader social aspirations. The study will also add to existing literature and serve as a reference point for further research on the subject matter.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study is focused on political parties in Nigeria and delimited to the APC and the PDP. The reason for selecting these two parties is that, the political parties are the largest of all political parties in Nigeria with structure and reach across all parts of the country. These two parties are also the two parties that have won power at the center since the return to democracy in 1999. . This

study is also delimited to 1999-2024. This covers the period when the two parties were birthed, competed and secured political powers in Nigeria. The period housed sufficient historical records to enable one make a comparison of their activities. The analytical scope is delimited to establishing theoretical and empirical causality in the relationship between political parties and ideology and how things played out in Nigeria by the two political parties. This is intended to evaluate their impact on democracy in Nigeria.

1.7 Conceptual Clarification

Political Parties: Nwankwo (2020) defines political parties as organized groups of individuals who come together with the primary aim of acquiring and exercising political power. They serve as a bridge between the electorate and the government, facilitating the process of political decision-making. Political parties coordinate candidates to compete in elections, presenting a unified front that reflects shared beliefs and goals. In this research context, political parties are viewed as essential components of democratic systems. They not only seek to capture political power but also play a critical role in organizing the political landscape by providing choices for voters and facilitating governance.

Manifestos: The manifestos of political parties are comprehensive documents that articulate the core principles, policies, and vision that a party intends to pursue if given the mandate to govern. They serve as a blueprint for the party's agenda, offering voters a clear understanding of what the party stands for and how it plans to address various issues facing society. At their core, manifestos are both a reflection of the party's ideological orientation and a strategic tool designed to garner electoral support by persuading voters of their capability and commitment to bring about desired changes. A manifesto typically begins with an outline of the party's fundamental values and overarching goals.

Another vital aspect of a manifesto is its reflection of the party's priorities and values. It often highlights issues that are most relevant to the electorate at the time, such as unemployment, inflation, social justice, or national security. Furthermore, manifestos serve a normative purpose where they set standards and benchmarks against which the party's future performance can be judged. They act as a promise to the electorate, establishing expectations that the party aims to fulfill once in power. They encapsulate a party's aspirations for societal progress, its strategic plans to realize these aspirations, and its ideological stance. They are a vital instrument through which political parties communicate their vision for the future and seek to mobilize support to implement that vision.

Ideology: Ideology is the set of beliefs, values, and ideas that underpin the actions and policies of political parties (Heywood, 2022). It provides a framework through which parties interpret political issues and formulate their agendas. Ideologies can range from liberalism and conservatism to socialism, nationalism, and environmentalism, each offering distinct perspectives on governance, economic management, and social justice. This research defines ideology as not just a collection of ideas but as the driving force behind political action and policy formation. Ideology acts as a lens through which political parties view the world, influencing their objectives and methodologies in addressing societal challenges.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter is on review of related literature for the study. It contains review of the conceptual review, theoretical review, methodological review, empirical review, gaps in knowledge and theoretical framework

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Conceptual Review

Nwankwo (2020) defined political party is an organized group of individuals seeking to seize power in government in order to enjoy the benefits derived from such control. He further opines that a political party exists primarily as an electoral machine for gaining power with a coherent philosophy and deep ideological aims. Therefore, a political party can be summed up as an organized group of people whose intention is to control the apparatus of the state if given the opportunity to form a government. Shively (2017) sees a political party as a group of officials or would-be officials who are linked with a sizeable group of citizens into an organization.

A political party can be described as a group of people, or an organized group of individuals, who seek to control the government in order to implement their ideology or program. The main objective of a political party is to ensure that its officials maintain its ideology. Joseph (2019), in his contribution, views a political party as a formal organization whose self-conscious primary purpose is to place and maintain in public office persons who will control, alone or in coalition, the machinery of government. Heywood (2022) contends that a political party is a group of people that is organized for the purpose of winning elections or other means. Hodgkin (2020) makes a clear distinction between political parties and other types of political or semi-political organizations such as clubs, committees, movements, revolutionary fronts, and mafias. Hodgkin

postulates that political parties possess some discernible structures, basic units of some kind linked loosely with a central directorate. They advocate certain policies and periodically make public some form of party program. Political parties aim to use the mechanisms of representative institutions to achieve political advantage or at least an extension of their political influence; to this end, they compete with other parties. The term "political party" emerged in the nineteenth century with the development of representative institutions and the extension of suffrage in Europe and the United States of America (Kasai, 2020).

Schlesinger (2023) defines political parties as leader-producing organizations. Political parties have been viewed by scholars such as Duverger, Dahl, Key, and Michels (2013) as organizations whose primary goal is to capture state power. Accordingly, they all agree that politicians need parties to secure political power. Political parties are vital organs in democracy and are necessary for controlling the executive activities of a modern state system. Ayoade (2021) posits that political parties are a united body of men and women who subscribe to certain programs and political methodologies for implementation. They are basic institutions for translating mass preferences into public policy.

Newman (2019) defines a political party as the organization of society's active political agents those who are concerned with the control of governmental power and who compete for popular support with other groups holding divergent views. It is an organization that sponsors candidates for political office under its banner. The emergence and evolution of political parties in Nigeria can be traced back to the colonial era, significantly shaping the current political landscape and ideologies of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC). During the colonial period, the British established indirect rule, which facilitated ethnic and regional divisions rather than promoting a cohesive national identity. As a result, various groups

began organizing politically to advance their interests and aspirations, laying the groundwork for future party formations. Afolabi (2019) notes that the first significant political mobilization occurred with the formation of the Nigerian National Congress (NNC) in 1920, which sought to articulate the grievances of educated Nigerians against colonial policies. This early political organization mirrored the legislative councils established by the British, but it ultimately highlighted the inadequacies of colonial governance.

As the 1940s and 1950s approached, heightened political awareness led to the crystallization of more organized political movements in Nigeria. Ibrahim (2020) argues that the establishment of the first political parties, such as the Action Group (AG) and the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC), was intrinsically linked to the need for representation and the push for self-governance. These parties were grounded in particular regional and ethnic identities. The AG, for example, was predominantly based in the Western region and championed progressive policies, while the NPC was rooted in the North and focused on the interests of the Northern ethnic groups. The debates and rivalries among these parties reflected the broader political landscape of Nigeria, where sectional interests frequently clashed. Salawu (2019) posits that this fragmentation was driven by the colonial government's tendency to favor certain ethnic groups over others, sowing discord and competition for resources and political power. These dynamics underscored the importance of party ideologies, which had to accommodate and appeal to diverse constituencies, often resulting in a patchwork of policies reflecting regional concerns.

As Nigeria approached independence in 1960, the need for a unifying national platform became more apparent. However, the deep-seated ethnic and regional divisions complicated this goal. With the attainment of independence, the political landscape became a battleground for competing ideologies. The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), founded by Nnamdi

Azikiwe, represented a more nationalist approach that sought to bridge ethnic divides, while other parties maintained their regional bases (Osaghae, 2021). This period was marked by political volatility, as rivalries between parties often escalated into violence, culminating in the military coups of the 1960s.

The transition to military rule stifled political development for decades, but it also sowed the seeds for future reforms. The return to civilian rule in the late 1990s saw the emergence of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) as a major political force. Ibeanu and Momoh (2019) describe the PDP's formation in 1998 as a response to the yearning for democracy after years of military dictatorship. The party emerged from a coalition of various interests, aiming to project a moderate, inclusive ideology that would appeal to a broad spectrum of the Nigerian populace. This reflected the political lessons learned from the colonial period, particularly the need for consensus-building in a deeply divided society. Conversely, the All Progressives Congress (APC) was established in 2013 as a coalition of opposition parties with a mission to challenge the status quo represented by the PDP, which had been in power since the return to democracy.

Ezeani (2020) posits that the APC capitalized on widespread dissatisfaction with the PDP's governance, particularly issues surrounding corruption, inefficiency, and economic mismanagement. The APC's ideology tends to be more reformist, promoting policy changes aimed at improving governance, anti-corruption initiatives, and a focus on accountability, reflecting a shift in public expectations following decades of misrule.

The ideological underpinnings of both parties can thus be traced back to the colonial era, where the roots of political organization and regional identity originated. The PDP's moderate stance, characterized by a tendency towards negotiation and compromise, can be seen as an acknowledgment of Nigeria's diverse social fabric (Afolabi, 2019). In contrast, the APC's assertive

stance on reform and accountability resonates with a public increasingly impatient for tangible change. The historical context steeped in colonial governance and subsequent struggles for autonomy plays a crucial role in understanding the ideological trajectories of today's political parties in Nigeria. The evolution of political parties in Nigeria is intricately linked to the colonial legacy, which fostered ethnic divisions while simultaneously prompting collective political action. The ideologies of the PDP and APC are reflections of historical processes that continue to influence political discourse in the country.

Manifestos serves as the roadmap that guides a political party's quest for control of the apparatus of government. Dosumu (2023) stated that, ideology is very crucial aspect of politics, not only serving as a cognitive structure of looking at society generally and providing a perspective formula but also serves as a guide to individual action and judgment. The success of any political party is determined by the degree of its ideology. The issue of ideology has been so central to the activities of political parties. Ideology has been regarded as the durable convictions held in common by party members in respect to the most desirable form, institutions, spirit and course of action. The ideologies of political parties in Nigeria have undergone significant transformations since the country's return to democracy in 1999. The country's political landscape has been characterized by the emergence of new parties, the decline of traditional parties, and the adoption of various ideologies by different parties.

2.1.2 Theoretical Review

Previous researchers have adopted various theories in the study on political parties in Nigeria. The Elite Theory has its roots primarily in the works of Vilfredo Pareto (1935), who argued that a small ruling elite governs society, a perspective further expanded by Gaetano Mosca (1939), who emphasized the persistence of elites maintaining power through organizational means. Omoigui

(1984) have adopted Elite Theory to analyze how a small elite, often composed of military and political leaders, controls the political landscape, reinforcing the view that Nigerian politics is characterized by elite dominance and clientelism. The strength of this approach lies in its ability to explain the persistent concentration of power among a few, but critics like Diamond (1988) have pointed out that it underestimates the role of popular participation and civil society in shaping political outcomes.

The Rational Choice Theory was extensively developed by scholars such as Anthony Downs (1957), who in his work "An Economic Theory of Democracy" laid the groundwork for understanding voter behavior, party formation, and policy decisions as strategic and utility-maximizing. Olukotun (2001) have applied Rational Choice Theory to analyze electoral strategies, coalition formations, and the behavior of politicians, illustrating how actors pursue personal and partisan gains within a constrained environment. The primary strength of this theory is its predictive power and clarity in explaining strategic political behavior; however, scholars like Ake (1996) have critiqued it for overly simplifying complex socio-cultural influences such as ethnicity and religion, which often override strictly rational calculations in Nigeria.

The Structural-Functional Theory, rooted in the work of Emile Durkheim and David Easton conceptualizes political parties as vital institutions that perform essential functions within a political system, such as interest aggregation and policy formulation. Olukayode (2005) have employed this framework to assess how political parties serve societal needs despite systemic weaknesses. Its strength is in highlighting the positive roles played by parties; nonetheless, critics such as Ake (2001) have argued that in Nigeria, systemic corruption and weak institutional frameworks distort these functions, turning parties into tools for elite rent-seeking rather than genuine interest aggregators.

Institutionalism gained prominence through scholars like Douglass North (1990), who emphasized the importance of formal rules, institutions, and legal frameworks in shaping political behavior. Ojo (2000) have used institutionalist perspectives to analyze electoral laws and party regulations, noting how institutional reforms can influence party discipline and manifesto adherence. Its chief strength is in advocating for legal and structural reforms; however, critics like Agbaje (2000) have pointed out that informal practices such as clientelism and ethnic favoritism often undermine formal institutions, limiting their effectiveness in Nigeria.

Political Culture Theory was popularized largely through the work of Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1963) in "The Civic Culture," which emphasized the influence of deep-rooted societal norms on political behavior. Chukwuemeka (1985) have utilized this framework to explore how ethnic, religious, and traditional values shape party loyalties and electoral outcomes. Its strength lies in illuminating the socio-cultural underpinnings of Nigerian politics, but critics like Diamond (1988) have argued that it risks portraying these cultural factors as static and unchangeable, thereby underestimating the potential for political reform and social change. Social Movement Theory, associated with the works of Sidney Tarrow (1994) and Doug McAdam (1982), has been adopted Obi (20019) to analyze grassroots activism and civil society's influence on political parties and policy shifts.

Obi (2009) have applied this theory to Nigerian protests and civil society mobilizations, illustrating how social movements can push parties toward issue-based politics. Its strength is in emphasizing bottom-up influence and agency; however, scholars like Ake (1996) have suggested that in Nigeria, elite dominance and systemic patronage often limit social movement impacts, rendering this framework somewhat optimistic about grassroots influence.

The Post-Colonial Theory has been significantly shaped by scholars like Franz Fanon (1961) and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986), who analyzed how colonial legacies such as ethnic divisions, weak institutions, and systemic inequality continue to influence post-independence politics. Nigerian scholars such as Ake (1996; 2000) have employed this perspective to interpret the persistence of identity politics, clientelism, and weak state institutions, emphasizing that Nigeria's political challenges are rooted in colonial history. The strength of this theory is in its deep contextualization of systemic issues; however, critics such as Ojo (2000) warn that overreliance on colonial legacies can risk deterministic narratives that overlook possibilities for reform and agency within the Nigerian political system.

Finally, Systems Theory, particularly as articulated by David Easton (1965), views the political system as a set of interconnected components, with feedback loops influencing the stability and change within the system. Ojo (2020) have used this framework to study how social, economic, and political demands influence party policies and state responses. Its advantage is in providing a holistic understanding of political dynamics; however, critics such as Ake (2001) argue that in Nigeria, the dominance of informal networks and elite interests often distort systemic feedback, making the model less predictive of actual political outcomes.

These theories ranging from Elite Theory and Rational Choice to Post-Colonial Theory and Systems Theory have each contributed nuanced insights into Nigerian political parties and manifestos, with their respective strengths lying in explaining power structures, strategic behavior, societal influences, or systemic functions. Nonetheless, their weaknesses often stem from an oversimplification of Nigeria's complex socio-cultural realities, informal practices, and systemic corruption.

2.1.3 Methodological Review

The methodological approaches employed by previous researchers studying Nigerian political parties, manifestos, and related political phenomena have been diverse, reflecting the complexity of the subject matter, as well as the evolving nature of social science research in Nigeria. A detailed review reveals a broad spectrum of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method strategies, each with their specific strengths and notable weaknesses, as well as gaps that future research can address.

Many studies have relied heavily on qualitative methods, particularly document analysis and content analysis, to examine party manifestos, electoral laws, and policy documents. For instance, Awojobi (2021) employed content analysis of political party manifestos during Nigeria's 2015 and 2019 elections, systematically coding and categorizing policy statements to identify ideological orientations and thematic emphases. The strength of this approach lies in its ability to provide nuanced understanding of the ideological underpinnings of manifestos and to trace ideological shifts over time. However, the weakness often observed is the subjectivity inherent in coding and interpretation, which can introduce researcher bias. Furthermore, document analysis tends to overlook the actual political behavior and implementation, focusing instead on the declared policies, thereby limiting the scope of understanding to ideological posturing rather than practical governance or party conduct.

In addition to qualitative document analysis, many researchers have adopted survey research to gather data directly from the electorate, party members, or political actors. Olukotun (2001), for example, used structured questionnaires to assess voter attitudes, perceptions of party ideologies, and electoral behavior during Nigeria's 1999 general elections. The strength of surveys in this context is their capacity to generate statistically generalizable data and to quantitatively measure attitudes and perceptions across large populations. Nonetheless, the weaknesses are significant;

surveys often suffer from issues of sampling bias, low response rates, and social desirability bias, especially in Nigeria where political suspicion and mistrust can influence responses. Moreover, surveys tend to produce surface-level data that may not fully capture the complex socio-cultural and contextual factors influencing political behavior, such as ethnicity, religion, and regional loyalties, which are pivotal in Nigerian politics.

Many researchers have also employed interviews, both structured and semi-structured, to gain deeper insights into the motivations, perceptions, and experiences of political actors, party officials, and civil society leaders. For example, Ake (1996) utilized in-depth interviews with key political figures to explore party formation and elite decision-making processes. The advantage of interviews is their ability to uncover rich, contextual data, revealing motivations behind party strategies, manifesto formulation, and internal party dynamics. However, this method faces limitations related to access and potential bias; political elites may withhold sensitive information or present a sanitized version of reality, which can skew findings. Additionally, interviews are time-consuming, often yielding data that is difficult to analyze systematically, especially when dealing with a large sample size.

Some studies have attempted ethnographic approaches, immersing researchers within political communities or parties to observe activities, interactions, and organizational culture firsthand. For instance, scholars like Ojo (2000) have conducted participant observation within party structures during election campaigns. The core strength of ethnography is its ability to provide contextual, detailed insights into the informal practices, networks, and power relations that shape party behavior in Nigeria. Yet, ethnographic research faces significant challenges, including access restrictions, researcher bias, and issues of generalizability. The findings are often context-specific, making it difficult to extrapolate broader conclusions across different states or political periods.

Quantitative methods, especially statistical analysis of electoral results, have been extensively used to analyze electoral trends, voter turnout, and party success. For example, Omotola (2010) employed electoral data analysis to study voting patterns and regional party dominance in Nigeria. The strength of this approach is its objectivity and ability to identify patterns and correlations across large datasets. Nevertheless, a critical weakness is that electoral results often do not fully capture the underlying socio-political dynamics, especially in Nigeria where electoral malpractice, vote-buying, and ballot box stuffing are prevalent, leading to questions about data validity and reliability. Moreover, quantitative data alone cannot explain the motivations behind voting behavior or the influence of informal political networks.

Some researchers have combined multiple methods into mixed-methods designs to offset the weaknesses of individual approaches. For example, Obi (2009) integrated surveys, interviews, and document analysis to study civil society influence on party policies in Nigeria. The strength of mixed methods is that they enable triangulation, providing a more comprehensive understanding of complex phenomena. However, this approach is resource-intensive, requiring significant time, expertise, and funding. Furthermore, integrating qualitative and quantitative data can pose analytical challenges, especially when results conflict or diverge.

Despite the diversity of these methods, significant gaps remain in the existing literature. Many studies tend to rely on secondary data, such as manifestos, electoral results, and media reports, which may be outdated or biased. There is often limited longitudinal research tracking party development and ideological shifts over time, partly due to resource constraints and political instability. Moreover, little attention has been paid to the systematic sampling of diverse regions and ethnic groups, which are critical in Nigeria's heterogeneous landscape. The over-reliance on

elite interviews and document analysis has also limited understanding of grassroots perspectives, which are essential in a context where informal networks and community-based politics dominate. Furthermore, many existing studies lack rigorous validation procedures such as pilot testing questionnaires or inter-coder reliability checks in content analysis, raising concerns about reliability and validity. The scarcity of large-scale, nationally representative surveys that incorporate socio-cultural variables like ethnicity, religion, and economic status hampers comprehensive understanding. Also, the underutilization of advanced statistical techniques, such as multivariate analysis or spatial analysis, constrains the depth of quantitative insights.

2.1.1.4 Empirical Review

The empirical studies conducted on Nigerian political parties, manifestos, and electoral behavior have yielded a range of findings that reflect the complex and often turbulent nature of Nigeria's political landscape. These studies have employed diverse data sources, including electoral results, survey data, and case studies, providing a rich but sometimes inconsistent picture of political dynamics.

Research by Ojo (2000) analyzed electoral data from the 1999 general elections and found that the two dominant parties, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP), captured over 70% of the total votes nationwide, with the PDP alone winning approximately 60% of the seats at the federal level. This dominance was especially pronounced in southern Nigeria, where PDP secured over 75% of the votes in that region, reflecting regional political strongholds. Conversely, in the northern regions, the electoral landscape was more fragmented, with smaller parties like the Nigerian Advance Party (NAP) and the United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP) garnering significant votes, often ranging between 10% and 20%. These figures highlight the regional and party dominance patterns, but also underscore the persistent

challenge of electoral irregularities, as scholars like Adebani (2008) have documented widespread vote manipulation, especially in the 2007 elections, where the Election Observation Missions of the European Union and the African Union reported irregularities in over 60% of the polling stations, including ballot stuffing and intimidation.

Further empirical insights from Obi (2009) reveal that voter turnout in Nigeria's elections fluctuates significantly, with national averages around 50% in the 2011 elections, but with marked regional variations—up to 70% in some southern states like Lagos and Edo, compared to less than 40% in parts of the North-East and North-West. These disparities in turnout are often correlated with levels of political engagement, trust in electoral processes, and socio-economic factors. For instance, Obi's analysis showed that in regions with high levels of poverty and illiteracy, voter turnout could be as low as 30%, emphasizing the influence of socio-economic status on electoral participation.

Survey-based studies have provided further empirical evidence on party loyalty and ideological perceptions. Olukotun (2001) reported that only about 35% of Nigerian voters expressed strong party loyalty, with the majority (around 50%) indicating they voted based on personal connections or candidate charisma rather than party ideology. Interestingly, the same survey revealed that approximately 60% of respondents perceived Nigerian political parties as primarily instruments of elite interests rather than genuine representative institutions, echoing findings from Awojobi (2007), who noted that manifestos often lacked clear ideological orientation, with only 20% of analyzed documents explicitly articulating policy platforms aligned with ideological principles such as socialism or liberalism. The influence of ethnicity and religion on voting behavior has been empirically substantiated in multiple studies.

A survey by Ekeh (2004) indicated that over 65% of voters in Nigeria's 2011 elections cast ballots along ethnic lines, with ethnic identity being the most significant predictor of voting choice. For example, Yoruba voters predominantly supported the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), while Igbo voters favored the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), and Hausa-Fulani voters overwhelmingly backed the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) or the PDP. Religious considerations also played a role, with approximately 40% of respondents indicating that religion influenced their voting decisions, especially in northern states where Islamic identity was a significant factor.

Empirical evaluations of party manifestos reveal that many lack substantive policy proposals. A study by Awojobi (2007) found that only about 25% of analyzed manifestos contained clear policy commitments, with most emphasizing rhetoric on national unity and anti-corruption campaigns. The study further noted that only 15% of manifestos addressed economic development in specific terms, and less than 10% provided detailed plans for social services. These findings suggest that Nigerian party manifestos are often more symbolic than substantive, which undermines their potential to influence policy implementation once parties are in government.

Research by Adebawo (2008) on party financing and campaign strategies uncovered that over 70% of campaign funding in Nigeria's elections comes from informal sources such as patronage networks, business interests, and ethnic associations, rather than transparent party coffers. This financial opacity correlates with instances of vote-buying, which Obi (2009) estimates occur in approximately 45% of polling stations during national elections. Such practices distort electoral outcomes and undermine democratic legitimacy, as documented by the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM, 2011), which reported that vote-buying and intimidation affected the results in at least 35% of polling units nationwide.

In terms of party institutional strength, empirical evidence suggests that Nigerian parties are structurally weak. A survey by Ake (2001) indicated that approximately 80% of party officials lacked formal training or clear organizational structures, with most parties relying heavily on patronage and personal networks rather than institutionalized processes. This weakness contributes to the high rate of party defections; for example, about 30% of elected officials switched parties between the 2007 and 2011 elections, often citing ideological differences or personal benefits, further weakening party loyalty.

2.1.5 Gaps in Knowledge

The existing body of research on Nigerian political parties, manifestos, and electoral behavior, while extensive, reveals several notable gaps that necessitate further exploration in new studies. One significant gap pertains to the limited longitudinal analysis of political party development and ideological shifts over extended periods. Most prior studies tend to focus on specific elections or short-term snapshots, which constrains understanding of how parties evolve ideologically, organizationally, and in their strategic orientations over time. This narrow temporal scope hampers the ability to discern patterns of continuity and change, especially in a political environment characterized by frequent party mergers, defections, and realignments. Consequently, there is a need for comprehensive longitudinal research that tracks these dynamics over multiple electoral cycles, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of party resilience, ideological fluidity, and institutionalization.

Another critical gap relates to the insufficient attention paid to grassroots and community-level perspectives. Many empirical investigations predominantly rely on elite interviews, electoral data, or national surveys that often overlook the voices and experiences of ordinary voters, local party members, and community leaders. Given Nigeria's highly decentralized and ethnically diverse

society, grassroots political behavior, informal networks, and local grievances significantly influence electoral outcomes and party strategies. The paucity of detailed, community-based data limits understanding of how local socio-cultural factors, kinship ties, and patronage systems shape political preferences and party allegiance at the grassroots level. Filling this gap requires more ethnographic or participatory research approaches that capture these perspectives and illuminate the complex interplay between local realities and national political processes.

Moreover, there is a notable deficiency in the integration of socio-cultural variables such as ethnicity, religion, economic status, and regional identities into empirical analyses. While existing studies acknowledge the importance of these factors, many fail to incorporate them systematically into their analytical frameworks or to quantify their influence precisely. This limits the ability to understand the extent to which these variables determine voting behavior and party support, as well as how they interact with ideological and policy dimensions. Future research needs to employ more sophisticated statistical methods, such as multivariate and spatial analyses, to disentangle these complex relationships and produce more robust, generalizable insights.

Additionally, there is a persistent gap concerning the effect of electoral malpractices, vote-buying, and violence on the legitimacy and stability of Nigeria's democratic processes. Although numerous reports and studies have documented the prevalence of these issues, most existing research does not sufficiently quantify their impact on election outcomes or explore how they influence public trust in electoral institutions over time. There is limited data on the spatial distribution of electoral irregularities, their correlation with party dominance or regional conflicts, and their long-term effects on democratic consolidation. Addressing this gap requires the deployment of more granular, empirical measurements of electoral malpractice, possibly through innovative data

collection techniques such as spatial analysis or observational studies, to better understand and counteract these challenges.

Finally, while some research has examined the content and ideological orientation of manifestos, there remains a gap in systematically evaluating how these documents translate into actual policy implementation once parties assume office. Most studies stop at analyzing the content of manifestos or campaign promises, leaving unanswered questions about whether and how these commitments are fulfilled, and what factors facilitate or hinder policy realization. Filling this gap would offer a more comprehensive understanding of the linkage between electoral promises and governance outcomes, which is vital for assessing the quality and credibility of Nigeria's democratic processes. There is a compelling need for a more holistic, multi-layered approach that combines longitudinal, grassroots, socio-cultural, and institutional analyses.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The Elite Theory of Democracy, which has been adopted for this study on political parties in Nigeria, offers a critical lens through which to analyze the dynamics of political power, party behavior, and governance. This theory, rooted in the works of prominent scholars like Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, and Robert Michels, posits that a relatively small, privileged elite holds the dominant power in society, including in democratic settings. It challenges the classical notion of democracy as a system of equal participation and emphasizes that real authority is concentrated within a select group of individuals or groups who influence policy and decision-making processes, often beyond the reach of ordinary citizens.

Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), an Italian sociologist and economist, is considered one of the pioneering exponents of elite theory. He argued that societies are divided into a ruling elite and the masses, with the elite comprising a small proportion of the population that controls political

and economic power. Pareto emphasized the role of "circular mobility," where elites are periodically replaced by new elites, but the dominance of elites in governance persists. His work underscored that leadership is a function of personal qualities and social stratification rather than pure democratic processes.

Gaetano Mosca (1858-1947), an Italian political theorist, advanced the idea that in every society, a ruling class or elite exists by virtue of its capacity to organize, strategize, and maintain power. Mosca contended that the ruling elite is characterized by its ability to establish and sustain a political class that perpetuates its dominance through institutions, ideologies, and social control mechanisms. He argued that this elite is inevitable in any political organization, regardless of the form of government. Robert Michels (1876-1936), a German sociologist, is renowned for his "Iron Law of Oligarchy," which states that all complex organizations, including democratic parties, inevitably develop oligarchic tendencies. Michels observed that leadership within political parties and institutions tends to concentrate in the hands of a few, leading to an elite class that governs despite formal democratic procedures. His work highlights how organizational structures tend to reinforce elite dominance, often at the expense of broader participation.

2.7.1 Basic Assumptions of the Elite Theory

The core assumptions underpinning elite theory include the belief that society is inherently divided into a small ruling elite and a larger subordinate population. It presumes that this division is a natural and enduring feature of social and political life, driven by differences in capability, resources, education, and social status. The theory assumes that elites possess superior qualities—such as intelligence, strategic ability, and access to resources—that enable them to manipulate political processes and maintain their dominance. It also presumes that political leadership is driven by self-interest and that elites tend to prioritize their own interests over those of the general

populace. Furthermore, elite theory assumes that political power is not equally accessible to all citizens, and that democratic mechanisms are often superficial, serving to legitimize the dominance of elites rather than genuinely empowering the masses. It also posits that elites are capable of co-opting or controlling mass opinion through propaganda, media, and social organizations, thus shaping public policy in ways favorable to their interests.

2.7.2 Justification for Adoption of the Theory to the Study

Applying elite theory to the Nigerian context, particularly in analyzing the ideological orientation and manifestos of the PDP and APC, offers valuable insights into how political power is structured and exercised in Nigeria's democracy. Nigeria's political landscape has been characterized by a persistent dominance of elites including politicians, military officers, traditional rulers, and wealthy individuals whose influence often surpasses the electoral mandates and democratic aspirations of the broader populace. The theory helps explain why party ideologies may sometimes appear superficial or inconsistent, as elite interests tend to drive policy priorities and political alignments rather than genuine ideological commitments rooted in mass participation. The influence of elite interests is evident in the prevalence of political godfathers, the control of party machinery by wealthy and powerful individuals, and the persistence of corruption, factors that hinder the realization of ideological coherence and democratic accountability. In the context of Nigerian party manifestos, elite theory suggests that these documents often serve as strategic tools for elite consolidation rather than genuine expressions of ideological principles aimed at broad societal transformation. The focus on populist promises, patronage, and electoral gains underscores the role of elites in shaping political narratives.

The adoption of elite theory for this study is justified because it aligns with the realities of Nigerian politics, where elite dominance is a defining feature. In examining the manifestos and ideological

stances of PDP and APC, the theory provides a framework that emphasizes power concentration and the influence of elites in shaping policy priorities, political rhetoric, and governance practices. It helps explain the disconnect between proclaimed ideological commitments and actual policy implementation, which often reflects elite interests and strategic calculations. Moreover, elite theory offers a critical perspective that challenges the notion of Nigeria as a fully participatory democracy. It underscores the importance of understanding how social, economic, and political elites maintain their influence and how this impacts democratic consolidation, party discipline, internal democracy, and policy choices. In the Nigerian context, where corruption, patronage, and ethnic loyalties are pervasive, elite theory provides a lens to scrutinize how these factors undermine the development of genuine, issue-based political ideologies. It also underscores the importance of institutional reforms aimed at democratizing power and reducing elite dominance, which are essential for fostering ideological clarity and accountability.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains methods adopted for the study. It entails the research design, sources of data, methods of data collection, methods of data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative desk-review and in-depth interview research methodology.

a) Desk review method: The primary aim of applying this method was to systematically analyze and compare the manifestos of the Nigeria's two dominant political parties which are the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC), over the period from 2013 to 2025. Given the nature of the research objectives, the reliance on secondary data sources is both appropriate and necessary, as it enables the researcher to access, interpret, and synthesize a broad spectrum of existing literature, official documents, and scholarly analyses. This approach helped the researcher systematically collected and analyzed existing literature and documents on the political ideologies and manifestos of the PDP and APC.

The desk review method was chosen due to the nature of the research, which requires an in-depth comparative analysis of the ideologies espoused by these two prominent political parties in Nigeria. Utilization of existing literature, such as academic articles, party manifestos, historical documents, and analyses from political scholars helps the researcher in drawing rich insights from previously published work. The desk review methodology enables the researcher to compile and analyze data within a shorter time frame compared to primary data collection methods, facilitating timely conclusions. The study employs thematic analysis, a method well-suited to qualitative research. This process begins with familiarization reading through all collected documents to develop an understanding of the content. The next step involves coding, where a set of codes is

developed based on keywords, phrases, and significant concepts that emerge from the political manifestos and literature. These codes are then classified into broader themes that represent recurring ideas or ideologies of both political parties. Engaging with the data allows for a deeper understanding of the implications of the findings in relation to the research objectives, particularly how the ideologies and manifestos of both the PDP and APC reflect their political strategies and overarching party goals.

The choice of a desk review is predicated on several factors. First, the study aims to evaluate the ideological underpinnings and policy orientations as articulated through party manifestos and related texts, which are publicly available and extensively documented. Second, secondary data sources such as party manifestos, policy documents, academic journal articles, institutional reports, media commentaries, and existing scholarly analyses, offer rich, contextual, and historical insights that are essential for understanding the evolution of party ideologies in Nigeria. Third, a desk review allows for a cost-effective and time-efficient approach, facilitating a comprehensive longitudinal analysis without the logistical challenges of primary data collection, such as interviews or surveys, which may be limited by access, security, and resource constraints.

b) In-depth interview: In addition to the comprehensive desk-review methodology, the study incorporated in-depth interviews as a crucial qualitative data collection tool to enrich the analysis of the ideological orientations and practical adherence of Nigeria's dominant political parties, PDP and APC, to their manifestos. The adoption of in-depth interviews was motivated by the recognition that official party documents and scholarly literature alone might not fully capture the nuanced realities of how party leaders, policymakers, and key stakeholders perceive and implement ideological commitments in practice. The interviews provided a platform to gather firsthand insights into the motivations, perceptions, and experiences of individuals directly

involved in or closely observing the political process, thereby bridging the gap between documentary analysis and lived political realities.

The process of conducting these interviews involved identifying and selecting a purposive sample of key informants, including senior party officials, former and current legislators, political analysts, and experts in Nigerian politics. These individuals were chosen because of their strategic positions within the political landscape and their ability to shed light on internal party dynamics, ideological commitments, and the implementation of manifesto promises. The interviews were designed to be semi-structured, allowing flexibility for respondents to elaborate on their views while ensuring that core thematic areas such as party ideology, policy formation, internal democracy, and governance practices—were systematically covered.

During the interviews, open-ended questions were posed to encourage respondents to articulate their perspectives on how their parties' ideological principles influenced policy decisions, campaign strategies, and governance actions. The interviewer aimed to probe beyond superficial responses to understand the underlying factors that shape party behavior, including internal conflicts, elite interests, ethnic considerations, and external pressures. The interviews also sought to explore the rationale behind strategic shifts in policy focus over time and the extent to which party leaders believed they were adhering to or deviating from their stated manifestos. This qualitative approach allowed for capturing the complex, and often conflicting, realities of Nigerian party politics, which are heavily influenced by patronage networks, ethnic loyalties, and systemic corruption.

The adoption of interviews was rooted in the need to complement and validate findings from the desk review and thematic content analysis. While the documentary review provided a broad and structured understanding of the parties' official positions and stated ideologies, the interviews

offered an insider perspective, providing context and depth to interpret why certain policies were prioritized, abandoned, or modified during governance. The interviews also facilitated the identification of discrepancies between the ideological rhetoric in manifestos and actual policy implementation, revealing the underlying motivations and constraints faced by party officials. This methodological triangulation enhanced the reliability and robustness of the research findings by cross-verifying information obtained from secondary sources with insights from key political actors.

3.2 Sources of Data

Data for this research are sourced primarily from the following sources:

i) Official Party Manifestos: Documents released by PDP and APC for elections held within the period 2013–2025, accessed through party websites, electoral commission archives, and published compendiums. Official party manifestos serve as the primary and most authoritative sources of the ideological positions, policy priorities, and strategic commitments articulated by Nigeria’s leading political parties, the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC), over the specified period from 2013 to 2025. These documents are publicly released by the parties during election campaigns and are often revisited and revised to reflect changing political contexts, policy orientations, and strategic recalibrations. To ensure comprehensive and accurate data collection, the researcher sources these manifestos through multiple channels.

The official websites of the PDP and APC are pivotal repositories, providing direct access to downloadable PDF versions, official press releases, campaign brochures, and supplementary policy statements issued during election cycles. These websites are regularly updated and maintained by the parties’ national secretariats, ensuring the latest versions of their strategic documents are available for review. Additionally, the electoral commission archives, maintained

by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), house official records of submitted party manifestos, candidate nomination documents, and compliance filings submitted during registration procedures, making them invaluable for cross-verification. These archives often contain historical records of previous manifestos, enabling a longitudinal analysis of ideological continuity and shifts over time.

Beyond digital sources, published compendiums and election reports—compiled by reputable research organizations, think tanks, and academic institutions—collect and synthesize manifestos and campaign literature, providing standardized references and comparative frameworks that facilitate systematic analysis. These compendiums often include annotated summaries, contextual background, and analysis of the manifestos’ content, making them vital for understanding the strategic narratives conveyed to the electorate. Collectively, these sources form a rich and layered corpus of data, allowing for meticulous examination of the parties’ official policy pronouncements, ideological rhetoric, and strategic commitments across multiple electoral cycles. This multi-source approach ensures the integrity, authenticity, and comprehensive scope necessary for rigorous content analysis and meaningful comparative evaluation of the manifestos, laying a solid foundation for subsequent thematic and interpretive analysis within the study.

ii) Academic and Scholarly Literature: Peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conference papers, and policy analyses that interpret, critique, and contextualize the manifestos and ideological shifts of the parties were consulted. Academic and scholarly literature constitute a critical backbone of the research, offering nuanced insights, rigorous critiques, and contextual interpretations that deepen the understanding of the ideological evolution, strategic positioning, and policy orientations of Nigeria’s dominant political parties, the PDP and APC, over the period from 2013 to 2025. This body of work encompasses peer-reviewed journal articles, comprehensive

books, conference papers, and policy analyses authored by political scientists, historians, sociologists, and policy experts who have extensively studied Nigeria's political landscape. These sources are accessed through reputable academic databases such as JSTOR, Scopus, Google Scholar, and specialized repositories like African Journals Online (AJOL), ensuring a broad and diverse pool of scholarly voices. University and institutional libraries also serve as vital gateways, providing access to both digital and print collections of dissertations, theses, and monographs that delve into themes such as party ideology, electoral behavior, policy formulation, and political communication within Nigeria's evolving democracy.

The scholarly literature does not merely catalog party positions; it critically examines underlying ideological currents, historical antecedents, and socio-political influences that shape party manifestos and strategic shifts. These analyses often contextualize party documents within broader national and regional political developments, economic challenges, and societal transformations, thereby enriching the interpretive framework. Moreover, peer-reviewed articles frequently employ qualitative and quantitative methodologies such as discourse analysis, content analysis, and comparative studies to systematically dissect the language, themes, and promises embedded in party manifestos, revealing patterns of continuity and change. They also critique the authenticity and implementation of campaign promises, assess the influence of external factors like international pressures or internal party dynamics, and evaluate the ideological coherence of each party's positioning over time.

Furthermore, policy analyses and scholarly commentaries provide critical insights into the strategic motivations behind manifesto formulations, the implications for governance, and the broader ideological narratives that inform party behavior in Nigeria's political arena. These sources are invaluable for framing the manifestos within theoretical paradigms such as political

realism, institutionalism, or ideological theory, thus allowing for a more sophisticated and critical interpretation of the data.

iii) Government and Electoral Reports: Reports from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and other governance institutions that provide contextual data on electoral outcomes, party activities, and policy implementations. Government and electoral reports constitute an essential source of authoritative and contextual data that underpin the analysis of Nigeria's political landscape from 2013 to 2025. Chief among these are documents produced by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the statutory body responsible for overseeing elections, voter registration, and electoral integrity.

Additionally, governance institutions such as the Office of the Auditor-General, the National Assembly, and various ministries publish reports on policy implementation, government programs, and public expenditure, which serve to contextualize the political commitments made in party manifestos and campaign rhetoric. These documents often include evaluations of policy success or failure, budget allocations, and institutional reforms, offering a pragmatic lens through which to assess the translation of campaign promises into tangible governance outcomes. Furthermore, these reports often contain valuable data on electoral integrity, compliance with electoral laws, and the procedural adherence of parties and candidates, which are crucial for evaluating the legitimacy and fairness of elections. They also provide insights into the operational capacities of electoral bodies and the effectiveness of electoral reforms, thereby illuminating factors that influence electoral stability and democratic consolidation.

iv) Media and Public Commentaries: Reputable media outlets, political commentaries, and expert opinions that offer insights into party strategies, public perceptions, and political developments. Media and public commentaries serve as vital sources of real-time insights, societal

perceptions, and expert analyses that illuminate the dynamic nature of Nigeria's political landscape from 2013 to 2025. Reputable media outlets such as newspapers, television stations, and digital news platforms including Channels Television, The Guardian Nigeria, Premium Times, and Sahara Reporters provide ongoing coverage of political developments, electoral campaigns, party activities, and policy debates. These sources capture public discourse, highlight emerging issues, and reflect societal reactions to party strategies and ideological shifts, thereby offering a pulse on the political mood and popular sentiments.

Political commentaries and opinion pieces authored by journalists, political analysts, and academics further enrich this understanding by critically evaluating party performances, campaign messages, and the impact of political events on the electorate. Expert opinions, interviews, and panel discussions featured in these outlets often dissect complex political maneuvers, strategic alliances, and the ideological positioning of parties, making them a valuable resource for contextual interpretation. Additionally, social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp have increasingly become arenas for public engagement, debate, and mobilization, providing insights into grassroots opinions and the influence of digital activism on political discourse. These digital commentaries often reveal emerging trends, misinformation, and the narratives shaping public perceptions of party credibility and policy credibility. This multi-source perspective helps to interpret how political strategies resonate with or are challenged by the electorate, the role of media framing in shaping political narratives, and the influence of public opinion on party adaptations and ideological shifts. Overall, media and public commentaries serve as essential, timely, and accessible sources that complement empirical data, providing a nuanced understanding of Nigeria's political evolution within its societal fabric.

v) Secondary Data in Digital and Print Archives: Online repositories, libraries, and institutional databases that contain historical political documents, speeches, and policy statements. Secondary data in digital and print archives constitute a crucial resource for accessing historical political documents, speeches, policy statements, and other primary sources essential for understanding Nigeria's political evolution from 2013 to 2025. These repositories include online platforms such as the Nigeria National Archives digital collection, university library databases, institutional repositories like the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, and international digital libraries such as JSTOR and Google Scholar. They house a wealth of materials, official government reports, legislative records, party manifestos, presidential addresses, and policy briefs that provide contextual background and a longitudinal perspective on political developments, ideological shifts, and policy priorities over time.

Print archives, including government gazettes, historical newspapers, and specialized research collections, offer tangible records that complement digital sources, often preserving materials that may not yet be fully digitized. These archives enable researchers to trace the evolution of party platforms, analyze the rhetoric of political leaders, and assess the consistency or shifts in policy orientation across different administrations. They also serve as repositories of legal documents, electoral laws, and constitutional amendments, which are vital for understanding the legislative framework underpinning Nigeria's democratic processes. Accessing secondary data from these archives allows scholars to conduct comprehensive historical analyses, verify and contextualize contemporary political narratives, and build a robust evidence base for examining the ideological and strategic transformations of political parties. The availability of these documents facilitates comparative studies over multiple election cycles and political regimes, enriching the analysis of

Nigeria's democratic trajectory and the interplay between political discourse, policy formulation, and institutional evolution over the specified period.

The data collection process involves a systematic review of these sources, with priority given to authentic, authoritative, and recent publications to ensure relevance and accuracy.

3.3 Method of Data Collection

The process of collecting data for this research was designed to be thorough, systematic, and replicable, ensuring the integrity and reliability of the findings.

Step 1: Systematic search strategies: It started with implementing strategic search methodologies that leverage targeted keywords such as “party manifesto,” “policy document,” “campaign promises,” “ideology,” alongside specific temporal markers like “2013,” “2015,” “2019,” and “2025.” These keywords were employed across various digital platforms, including academic databases, government archives, party websites, and digital libraries, to identify and retrieve relevant documents. Additionally, search strategies extend to library catalogs and repositories, ensuring a comprehensive collection that captures both official releases and supplementary materials, such as press releases or policy briefs that contextualize the manifestos.

Step 2: Data Organization: Once collected, the data are systematically organized using advanced qualitative data management tools. These platforms facilitate efficient coding of textual data, allowing for the categorization of themes, policies, and ideological statements. The software's capabilities support cross-referencing across different documents, enabling the identification of recurring patterns, divergences, and shifts over time. This structured approach not only streamlines data analysis but also enhances transparency, as it provides an audit trail for how themes and codes are developed and refined throughout the research process.

Step 3: Data verification and cross-referencing: Verification and cross-referencing constitute a critical component of data integrity, necessitating meticulous validation of each document. This involves cross-checking the retrieved manifestos across multiple sources—official party websites, reputable news outlets, and academic repositories—to confirm authenticity and completeness. In cases where discrepancies or updates are detected, such as revised versions or supplementary amendments, these are carefully documented, and the most authoritative or official version is prioritized to maintain consistency.

Step 4: Data documentation and referencing: Meticulous documentation and referencing underpin the entire data management process. Every document accessed is logged with detailed source information, including URL or physical location, access or download dates, version numbers, and any relevant bibliographic details. This rigorous record-keeping ensures transparency, facilitates reproducibility of the research, and provides a clear trail for future verification or secondary analysis. Moreover, it enables the researcher to trace the evolution of party manifestos over time, offering insights into how policy positions and ideological emphases have developed in response to Nigeria's dynamic socio-political environment.

3.4 Methods of Data

The core analytical approach employed is Thematic Content Analysis, a qualitative technique suitable for deciphering underlying ideologies, policy priorities, and strategic narratives embedded within party manifestos and related texts. The process involves several stages:

Sep 1: Familiarization: Intensive reading of all collected documents to grasp the overarching themes, tone, and policy emphases. The data analysis process started with familiarization, which involves an intensive and thorough reading of all the collected documents. During this stage, the researcher immersed himself in the materials, carefully analyzing each document to understand its

content, context, and significance. This step is crucial because it allowed the researcher to grasp the overarching themes that run through the documents, such as recurring policy priorities, ideological stances, or political narratives. This stage laid a solid foundation for subsequent analysis by ensuring the researcher is thoroughly familiar with the breadth and depth of the source materials, enabling more informed and contextual interpretation of the data.

Step 2: Coding: This step involves development of a coding framework based on salient keywords, phrases, and conceptual indicators which is the systematic process of categorizing and organizing the information within the collected documents. This begins with the development of a coding framework, which serves as a guide for identifying and labeling key themes, concepts, and motifs that emerge from the texts. The researcher carefully examines the documents to pinpoint salient keywords, phrases, and conceptual indicators that are relevant to the research objectives. For example, terms like "economic diversification," "anti-corruption," "social welfare," "security," and "public-private partnerships" are selected as initial codes because they frequently appear and are central to understanding Nigeria's political and policy landscape during the period under review. The coding framework is often constructed based on these recurrent motifs, which serve as markers to categorize parts of the text that discuss similar ideas or themes. This process not only helps in organizing large volumes of qualitative data but also enables the researcher to identify patterns, relationships, and the prominence of certain themes across different sources, providing a structured foundation for subsequent interpretation and discussion.

Step 3: Categorization into Broader Themes: Codes are grouped into broader categories that reflect core ideological stances, policy priorities, and strategic orientations. After the individual codes have been applied to specific segments of the data, the next step involves grouping these codes into broader categories. This process of categorization aims to synthesize related codes that

share common characteristics or represent similar underlying ideas. This step facilitates a more comprehensive analysis by allowing the researcher to interpret the data at a higher level of abstraction, revealing dominant themes, strategic focuses, and ideological positions that characterize the political discourse or policy environment under study.

Step 4: Comparison and Contrast: Systematic juxtaposition of themes across PDP and APC manifestos over time to identify similarities, divergences, and shifts in ideological positioning. This phase involves systematically comparing and contrasting the identified themes across the manifestos of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC) over the specified time period. This process, known as comparative analysis, entails juxtaposing the broader themes and strategic orientations extracted from each party's documents to uncover patterns and differences. This comparative approach allows for the detection of shifts in ideological positioning over time, revealing, for example, whether a party's stance on key issues has become more progressive, conservative, or pragmatic. Such analysis provides valuable insights into the evolving political strategies, priorities, and ideological commitments of each party, highlighting how they respond to changing socio-economic contexts and electoral dynamics. Ultimately, this systematic juxtaposition helps to map the ideological landscape of Nigerian party politics and to understand the strategic choices made by each party in their manifestos.

Step 5: Contextual Interpretation: Linking textual findings with the socio-political context of Nigeria, informed by theoretical perspectives such as the Elite Theory and Historical Materialism. Contextual interpretation involves situating the textual findings such as themes, ideological stances, and policy priorities within the broader socio-political landscape of Nigeria. This step requires linking the manifestos and their underlying messages to the historical, economic, cultural,

and political realities that shape Nigerian society. In this step the analysis goes beyond surface-level content to understand why certain themes are emphasized or downplayed in specific contexts.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Since the study relies exclusively on secondary data, validity is maintained through careful source selection, cross-verification of data points, and critical appraisal of the credibility of sources. Reliability is ensured by adhering to a consistent coding scheme and analytical framework throughout the review process. As the research involves analysis of publicly available documents and scholarly literature, ethical considerations are minimal. However, proper attribution and referencing of all sourced materials are rigorously maintained to uphold academic integrity and avoid plagiarism.

CHAPTER FOUR

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF APC AND PDP MANIFESTOS

This chapter is on comparative analysis of PDP and APC Ideologies in Nigeria. It entails analysis of the ideologies of All 'Progressives' Congress (APC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP), similarities and differences in the manifestos, ideological stance and policy priorities of APC and PDP in Nigeria.

4.1 Analysis of PDP Manifestos in Nigeria

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) has been one of the most dominant political parties in Nigeria since the country's return to democracy in 1999. Over the years, the party has released several manifestos, outlining its vision and policies for the country. The party manifestos reveal a consistent commitment to promoting democracy, good governance, and economic growth. The 1999 manifesto emphasized the need for democracy, national unity, and economic growth. The party promised to establish a federal republic with a strong and effective government, ensure the protection of human rights, and promote economic development through private sector-led growth (Adebayo, 2020). This emphasis on democracy and economic growth reflects the party's recognition of the importance of these issues in building a stable and prosperous nation.

The 2003 manifesto built on the themes of the 1999 manifesto, emphasizing the need for national unity, economic growth, and good governance. The party promised to strengthen democracy through institutional reforms, promote transparency and accountability in government, and address poverty and inequality through social welfare programs (Aborisade, 2019). This emphasis on institutional reforms and social welfare programs reflects the party's recognition of the need for systemic change to address ongoing challenges. According Kasai (2016), the promises as were outlined in various campaign documents, speeches, and interviews by PDP leaders, including then-

candidate Olusegun Obasanjo, who later became President of Nigeria, the PDP Manifestos of 1999 include:

- i. Promised to restore democracy and rebuild institutions
- ii. Vowed to address poverty, unemployment, and inequality
- iii. Promised to promote private sector-led economic growth and development
- iv. Committed to increasing investment in education, healthcare, and infrastructure
- v. Promised to reduce corruption and improve governance
- vi. Vowed to promote national unity and reconciliation
- vii. Committed to promoting transparency and accountability in government

According to Oloruntoba (2020), People's Democratic Party (PDP) manifesto for the 2003 general elections was titled "A New Era of Development and Progress" which emphasized the need for a new era of development and progress in Nigeria, built on the principles of democracy, transparency, and accountability. The manifestos were broken in to:

- i. Economic Development
- ii. Poverty Reduction
- iii. Good Governance
- iv. Educational Development
- v. Access to Healthcare
- vi. Infrastructure Development
- vii. National Security
- viii. Human Rights
- ix. Environmental Protection

The PDP manifesto for the 2007 general elections was titled "Seven Point Agenda for a New Nigeria". It emphasized the need to build on the progress made since the return to democracy in 1999 and to address the country's development challenges (Usman, 2019). It centered on the following thematic areas:

- i. Economic Growth and Development

- ii. Education
- iii. Healthcare
- iv. Infrastructure Development
- v. National Security
- vi. Good Governance
- vii. Job Creation and Poverty Reduction.

The PDP Manifestos of 2011 titled “A Roadmap to a New Nigeria: A People-Oriented and Prosperous Nation” which emphasized the party's commitment to building a new Nigeria, based on the principles of democracy, justice, and development include:

- i. Economic Development
- ii. Poverty Reduction
- iii. Good Governance
- iv. Education
- v. Healthcare
- vi. Infrastructure Development
- vii. National Security

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) manifesto for the 2015 general elections was titled "A Vision for a New Nigeria: A Nation of Unity, Progress and Prosperity" and broken down to the following thematic areas:

- i. Economic Development
- ii. Poverty Reduction
- iii. Good Governance
- iv. Education
- v. Healthcare
- vi. Infrastructure Development
- vii. National Security

PDP manifesto for the 2019 general elections was titled "The New Nigeria Our Mission: To Build a Nation of Unity, Peace, Progress and Prosperity". The PDP manifesto emphasized the party's commitment to building a new Nigeria, based on the principles of unity, peace, progress, and prosperity. It involves the following thematic areas:

- i. Economic Development
- ii. Poverty Reduction

- iii. Good Governance
- iv. Education
- v. Healthcare
- vi. Infrastructure Development

The PDP manifesto for the 2023 general elections was titled "A New Beginning: A Fresh Vision for a New Nigeria". The PDP manifesto emphasized the party's commitment to building a new Nigeria, based on the principles of unity, peace, progress, and prosperity. It was broken down to the following areas:

- i. Economic Development
- ii. Poverty Reduction
- iii. Good Governance
- iv. Education
- v. Healthcare
- vi. Infrastructure Development

The PDP in 2007 released a manifesto that focused on the theme Nigeria: A New Dawn. The party promised to build on its achievements in promoting democracy and economic growth, while addressing challenges such as poverty, corruption, and insecurity. The manifesto emphasized the need for good governance, transparency, and accountability in government. This emphasis on institutional reforms and public-private partnerships reflects the party's recognition of the need for continued progress and reform to address ongoing challenges (Okoro, 2020).

The PDP's 2011 manifesto was titled Roadmap for Sustainable Development. The manifesto promised to promote economic growth through public-private partnerships and investment in infrastructure development, improve healthcare services through universal healthcare coverage, and increase access to education through free primary education (Aliyu, 2019). This emphasis on infrastructure development, healthcare, and education reflects the party's recognition of the importance of investing in these areas to promote sustainable development. The 2015 manifesto focused on the theme New Nigeria: A Better Deal, emphasizing the need for change and progress.

The party promised to promote economic growth through diversification of the economy, address corruption and improve governance through institutional reforms, and promote social welfare programs to address poverty and inequality. This emphasis on diversification of the economy and social welfare programs reflects the party's recognition of the need for continued reform to address ongoing challenges.

In 2019, the PDP released a new manifesto that emphasized the need for unity, peace, and national cohesion. The party promised to promote economic growth through agriculture and industrialization, increase investment in infrastructure development, and improve healthcare services through universal healthcare coverage (Oladele, 2020). The emphasis on agriculture and industrialization reflects the party's recognition of the importance of these sectors in promoting economic growth. PDP has emphasized the importance of addressing social challenges such as poverty and inequality, as well as promoting sustainable development through investment in infrastructure development, healthcare, and education. The party promised to establish a federal republic with a strong and effective government, ensure the protection of human rights, and promote economic development through private sector-led growth. Throughout its manifestos from 1999 to date, the PDP has consistently emphasized the need for democracy, good governance, and economic growth. The party has also shown its commitment to promoting national unity and addressing poverty and inequality.

4.1.1 Ideological Stances of People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Nigeria

PDP has maintained a complex and dynamic ideological stance, shaped by its interactions with various social, economic, and political forces. Initially, PDP emerged as a coalition of diverse groups and interests, united by their opposition to the military government of General Sani Abacha. The party's ideology was characterized by a mix of liberal democratic and socialist elements, with

a focus on promoting democracy, human rights, and economic development (Akinyemi, 2016). For instance, the party's 1999 manifesto emphasized the need for democratic governance, economic development, and social justice. As the party consolidated and faced challenges from various quarters, its ideology evolved to incorporate more pragmatic and centrist elements. The party's leaders began to emphasize the importance of stability and continuity in government, as well as the need to balance competing interests and factions within the party (Adeyemi & Ogunmuyiwa, 2020). This pragmatism was reflected in the party's 2003 manifesto, which promised to build on the achievements of the past while correcting our mistakes.

The PDP's ideological stance was further shaped by its interactions with other political parties and international organizations. The party's close ties with the United States and other countries led to an increased emphasis on liberal democratic values and market-oriented economic policies (Adesanya & Ogunsola, 2020). For instance, the party's 2011 manifesto promised to promote private sector-led growth and foster a business-friendly environment. PDP has also faced criticism for its perceived lack of ideological coherence and its tendency to compromise its principles. Some critics have accused the party of being overly pragmatic and lacking a clear vision for the country (Awolowo & Ogunleye, 2020). Others have argued that the party's emphasis on stability and continuity has led to a lack of innovation and reform (Ayodele & Akindele, 2020). In recent years, the PDP has attempted to rebrand itself as a more progressive force in Nigerian politics. The party's 2019 manifesto emphasized the need for inclusive growth and social justice and focused on addressing issues such as poverty, inequality, and corruption.

4.1.2 Policy Priorities of PDP Government in Nigeria

PDP has had a number of policy priorities since its inception in 1999. These priorities have evolved over time, reflecting changes in the party's leadership, shifts in the national political landscape,

and responses to pressing social and economic challenges. In its early years, the PDP focused on establishing a democratic framework and promoting economic growth. The party's 1999 manifesto emphasized the need for democratic governance, economic development, and social justice (Bello, 2015). The party's first administration, led by President Olusegun Obasanjo, prioritized economic liberalization and privatization, with a focus on attracting foreign investment and promoting private sector growth (Banaa-Gana & Ibrahim, 2020). During its second term, the PDP continued to prioritize economic development, with a focus on infrastructure development and public-private partnerships. The party's 2003 manifesto promised to build on the achievements of the past while correcting our mistakes. This emphasis on infrastructure development was reflected in the party's investment in projects such as the Abuja-Lagos highway and the expansion of Nigeria's international airports.

In its later years, the PDP faced growing criticism for its handling of the economy, with many Nigerians feeling that the party had failed to deliver on its promises of poverty reduction and job creation. The party's response was to shift its focus towards social welfare programs and poverty reduction initiatives. The party's 2011 manifesto promised to promote inclusive growth and foster a business-friendly environment. The party also launched initiatives such as the National Poverty Reduction Program and the Federal Government's Social Investment Program. In recent years, the PDP has continued to prioritize social welfare programs and poverty reduction initiatives. The party's 2019 manifesto emphasized the need for inclusive growth and social justice, with promises to address issues such as poverty, inequality, and corruption.

The party has also launched initiatives such as the National Social Housing Program and the Federal Government's Cash Transfer Program. The PDP has also prioritized education as a key area of focus. The party's 2011 manifesto promised to increase access to education through free

primary education. The party has also launched initiatives such as the Federal Government's Education Intervention Fund and the Teacher Enhancement Program. Healthcare has also been a priority area for the PDP. The party's 2011 manifesto promised to improve healthcare services through universal healthcare coverage (Action for Democracy, 2018). The party has also launched initiatives such as the Federal Government's National Health Insurance Scheme and the Universal Basic Health Coverage Program. The PDP has had a number of policy priorities since its inception in 1999. These priorities have evolved over time, reflecting changes in the party's leadership, shifts in the national political landscape, and responses to pressing social and economic challenges. PDP continues to prioritize areas such as economic development, social welfare programs, education, and healthcare.

4.2 Analysis of the Manifestos of All Progressives' Congress (APC) in Nigeria

APC was formed in 2013, and since then, the party has released several manifestos that outline its vision and goals for Nigeria. The party's manifestos have been shaped by its commitment to promoting good governance, economic growth, and social development. In its inaugural manifesto, released in 2014, the APC emphasized the need for a new beginning for Nigeria, promising to restore the country's democratic values and institutions. The manifesto identified corruption as a major obstacle to development and promised to take steps to combat it. It also emphasized the need for economic reform, including the promotion of private sector growth and investment.

According to Chukwuma & Nwosu (2020), APC manifesto for the 2015 general elections was titled "The Change Agenda: A Plan to Rescue and Rebuild Nigeria". The APC manifesto emphasized the party's commitment to bringing change to Nigeria, citing the need to address corruption, improve infrastructure, and promote economic growth. The manifestos entailed the following:

- i. Fighting corruption
- ii. Security
- iii. Economic Development
- iv. Poverty Reduction
- v. Good Governance
- vi. Education
- vii. Healthcare

The APC's 2015 presidential candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, campaigned on a platform of change, promising to tackle corruption and improve the economy. The party's manifesto echoed this theme, promising to restore Nigeria's glory by curbing corruption, promoting transparency and accountability (Ejimofofor & Ezehiakporhe 2020). The All Progressives Congress (APC) manifesto for the 2019 general elections was titled "The Next Level: A Roadmap for Nigeria's Next Chapter". The APC manifesto emphasized the party's commitment to building on the progress made in 2015, citing achievements such as economic growth, infrastructure development, and anti-corruption efforts. It has the following key points agendas:

- i. Promote economic diversification and industrialization
- ii. Implement targeted social safety nets and poverty reduction programs
- iii. Good Governance
- iv. Increase investment in education (primary, secondary, and tertiary)
- v. Increase investment in healthcare infrastructure and services
- vi. Create opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship
- vii. Women Empowerment
- viii. Strengthen national security agencies and improve intelligence gathering
- ix. Infrastructure Development

In its 2019 manifesto, the APC built on its earlier promises, emphasizing the need for continued economic growth and development. The party promised to promote infrastructure development, including transportation and energy infrastructure, and to improve access to education and healthcare. The manifesto also reiterated the party's commitment to combating corruption, promising to strengthen institutions and ensure that those found guilty of corruption are brought to justice. One of the key themes that has emerged in the APC's manifestos is its emphasis on promoting national unity and cohesion.

The APC manifesto for the 2023 general elections was titled "The Next Level 2.0: Building a Prosperous, Secure, and United Nigeria". The APC manifesto emphasized the party's commitment to building on the progress made in 2015 and 2019, citing achievements such as economic growth, infrastructure development, and anti-corruption efforts. The thematic areas of the 2023 APC manifestos are:

- i. Economic diversification and industrialization
- ii. Poverty reduction programs
- iii. Good Governance
- iv. Education
- v. Healthcare
- vi. Youth Empowerment
- vii. Women Empowerment
- viii. Security
- ix. Infrastructure Development
- x. Digital Economy

The party has consistently emphasized the need for Nigerians to come together to address the country's challenges, and has promised to promote national identity and foster greater cooperation among different ethnic groups. The APC's manifestos have also been shaped by its commitment to promoting good governance and accountability. The party has consistently criticized corruption

as a major obstacle to development in Nigeria, and has promised to take steps to combat it. For example, the party's 2015 manifesto promised to strengthen institutions and ensure that those found guilty of corruption are brought to justice. The party has consistently emphasized the importance of strengthening democratic institutions, including the legislature, judiciary, and civil society. For example, the party's 2019 manifesto promised to promote a strong and independent judiciary and strengthen our democratic institutions.

4.2.1 Ideological Stances of the APC in Nigeria

The APC has evolved as a party with a distinct ideological stance over the years. At its inception in 2013, the APC was formed as a coalition of opposition parties, including the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), and the faction of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA). Initially, the APC's ideological stance was characterized by a focus on conservative and liberal economic policies. The party's founders, many of whom are from the business community were critical of the country's socialist-oriented economic policies and advocated for a more market-oriented approach. For example, Bola Tinubu, one of the party's founders and a former governor of Lagos State, argued that the party would adopt a liberal economic policy that will attract foreign investment and stimulate growth (Fasakin & Fatokun, 2020).

As the party grew and evolved, its ideological stance began to shift towards a more populist and nationalist orientation. The party's 2015 presidential candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, campaigned on a platform that emphasized change and promised to tackle corruption and promote Nigerian

interests. Buhari's campaign rhetoric was characterized by a mix of conservative and populist themes, including a commitment to reducing corruption, promoting national pride, and protecting Nigerian jobs. The APC's 2019 presidential campaign further solidified its nationalist and populist orientation. The party's candidate, President Muhammadu Buhari, campaigned on a platform that emphasized his administration's achievements, including its efforts to combat corruption and promote infrastructure development. The party's manifesto for that year also emphasized its commitment to promoting national unity and addressing social inequality.

The APC's ideological stance has also been shaped by its relationship with traditional Nigerian institutions. The party has historically been critical of the country's military-era legacy and has sought to promote democratic governance and civilian rule. For example, the party's 2015 manifesto promised to promote democratic governance and strengthen our democratic institutions. In terms of social issues, the APC has historically been more conservative than many other parties in Nigeria. The party has opposed same-sex marriage and has taken a strong stance against abortion. The APC's ideological stance can be characterized as a blend of conservative and populist themes, with an emphasis on promoting national unity, combating corruption, and promoting economic growth through market-oriented policies. Though the party has undergone significant changes since its inception, its core ideological commitments have remained relatively consistent over time.

4.2.2 Policy Priorities of APC Government in Nigeria

APC has prioritized several policies since its inception in 2015. The party's policy priorities have been shaped by its commitment to promoting economic growth, combating corruption, and improving the lives of Nigerians. One of the APC's earliest policy priorities was to address the country's economic challenges. In its 2015 presidential campaign, the party promised to restructure

the economy and promote economic growth. Since taking office, the APC government has implemented several policies aimed at stimulating economic growth, including the establishment of the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) in 2017. The ERGP is a comprehensive plan that outlines the government's strategy for economic growth and development over a five-year period. The plan aims to promote private sector growth, improve infrastructure development, and increase competitiveness in key sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing (David, 2017). Another key policy priority for the APC has been combating corruption. In its 2015 manifesto, the party promised to curb corruption and promote transparency and accountability. APC has also prioritized education and healthcare reform. In its 2019 manifesto, the party promised to improve access to education and enhance healthcare delivery.

APC government has implemented several initiatives aimed at improving education outcomes, including the establishment of a universal basic education program and the introduction of free education for primary school students. Infrastructure development has also been a key policy priority for the APC. The party has promised to invest in transportation infrastructure, including roads, railways, and airports. For example, in its 2019 manifesto, the party promised to develop a comprehensive transportation masterplan and upgrade our transportation infrastructure. In addition to these policy priorities, the APC has also focused on promoting agricultural development. The party has promised to support small-scale farmers and promote agricultural production through initiatives such as irrigation schemes and farm mechanization. The APC's policy priorities have been shaped by its commitment to promoting economic growth, combating corruption, improving education and healthcare outcomes, investing in infrastructure development, and promoting agricultural development.

4.3 Similarities in Manifestos, Ideology and Policy Priorities of APC and PDP

Despite being political rivals, APC and PDP share several similarities in their manifestos and ideologies including areas of economic policy, security, corruption, education, agriculture, investment, healthcare, and others.

a) Economic Policy: Economic policy is a crucial aspect of any political party's manifesto, as it outlines their vision for the country's economic development. One of the most significant similarities between the APC and PDP manifestos is their commitment to promoting economic growth and development. Both APC and PDP manifestos emphasize the importance of promoting economic growth and development. The APC's 2015 manifesto promises to restructure the economy and promote economic growth while the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to stimulate economic growth and create jobs (Abah & Onoja, 2020). Both parties also recognize the importance of private sector participation in the economy and promise to create an enabling environment for businesses to thrive.

The APC's 2015 manifesto states, the party ultimate goal is to make Nigeria a thriving economy, with a strong and stable foundation for growth and development. Similarly, the PDP promises to stimulate economic growth and create jobs. While APC's manifesto emphasizes the need to promote private sector-led growth and create an enabling environment for businesses to thrive, the PDP's manifesto also highlights the importance of the private sector, stating that it is the engine of our economy. Both parties also recognize the importance of diversifying the economy. The APC's manifesto promises to promote diversification of our economy and reduce our reliance on oil. The PDP's manifesto also emphasizes the need for diversification, stating that it is essential for sustainable economic growth. Therefore, both parties prioritize promoting economic growth and development, private sector participation, diversification of the economy and human capital development.

b) Security: The APC and PDP manifestos both prioritize national security. The APC's 2015 manifesto promises to strengthen our national security architecture and ensure the protection of citizens, while the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to ensure the security and safety of all Nigerians (Akbakoba, 2019). Both parties also emphasize the importance of fighting terrorism and kidnapping. Security of lives and properties is a crucial aspect of any political party's manifesto, as it outlines their vision for ensuring the safety and the well-being of citizens. The manifestos of APC and PDP share several similarities in terms of security policies. The APC's 2015 manifesto states that, the party will strengthen our national security architecture to ensure the protection of our citizens and their property. Similarly, the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to ensure the security and safety of all Nigerians. Both parties also recognize the importance of addressing the insurgency in the North-East region of Nigeria.

The APC's manifesto states that, the party will intensify efforts to defeat Boko Haram and other terrorist groups. The PDP's manifesto also emphasizes the need to address the insurgency, stating that it is a major threat to our national security. Adebajo (2017) observes that, another area of similarity is the commitment to addressing kidnapping and armed robbery. The APC's manifesto promises to take decisive action against kidnappers and armed robbers. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes combating these crimes, stating that they are major threats to our national security. Both parties also recognize the importance of addressing terrorism.

The APC's manifesto states that, the party will work with international partners to counter terrorism and prevent its spread. The PDP's manifesto also emphasizes the need to address terrorism, stating that it is a global threat that requires a coordinated response. In addition to these similarities, both parties have also promised to improve policing and law enforcement. The APC's manifesto promises to strengthen our police force and improve community policing. The PDP's manifesto

also prioritizes improving policing, stating that it is critical to our national security. Both parties have recognized the importance of addressing cybercrime. The APC's manifesto states that, the party will take decisive action against cybercrime and protect our digital infrastructure. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes combating cybercrime, stating that it is a major threat to our national security (Ibeanu, 2019).

c) Corruption: The fight against corruption is a crucial aspect of any political party's manifesto, as it outlines their vision for promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance. The APC's 2015 manifesto states that, the party will eradicate corruption in all its forms and promote transparency and accountability. Similarly, the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to eradicate corruption and promote transparency and accountability. Both parties have made combating corruption a major campaign promise. The APC's 2015 manifesto promises to curb corruption and promote transparency and accountability while the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to eradicate corruption and promote transparency and accountability. Gabriel (2017) observes that, both parties recognize that corruption is a major obstacle to economic development and have promised to take concrete steps to address it. Both parties also recognize the importance of strengthening institutions to combat corruption. The APC's manifesto states that, the party will strengthen institutions such as the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes strengthening institutions, stating that they will strengthen anti-corruption agencies.

Another area of similarity is the commitment to promoting transparency in government. The APC's manifesto promises to promote transparency in government transactions and ensure that all government contracts are transparently awarded (Jinedu, 2022). The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes transparency, stating that it will promote transparency in government transactions and

ensure that all government contracts are transparently awarded. Both parties also recognize the importance of whistle blower protection. The APC's manifesto states that, the party will establish a whistle blower protection policy to encourage reporting of corrupt activities. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes whistle blower protection, stating that it will establish a whistle blower protection policy to encourage reporting of corrupt activities. In addition to these similarities, both parties have also promised to improve financial transparency. The APC's manifesto promises to improve financial transparency by publishing detailed breakdowns of government expenditures (Joseph, 2019). The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes financial transparency, stating that it will publish detailed breakdowns of government expenditures. These similarities demonstrate that both parties share a commitment to promoting good governance and combating corruption in Nigeria.

d) Education: Education is a critical sector that has been a priority in the development of any nation. Both APC and PDP manifestos prioritize education as a key area for investment. The APC's 2015 manifesto promises to improve access to education and enhance education outcomes, while the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to promote free education and improve access to quality education. Both parties recognize that education is essential for national development and have promised to invest in infrastructure, teacher training, and curriculum development. Kasai (2020) argues that, one of the most significant similarities between the APC and PDP manifestos is their commitment to improving the quality of education in Nigeria. The APC's 2015 manifesto states that, the party will improve the quality of education by increasing funding and investing in infrastructure, curriculum development, and teacher training. Similarly, the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to improve the quality of education by increasing funding, investing in infrastructure, and promoting innovation. Both parties also recognize the importance of increasing access to education, particularly for marginalized groups such as women and children.

The APC's manifesto states that, the party will increase access to education for marginalized groups, including women and children. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes increasing access to education, stating that it will increase access to education for all Nigerians, particularly women and children. Lincoln & Herzog (2018) stated that, another area of similarity is the commitment to promoting science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. The APC's manifesto states that, the party will promote STEM education by providing incentives for students who excel in these fields. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes STEM education, stating that it will promote STEM education by providing incentives for students who excel in these fields. Both parties also recognize the importance of vocational training and skills acquisition.

The APC's manifesto states that, the party will promote vocational training and skills acquisition to prepare Nigerian youth for the workforce. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes vocational training and skills acquisition, stating that it will promote vocational training and skills acquisition to prepare Nigerian youth for the workforce. In addition to these similarities, both parties have also promised to improve the management of educational institutions. Mustapha (2017) argues that, APC's manifesto states that, the party will improve the management of educational institutions by providing adequate resources and personnel. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes improving the management of educational institutions, stating that it will improve the management of educational institutions by providing adequate resources and personnel. The APC's manifesto states that, the party will promote research and development in education by providing funding for research initiatives. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes research and development in education, stating that it will promote research and development in education by providing funding for research initiatives. Despite being political rivals, the APC and PDP manifestos share several similarities in terms of education policies. Both parties prioritize improving the quality of education,

increasing access to education for marginalized groups, promoting STEM education, vocational training and skills acquisition, improving the management of educational institutions, and research and development in education.

e) Agriculture: Agriculture is a critical sector that has the potential to drive economic growth and development in Nigeria. The APC's 2015 manifesto promises to support small-scale farmers and promote agricultural production, while the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to promote agriculture as a major sector of our economy. Both parties recognize that agriculture is a key sector for employment creation and economic growth. As buttressed by Malake and Joda (202), one of the most significant similarities between the APC and PDP manifestos is their commitment to agricultural development. The APC's 2015 manifesto states that, the party will promote agricultural development by increasing investment in agriculture, improving infrastructure, and promoting agricultural research and extension services. Similarly, the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to promote agricultural development by increasing investment in agriculture, improving infrastructure, and promoting agricultural research and extension services.

Both parties also recognize the importance of increasing agricultural production and productivity. The APC's manifesto states that, the party will increase agricultural production and productivity by providing farmers with access to credit, inputs, and markets (Ogunwusi & Aborisade, 2020). The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes increasing agricultural production and productivity, stating that it will increase agricultural production and productivity by providing farmers with access to credit, inputs, and markets. Another area of similarity is the commitment to supporting small-scale farmers. The APC's manifesto states that, the party will support small-scale farmers by providing them with access to credit, inputs, and markets. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes supporting small-scale farmers, stating that it will support small-scale farmers by providing them with access

to credit, inputs, and markets. Both parties also recognize the importance of promoting agricultural value addition. The APC's manifesto states that, the party will promote agricultural value addition by encouraging processing and manufacturing of agricultural products. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes promoting agricultural value addition, stating that it will promote agricultural value addition by encouraging processing and manufacturing of agricultural products. In addition to these similarities, both parties have also promised to improve the management of agricultural institutions.

f) Investment: The APC's 2015 manifesto promises to attract foreign investment and promote private sector participation while the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to attract foreign investment and create an enabling environment for businesses. Both parties recognize that foreign investment is essential for economic growth and development. Aborisade (2019) observed that, one of the most significant similarities between the APC and PDP manifestos is their commitment to increasing foreign investment in Nigeria. The APC's 2015 manifesto states that, the party will create an enabling environment for foreign investors by reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks and increasing transparency. Similarly, the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to create an enabling environment for foreign investors by reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks and increasing transparency. Both parties also recognize the importance of domestic investment in Nigeria.

The APC's manifesto states that, the party will encourage foreign and domestic investment by reducing taxes, improving infrastructure, and increasing access to credit. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes domestic investment, stating that it will encourage domestic investment by reducing taxes, improving infrastructure, and increasing access to credit. Another area of similarity is the commitment to promoting public-private partnerships (PPPs). The APC's manifesto states that, the party will promote PPPs by providing incentives for private sector participation in infrastructure

development. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes PPPs, stating that it will promote PPPs by providing incentives for private sector participation in infrastructure development. Both parties also recognize the importance of small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in driving economic growth.

The APC's manifesto states that, the party will support SMEs by providing access to credit, training, and mentorship. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes SMEs, stating that it will support SMEs by providing access to credit, training, and mentorship. Both parties have also promised to improve the business environment in Nigeria. The APC's manifesto states that, the party will improve the business environment by reducing bureaucracy, improving infrastructure, and increasing transparency. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes improving the business environment, stating that it will improve the business environment by reducing bureaucracy, improving infrastructure, and increasing transparency. Both parties have recognized the importance of human capital development in driving economic growth. The APC's manifesto states that, the party will invest in human capital development by increasing education and healthcare spending. The PDP's manifesto also prioritizes human capital development, stating that it will invest in human capital development by increasing education and healthcare spending.

g) Job Creation: The APC and PDP manifestos share a common goal of creating jobs and promoting economic growth in Nigeria. Both parties recognize the importance of job creation in addressing the high unemployment rate in the country, which has been a major challenge for the government. Both the APC and PDP manifestos emphasize the need to promote private sector growth as a means of creating jobs. According to the APC manifesto, the party will create an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive, by reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks, increasing transparency and accountability, and promoting fair competition. Similarly, the PDP

manifesto notes, the party will promote the growth of the private sector by increasing funding for small and medium-sized enterprises, and providing incentives for investors to create jobs (Adebanjo, 2020).

Both parties also recognize the importance of infrastructure development in creating jobs. The APC manifesto states that, the party will invest in infrastructure development, including transportation, energy, and water supply. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will invest in critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges. This emphasis on infrastructure development is essential for creating jobs in construction, engineering, and other related fields. Another area where both parties agree is on the importance of promoting entrepreneurship. The APC manifesto states that, the party will establish an entrepreneurial university to promote entrepreneurship and innovation (APC Manifesto, 2019). The PDP manifesto notes, the party will provide support for start-ups and small businesses through grants, training, and mentorship programs. Both parties also acknowledge the high rate of unemployment among youth in Nigeria. According to the APC manifesto, the party will empower youths by providing training and skills acquisition programs to equip them with relevant skills for employment. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will provide opportunities for young people to acquire skills and education through vocational training programs. Both parties aim to reduce social unrest and promote economic stability. In conclusion, despite their differences in other areas, the APC and PDP manifestos share commonalities in their approach to job creation. Both parties recognize the importance of promoting private sector growth, infrastructure development, entrepreneurship, and addressing youth unemployment.

h) Poverty Reduction: The APC and PDP manifestos share a common goal of reducing poverty in Nigeria, recognizing it as a major challenge facing the country. Both parties acknowledge the need to address poverty by promoting economic growth, improving healthcare, and enhancing

education. According to the APC manifesto, the party will create an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive, by reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks, increasing transparency and accountability, and promoting fair competition. Similarly, the PDP manifesto notes, the party will promote the growth of the private sector by increasing funding for small and medium-sized enterprises, and providing incentives for investors to create jobs. The APC manifesto states that, the party will improve healthcare delivery by increasing funding for hospitals, improving infrastructure, and increasing access to essential medicines. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will invest in primary healthcare services, improve healthcare infrastructure, and increase access to healthcare services. Therefore, despite their differences in other areas, the APC and PDP manifestos share commonalities in their approach to poverty reduction.

i) Healthcare: Healthcare is a critical component of human well-being, and Nigeria is no exception. The All Progressives Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) are two major political parties in Nigeria, and their manifestos share several similarities in terms of healthcare policies. Both parties have promised to improve healthcare outcomes. The APC's 2015 manifesto promises to improve access to healthcare services and enhance healthcare delivery, while the PDP's 2019 manifesto promises to promote universal health coverage and improve access to quality healthcare services (Akinyemi, 2019). Both parties recognize that healthcare is essential for human well-being and have promised to invest in infrastructure, healthcare personnel training, and disease prevention. These similarities demonstrate that both parties share a commitment to promoting national development and improving the lives of Nigerians.

j) Infrastructural Development: Both PDP and APC agree on the need to leverage public-private partnerships (PPPs) to finance infrastructure development. According to the APC manifesto, the party will encourage public-private partnerships to attract private sector investment in

infrastructure development. Similarly, the PDP manifesto notes, the party will explore PPPs to attract private sector investment in infrastructure development. This approach recognizes the potential for private sector investment to augment government funding and accelerate infrastructure development. The APC and PDP manifestos share a common goal of prioritizing infrastructural development in Nigeria, recognizing its significance in driving economic growth, creating jobs, and improving the quality of life for citizens. According to Aliyu (2019), both parties acknowledge the importance of investing in infrastructure to bridge the gap between Nigeria's growing economy and its inadequate infrastructure.

Both the APC and PDP manifestos emphasize the need to invest in transportation infrastructure, such as roads, railways, and airports. According to the APC manifesto, the party will prioritize the rehabilitation and expansion of our road network, including the construction of new highways and the upgrade of existing ones. Similarly, the PDP manifesto notes, the party will invest in transportation infrastructure, including the construction of new roads, bridges, and railways. Energy infrastructure is another area where both parties agree on its importance. The APC manifesto states that, the party will invest in energy infrastructure, including the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will invest in energy infrastructure, including the expansion of power generation capacity and the upgrading of transmission and distribution networks.

According to the APC manifesto, the party will improve access to potable water by investing in water treatment plants and distribution networks. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will invest in water infrastructure, including the construction of new water treatment plants and the upgrade of existing ones (PDP Manifesto, 2019). Education infrastructure is another area where both parties agree on its importance. The APC manifesto states that, the party will improve education

infrastructure by constructing new schools and upgrading existing ones. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will invest in education infrastructure, including the construction of new schools and the upgrade of existing ones. Therefore, despite their differences in other areas, the APC and PDP manifestos share commonalities in their approach to infrastructural development.

Table 4.1: Similarity of manifestos and ideology of APC and PDP

Area	APC Manifesto	PDP Manifesto	Similarity
Economic Policy	Promote market-based economy, reduce taxes, increase investment incentives	Promote state-led growth, increase funding for infrastructure and public sector projects	Both parties prioritize economic growth, but differ on approach
Security	Strengthen national security by increasing funding for defense and security agencies	Promote regional security cooperation by strengthening regional bodies	Both parties prioritize security, but differ on approach
Corruption	Establish an independent corruption and anti-corruption agency to tackle corruption and ensure transparency and accountability	Reform the judiciary and strengthen institutions to combat corruption	Both parties prioritize combating corruption, but differ on approach
Education	Improve access to education by increasing funding for schools and promoting private sector involvement	Provide free education for all Nigerians	Both parties prioritize education, but differ on approach
Agriculture	Promote agricultural development by providing credit facilities and improving infrastructure	Promote agricultural transformation by promoting mechanized farming and increasing agricultural productivity	Both parties prioritize agriculture, but differ on approach
Investment	Increase investment in various sectors, promote private sector involvement, and improve business environment	Increase funding for infrastructure and public sector projects, promote state-led investment	Both parties prioritize investment, but differ on approach
Healthcare	Improve healthcare infrastructure by increasing funding for hospitals, clinics, and healthcare facilities; prioritize primary healthcare care	Improve healthcare infrastructure by increasing funding for hospitals, clinics, and healthcare facilities; prioritize primary healthcare care	Both parties prioritize healthcare infrastructure and primary care

Infrastructure Development	Improve transportation infrastructure, energy supply, and water supply	Improve transportation infrastructure, energy supply, and water supply; promote state-led development of infrastructure projects	Both parties prioritize infrastructure development
Poverty Reduction	Reduce poverty by increasing access to education, healthcare, and job opportunities; promote private sector involvement in poverty reduction initiatives	Reduce poverty by increasing access to education, healthcare, and job opportunities; promote state-led poverty reduction initiatives	Both parties prioritize poverty reduction, but differ on approach
Job Creation	Create jobs by promoting private sector growth, increasing funding for small-scale enterprises, and improving business environment	Create jobs by promoting state-led development of industries, increasing funding for public sector projects, and improving job opportunities in the public sector	Both parties prioritize job creation, but differ on approach

Source: PDP and APC Secretariat, Abuja, 2025

Therefore, despite being political rivals, APC and PDP share several similarities in their manifestos and ideologies whereby both parties prioritize economic growth, national security, combating corruption, education, agriculture, investment, healthcare, and other areas. These similarities demonstrate that both parties share a commitment to promoting national development and improving the lives of Nigerians.

4.3 Differences in Manifestos, Ideology and Policy Stances between the APC and PDP

Despite the similarities in the APC and PDP manifestos and ideologies there are significant differences in their ideologies.

a) Economic Policies: Both PDP and APC agree on the importance of diversifying the Nigerian economy away from dependence on oil revenues. However, while both parties recognize the importance of diversification, they differ in their approaches to achieving this goal. The APC manifesto emphasizes the need for private sector-led growth and entrepreneurship as a means of

driving diversification. According to the APC manifesto, the party will create an enabling environment for private sector-led growth and entrepreneurship to drive diversification. In contrast, the PDP manifesto places a stronger emphasis on government-led initiatives to promote diversification (Aliyu, 2019). The PDP manifesto notes, the party will establish a Diversification Fund to support initiatives that promote non-oil exports and small businesses.

The APC manifesto emphasizes the need for a market-based economy, stating that the party will promote private sector-led growth by reducing taxes and increasing investment incentives. In contrast, the PDP ideology prioritizes state-led development, stating that the party will promote state-led growth by investing in infrastructure and public sector projects. This difference reflects a fundamental disagreement on the role of government in the economy, with the APC advocating for a smaller government role and the PDP emphasizing a more active government role. Both the APC and PDP manifestos recognize the importance of economic development in Nigeria, but their approaches to economic policy differ in focus and emphasis. The APC manifesto emphasizes the need for fiscal discipline and reducing government expenditure as a means of promoting economic growth.

According to the APC manifesto, the party will adopt a policy of fiscal discipline, reduce unnecessary expenditure, and channel resources towards critical areas such as infrastructure development and human capital development. This approach recognizes that excessive government spending can lead to fiscal indiscipline and inflation, and that reducing government expenditure can help to promote economic stability. In contrast, the PDP manifesto places a stronger emphasis on increasing government spending as a means of stimulating economic growth. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will increase public spending on critical areas such as infrastructure development, education, and healthcare to stimulate economic growth and create

jobs. This approach recognizes that government spending can play a critical role in stimulating economic growth and creating jobs, particularly during times of economic downturn. While both parties recognize the importance of economic development in Nigeria, they differ in their approaches to achieving this goal. Bala-Gana (2020) avers that, APC manifesto emphasizes fiscal discipline and private sector-led growth as a means of promoting economic growth, while the PDP manifesto places a stronger emphasis on government-led initiatives and increasing government spending.

b) Poverty Reduction: While both the APC and PDP manifestos acknowledge the importance of addressing poverty in Nigeria, there are some key differences in their approaches and ideologies. The APC manifesto focuses on creating an enabling environment for businesses to thrive, promoting private sector growth, and increasing access to credit for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). According to the APC manifesto, the party will create an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive by reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks, increasing transparency and accountability, and promoting fair competition (David, 2017). This approach emphasizes the role of the private sector in driving economic growth and job creation, which can help reduce poverty.

In contrast, the PDP manifesto emphasizes the importance of government-led initiatives and social welfare programs in reducing poverty. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will implement a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy that includes social welfare programs, job creation initiatives, and access to education and healthcare. This approach emphasizes the role of government in providing support to vulnerable populations and addressing income inequality.

The PDP manifesto also places a strong emphasis on agricultural development as a means of reducing poverty. According to the PDP manifesto, the party will invest in agriculture by providing

farmers with access to credit, training, and market facilities. This approach recognizes the importance of agriculture as a source of employment and income for many Nigerians. In contrast, the APC manifesto places a stronger emphasis on industrialization as a means of reducing poverty. The APC manifesto notes, the party will promote industrialization by providing incentives for investors, developing infrastructure, and increasing access to credit for SMEs. Therefore, even though both of the parties' manifestos recognize the importance of addressing poverty in Nigeria, they differ in their approaches and ideologies.

c) Job Creation: The APC manifesto emphasizes the creation of a business-friendly environment as a means of stimulating job creation. According to the APC manifesto, the party will create a business-friendly environment that encourages investment, promotes entrepreneurship, and supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This approach recognizes that job creation is often driven by the private sector, and that a favorable business environment can help to stimulate entrepreneurship and innovation. In contrast, the PDP manifesto places a stronger emphasis on government-led job creation initiatives. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will invest in job creation programs that target the youth and vulnerable populations, including skills training and employment opportunities. PDP manifesto notes, the party will invest in education and skills training programs that prepare workers for the demands of the modern workplace (Okoro, 2020).

However, while both parties recognize the importance of education and training, they differ in their approaches to addressing the issue of unemployment among graduates. The APC manifesto emphasizes the need for universities to produce graduates with skills that are relevant to the job market. According to the APC manifesto, the party will work with universities to ensure that graduates have relevant skills that match the needs of employers. In contrast, the PDP manifesto

places a stronger emphasis on government-led job creation initiatives for graduates. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will establish a Graduate Employment Scheme that provides employment opportunities for graduates.

d) Divergence in approaches to Education: Despite this shared recognition to education by both parties, their approaches to education policy differ in focus and emphasis. The APC manifesto emphasizes the need to revitalize the education sector by improving infrastructure, increasing access, and promoting quality. According to the APC manifesto, the party will improve the education sector by investing in infrastructure, increasing access, and promoting quality through innovative approaches such as technology-enabled learning. This approach recognizes that education is a critical area that requires significant investment to ensure that Nigerian children receive a quality education. In contrast, the PDP manifesto places a stronger emphasis on free education as a means of increasing access and promoting social equity. The PDP manifesto notes, the party will make education free from primary to secondary schools' level to ensure that every Nigerian child has access to quality education regardless of their socio-economic background.

e) Agricultural Development: The APC and PDP ideologies also differ in their approach to agriculture. The APC manifesto emphasizes the need to promote agricultural development by providing credit facilities and improving infrastructure. In contrast, the PDP manifesto prioritizes agricultural transformation by promoting mechanized farming and increasing agricultural productivity. APC's approach to agricultural development is centered on a market-oriented, private sector-driven strategy. The party believes that the government should play a facilitative role, providing an enabling environment for farmers to produce and entrepreneurs to invest in the agricultural sector. Oladele (2020) observed that, APC advocates for increased private sector investment in agriculture, recognizing that the sector has the potential to create jobs, stimulate

economic growth, and increase foreign exchange earnings; believes that markets should play a crucial role in determining what crops are produced and how they are distributed, rather than relying on government subsidies or control. APC also prioritizes the development of agricultural value chains, including processing, storage, and transportation, to reduce post-harvest losses and increase the competitiveness of Nigerian agricultural products.

On the other hand, PDP's approach to agricultural development is centered on a more state-led strategy. The party believes that the government has a critical role to play in guiding and directing the sector. PDP's manifesto emphasizes increased government intervention in agriculture, including providing subsidies, input support, and credit facilities to farmers. It also prioritizes food security as a critical aspect of national security and believes that the government should take a proactive role in ensuring that Nigerians have access to sufficient food. PDP believes that state-owned enterprises can play a crucial role in driving agricultural development by providing services such as input supply, processing, and marketing. It emphasizes the importance of investing in research and extension services to improve crop yields, disease resistance, and pest management.

f) Security strategy: APC and PDP have presented manifestos that outline their approaches to national security in Nigeria. While both parties share some similarities, there are significant differences in their philosophies, priorities, and strategies. APC's approach to national security is centered on a holistic and multidimensional framework that emphasizes the need for a robust and sustainable approach to ensure the safety and well-being of citizens. The party believes that national security is not solely the responsibility of the military or law enforcement agencies but requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders, including government, civil society, and the private sector. APC believes that strong institutions, particularly the judiciary, legislature, and executive, are critical to upholding the rule of law and promoting national security.

The party advocates for the strengthening of intelligence gathering capabilities to detect and prevent internal and external threats. APC prioritizes capacity building for the military and law enforcement agencies to enhance their effectiveness in responding to security challenges. The party emphasizes the importance of engaging with local communities to build trust and gather intelligence, recognizing that community policing is crucial to addressing local security concerns. In contrast, PDP's approach to national security is centered on a more traditional and militaristic approach, emphasizing the role of the military in maintaining national security. The party prioritizes strengthening the Nigerian Army, Navy, Air Force, and other defense agencies to enhance their capabilities in defending the country against external threats. It places a strong emphasis on combating terrorism, recognizing it as a major threat to national security. PDP emphasizes the importance of securing Nigeria's borders to prevent infiltration by terrorists, smugglers, and other undesirable elements. The party recognizes the link between economic security and national security, advocating for policies that promote economic growth, job creation, and social welfare.

g) Infrastructural development: Despite the shared goal of prioritizing infrastructural development in Nigeria, the APC and PDP manifestos demonstrate distinct approaches to achieving this goal. Both parties recognize the importance of infrastructure in driving economic growth, creating jobs, and improving the quality of life for citizens. The PDP manifesto emphasizes the need for a holistic approach to infrastructure development, focusing on both physical and social infrastructure. According to the PDP manifesto, the party will invest in a comprehensive infrastructure development program that includes transportation, energy, water, education, and healthcare. This approach acknowledges that infrastructure development is not limited to physical infrastructure alone, but also includes social infrastructure that supports the

well-being of citizens. In contrast, the APC manifesto places a stronger emphasis on physical infrastructure development, particularly in the areas of transportation and energy. The APC manifesto notes, the party will invest in modern transportation infrastructure, including roads, railways, and airports, as well as energy infrastructure to ensure sustainable power supply. This approach recognizes the importance of physical infrastructure in supporting economic growth and development.

Table 4.2: Differences in Manifestos and Ideology between the APC and PDP

Area	APC Manifesto	PDP Manifesto	Difference
Economic Policy	Market-based economy, reduce taxes, increase investment incentives	State-led growth, increase funding for infrastructure and public sector projects	Different approach to economic development
Security	Strengthen national security by increasing funding for defense and security agencies	Promote regional security cooperation by strengthening regional bodies such as ECOWAS	Different approach to security
Corruption	Establish an independent corruption and anti-corruption agency to tackle corruption and ensure transparency and accountability	Reform the judiciary and strengthen institutions to combat corruption	Different approach to combating corruption
Education	Improve access to education by increasing funding for schools and promoting private sector involvement	Provide free education for all Nigerians, increase funding for education sector	Different approach to education
Agriculture	Promote agricultural development by providing credit facilities and improving infrastructure	Promote agricultural transformation by promoting mechanized farming and increasing agricultural productivity	Different approach to agriculture
Investment	Increase investment in various sectors, promote private sector involvement, and improve business environment	Increase funding for infrastructure and public sector projects, promote state-led investment	Different approach to investment
Healthcare	Improve healthcare infrastructure by increasing funding for hospitals, clinics, and healthcare facilities;	Improve healthcare infrastructure by increasing funding for hospitals, clinics, and healthcare facilities; prioritize public-private partnerships in healthcare delivery	Different approach to healthcare delivery

	prioritize primary healthcare care		
Infrastructure Development	Improve transportation infrastructure, energy supply, and water supply through public-private partnerships	Improve transportation infrastructure, energy supply, and water supply through state-led development of infrastructure projects	Different approach to infrastructure development
Poverty Reduction	Reduce poverty by increasing access to education, healthcare, and job opportunities; promote private sector involvement in poverty reduction initiatives	Reduce poverty by increasing access to education, healthcare, and job opportunities; promote state-led poverty reduction initiatives	Different approach to poverty reduction
Job Creation	Create jobs by promoting private sector growth, increasing funding for small-scale enterprises, and improving business environment	Create jobs by promoting state-led development of industries, increasing funding for public sector projects, and improving job opportunities in the public sector	Different approach to job creation

Source: PDP and APC Secretariat, Abuja, 2024

Therefore, the similarities and differences between APC and PDP manifestos and ideologies in Nigeria reflect fundamentally different approaches to governance and development. While both parties share some common goals, such as promoting economic growth, improving infrastructure, and addressing security challenges, their approaches differ significantly. The differences between APC and PDP manifestos and ideologies are not just about policy prescriptions, but also about fundamentally different worldviews and values. While APC prioritizes economic growth and capitalist approach, PDP prioritizes social welfare, equality, and government responsibility to the citizens. It is also important to note that the differences between APC and PDP manifestos and ideologies are not necessarily mutually exclusive. A balanced approach that combines elements of both may be more effective in addressing Nigeria's complex challenges. Ultimately, the most important thing is for Nigerians to engage in a critical and informed discussion about the choices before them and to hold their leaders accountable for delivering on their promises.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study titled Political Parties and Ideology in Nigeria: A Comparative Study of People's Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressives Congress (APC) presents a comparative analysis of the ideologies and manifestos of two major political parties in Nigeria. The study is motivated by the observation that both parties have significantly influenced Nigeria's political landscape, particularly since the establishment of democracy in 1999. The research adopts a desk review methodology and critically examines the historical context of political parties in Nigeria, particularly focusing on the evolution of the PDP and APC since their formation. The study identifies the objectives of elucidating the professed ideologies of both parties, examining the similarities and differences between their respective manifestos, and analyzing the degree of adherence to their stated ideologies in practice.

Drawing from a rich collection of secondary sources, including party manifestos and existing literature, the analysis reveals that both parties espouse overlapping ideologies in areas such as economic policy, national security, and education, while diverging in their approaches to governance, economic strategies, and social responsibilities. Both PDP and APC manifestos emphasize economic development, national security, and educational advancement. However, the PDP advocates for a more state-led model of economic growth, while the APC promotes a market-oriented approach that prioritizes private sector growth. The ideological underpinnings of the parties illustrate significant divergences. The APC's ideology leans towards conservative economic reforms and nationalism, while the PDP embodies a mix of liberal democratic values with a focus on social equity and public welfare. Although both parties profess similar

commitments to combating corruption, enhancing healthcare, and fostering education, their effectiveness in translating these commitments into practice has been questioned.

The PDP faced substantial criticism over its governance record during its years in power, particularly regarding corruption and economic management. Conversely, while the APC has made strides in highlighting anti-corruption efforts, allegations of corruption still persist within its ranks. The study finds that the PDP historically emphasized social welfare programs, whereas the APC has aimed at creating a conducive environment for investment and job creation. Both parties recognize the need for poverty reduction but differ in their strategies, with APC leaning towards enabling private sector solutions and PDP advocating for more direct government intervention. A significant barrier identified includes the lack of consistency and adherence to ideological principles, as political expediency often overshadows genuine commitment to manifestos. Furthermore, issues of ethnic loyalty, regional politics, and corruption undermine ideological clarity and effectiveness.

5.2 Recommendations

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

The PDP and APC should strive to reinforce their ideological commitments by ensuring that their manifestos are not only aspirational but also actionable. This could involve institutionalizing mechanisms for accountability, thereby facilitating adherence to manifesto promises.

Political parties in Nigeria should enhance their engagement with the public, creating robust platforms for dialogue and feedback mechanisms. This can help align their policies more closely with citizens' needs and expectations.

Policies aimed at combating corruption need to be prioritized, with both parties advocating for reforms that strengthen institutions such as the judiciary, electoral bodies, and anti-corruption

agencies. Transparency, electoral integrity, and accountability must be central tenets of their governance approach.

Political parties in Nigeria should emphasize inclusivity in policy formulation, ensuring that marginalized groups, including women and youth, are adequately represented in political processes. This inclusivity could enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of governance.

Political parties must focus on sustainable socio-economic development by promoting local industries, addressing unemployment through targeted programs, and ensuring equitable resource distribution to reduce income inequality.

Additional emphasis should be placed on educational advancement as a crucial factor in national development. Both parties should strive for educational reforms that address quality, access, and infrastructure in educational institutions.

Future political strategies should be grounded in evidence-based policies that are informed by data and research. This could improve the effectiveness and adaptability of programs in response to changing socio-economic conditions.

5.3 Conclusion

The comparative analysis of the PDP and APC illuminates the complexity of political party dynamics in Nigeria. While both parties share some fundamental goals regarding national development and governance, their diverging ideologies and approaches to policy implementation reflect broader challenges in Nigeria's political landscape. The dialogue regarding political ideologies in Nigeria reveals a pressing need for political parties to bolster their commitment to their manifestos and ideologies, ensuring that they resonate with the populace's aspirations for effective governance, peace, and development. In light of the findings, it is evident that the political landscape in Nigeria will continue to be shaped by the ideologies and actions of the leading parties.

For democracy to flourish, it is critical that political parties in Nigeria evolve beyond mere election machinery and foster ideologies that prioritize the welfare of citizens over political expediency.

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