

**THE EFFECTS OF INTRA-PARTY CONFLICTS ON ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA:**

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**By**

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## CERTIFICATION

This Dissertation titled, **The Effects of Intra-party Conflicts on Elections in Nigeria**, has been approved as meeting the requirements for the award of Masters Degree in Election and Party Politics (MEPP), UNIBEN-NILDS Postgraduate Programmes.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research work is dedicated to the Almighty God whose mercy knows no bounds and whose love has kept me going.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Content

### Page

Certification

.....i

Dedication

.....ii

Acknowledgement

.....iii

Table of Content

.....iv

Abstract

.....vii

### Chapter One

#### Introduction

1.1 Background to the study.....1

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem  
.....4

1.3 Research Questions  
.....6

1.4 Research Objectives--  
.....6

1.5 Scope of the Study  
.....6

1.6 Significance of the Study	7
-------------------------------	---

**Chapter Two**  
**Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

2.1.1 Conflict	8
2.1.2 Political party	11
2.1.3 Trajectory and Vicissitudes of Intra-party Politics in Nigeria	13
2.1.4 Exploring the complexities of Intra-Party conflicts in Nigeria	17
2.1.5 Promoting Democratic Stability and the Impacts of Political Parties	20
2.1.6 Intra-Party Conflicts and Democratisation in Nigeria	22
2.1.7 Intra-Party Struggle and its Possible Challenges	27
2.1.8 Causes of Intra-Party Conflicts in Nigeria	29
2.1.9 Absence of Internal Democracy	31
2.1.10 Paucity of Political Ideology	34

2.1.11 Internal Democracy and Conflicts in Select Major Political Parties in Nigeria.....	37
2.1.12 Internal Conflicts in the People’s Democratic Party.....	42
2.1.13 Internal Conflicts in the All Progressive Congress from the Inception.....	47
2.1.14 Cross-carpeting and Crisscrossing as Bane to Democratization .....	51
2.1.15 Exploring the Effects of Intra-Party Conflicts on the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria.....	54
2.2	Theoretical Framework.....
2.2.1	Relevance of the Theory.....
	60
	62

**Chapter Three**  
**Research Methodology**

3.1	Research Design.....
	63
3.2	Sampling Technique.....
	67
3.3	Research Method.....
	68

3.4		Research	
Approach.....			68
3.5	Instruments	of	Data
Collection.....			69
3.6	Method	of	Data
Analysis.....			69

**Chapter Four**  
**Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

4.1	Discussion	of	
Findings.....			71

**Chapter Five**  
**Summary, Recommendations and Conclusion**

5.2			
Summary.....			76
5.3		Recommendations	
.....			77
5.4		Conclusion	
.....			78

References



### **Abstract**

Intra-party conflicts within the political parties in Nigeria has been an issue for a long time and thus, has been a major issue to deal with during the Fourth Republic due in part to the lack of internal democracy in the party. Internal democracy describes a wide range of methods for including party members in intra-party deliberation and decision-making. Some advocate of internal democracy argued that parties using internally democratic procedures are likely to select more capable and appealing leaders, to have more policies, and as result, to enjoy rancour free, peace and greater electoral success. However, the nature and patterns of party politics especially in the fourth republic have caused a lot of crises and conflicts that have gone beyond the shore of the political party and thus, escalated to the elections. Thus, this study probed questions of what is the nature of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria? What are the factors contributing to intra-party conflicts in Nigeria? And importantly, what are the effects of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria? These issues were interrogated against the backdrop of prebendalism, weakness, corruption, lack of internal democracy, lack of ideology, festering crises and overwhelming nuances that detract political parties from fulfilling their sublime function of deepening good governance.

The study adopted mixed research design, consisting primary and secondary data. It is a research design that combined the strength of the methods to investigate and dig beyond the surface. It provided an in-depth discussion with nine (9) stakeholders drawn from major political parties as APC (1) and PDP (1), representative of INEC (2), some members of election tribunals (3) and some community-based organisations (2). It also relied on relevant similar studies from academic journals, books, archival documents, newspapers, news magazines, and other secondary sources. While descriptive was used to analyse the interview, content analysis was used for most secondary data.

Findings showed that intra-party conflicts have heightened and affected election administration in Nigeria. The major parties, PDP and APC are unable to manage the difference and contour among the members and various groups of the party which has snowballed to the elections. It also identified major contributing factors causing intra-party conflicts in Nigeria as issues of leadership recruitments, the selection of candidates for general elections, the rising magnitude of political vagrancy on the basis of selfish and parochial interests, the high level of party indiscipline and intolerance, lack of transparency in the party financial administration, lack of clear ideologies, money bag politics, use of unguarded and foul languages, etc.

The study recommended among others strengthening of the political parties informed with clear ideology, transparency, principles of internal democracy and strong and reliable mechanism to manage its crises effectively. While the study concludes that intra-party conflicts accords a bad image to a political party which weakens party's capacity to win an election, it also underscores that conflicts cannot be absolutely avoided in a political party with multitudes, for such party is prone to experiencing divergent opinions and interests towards a political cause.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Representative democracies are partly a mirage without the active operations of political parties. The articulation of public opinions and interests can be facilitated by parties, and while parties handle political leadership, they enhance policy alternatives and equally present coherent alternatives for the purpose of electioneering. It has been observed that, in the recent times, many political parties in Nigeria find it daunting to employ an open system that will not only allow members of the party to participate in the decision making but also give them restrained opportunity to contest in elections under the party's platform (Aleyomi, 2013). It can be averred that this socio-political restriction is treacherous and has brought about acrimony and cross-carpeting in many political parties in Nigeria. So, intra-party democracy and unity are sacrosanct to the maintenance of orderly society in any democratic setup.

In the words of Scarrow (2000), it is established that democracy needs strong and sustainable political parties with the capacity to represent citizens and provide policy choices that demonstrate their ability to govern for the public good. The incessantly increasing discombobulations prompted by the frequent dissensions within political parties which leads to disconnect between citizens and their elected political leaders, coupled with a growing sophistication of undemocratic forces, political parties continue to experience challenges with proper selection and election of apt candidates for political positions.

It is worthy of note, therefore, that democracy cannot be detached from this research effort as it takes a bird's-eye view of the implications of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria. Democracy together with political parties with vibrant and reasonable manifestoes and ideologies are crucial tenets that prompt good governance in many societal contexts. As observed by Pwanagba (2015), without ideologically-based, strong and independent political

parties, good governance is likely not be deepened. In other words, political parties are meant to serve as a potent platform to deliver good governance through viable policies that can improve on the quality of life of the populace, not a conduit through which politicians contend for just political power. Representative democracy swirls around popular participation on the part of the electorates while the elected representatives are expected to exhibit absolute accountability and transparency. Inevitably, political party remains the core platform where the actual operation of a democratic system must be materialized.

However, a conflict within a political party is harming because it invariably leads to some members selling out to other parties and annihilating the overall mission of the party, and some members may just decide to leave the party. Conflicts in a political party, as a social group, might be inevitable due largely to people's natural tendency to have disparities in opinion and interest whenever they associate with one another, whether or not they pursue a common interest. Irrefutably, members of a party or group are liable to foreground personal interests over group interests for self-gratification, which in turn could easily occasion clashes with personalities and sentimental affiliations. Dudley (1973) claims that one basic attribute that is common to every human organization is the interaction and interdependence among their members. Invariably, the varying interests of party members are controlled by political parties for the purpose of realizing a broadly unified front to achieve the objectives of the party. While some others will be promoting self-interest which may results to unintended crises and conflicts.

In Nigeria, electoral politics has been so perturbing a phenomenon such that politicians and political authorities alike tend to desperately employ despicable shenanigans just to maintain or accomplish political power. For this reason, the feasibility of experiencing anarchy, impunity, atrocities and violence becomes inevitable experiences in the process of electioneering. To corroborate this, Diamond (1984, p. 905) cited Ake who had observed that:

‘The premium on political power is so high that we are prone to take the most extreme measures in order to win and maintain political power, our energy tends to be channeled into the struggle for power to the detriment of economically productive efforts’. In other words, the Nigerian politician’s mindset is revolved around the necessity to have total control over the resources of the control by just clinching political power at all costs and with limited consideration of a fellow citizen who is entitled to such privileges as well. Over the years, there has been noticeable upsurge in election-related disputes before the holding of elections; and after conclusion of elections and declaration of election results. These phenomena have immense implications for the electoral process of the country. Elections are an integral part of the democratic system without which no holder of an otherwise elective office can claim *de jure* legitimacy (Eline and Alexander, 2014).

Although there is obvious conception of elections as a democratic means of selecting candidates who are saddled with the responsibility of steering the affairs of a state; political parties play prominent roles in educating, mobilizing and organizing their members to participate actively and unanimously in the political process of electioneering. The actualization of elections is, of course, determined by political parties where candidates emerge for contentions at polls. However, the occurrence of malice, sentiments and conflicts which may be instigated by self-aggrandised motives within political parties is most likely to unleash unbecoming implications on elections. This study, therefore, seeks to research into the effects of intra-party conflicts on peaceful, transparent and credible elections in Nigeria in order to underscore the necessity to address the factors that propel such conflicts.

## **1.2 Statement of the Research Problem**

Inter-party conflict is a recurrent conflict or struggle in popular parties globally where there are variegated ideological inclinations, as humans naturally have the tendency to disagree on issues that affect their sociopolitical makeup. In many political parties, it has become

ostensible that the sentimental convictions of most of the party members clash in many occasions and result eventually in unending conflicts that affect the selection and/or election of candidates who would govern under the umbrella of the party.

The differences are springboards of personal motives and ambition, bigotry, crisis of confidence, factionalisation, power control and what have you. Christopher (2013) asserts briefly that it is the internal party conflict that makes democracy possible and thick, thus these variegated groups wearing different ideological colours that come together to form parties. Given the internal dynamics of the parties, and the inherent ideological contradictions, political observers do predict inevitable conflict in party formations.

Even though there has been tremendous increment in the number of studies that border on various aspects of leadership selections and the use of primaries in the processes (Cross and Pilet, 2015; Pilet and Cross 2014; Cross and Blais, 2012; Kenig, 2009; Sandri *et al.*, 2015), these studies are delimited to only developing tools for measuring, explaining and classifying the employment of different selection processes or study their impacts on different aspects, such as electoral performance, competition (i.e., the number of candidates and incumbency advantages), leadership profile, approval rating and cohesion.

In fact, it is equally maintained that the implications of intra-party conflicts on party membership and specifically the perception of the party membership itself remain very little studied (Sandri, 2012, Scarrow and Gezgor, 2010), albeit different scholars have also underscored the need to understudy their implications on the party membership (van Holsteyn and Koole, 2009; Bille, 2001).

Similarly, Freiherr von Nostitz (2016) focused his research effort on the impact of primaries on members who joined before and after the introduction of primaries, reemphasizing that to fully understand how changes in selection rules affect membership, there is need to strengthen the party membership's perspective in the intra-party democracy debate by

comparing changes in membership characteristics both over time as well as between existing and new members. He underscores largely the manner in which the process of selecting party candidates affects each member of the party which inspires the necessity to affirm the party members' traits. Omoregei and Aaron (2019) researched into the trajectory of intra-party pre-election litigations and advocated for a reinvention of previous Supreme Court jurisprudence which views such disputes as political questions for which courts should decline jurisdiction.

The research lacuna is rather interesting as most of the research efforts on intra-party conflicts swirl around the effect of the conflicts on the dividends of democracy to the masses, the aftermath of the dissensions within parties on party members, the processes of primary elections among others. Meanwhile, there has been limited or no research effort geared towards uncovering how intra-party conflicts affect the process of electioneering in Nigeria. This is a lacuna that cannot be undermined as it relates inevitably to the democratic dispensation of the state which grants citizens the opportunity to elect apposite and responsible leaders for better representation. This study, therefore, seeks to research into the effects of intra-party conflicts on peaceful, transparent and credible elections in Nigeria in order to underscore the necessity to address the factors that instigate such conflicts.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

Centrally, what is the effect of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria? Specifically, the study is guided by the following specific questions:

- i. What is the nature of intra-party conflicts in APC and PDP in Nigeria?
- ii. What are the factors contributing to intra-party conflicts in APC and PDP in Nigeria?
- iii. What are the effects of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria?

#### **1.3 Research Objectives**

Generally, the objective of the research to understand the effects of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria in order to undergird the necessity to address the inciting factors.

Specifically, the following are the specific objectives of the study:

- i. To examine the nature of intra-party conflicts in APC and PDP in Nigeria.
- ii. To evaluate the factors that incite intra-party conflicts in APC and PDP in Nigeria.
- iii. To assess the effects of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This research work is an examination of the effect of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria, considering the necessity to emphasise major factors that propel and aggravate such conflicts and the possible mechanisms to adopt in order to address the causative agents of the conflicts to give room for democracy. The study is conducted on the 2019 general election in Nigeria with particular focus on All Progressive Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in order to unleash the effects of intra-party conflicts on elections. The two parties are picked because they are the major political parties in Nigeria. The study equally delves into the feasibility of the internal conflicts to affect the masses' volitions in the process of general electioneering, beyond the circumference of political parties.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Intra-party conflicts have been incessant occurrences in political parties across the global space; and the case of Nigeria seems to be worse in the recent times as cases of factionalisation continues to sweep the integrity and democracy of these parties. This research effort is therefore significant as it assures the bolstering of available literature on intra-party politics and intra-party conflicts in APC and PDP in Nigeria. This research work equally exposes the sentimental inclinations of influential (and floor) party members that effectuate factions and clashes of interests within a political party.



In a similar vein, the study explores the effects of these intra-party conflicts on the process of electioneering as they affect the choices of the masses in their will to exercise franchise in Nigeria. Hence, the study may serve as eye-opener to the masses and some high-profile individuals, especially political parties, politicians and other related stakeholders, in society with regards to the manner in which their sentimental interests which lead to conflicts affects apt materialization of democracy in the political reality of the country – Nigeria. Thus, it will serve as a scientific contribution to the discourse of party politics in Nigeria.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter entailed the review of literature as they related to the current study on the intra-party conflicts and the effects they have on election in Nigeria as a country. The chapter justifies the contributions of many scholars towards the major issue being discussed in this study, and also expatiates on the conceptualization of intra-party politics and conflicts and how they affect election. In lieu of this, we explored and reviewed the trajectory and vicissitudes of intra-party politics in Nigeria, complexities of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria, promoting democratic stability and the impacts of political parties, intra-party conflicts and democratization in Nigeria, intra-party struggle and the challenges of good governance, causes of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria, and lastly the theoretical framework of the study. However, this chapter was divided into three (3) major parts: Conceptual Literature Review, Empirical and Theoretical framework.

#### **2.1 Conceptual Review**

### 2.1.1 Conflict

There is no consensus on the precise definition of conflict (Thomas, 1992) and, according to Pruitt (1998); there are almost as many definitions of conflict as there are authors writing about this concept. Notwithstanding the multiplicity of the definitions of the concept of conflict, we shall be examining a few definitions of the concept in this segment. Rubin, *et al.* (1994) defines conflict —as a perceived divergence of interests or beliefs that the parties ‘current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously. It can manifest itself in many forms, some of which may be violent and inflict pain and suffering on both parties in conflict and to other people who may not be directly involved, due to its spillover effect. Wolff (2006:2) also observes that —conflict is a situation in which two or more actors pursue incompatible, yet from their individual perspectives entirely just goals. Conflict —is a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect, something that the first party cares about (Robbins, 1998). The aim of every party in a conflict situation is to achieve values or goals dear to it. Hence, each of the party in conflict employ moves and counter-moves to displace each other as they both struggle to achieve the valued resources, which are the objects of contention.

Furthermore, conflict occurs when individuals or groups are entangled in the pursuit of incompatible goals. However, conflict has the potential to assume functional or dysfunctional outcomes, depending on how the parties in a conflict perceive the conflict and respond to it. On one hand, if the perception of the parties to conflict is positive, then their response to the conflict would be constructive and positive - vice versa. Functional conflicts engender creativity, positive growth and development, mutual understanding and healthy relationship between individuals and groups. According to Tjosvold (1997), ‘conflict may be perceived as inevitable in successful organizations’, because conflicts serve as a mechanism for engineering social relationship in groups and organisations for positive growth and increased productivity.

While on the other hand, dysfunctional conflicts causes disunity, hinder progress and development, affect decision making, create animosity and hatred between individuals and within or between groups.

For the purpose of this research work, it is important that an attempt is made to define intra-party conflict. From a political view point, Kenneth Boulding (1963: 5) defines conflict —as a situation of competition in which the parties are aware of the incompatibility of potential future positions and in which each party wishes to occupy a position that is incompatible with the wishes of the other. This definition vividly describes the nature of intra-party conflict. but it is still necessary to ask, what is intra-party conflict? Intra-party conflict can be defined as a conflict which occurs when members of the same political party pursue incompatible political goals or try to influence the decision making process of the party to their advantage. Intra-party conflict often plays out in the selection of members for elective positions both within and outside the party.

Political party as a social group cannot avoid conflict because where ever people come together to associate even when they do so to pursue common interest, tendencies are that members of such group would pursue their personal interests rather than the group's interest. However, what is important is that the group members 'interests should be subordinated to the larger interest of the group. As Dudley (1973:8) argues that —one basic characteristic common to all human organization is the interaction and interdependence among their members. Usually, political parties try to aggregate the varying interests of their members and articulate a unified front for achieving party's objectives.

Boucek (2009) identifies three types of intraparty conflicts or factionalism, which include cooperative, competitive and degenerative. 'Looking at the nature of all the three, cooperative factionalisation is most preferable because it creates the incentive for the constructive resolution of conflicts between party members. As Boucek (2003) argue that

repeated interactions between factions foster the emergence of cooperative norms‘, which may create the incentive for the parties in conflict to embrace compromise in settling their incompatible interests.

### **2.1.2 Political Party**

A political party refers to —any group of politically active persons outside a government who organize to capture government by nominating and electing officials who thereby control the operations of government and determine its policies| (Lemay, 2001). Political parties provide a veritable platform for conveying representation into elective offices in democratic systems. Essentially, political parties perform various functions in ensuring the growth and continuity of the democratisation process. According to a research conducted by The Friedrich Ebert Foundation Centre for Governance and Development (CGD) on institutionalizing political parties in Kenya published in (2010), political parties are the vehicles of representative democracy. They play several critical roles to make representative democracy a reality.

These include:

- a) Representing societal interests within the state (by participating in Parliament);
- b) Socializing political leaders on the principles of democracy and democratic participation;
- c) Carrying out political education and communication (by providing information on which the voters may base their selection of candidates before them);
- d) Carrying out political mobilization and encouraging the public to cast their votes in elections;
- e) Recruiting political leaders;
- f) Aggregating and articulating interests;
- g) Promoting pluralistic debates by presenting alternative policy platforms; and
- h) Integrating the diverse groups within a country into a cohesive nation.

In the same vein, the various functions of political parties are:

- i. Aggregate and articulate needs and problems as identified by members and supporters;

- ii.** Socialise and educate voters and citizens in the functioning of political parties and electoral system and generating general political values;
- iii.** Balance opposing demands and convert them into general policies;
- iv.** Activate and mobilise citizens into participating in political decisions and transforming their opinions into viable policy options;
- v.** Channel public opinion from citizens to government; and
- vi.** Recruit and train candidates for public office.

Furthermore, Almond (2000) argues that political parties have two major, but multifaceted, functions in any democracy, these are variables according to him are anchored on Input-Output functional variables and the historical method that provides a perspective background for discerning party politics vis-à-vis the problems associated with political instability in the Nigerian State (Omodia, 2010). Almond's Input-Output functions constitute seven functional variables which could be classified under two sections as input functions and output functions.

Generally, political Parties serve as an index through which democratic governance could be compared in States, in that, the structure and operation of party politics in polities tend to serve as measuring rod for determining the fragility or otherwise of democratic systems (Omodia 2010). These numerous functions performed by political parties in the democratic system make them vibrant and indispensable players in the democratisation process.

### **2.1.3 The Trajectory and Vicissitudes of Intra-party Politics in Nigeria**

Admittedly, politics is largely attached to the activities of some notable individuals that are bent on administering the will and resources of the society in order to ensure orderliness and tranquility with or without self-interest. Sentiment, personal interest and volitional proclivities cannot be expunged from the activities of those who swim in the pool of the political activities of a society. While politics relates substantially to the general issues that affect all and sundry, it obviously springs from political parties where fundamental decisions are made before being extended to the general public in a democratic society.

Since the postulations of Downs (1957), political parties have been configured to encompass unitary actors while there has been absolute neglect of intra-party politics in various contexts (Berker, 1958). In spite of this neglect, political parties are expected to select their best candidates for impressive and positive results during elections, since the defining moments of democracy still remains the general election. The pertinence of intraparty politics has therefore been revisited in the recent times, especially by Caillaud and Tirole (2002) who opine that parties can play crucial roles as a reliable and best channel to relay educative information to the electorates, and particularly, political party's organization and the gravity of intra-party politics and competition are indispensable.

The incessantly evolving character of the Nigerian political framework from the colonial era to the present period is evincing in the unstable character of the country's party politics which affects not only the leaders but also the common members. Basically, two political parties from the Northern and the Western regions which were the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and the Action Group (AG). These two dominant political parties were unabashedly ethnical and regionalised in both purpose and intent (Obayi, n.d.). The reason being that the parties prioritized regional interests, issues and concerns more than the national

politics as they wanted to see their various regions develop in terms of infrastructure, education and all, before conceptualizing national concerns. Lewis (2007, p. iii) has cautiously accentuated while corroborating the foregoing that one can comfortably posit that the last decade of the colonial era and the first decade of independence manifested a mixed grill of ethnic, clientelist and civic tendencies on the part of leading gladiators in the party system.

During this period, ethno-political tendencies were abound such that the three regions were made to be absolutely sentimental with their cultural and political orientations, and this cannot be separated from the political shenanigans of the colonial intruders. In a succinctly detailed historical exposition, Tyoden (2012, p. 5) asserts that:

In the cause of advancing its own goals and interests in Nigeria, the colonial authorities had deliberately encouraged the three dominant ethnic groups at the three regions – Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba – to develop and assert their separate social, cultural and even political identities and to pursue the issue of political self-determination from their separate, exclusive, regional-sectional perspectives.

Hence, the existing socio-cultural groups as of then facilitated the creation of the NPC and the AG in order to enhance ethnic identities and interests. Particularly, these parties made sure that political powers within their regions were claimed and utilized by only members of their ethnic backgrounds (Obayi, n.d.). This identity construction eventually led to the first ethnic-inclined intra-party political crisis in the Western region where leaders of the political parties combated for the premiership position at the regional level.

When Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe who was the leader of the National Council for Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) wanted to assume the position of the Premier of Western region, Yoruba members of the party decided to cross-carpet to the Action Group. One of the Yoruba defectors asserted, as submitted by Mbah (2011, p. 3) that: ‘I don’t want to be part of a situation where Yoruba land would be set on fire, so I am crossing over to the other side’. This statement of



course proclaimed the defectors' crossover to the other party, the Action Group. It is evident, therefore, that the major reason Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe was denied the premiership position in the western region was his ethnic inclination, without even considering the fact that he had dwelled in Lagos and was constitutionally entitled to the position in the west. In a similar vein, Zik went to the east to contend for the premiership position which made the members shove aside EyoIta because he was an Efik, not Ibo. This staunch desperation on the part of Zik and his fellow Ibo people to make him the premier of the region further aggravated intra-party conflict within the NCNC.

Similarly, in the northern region, the literal marginalization of the minorities in the political reality of the region, coupled with the radical orientation of Aminu Kano form the basis for intra-party politics which in turn snowballed into conflicts of interest and self-aggrandizement. Obayi (n.d.) points out that Aminu Kano had created another political party, the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) to further augment his move to echo the pseudo socialist ideology of the *Talakawa* which pursued the total repudiation of the mainstream feudal identity of Northern political leadership. The marginalization of the Northern minorities by the Hausa-Fulanis caused internal crisis within the Northern People's Congress which eventually prompted the formation of the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) by Joseph Tarka – a rallying figure of the Northern minorities (Mbah, 2011).

Largely, ethnic, tribal, principle and civic affinities and orientation form the basis for intra-party politics in the last quarter of Nigeria's colonial experience. In the first republic, the Action Group experienced a tensed intra-party conflict as Chief Ladoke Akintola left the party with a good number of followers to formulate the Nigerian National Democratic Party which aligned with the Northern people's Congress. Also, a leading Ibo politician, Dr Kingsley Mbadiwe broke ranks, and together with other defectors, formed a new political party

christened the Democratic Party of Nigeria Citizens (NDNC) which formed alliance with the Awolowo-led Action Group during the 1959 general election (Mbah, 2011).

The complexity of intra-party politics in the first republic was then resolved, to some extent, during the second republic to reinvigorate the national political ideology of Nigeria's party system. To buttress this, Obayi (n.d.) establishes that a fundamental idea to be unveiled about intra-party crisis in the second republic is that even though parties of the first republic were largely re-labeled as new political parties, it was substantially ameliorated by both global and national forces. The General Election of 1983 marked the inception of indiscriminate defections of party members most especially the opposition parties.

What has now been humbly accepted as the Third Republic in Nigeria's political history was the period 1991 – 1993 when the Babangida's regime inaugurated a diarchic governance system, mainly at the state level, supposedly preparatory to completing the civilianization programs slated for the later part of 1993. Two political parties, created by decree, by the Babangida government – the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republic Convention (NRC) became the organizational harbingers of party politics in that era. Intra-party politics accordingly had circumscribed institutional contexts plus a not so disinterested military regime at the national level that regularly called the shots Obayi (n.d.). It should also be noted that Babangida's military government designed their constitutions and manifestoes, coupled with the stipulation of the rules and regulations that govern membership and the structure and operation of the parties, alongside with the provision of generous grants for their sustenance (Tyoden, 2013).

All these political shenanigans and discombobulations from the last quarter of the colonial period to the first republic and the present political dispensation are most largely connected to the political leadership ideology of Nigerian politicians that is swamped with sentiments, personal interests, influence, self-aggrandisement, and favouritism. Party politics

could hence be related to inevitable contestation for political power between or among the political elites. Meanwhile, Landman (2005) refers to contestation as the uncertain peaceful competition that is crucial for any democratic rule, a principle which presumes the legitimacy of some opposition, the right to challenge the incumbents and the feasibility of free, fair and credible elections and a fairly consolidated party system.

To materialise an unstinting portrayal of intra-party politics cum crisis in Nigeria, it is much more apposite to uncover indicators of crisis scenarios. These indicators are not limited to: alteration within the ranks of party membership at all levels of the federal structure, high turnover in the election and/or appointment of members of the executive committees of political parties, the breakup of parties and subsequent formation of factions, and the manifestation of party crisis is rampant defections across parties.

#### **2.1.4 Exploring the Complexities of Intra-Party Conflicts in Nigeria**

It is irrefutable that the gamut of activities that are carried out in various political parties require that members of the will have series of common and variegated opinions and positions over issues that unfold with the precinct of the party. While some members maybe altruistic enough to stand for the unity and progress of the party for the sake of the masses, some may contrarily conflict on the basis of self-interest and self-aggrandisement in democratic governance.

Intra-party politics portends a situation where conflict and cooperation with factions exist and a meeting point is being sought between the two such that political crisis or conflict is deem inevitable among party members, hence avoiding escalations. Snyder and Ting (2002) are of the intelligent opinion that party unity enhances party strength in the electoral arena. In other words, conflicts among members of a party have horrendous implications on the democratic campaigns of the party where unity could avail a unified front in the wider political arena; and principally, all group members benefit if the group acts unanimously in defense of

its shared interests, but even moderately sensible members might hesitate before joining a possibly fatal fray (Gould, 1999). Political actors may feign their obstinacy towards the realization of their personal interest at all costs, they in most cases care about the aftermaths of their internal conflicts with regards to votes, office and policy across time and space.

From a political view point, conflict as defined by Kenneth Boulding (1963) can be referred to as a situation of competition where the parties are not oblivious of the incompatibility of potential future positions and in which each party aspires for a position that is incompatible with the whims and caprices of others. Albeit this explanation apparently demystifies the concept of intra-party conflict as it may occur in various political contexts, it is pertinent to draw on it to particularly define intra-party conflict as a situation where party members become absolutely contradictory in the pursuit of political goals, while they try to influence process of making decision in order to curry favour and advantage to their sides.

Conflict could automatically refer to the politics of power in any association; it is a sort of interaction between people where some control others and make them adhere to rules of engagement. Dudley (1978, p. 8) buttresses this when he posits that one basic feature often attributed to human organisation 'is the interaction and interdependence among their members'. Interdependence, hence, breeds contempt in various forms as some members will counteract group orders as unfavourable if it does not align with or favour their wills. For this reason, conflict could be inferred as inevitable in society especially as people are invariably denied fundamental needs for identity, security, recognition, equality, participation and dignity. Conflict is also feasible when the performance of a government policy is brimming with prejudice and favouritism by supporting certain individuals and group (Aleyomi, 2013). The intricacies of intra-party conflicts cannot be undermined as it is equally close to being a necessity, at times, for a perfect election of an appropriate candidate within the gamut of a political party. Besley, Persson and Sturm (2006) also attest to this as they suggest that lopsided

political support and weak political competition may spill over into party selection of low-quality political candidates who are more susceptible to influence by special interests. This portends that, conflicts within and outside political parties should not be completely regarded as a bane to their capacity to anchor the sociopolitical reality of a state, but a somewhat ironical catalyst to heighten the feasibility to effectuate a worthwhile and vibrant candidate who would represent the party without any iota of fear or favour.

There has been an increase in cases of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria since the commencement of the Fourth Republic (1999) which was the birth of absolute democratic dispensation in the country. Both inter and intra party conflicts have been recurring, and these conflicts ostensibly result in unmitigated factionalisation within and among political parties across different levels of government in Nigeria, serving as inroads to the progress, growth and development of Nigeria. Olaniyan (2009) has also emphasized that the Fourth Republic has recorded bitter and acrimonious tussles within parties as well as violent inter-party and intra-party relations. No doubts, the conviction that politics is the most profitable engagement in Nigeria might have further heightened the recurring nature of intra-party (and inter-party) conflicts in Nigeria.

This sociopolitical orientation is aggravated by the uninhibited culture of disregard for the rule of law which is popular among Nigerian political elites. It is rather unbecomingly unfortunate that political parties remain the most reliable conduit for Nigerian political elites to pursue and clinch power through elections which are flooded with all sorts of rigging and malpractices. For Jude and Ika (2013), the rationale is that the occupancy of political power gives the political elites the direct access to primitive accumulation of public wealth for their selfish gains and this has bolstered the desperation for the accomplishment of political power among political elites. In spite of the seeming inimitable nature of intraparty conflicts in

Nigeria, the Nigerian elites strive to strike a balance in settling their incongruous aspirations and concerns through coalitions or equitable distribution of political positions in the country.

### **2.1.5 Promoting Democratic Stability and the Impacts of Political Parties**

For many years back, Edmund Burke has described political party as a body of men united for promoting, by their joint endeavours, the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed (Churchill, 1963). Burke's observation, nay description, of political party is likened to the necessity for political parties to gear their ideologies towards promoting the unity and interest of a nation. Meanwhile, it is almost ecumenically acknowledged that modern political parties exhibit more attributes than was exposed in Burke's definition.

Hence, Hague and Harrop (2007) submit three characteristics that swamp the modern political party which are: first, they have become more organised and centralised institutions with bureaucratic structures, secretariats and paid staffers. Secondly, modern parties do not necessarily work towards a national interest, but any kind of interest including regional, ethnic, racial, religious or economic objectives. Parties are not restrictively subjected to a particular principle as many manifest different interests, ideologies, principles and objectives. Third, political parties are largely organised with the sole objective of competing for and capturing political office. The nature, forms and functions of political parties have continued to evolve in response to the current socio-economic and political changes in society. The bottom line is that the conception and understanding of political parties as platforms meant to only campaign for national interest has become stale in political parties in the recent times, as the interest of parties has been broadened to encompass more than national commitments.

Moreover, it is an irrefutable verity that political parties have played key roles in serving as building blocks in the course of ingraining democracy in a state. Schattschneider (1942) asserts that more than half a century ago, political parties have created democracy and modern

democracy is unthinkable safe in terms of the political parties. Policymakers and many contemporary scholars have come to agree on and affirm the fact that political parties are at the heart of modern democracy, as they are charged with fostering the development of newly emerging democracies or with improving the quality of democracy in established democratic polities (Biezen 2004).

To justify the impacts and relevance of political parties in the installation of democracy in Nigeria especially, Dode (2010) maintains that, while parties were not necessarily seen as inevitable, let alone desirable, they have now become firmly rooted in the established democracies and have rapidly acquired relevance in more recently established democracies in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world, to the point that they are widely seen as a sine qua non for the organization of the modern democratic polity and for the expression of political pluralism. Discussing the building blocks of the Nigerian democratic experience, we cannot discountenance political parties which have always been at the vanguard of checkmating the participation of party members in the affairs of the party and the country as a whole.

Political parties are seen as substantial instruments for contesting elections, the election being staged to select candidates as well as parties to exercise political power or authority (Yaquib 2002). Political parties are saddled with myriads of functions and responsibilities in a bid to psyche up the enthusiasm of the masses to participate in the country's political activities; and these roles include but not limited to being instruments of political education, political socialization, political recruitment and interest aggregation. Apart from the necessity to create and influence governmental agendas, political parties, as submitted by Almond (2000), have two major, but multifaceted functions of political parties in any democracy which are input-output functional variables and the historical method that make provision for a perspective background to behold party politics. It is on the basis of competently performing these roles

that a political party can stand a good chance of displacing and, thereby, taking power from a political party currently in the saddle (government) be it intra and/or inter party politics.

### **2.1.6 Intra-Party Conflicts and Democratisation in Nigeria**

There have been scholars' contributions on the issue of intra-party conflicts and its irrevocable link with representative democracy across varying contexts in the field of politics. Intra-party democracy, no doubts, has been demystified by Scarrow (2004) as a broad range of methods and techniques for including party members and loyalists in series of internal deliberations and decisions. The idea of all-inclusiveness is germane in any democratic set-up as the people who are being governed must take part in influencing the decision-making process of the group. In the context of intra-party democracy, the party members must not be jettisoned or excommunicated as active parts of the stronghold of the party; thus, it becomes imperative for party loyalists and members alike to share equal rights with other so-called prominent members.

Buttressing the foregoing, Ojukwu and Tope (2011) succinctly maintain that intra-party democracy refers to the management and functioning of political parties and party system considering the democratic principles which invariably reflect with regards to leadership selection, policy making, candidate selection, gender, minorities, membership relations, youths and party funding. The pivotal essence of intra-party democracy or democratization is to practically exemplify true democracy through the political party by availing a level-playing ground for all and sundry regardless of the sociopolitical, cultural or economic class of the individual, largely to eschew every catalyst of dissension and conflict among members of the party.

Moreover, democratization refers to the degree of development of political institutions at the national, state and local levels as measured by the Freedom House (2007). The process of democratization entails a pragmatic nurturing that gives cognizance to the salient values and



ideals of democracy. The fundamental structure and framework of democratic sustainability is defective outside those timely ideals and values (Simon, 2018). In other words, a political party must be driven by ideology, adhere to the rule of law, operate and demonstrate credibly transparent electoral process, grant liberty and equality, employ electoral guidelines and party constitution, and must manifest absolutely responsive representation.

Contrarily, a cursory look at the political circumference of Nigeria will reveal the pictures of discordance in political parties especially. This is evident in the spectrum of superfluous longing for self-interest at the detriment of the political party and members, and this unfair orientation has pervaded the landscape of the Nigerian politics for many a decade. There is no doubt then that intra-party conflict is an unbridled route to the amputation and curtailing of democratic governance and/or democratization, regardless of the applauding aspirations and objectives of a political party. The internal wrangling of political parties makes a mess of democratic process (Yahaya, 2018).

According to Egobueze (2021), intra-party conflict is related to situations there is a lingering and pervasive disagreement among members of the same political party, usually engineered by clash of divergent interests and egos as against the collective interest, ideologies, and manifesto of the party. The cohesive and directional purpose of the party is fractured and democratization doomed as a result of the incessant fracas among party members. Even though conflict is inevitable, the manner and finesse put into handling, resolving and/or managing it that determines how it affects the political party in question. Thus, irreconcilable conflict degenerates into crisis dimension which has the capacity to mar rather than make democratization (Egobueze, 2021). Having admitted the inevitability of intra-party conflicts, the manner and finesse through which these disparities and altercations are handled, managed and addressed is much more crucial.

It becomes noteworthy then that party politics is one of the recognizable pivotal orbits upon which democracy revolves. A key pillar of liberal democracy is representative system (Odigwe, 2015). To further expatiate the concept of representative system, Appadorai (2001, p.537-538) notes that representative system in the modern state is closely connected to the political party. Political party is likened to the 'labour room' of democracy on the larger horizon. True democratic praxis in any nation has its root in the prevailing democracy at the political party level. In a similar vein, Huntington (1968) observes that the strengths of political parties serve as the pillar upon which the stability of their modernization depends. Also, political parties are oftentimes consolidated based on the gravity of massive support they accrue. A party's strength reflects the range of that support and the level of institutionalization. The modernizing countries which achieve high levels of actual and presumptive political stability possess at least one strong political party.

Oden (2018) remarks that, in modern societies, political parties are very essential to political process. Therefore, democracy and the electoral process can be materialized largely by depending on the existence and strength of political parties. In the words of Egobueze and Nweke (2016), it is considerately put that the ultimate motive was to control and harness the political apparatus of the State which is a lee way to the control of common wealth of the State. Such a development in our polity is bluntly considered counter-productive to the cardinal goodwill of democratic dispensation. Kapur (2006, p.642) amazingly establishes the sanctity of varying interests in politics when he puts that, "opposition is the hub of democratic government and upon its strength depends the success or failure of democracy. Without mincing words, party politics without internal democracy is a breeding ground for instability, under-development, insecurity, chaos and violence." That is, Kapur (2006) believes that it is through opposition that brilliant and vibrant candidates can emerge, and as such no party

member will feel too special, pompous and/or overconfident to acquire political power either within or outside the party.

Obviously, the salience of competition, nay opposition, which spontaneously ushers in a credible democratization in parties and the whole nation, cannot be sidelined just as fair, credible and free election serve as the yardstick for plausible elections. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) encompasses the rulings upon which intra-party democracy is based, specifically in Sections 221-229. The sections of the Constitution mandate for every political party the election of leaders who would anchor the human and material resources of the party with staunch considerations of the party constitutional guidelines.

However, it is surprising how the process of election in a party is disregarded, consequent upon the influence of the so-called godfathers and other gladiators as they are at the centre of attraction and decision making in internal party politics. Also, when the rules are adhered to, the godfathers and gladiators have means of circumscribing them, influencing the process in order to determine the outcomes in their favour (Landman, 2005). Overtime, party politics in Nigeria have witnessed a various forms of attacks on the democratic uprightness of the country. Intra-party politics and the ensuing conflicts have literally rendered the country's democracy useless and incapacitated. Funnily enough, the aftermath of all these internal conflicts is related to the way all these party hijackers parade themselves as great achievers in the name of godfatherism which sabotages the collective voices of their fellow party members. These party lords have singlehandedly handpicked political representation to accomplish their selfish interests contrary to the party's rules of engagement. The aftermath of this inhuman and dictatorial actions and inactions is unmitigated conflict or crisis and retarded growth.

Internal party activities such as membership, recruitment, socialization, training, discipline and resources of the party have profound influence on good governance because

political parties serve as an avenue through which political leaders emerge. When political parties are weak and ineffective, politics is reduced to unbridled opportunity and self-serving interest of individual politicians who may derail nation-building process and democratic project. The international Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2006 cited in Omilusi, 2016), in a report, summarized thus: that party congress is where leaders and candidates of political party are nominated and elected but that conflict begins when party bosses or “moneybags” have their preferred candidate who they want to impose on the members of the party. That the main culprits of intra-party conflict are godfathers and “moneybags”.

That these godfathers or “moneybags” have made it hard for any candidate who is not in their good book to emerge. And this is lack of internal democracy. According to the IDEA’s report, cited in Landman (2005), political parties in Nigeria deployed several tricks or ways to deny some members participation in primary election. These include the anointed of a particular candidate by powerful figures within the party such as state governors, godfathers, moneybags etc. enlisting the supports of these few powerful members threaten the chances of others who may be force to withdraw from contesting; zoning which denies some section of the members who are not from a particular zone from contesting; the use of violence and thugs to intimidate members who want to go against all odds to contest; and monetization of the electoral process which makes it very expensive for some people who want to aspire for any elective position.

### **2.1.7 Intra-Party Struggle and its Possible Challenges**

Intra-party turbulence in many of the political parties points to the undemocratic nature of selection of candidates for political offices. The few high-ups in the hierarchy determine winners and losers at the expense of their party’s cohesion. It is no wonder, therefore, that political parties all over are having so much internal troubles that their orderly growth and

development into a veritable resource magnet for political thinking and actions are being stymied. The political environment ever since 1999 still is very much in a confused state, thus service to the people is thrown to the winds (Guobadia, 2012).

It is out of the confusion that some of the politicians were catapulted into office and it is the reason their behaviour is so anathematic since their loyalty is automatically owed to those who engineered their ascent. Politics in Nigeria has become a business enterprise in which the investors reap abundant profit at every available opportunity; fair or foul. These profits don't come from salaries and allowances alone (though bloated) but from a host of other cleverly devised means, bribery, contract inflation, security vote and oversight function. Unfortunately, the time spent in scheming out these new ways and implementing them leaves the wayward politicians so little time for serious governance and legislative work. Perhaps this is why Bayart (1992) has referred aptly to the struggles for democracy as expressed in the contest for political control of the state in Africa as "politics of the belly". Also, one therefore understand why an attempt to confront Nigerians on good and practical democracy is derided with the popularly cynical rhetorical question – "*na democracy we go chop?*" (Kuka, 2003).

It is the reason why series of National Assembly investigative panels are yet to yield any benefit to the people or culprits found guilty; rather, they back to the house and peoples; docile attitude continue to manifest. Ake (2003) confirming the above on the lackluster attitude that Nigeria is still a contested terrain of conflicting identities even after four decades of independence and a still longer period of being one political entity. Possibly some of Nigerian elites think of themselves primarily as Nigerians and place their Nigerian identity above all other identities. But many more are ambivalent about what their primary identity should be. And even more place their Nigerian identity below their local community, nation or ethnic group. In Nigeria, as in most African countries, the state remains a battle ground where individuals fight for whatever power or resource they can capture. It is not surprising therefore

that the hyped NNPC, oil subsidy, pension and many other probes are laden with a lot of misgivings, doubts of any tangible outcome.

Regrettably, however, Nigeria has become a land where honour means nothing and it means nothing because certain bad behaviour(s) have successfully been institutionalized. So calling anyone to resign because of a perceived taint on his character is akin to beating drums for the deaf. But all is not yet lost as the system can self-correct or be forced to correct itself.

### **2.1.8 Causes of Intra-Party Conflicts in Nigeria**

In a democratic system of government where everyone claims to be fit for one position or the other, and where rights are so abounded that no one can just trample upon the privileges and rights of another without being crucified, myriads of factors are capable of instigating intra-party conflicts. Virtually all the party members have one interest or the other which they pursue, or which motivated them to join the party to become an official member. The process of pursuing and struggling to materialize these dreams and aspirations is knotted with many factors that could prompt dissension, conflict and hatred with a political party. To pinpoint the major factors that invariably causes intra-party conflicts, Shale and Matlosa (2008, p. 13) submit the following as factors could trigger party internal conflicts:

- a) Unequal sharing of resources
- b) Favouritism – promoting one's kith and kin
- c) Centralized authority – power concentrated at the top; and
- d) Lack of regular meetings.

The foregoing exposes the most contentious and gladiatorial rationales behind party members' resort to internal conflict. These factors as mentioned above can all be likened to the use of power and influence to suppress the capacities of others in order to exert or impose the interests of the well-to-do and high-profile members of the party. Uneven distribution of resources is, particularly, a bane to the democracy and in turn unity of the party such that every

member wants to have more or even share of the dividends of the party (Ntalaja, 2000). Normally, when resources are shared without favouritism, it will not only gratify the members but also bolster their trust and confidence in the democratic tendencies of the party lords.

Therefore, any political party that celebrates lopsidedness with limited or no consideration for the other members of the party will conveniently plunge into unrestrained conflicts of various sorts. For example, poor party politics have been bedeviling democratic process in Nigeria due largely to lack of clear cut ideologies, ethnicisation of party politics, excessive western influence on democracy, poor leadership, indiscipline within the party, among others but also and more worrisomely, lack of internal party democracy (Ntalaja, 2000). Issues of zoning and ethnicisation of party politics cannot be overemphasised as major triggers for internal party conflicts in Nigeria as every member continue to display their sentimental interest towards the craving for the national political power. Thus political parties, especially the popular ones, continue to nurse internal conflicts that are hinged on the intricacies of political ethnicisation with limited consideration for absolute democracy.

The zoning arrangement in virtually all political parties in Nigeria has spurred up uprisings which have degenerated into unabated level of insecurity in the country in recent times (Azazi, 2012). While commenting on the rationale behind the desperations of Nigerian political power seekers, Edoh (2012) submits that power seekers in Nigeria consider politics as the best route towards making money, as they have the conviction that to be in power is to control state resources which are oftentimes converted to personal use. With this, we can hence infer that Nigerian political power mongers are not only desperate to acquire political power, but also to be able to have a sort of total control over the economy of the state which will in turn augment their personal wealth and financial stability. Basically, there are many factors, open or hidden, that cause intra-party conflicts in Nigeria, part of which have been discussed above; however, Jude and Ika (2013) opine some other similar, yet presentable points that cause

conflicts internally in Nigerian political parties and they include: paucity of ideology, interference by the executive arm in the domestic affairs of political parties, desperation for power, absence of internal democracy, ethnicity, and religious brinkmanship.

Taking a cursory look at the above mentioned causes of internal conflicts, Nigeria tends to be guilty of two major factors which are absence of internal democracy and, of course, paucity of ideology. In the words of Jude and Ika (2013), internal democracy and political ideology are mutually reinforcing and they affect each other, such that when a political party is ideologically oriented, there is every possibility that discipline and internal democracy will be sustained in such political party. It is, therefore, pertinent to discuss these two factors as they are necessary in the course of demystifying internal conflicts in the Nigerian context.

#### **2.1.9 Absence of Internal Democracy**

As established in the abovementioned discourse, internal democracy serves as the major backbone of a party, such that it avails every member little privilege that could be enjoyed as stooges and party members alike. Lack of internal democracy is then a major factor that instigates incessant conflicts in a typical Nigerian political party. The reason is not far-fetched as leaders and/or godfathers of the party are so avaricious and selfish that they manipulate the limited available resources to their favour or advantage. Scarrow (2004) opine that internal democracy suggests a broad range of methods (used) to include party members in intra-party deliberations and decision making.

Ordinarily, the pivotal doctrines of democracy are supposed to be articulated where there is internal democracy together with the level at which political parties give room for basic values of democracy particularly with regards to penalties ascribed to erring members, selection of candidates, conducting party congress, among others. Gosnell (1968) also contributes to the expatiation of intra-party democracy as that which provides required vertical nexuses between different deliberating spheres and horizontal linkage between competing



issues. Internal democracy equally portends the establishment of a permissible climate where every member of a party is given equal opportunity and privilege to contribute to decision making process and the general administrative functions of the party. In this regard, the limited number of powerful rich members does not determine the fate of the party but the overall consensus of the party stooges and members.

Essentially, intra-party democracy is aimed at ensuring a level-playing ground for all members of the party in making decisions to stimulate active participation of party members in the affairs of the party and, in turn, effectuate a vibrant party that is capable of steering the affairs of the state in a manner that will meet the expectations of the entire citizens of the state. The impactful role credited to internal democracy is affirmed by Omotola (2010) by positing that parties' decision making structures and processes should provide opportunities for individual citizens in order to influence the choices that parties offer to voters. In a similar position, Scarrow (2005) also establishes that intra-party democracy describes a wide range of methods for including party members in intra-party deliberations and decision-making processes.

More importantly, internal democracy is most required in the selection of candidates for elective positions both within and outside elections, as it has been observed that what normally causes factionalisation or conflicts in most political parties is the issue of selection of candidates through party primaries for elective positions in general elections. It becomes salient, therefore, that each political party should create a level playing ground for every party member that is interested in running for any elective office both within and outside the party (Jude and Ika, 2013). This is imperatively relevant as it will arouse unity in the party and bring about a credible, qualified and efficient candidate that can assure positive results for the party in general elections. Political parties that are inclusive in their decision making process enjoy active participation of their members in their affairs.

Scarrow (2005) has equally opined that in the most inclusive parties, all party members, or even all party supporters, are given the opportunity to decide on important issues, such as the choice of party leader or the selection of party candidates. Inclusiveness is a matter of process and formal rule; hence, it is mandatory for inclusive parties to provide more chances for open engagements and deliberation before the decisions are taken.

However, the absence of internal democracy in political parties in Nigeria has often created a scenario where some powerful elites in political parties would want to foist their own selfish ideas or in some cases their candidates or their candidatures on their party. Echoing his observation on intra-party dissensions, Metuh (2010) points out clearly that, what I have noticed in crisis-laden states is that the governors hesitate to let go their grips on the party structures, while other loyal disciples of the party insist that the political party has to be strategically separated from government. Metuh (2010) further assert that the governors are made to fund the party but I don't subscribe to the idea of governors running and controlling the party. The party should be the conscience of the people, the party is much more expected to control the governor, by challenging him not to have constructed enough roads, not to have one thing or the other. Contrarily, in a situation where the constitution is rendered irrelevant and insignificant as checks and balances, it will surely be daunting and almost impossible to challenge the governor. it isn't happening especially where the legislature isn't acting It is only the party that can do that, but the party isn't doing that.

There has been unnecessary interference on the part of the political leaders, the executive especially in the affairs of political parties because they have absolute influence on the state resources and because they are responsible for the financing of political parties in a democratic government.

Party elites obviously commit everything to the cause of controlling and influencing party decisions, deploying their financial edge over others within the party. More often than

not, when their opinions and interests tend to be condemned by the party members, the party elites then find a way to spur hatred, dissension and conflict within the party to showcase their influence. Consequently, the struggle for political power fuels intra-party conflicts which undermine the process of democratisation in Nigeria.

#### **2.1.10 Paucity of Political Ideology**

Political ideology suggests how a political party plans to handle its government with regards particularly to its programmes and activities which influence its output when the party emerges as winner to paddle the canoe of the state. Morse (1896) conceives ideology as lasting convictions which are held in common by party members in respect to the most desirable form, institutions, spirit and course of action of the state, which determines the natural attitude of a party towards every public question.

Unarguably, ideology is so salient that no principled and worthy political party will want to be ideologically motivated. The reason is that ideology is meant to control the programmes and actions of parties. The existence of political parties is hinged on ideology so much so that there may be no sense of direction, internal squabbles, among others, if ideology is lacking in a political party. Political elites in Nigeria share avarice and promiscuous attributes as traits that sabotage the political standard and welfare of the party.

While further exposing the foregoing and the gimmicks of political elites, Simbine (2004) points out that aspirants of various parties tend to cross-carpet from one party to the other for the flimsiest and selfish reasons all in the name of gratifying their ambitions, and this practice has resulted in both intra and inter-party crises in Nigeria. It should be noted that in Africa, the economic implications of democracy is much more considered than any political ideology. This is why elites conceive of political parties in Nigeria as ordinary avenues through which they conveniently bargain and contest for elections with the sole motive to accomplish wealth and power for personal growth.

Mainwaring and Shugart (1997) meticulously point out that the techniques and methods that a party adopts in the process of electing a candidate cannot be undermined as they incontrovertibly affect the candidate when eventually emerged and while in office attending to official assignments that affect the all and sundry. Ideology functions as planks wherein the single issue statements in a platform or the particular ideological orientation of a party are often used as formal conduits for party unity. In other words, when ideologies are engendered in political parties in Nigeria, it undoubtedly party candidates a sense of responsibility and commitment towards implementing the manifestos and programmes that have been established and articulated during campaigns and the extent of the candidate's achievement in government forms the basis which electorates use to evaluate the performances of elected officials in relation to party ideology (Strickler and Davies, 1996).

It behooves, therefore, that political parties must be able to connect their ideologies with the needs and expectations of the citizens and ensure that they are efficiently addressed. This is because an ideology without any connection to the longings of the masses is nothing but a mirage. It is only when this is done that political parties can claim to be ideologically based and the electorates can perceive them to be synonymous to the ideologies they so represent. It is important therefore to note that, in order to effectuate the success or otherwise of a political party the question of political ideology must be a priority (Omotola, 2009), and, similarly, series of research have confirmed that political parties in all political systems attempt to build linkages to voters, try to develop mechanisms for representation and aspire to articulate a more or less coherent ideological profile (Kitschelt *et al.*, 1999).

It is therefore ostensibly glaring that, most political parties in Nigeria do not demonstrate an understanding of the relevance of political ideology. While the electorates are oblivious of the necessities of political ideology and its essence in a political system, political parties in Nigeria have very limited knowledge of the manner political ideology facilitate the

shaping the programmes of political parties and bridge the gaps between political parties and the electorates and stimulate trust, confidence, responsibility and responsiveness in the democratic dispensation of the country. There is no doubt that lack of political ideology in a country is capable of making the so-called political leaders to perceive politics as an opportunity to accrue national wealth primitively and selfishly without any iota of consideration for the wellbeing of the masses. Hence, since there is limited or no political ideology, political parties in Nigeria are handled with no strict principle for national growth. Aggrandizement is thus the end-product of this, as political enthusiasts and leaders alike tend to turn to any available party that is ready to avail them the opportunity to pursue their political ambitions that is ridden with corruption of all sorts.

#### **2.1.11 Internal Democracy and Conflicts in Select Major Political Parties in Nigeria**

Overtime, political parties have been the tools and crucial ingredients in participatory democracy (Akinade, 2018). It is imperative for political parties to allow electoral democracy to thrive in contemporary societies. Ordinarily, democracy is a system that values the creation of political parties for the sake of level playground for all citizens regardless of class and political affiliations. As a part of a major institution that crystalises and executes the doctrines of democracy in a country state, political party, expectedly, can easily jettison its core value of absolute representation with incessant internal conflicts. Political parties are expected to realize series of institutional guarantees so that they can perform to or beyond expectations; and to bring this to unalloyed reality, there must be internal democracy where all-inclusiveness affects every action and decision of the party.

Undoubtedly, political parties are responsible for the administration of a country, and their methods, techniques and ideologies for harnessing resources within the circumference of their parties affect how they govern an entire democratic country such as Nigeria. This portends that any political party that seeks to control the affairs of a state must be proactive in

redressing every democratic flaw that instigate conflicts within the party before presenting a candidate for election, in an ideal world, as it were. Internal democracy deals with the various methods that are used to include party members in different processes of decision-making in a political party. Some advocates for intra-party democracy argue, on a pragmatic level, that parties using internally democratic procedures are likely to select more capable and appealing leaders, to have more responsive policies, and, as a result, to enjoy greater electoral success Scarrow (2004). Without any doubt, the move to strengthen democratic tradition in a political institution is dependent upon sticking to the procedures of democracy.

Therefore, it is inevitable to admit that the aim to formally institute internal democracy in the party system of Nigeria is a paramount endeavour, basically due to its orientation to incorporate party members in the decision making and deliberations that take place within the party structure. The general belief, arguably, is that intra-party democracy nurtures citizens' political competence and may produce more qualified representatives leading to formulation of better political programmes which can be of beneficial effect on the citizens, and the political environment.

On the other hand, it is also argued that when democratization is superfluous, it could constrain parties to their electoral pledges and sideline the power and influence of internal leadership which also has its unavoidable relevance to the management of the party. Pundits believe that when internal democracy is non-existent in a political party, such political party lack the wherewithal to instill democracy in a country's political process and governance, as it were. Elections in Nigeria, particularly since 1999 when the military relinquished political power, regardless of how well organized, have remained the major way of achieving legitimate rule (Akhaine, 2019). Findings on Nigerian elections have underscored the implementation of the western model of liberal democracy in the country.

Ostensibly, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has been designed and framed to encompass clauses that condition the political actors and gladiators to adopt democratic styles in their political engagements, in order to inculcate the culture of democratic etiquettes that tend to reduce intra-party conflicts for the sake of promoting a sort of internal democracy in the party. These doctrines are similarly reechoed in the Electoral Act, where it is accentuated that the requirement must equally apply to nomination of candidates, and not only elections into party executive positions, by political parties in any election (the Electoral Act, 2010). Moreover, as stated in the Nigerian Constitution (1999), the INEC is particularly saddled with the task of administratively monitoring strict compliance with these mandatory constitutional and statutory requirements.

Political parties play active roles in the conduct of elections and this is a substantial and relevant process of democratization. Moreover, political parties in Nigeria do not have absolute authority over its members; since party members do not dignify their parties but always aim to accrue values from the parties such that they eschew different means through which they could contribute to the wellness and stability of the parties. Largely, lack of control and supremacy within political parties have led to creating rooms for those who just want to assume leadership roles with limited or no focus at all for the unity and internal democracy of the parties in Nigeria. The political orientation, personality, and character of party leadership, hence, define its relationships with members and disposition to the use of state power.

In a personal interview January 18, 2022, Olanipekun (Appendix) opined that there are problems with the current Nigerian political parties in terms of internal democracy because there is lack of clear-cut ideas, ideologies, identities, and inclusivity. Particularly, lack of inclusivity is one of the reasons nations fail; and it relates to bringing all people from varying backgrounds to work together in making decisions in the way the party is run. However, according to the interim coordinator of the non-profit organisation, impunity has swamped the

nook and cranny of the two major political parties in the country. As such, decision-making processes have always been determined and/or influenced by self-aggrandised few privileged stakeholders and leaders of the party which is against the theory of internal democracy in a party. By way of buttressing the forgoing supposition on internal democracy in Nigerian political parties, it should be noted that:

As human beings, there will always be wrangling. During the second republic when we had the Unique Party of Nigeria (UPN) and other parties, the masses and Nigerians alike knew what these parties stood for; we knew their ideologies. It was sort of a brand like Toyota, Volkswagen, Benz, among others that sell based on their unique and convincing creativity and inventions that soothe their potential and regular customers. We do not have our political parties in Nigeria as brands yet, and these politicians must know the reality – they are acting out of impunity. They don't even follow the constitution. To curtail this, the political parties should have penalties in place for elective candidates who contravene to the democratic establishments of the political party (Olanipekun, personal interview, January 18, 2022).

However, in a situation where leaders emerge through elections in some parties, such leaders are, covertly, controlled and rallied around by the so called 'godfathers' on whose hands the fate of the party dwells. Obiora and Chiamogu (2020) buttress this point stating that every political appointee including the party leadership is individually responsible to the president and/or governor as appropriate but the intriguing situation is that these chief executive officers climbed the ladder through the contributions of *godfathers* and power brokers who financed and succoured their electioneering campaigns. In these situations, there is every possibility that interplay of forces will materialize to make decisions. It plunges these camouflaging leaders into dismay and indecisiveness as they tend to bask predominantly on the positions of their godfathers to implement policies and projects, as it were. It creates an ambiance of intricacies



and complexities with regards to democracy and integrity where the doctrines and ideologies of the party are watered down for the sake of a superior individual. Issues like these cannot be disputed in the political landscape of Nigeria, for virtually every political party grows to nurse and serve a party godfather, whether overt or covert, at the detriment of party ideologies or party system, as the case may be. While this may not affect the selected leader personally, the party members will sure be affected; thus, evoking condemnations, reprimands, grievances and animosity which may in turn effectuate the growing of doubts and distrusts towards the selected leader. Although conflicts cannot be completely avoided in a group of humans, they are not encouraged in a party institution whose major interest is to remain prominent in the political landscape of a country.

Adekunle (Appendix) stated in a personal interview January 19, 2022 that most politicians in Nigeria feign to appreciate internal democracy because even when they claim they want internal democracy, they always come with their own agenda. In his words, he underscored that politicians in Nigeria reprimand their party's internal democracy when their personal plans do not work out. While he also supports internal democracy, the former party leader of the PDP said every party should insist on internal democracy; but in seeking internal democracy, we should also know that people are entitled to their opinions. Politics can be likened to a game of soccer, it is a contact game because you cannot stop people from pushing you, but you have the right to determine where you want to follow and how to follow the route. We can then deduce that political institutions in Nigeria have been grappling with a plethora of issues affecting democratic dispensations and egalitarianism, as there is a continual existence of politicians who only feign democracy on a superficial terrain. These sorts of politicians are abounding as they continue to accelerate the wheel towards the achievement of their sentimental objectives at the detriment of the party system and the innocent opinions of party members.

The former party leader continues to affirm that the major problem with internal democracy in Nigerian political parties is that when factions are figured out in a party, those factions are immediately seen as enemies of progress, they are seen as a threatening opposition, and as being sponsored as instigators of troubles. However, the beauty of democracy is that we will always have divergent viewpoints, which suggests that myriads of issues are rife to take cognizance of, in order to avoid mistakes. Regardless of the influence of a party member with regards to decision making, equality of every member and adherence to the rule of law cannot be undermined in a democratic setting. On a similar note, it is observed that these so-called political actors and leaders alike are the ones who contribute tremendously to the survival and progress of the party. This portends the reason they strive to occupy leadership positions of the party to be able to claim the fruits of their labour, which is in tandem with the aphorism that he who plays the piper dictates the tune.

#### **2.1.12 Internal Conflicts in the People's Democratic Party**

The People's Democratic Party (PDP), which was formed during this Fourth Republic, came into being particularly in 1998 through an alliance of different groups who were not in good terms with the self-succession strategy the then Head of State of Nigeria, General Sani Abacha, was adopting to rule over the country. While many political parties have emerged since that time, the People's Democratic Party remains prominent, as the party has controlled the affairs of the country for over a decade – between 1999 and 2015 – basking in an absolute democratic dispensation.

The PDP was formed by a group of people called G.34 committee headed by Dr. Alex Ekwueme, the Second Republic Vice-President of Nigeria (Aleyomi, 2013). Similarly, according to Ojukwu and Olaiifa (2011), PDP as a party evolved from three major sources. First, they were the politicians who were denied registration by the Nigeria Head of State as of that time, General Sanni Abacha, during his self-succession project. This committee later

changed to G.34 Men that petitioned against the self-succession project against Abacha. The second pedigree of PDP is traced to those politicians who did not counteract the self-succession of Abacha and did not support it either. The group was popular as All Nigeria congress (ANG) which was led by Chief Sunday Awoniyi. The third source encompasses those who were the disciples of the late General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua under Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM) which constituted Chief Tony Anenih and Alhaji Atiku Abubakar.

Meanwhile, the PDP in its 16 years of administering the Nigerian state has demonstrated unbridled abuse of internal mechanisms of resolving disputes and conflicting interests. Virtually all states of the federation where PDP controlled witnessed abuse of internal party democracy. In some instances, PDP contested some electoral positions without clearly identified candidates. The situation is rife in ruling parties because they attract all manners of politicians (Obiora and Chiamogu, 2020). For many years, there have been unequivocal stains in the internal democracy of the PDP which continues to tarnish the image of the party across boards. Internal conflicts arising from manipulation of elections within the party, nomination of leaders with ulterior motives, among others cannot be washed off the flag of the political party. Whether a candidate is popular or not, it does not matter, because the Governors and Presidents see it fit to foist candidates and other decisions on party members with limited or no consideration for their whims and caprices. Such considerations as commitment to retiring the money spent for securing 21/21 victory for the governor in the 2017 gubernatorial elections in Anambra state and, ability to settle groups around the governor appear to form the priorities for winning candidacy for elective positions in the party. There was little or no consideration for loyalty and commitment to party ideologies and aspirant's popularity which is a serious bane to justice and democracy in the political party (Obiora and Chiamogu, 2020).

More specifically, during the primary elections conducted by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) to select/elect a presidential candidate ahead of the 2019 general elections in

Nigeria, a manipulated nomination was materialized in the guise of a primary election. In other words, the leadership of the PDP used their influential power to impose a candidate on the party members in a quite subtle manner. This PDP primary election had some APC defectors such as Dr Bukola Saraki, Dr Rabiu Kwankawaso, Aminu Tambuwa, and other PDP active members such as Alhaji Atiku Abubakar which made the race somewhat intense. While thousands of PDP delegates were anxiously ready to cast their votes and elect their party candidate for the 2019 general elections, the leadership of the party had allowed some of the contestants to adopt money-politics to get the ticket. Particularly, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, knowing full well that he may not emerge, expended as much as nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) on the primary election in order to convince the delegates to vote for him. This led to his emergence as the presidential candidate for the PDP as he got about 1,432 votes which were massive because the first runner-up (Aminu Tambuwa) only had 693 votes. The bottom-line is that this sort of primary election was adopted to masquerade an intended imposition of candidates by the leadership of the party.

The rationale behind the foregoing is not unconnected with the heightened level of undetermined party policy positions which should ordinarily serve as the fount of legitimate actions and popular mobilization within the PDP as a political institution. Drawing on the presence of intra-party conflict in the party, Iyare (2004) has averred that “there is almost nothing to choose, between PDP and other parties in terms of ideological leaning”. In a similar vein, prior to the 2019 general election, the PDP faced myriads of conflicts, dissensions, discord and animosity, if you like – which led to factionalisation within the party – in the bid to elect a party chairman who would harness the party resources and oversee the political engagements of the PDP at a time when the masses was virtually doubting the administrative capacity of the incumbent political party, the APC.

For instance, the political imbroglio that occasioned the nomination of Ali-modu Sherriff, former governor of Borno state, cannot be undermined as it lasted for months of trials

and agitations by members of the party. The nomination of Ali-modu Sheriff was carried out without considering the popular opinions and concerns of the general members of the party and even some party committees and officials were left out of the decision making processes. To demonstrate their discontent with the nomination cum imposition, another faction of the PDP subsequently removed Ali-modu Sheriff as the Chairman of the party. So, in order to decide on the legitimately approved leader of the party and put an end to the enmity that had enveloped the party, the PDP held a convention in Rivers state, in 2016, attended by a larger percentage of the party members and stakeholders; and instituted Ahmed Makarfi led Caretaker Committee. Ali Sheriff took the case to the Federal High Court, Port Harcourt to challenge the action of the Party. However, in the judgment of Justice Mohammed Liman of the Federal High Court, Port Harcourt delivered on July 4, 2016, the Court upheld the appointment of Ahmed Marfi as the Chairman, PDP National Caretaker Committee. Ali Sherrif subsequently challenged the judgment at the Court of Appeal. The Court of Appeal, Port Harcourt declared Ali Sherif the authentic National Chairman of the People's Democratic Party (Premium Times News, February 17, 2017). The Appeal Court, in a split decision, ruled that it was illegal to replace the Sheriff-led National Working Committee with the Makarfi-led caretaker committee. The judgment was challenged at the Supreme Court. After a protracted legal battle that ruptured the unity of the party, the Supreme Court finally upheld the election of a former Kaduna State governor, Ahmed Makarfi, as the authentic chairman of the People's Democratic Party, PDP (Premium Times News, July 12, 2017). A three-member panel of the court presided by the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Walter Onnoghen, upbraided Mr. Makarfi's contender, Ali Sheriff, for demonstrating "infantile desperation to lead the party." Reading out the judgement after weeks of compilation, a member of the panel, Rhodes Vivour, said Mr. Sheriff was not within the category of an 'unimpeachable leader', stressing that the removal of the former

governor was not necessarily expected to follow a vote of no confidence. Mr. Vivour added that there was no clause in the constitution of the party that made it mandatory for Mr. Sheriff to be removed' using a vote of no confidence.

The apex court further said that although the PDP constitution allows the party to remove the National leader after two years through a vote of no confidence, the word used to denote Vote of no confidence was 'may', which does not signify compulsory adherence. According to him, "there can be no doubt that the National convention has enormous powers over the party," said Mr. Vivour, who thus faulted the lower court for declaring the conduct of the national convention as illegal. In the judgment, the apex court subsequently ordered Mr. Sheriff to pay a fine of N250,000 for abuse of court processes (Premium Times News, July 12, 2017).

However, it should be noted that the selection of Chairman has always instigated discontents, dissension and conflicts that threaten internal democracy within the party. All these political imbroglios and factionalisations have always been the pedigree of political problems within the party and it still continues to tear the party into pieces as the PDP, till today, still struggles to heal the age-long wounds it has been nursing for donkey years, and particularly considering the rate of their performance in the 2019 general elections.

### **2.1.13 Internal Conflicts in the All Progressive Congress from the Inception**

The All Progressive Congress (APC) was formulated in 2015 through the amalgam of four different political parties – the CPC, ANPP, ACN and some members of the APGA and PDP. The major rationale behind this merging was the necessity to take over power from the ruling PDP which had ruled the country for sixteen years. Internal conflicts that were eating deeply the fabrics of these political parties stimulated the creation of the APC in order to integrate their political opinions and interests which were not met in hitherto political parties. The formulation of this political party, as it were, was not perhaps flanked by specific

ideologies which affected the required quality it deserved as a party, and the self-serving purposes of each of the parties that joined in the coalition began to surface with the domineering instincts of the elites, which in effect aroused intra-party conflicts that continues to grow in the All Progressive Congress in the past few years. Particularly, there were many cases of intra-party conflicts hinged on the denial of party members of the privilege to run as candidates.

Internal conflict in the APC was instigated by the complexities attached to the selection of the Senate President in 2015. As a result of the complex interplay of forces, influence and powers from powerful individuals, groups and sections of the country and the party, there was unmitigated hot pursuit which pushed groups like the new PDP into assuming what gave rise to a new turn in the power equation at the Senate with Dr Bukola Saraki as the President against the interest of the new ruling APC supposed leadership and the presidency (Obiora and Chiamogu, 2020). The election of Dr Bukola Sraki as the new Senate President of the 8<sup>th</sup> National Assembly was occasioned by variegated positions and perspectives as some APC members and leaders alike reprimanded this political achievement of the Kwara-born politician.

Having established unforeseen wrangling in the party, some factions of the party began to counteract and expose the party's actions and inactions that infringe on the law. More specifically, when the party calculatedly delayed its elective party congresses and conventions, these angry forces or factions of the party pronounced the act as a disregard to the rule of law of the country. The illicit extension of the tenure of the party's National Working Committee was inciting, as it led to unavoidable discombobulation which made the Lagos state APC and Abdulaziz Yari (Governor of Zamfara state) to move peacefully from issues related to the NEC completely. As a result of this, a party member from the south east (Imo state) dragged the APC to the Federal High Court in Abuja asking it to sack the Chief John Odigie Oyegun led National Working Committee of the party (Ojo, 2018). Without any doubt, the APC have been

battling with crises in varying forms most especially when the party plans to take absolute decision on its leadership structure. Particularly, the conduct of party primaries in preparation for the 2019 general elections generated severe intra-party crises than what was recorded in the previous elections (Akhaine, 2019). This wrangling and internal conflicts, as it were, in the APC was abounding due to its massive crops of followership and/or membership with its taxing demands of controlling the largesse of party members throughout the country.

Similarly, towards the election of some states' governors, the party witnessed another inciting power issues that resulted from the elites' disposition to dominate every decision-making process of the party, particularly with regards to selection of leaders. In Lagos, the incumbent governor then, Governor Akinwumi Ambode was dramatically denied the party's ticket to run for a second term in 2019 due largely to his purported obstinacy towards the national leader of the party, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, who requested his complete fidelity and subservience; but then the governor had stood his ground to make sure the state steer clear of impositions and political influences of the national leaders of the APC.

In Imo, Rivers, Adamawa, Zamfara, Kaduna and Ogun States, there were serious conflicts of interest resulting from the party leaders' interest to install some particular candidates as against the will of the masses or the incumbent governor as the case may be. The selection of state and national assembly candidates raised maximum dusts that gave rise to massive defection of APC lawmakers at the national assembly in addition to the creation of formations by some outgoing governors who were bent on realizing their own ambitions and that of their preferred candidates against party interests.

These conflicts continue to rife and as such affect the unity of members of the party, and till today the party struggles to have a collective voice over pressing issues that relate to the progress of the party. To be more specific, the APC is currently being accused of postponing its national convention – where political decisions as regard selection of candidates for



elections are realized – since 2021 and this is as a result of unending internal conflicts among party members and leaders alike. This portends that there is a supposed lack of democracy lingering within the party. The beauty of internal democracy is hinged on party conventions; and if the APC cannot successfully hold its convention to show its capability to pilot the affairs of the country, then its internal democracy is at stake. Ideally, a party cannot vaunt of internal democracy when leaders are being decided or nominated by a few members of the party who see themselves as superior, and this has always been a major bone of contention within the APC.

The major problem that the APC face today is revolved around leadership. There are situations where the President is made to act as the profound leader of the party; governors also double as the state chairman of the party, which is totally against the dictates of the Nigerian Constitution. Normally, the APC are supposed to hold their national convention where they will be able to amend their party constitution, or suspend the constitution and make new laws, but since the convention cannot be held, many issues are expected to be lingering and pending which will in turn affect the internal engagements of the party. For us to grow democratically, we must put the parties in the hands of the party members. Take it away from those who occupy elective positions because they have become a problem to the steady working of our party system [Olajide (Appendix), personal communication, January 19, 2022].

The foregoing supposition by Olajide (Appendix) exposes the incessant issues of domination, influence, control, superiority, aggrandizement, among others, which have knotted the APC since 2015. The inevitability of the APC internal conflicts is attached to the pedigree of the party, as political actors of varying parties coalesce to form the party because of their variegated political pursuits. Hence, the need to contend for positions as related to the ambition of each of these political gladiators who have converged from different backgrounds and

affiliations. In furtherance, the party members are also at the receiving end of this insatiability of the party leaders, as they continue to bolster leadership imposition with a very limited consideration for members' rights and privileges. Olajide further adduced that political parties should not be left in the hands of fewer people to determine their fates, but the will of the people should be a major priority and determining factor in all circumstances. Leaders are, however, very crucial in political parties, for even in various households, you must have leaders – you must have people who give directions. Having admitted the forgoing, it is yet popular that lack of solid and egalitarian leadership structure and collectivity are major sources of conflicts in the APC; and while the party national leaders continue to nurse these issues, it leaves the party members in dilemma and lack of confidence in their party's capacity to rule efficiently.

Specifically, the All Progressive Congress also demonstrated its manipulated mode of nomination cum impunity during its primary elections ahead of the 2019 general elections. Expectedly, many of the qualified party members purchased forms to contend for the presidential ticket, but then were shown the red lights even though the party was under the chairmanship of Adams Oshiomhole, a celebrated activist. Aspirants who used their hard-earned money to purchase nomination forms and got screened found their names omitted on the election-day, despite the fact that the forms were bought at a very exorbitant price. Some other contestants who participated in the APC primary election had their results deliberately delayed. This portended to them that an automatic ticket had been offered to an influential and preferred aspirant (the incumbent president) by the party leaders. This, no doubts, had its effects on the performance of the APC in the 2019 general elections as some of the aggrieved party members considered cross-carpeting, factionalisation, petitions, among others.

#### **2.1.14 Cross-carpeting and Crisscrossing as Bane to Democratization**

It is an irrefutable verity that politicians in Nigeria are overly sentimental with their political intentions as evident in the rationales behind their volitions to crisscross, and cross

carpets in the political landscape of the country. The pursuance of personal interests, without any iota of consideration for the will and trust of the people and respect for party system, beclouds the terrains of political dispositions of most Nigerian political gladiators. This inclination to join the ruling party at all costs continues to wither away the masses' confidence in political parties as appropriate conduits to enjoy democratic dividends in the country. This has become a necessary attribute of most Nigerian politicians who crave for platforms that will celebrate their intents. As espoused by Moliki (2019), defection and cross-carpeting between parties is rampant in the current democratic dispensation more than any other republics and there is no political party in Nigeria, particularly in the Fourth Republic, which has not suffered from defection crises. Intra-party conflicts, issues of internal democracy, inefficient party ideology, leadership issue, self-service, among others, have been identified as factors that have continued to psyche up cross-carpeting in the Nigerian political terrain. This is ideally not strange in a multi-party political system where citizens have the right to join any political party at will.

However, the self-aggrandised reason for deflecting into other political parties in Nigeria is worthy of being checked and addressed, as it may deface the good attribute of a political party in the process of democratization. While very few of these deflectors seem to adhere to the stipulations of the law while deflecting, majority of them boycott appropriate quarters. It should be noted, thereby, that it is very mysterious to materialize democracy when democrats who are supposed to exhibit the doctrines of democracy are nowhere to be found (Fayemi, 2012). Ideally, in a democratic political context, there must be an opposition party that checkmates the policies and excesses of the ruling party for efficient administration. However, in a situation where the strong political actors resort to cross-carpeting and crisscrossing, as the case may be, there will be a monumental lacuna in the fundamental roles of opposition party, for there may be no reliable politicians capable of challenging the political

shenanigans of the ruling party as it is evincing in the Nigerian political space. The confidence to crisscross at will from one political party to another can be attributed to the Electoral Act of the country which gives room for such act without any form of penalty or stringent conditions.

In the personal interview with Olajide January 19, 2022, (Appendix) the coordinator of the Solidarity Youth Forum maintained that the Electoral Act (2022) of Nigeria is fundamentally flawed; and that is why we experience the political setbacks we have today. The Electoral Act allows for factions within a party, and politicians can stride from one party to another without challenging conditions. This effectuates unmitigated plagiarism and political nomadism across different parties. Of course, politicians should reserve the right to cross-carpet but then the Electoral Act must stipulate due prices and punishments to pay for defecting. This can effectively deter people from crisscrossing selfishly to/from parties, which will in turn make the party system equitable and acceptable to all and sundry.

In furtherance, cross-carpeting and crisscrossing have taken varied dimensions in Nigeria, overtime. In some instances, individual politicians defect to another party singly without amassing their erstwhile party members to their sides. However, in some cases, when a politician crosses to the other party, mostly the ruling party, his followers and loyalists follow him en-masse to the party, even when the politician refuses to categorically establish the facts that figures that necessitated the profound action.

Oladimeji (Appendix) stated in a personal interview January 18, 2022, that as we have seen in many scenarios in Nigeria, there are people who have positioned themselves in the society to decide for some set of people which party they will support or vote for during an election. The moment the leader moves from a party like the APC to PDP, the entire electorates and/or community move with the person to the other party. So, the electorates are also faulty in this regard as they refuse to maintain their stands in challenging those they vote for: to obey them and do exactly what they have promised them. It is therefore manifesting that most electorates

only supports some politicians because they feel they are capable of directing and rallying them around the political ambiance.

### **2.1.15 Exploring the Effects of Intra-Party Conflicts on the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria**

Politics in Nigeria has been perceived by many people as a dirty game where political actors go extra length to clinch a political authority. The desperation for power at all cost cannot be overemphasized in the Nigerian political space, and this continues to be an unmitigated fount of intra-party conflict in Nigerian political parties. Meanwhile, when there are incessant conflicts among the political actors and some popular party members, what are the likely implications on various elections in Nigeria, especially the general election? How can these conflicts affect or influence the impressions of the electorates and citizens at threshold of electing a leader from a conflict-ridden political party? These questions cannot be shunned as internal conflicts in political parties do not affect only the participants in the conflicts but virtually all the party active members, without precluding those who have the potentials to pilot the affairs of a state most exquisitely.

Of course, in most instances, many aggrieved members of the conflict-laden parties tend to cross carpets and seek their political greener pastures in another party, and this does not speak well for the democratic potential of political parties in any context. As explored in the previous discourse above, cross-carpeting between political parties tend to solidify or consolidate a political party than any other party which in turn affects the sustenance of democratic materialization where opposition parties reserve the right to check the excesses of the ruling party, and the reverse is invariably the case where cross-carpeting is condoned overmuch. In effect, it is observed that the majority of Nigerian electorates are liable to submit to the pressure of a ruling party that is dominated by most prominent political figures of the country. The reason is that, in most situations, Nigerian citizens and electorates alike are

observed to derive joy from voting for a party that wins an election, and as such become very cautious and captious of the probability and feasibility of the party to be victorious. Contrarily, when political parties experience all sorts of conflicts among its party members due to one reason or the other and the prominent political actors of the party deflect to another party, electorates may tend to follow popular choice and vote for the party that has winning potentials.

In a similar vein, Musefiu Ade (Appendix) established in a personal interview, January 18, 2022, that political parties may experience conflicts on different occasions, it is normal because we cannot avoid opinion mismatch in group contexts as in political parties; but then the earlier a party realize how conflicts sabotages their attractiveness to the citizenry, the better. Intra-party conflicts jeopardize the party's image, and this makes the citizens have negative inferences of such political party. As a result of this, citizens find it rather misleading to encourage people to join or support a political party where conflicts are hardly resolved, because when you support such party, you are only trying to prompt corruption, dictatorship, nepotism, disintegration and backwardness into the developmental trajectory of the country.

Based on my experience of the 2019 general election, the PDP could have been successful in the elections but for some issues that could not be resolved by the leadership of the party. Also, you would realize that the APC had some factions within the party as of then which they were trying to resolve when President Muhammadu Buhari appointed Chief Bola Ahmed Tinubu to intervene and resolve all the wrangling that were disturbing the tranquility of the party. They did this because they were scared of the negative implications internal conflicts would cause them during the elections. However, what affected the PDP and made some Nigerians have bad impression about our party was the fact that the primary election that was conducted prior to the 2019 general election was overtly marred by money politics. If you can recall, it was even reported that the candidate that emerged as the candidate of the party bought the votes

he amassed during the primary election. Consequently, those who were trying to consider my party for presidential election were disappointed, and they concluded that ‘the devil we know is better than the angel we do not know’ Musefiu Ade (Appendix).

The sort of conception about a conflict-ridden political party sure affects the performance of the party in the polls, for the party tend to lack absolute and convincing manifesto to curry favour and impress the electorates. A political party is not just organized to win election without performing particular roles that uplift the democratic sustainability of a country; they are expected to be collective and unanimous in their decisions, which is the bedrock of imparting, working manifesto that can effectuate victory for a well-meaning candidate under the umbrella of the party. Political parties are major players in the electoral process as they educate, mobilise and organise their members to participate in the political process, —they are teams composed by a variety of players that coordinate themselves to solve collective action dilemmas and coordination problems (Aldrich, 1995 & Cox and McCubbins, 1993). Hence, political parties are well structured to perform articulative, aggregative, communicative and educative functions; such a system is often associated with participant political culture which is capable of ensuring a steady democratic process (Almond 2010). When a political party does not value these crucial functions in its activities, by oftentimes creating conflicts that linger for so long, it tends to lose the attractiveness of the citizenry who hold the legitimate power to determine who paddle the canoe of the country. In other words, internal conflicts undermine the capacity of a party to enhance democracy and claim responsibilities for catering for the needs and expectations of the entire citizenry.

Furthermore, pre-election litigations are bound to abound in a conflict-laden political party, such that aggrieved and discontent party members tend to file suitcases to pursue their interests in a political party, especially on issues that relate to determining the leadership of the party and selection of candidates for a general or gubernatorial election. Meanwhile, Cohen

(2015) submits that to develop a culture of democratic ethics which can minimize and manage conflicts arising from intra-party contestations and infuse a system of internal democracy in political parties, the framers of the Constitution had incorporated some conditions in the Constitution which require political parties to employ democratic methods in the internal management of their affairs. These conditions have been augmented in the Nigeria Electoral Act (2022).

In the interview conducted with a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (Appendix), it was gathered that in the preparation for the 2019 general election in Nigeria, there were overwhelming petitions and court cases arising from primaries conducted by political parties, especially the PDP and the APC, to determine their candidates for the election. He maintained that in the recent history of Nigerian political history, the party primaries conducted for the 2019 primary election exposed a shortfall in internal democracy which is a concern for electoral progress and success in the country. Consequently, the judge adduced, ‘inordinate pre-election cases and petitions, most of which were filed by members of the APC and the PDP, showed a lack of democratic process in the selection of candidates; and this affected the moral right of the opponent party to complain about the outcome of the general election’.

Where political parties adhere to democratic doctrines in their dealings, there will be limited conflicts within the party which will be easily resolved, and as such aspirants will be deemed responsible to have been nominated without issues. The Electoral Act (2010), section 87 (subsection 7) that, ‘a political party that adopts a system of indirect primaries for the choice of its candidates shall clearly outline in its constitution and rules the procedure for the democratic election of delegates to vote at the convention, congress or meeting’. This condition was ingrained to further offset the negative implication of intra-party conflicts which relates to distrust among members of political parties, animosity and factionalisation of party members, indiscipline among party members, credibility problem and bad image for political parties,



opportunity for opposition political party to criticize and factionalize the party in conflict, waste of time and resources, divided loyalty among party members, discontent among party members, annihilation of party activities, instability in the party and over-heating the polity. Conflict-laden political parties are likely to be unstable and this can threaten the process of democratization.

More often than not, political parties that experience wrangling of all sorts are liable to adopt do-or-die method in their pursuit of political power during electioneering, out of the will to outsmart some of their party factions and defectors. As such, such political parties resort to vote buying, rigging of election, multiple voting, and all sorts of illicit acts to amass votes during election, which of course, are a bane to the process of democratization.

Consequently, intra-party conflicts undermine the capacity of political parties to perform their key role of fostering democratic governance and ensuring that they are responsive to societal needs. Inability of political parties to perform this role would mean that —the whole democratic experiment can disintegrate (Kellman, 2004). In a similar vein, research findings have underscored that party conflicts, lawlessness and the devastating influence of godfatherism continue to pose serious roadblocks and challenges to the sustenance of the country's democracy (Ogundiya and Baba, 2005).

Thus, as maintained by Oladimeji (Appendix), it is the core responsibility of the Independent National Electoral Commission to monitor political parties in their capacities to comply with their unadulterated statutory and constitutional requirements to steer the affairs of their parties democratically. During the 2019 general elections, leaders of the PDP found it somewhat taxing to petition the result of the election as they were scared some aggrieved party members may psyche up the continuation of suitcases filed against the party after the primaries, as they had lost the members' loyalty to the party as a result of impositions and political propaganda which does not speak well for the fate of democracy in the country.

It should be noted, meanwhile, that as Kellman (2004) observes, while it is acceptable that political parties can be sacrosanct in the enhancement of democracy, they can equally be an impediment to its attainment as well; and this portends that true democracy may oftentimes have a very slim chance of surviving, regardless of the context. As observed in the political reality of Nigeria, internal wrangling, factionalisation, indiscipline, and all sorts of conflicts continue to chase away the truly democratic, patriotic and well-meaning personalities from politics. Most, if not all, scholars and professionals in Nigeria hide under the pretext of political conflicts to conceal themselves from being lured into politics in Nigeria; and as such parties continue to present incompetent political actors to contend for executive positions in elections which in turn delimit the party's chance of winning at the poll. This also forms the reasons political parties resort to violence and vote buying in order to foist success in elections. While many people have acknowledged the horrendous influence of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria, it is worthy of note that in a political party, it is impossible to have multitudes without some measure of conflicts; it should just be managed in order not to escalate to violence.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This research work is influenced by the theory of Intra-Group Cooperation which presupposes that social groups exist through conflict and cooperation. This theory was propounded by Jude and Ika (2013) to undergird the fact that social groups as in political parties are comprised of individuals who emerge from variegated backgrounds that celebrate different dimensions of interests and priorities in life, yet constrain their personal and individualistic interests for a common interest that serve the wills of all.

As members of a group interact together, there emerge power relations in the internal dynamics of the group, which may polarise the group into two power blocs namely; the privileged and the less privileged power blocs. These power blocs compete for the control of

the decision-making machinery of the group with the aim of influencing the decisions of the group to their favour (Jude and Ika, 2013). The somewhat competitive nexus that exist between the power blocs in some cases creates a communication dilemma within the group. Interestingly, the aspirations which bind the group members together ultimately creates the incentive for the privileged and the less privileged power blocs to strike a balance by cooperating to integrate their incompatible interests in the larger group's interest so as to promote its corporate objectives. In other words, both power blocs break up in order to integrate their divergent opinions into the group's corporate objectives. This is why for instance, political parties are seen as organised groups of people working together to compete for political power so as to promote agreed upon policies.

Hierarchy within groups is not simply a status ordering of individuals; it often involves coalitions of group members (subgroups) and represents power differentials among these subgroups. Alexander *et al.* (2009) also reports that once hierarchies of power and prestige are set into place, research suggests that they are viewed as legitimate and highly resistant to change...valid and helpful suggestions from low-status members are likely to be ignored, devalued, or discounted. However, members of disadvantaged group may challenge the imbalance so as to improve their group's position. The rivalry between the advantaged and disadvantaged groups within the larger group is often resolved by reaching of a compromise that would ensure that the interests of the two parties are integrated and articulated as the policy or position of the group. Framing the conflict as a step level game (Pruitt and Rubin, 1994) has clear advantages from the perspective of the group, as it makes it rational for group members to contribute when they believe this is critical for their group's success.

In most cases, group members tend to be inspired by their desire to possess and maintain control over valued resources. Therefore, the disadvantaged group will compete to gain resources and status, whereas the advantaged group will act against any threat to their

resources. Human societal groups are such that lack of equality breeds the existence of different aspirations wherein the possession of resources for sustenance is either pursued or protected, depending on the status of such individual in a social group; while this can stimulate conflict of interests, it can equally arouse cooperation among individuals of a group to collectively pursue a common goal. King *et al.* (2009) opine that conflict and cooperation are best viewed as a process rather than outcome or product, and this process brings about complementary contributions to group function and development.

Research has however shown that all group members benefit if the group acts collectively in defense of its shared interests, but even moderately sensible members might hesitate before joining a possibly fatal fray (Gould, 1999 359). The issue of interest is typically not how groups overcome internal obstacles to collective action but rather why members of distinct social groups see their interests as conflicting in the first place. The transition from group interest to group action is often treated either implicitly as unproblematic, or explicitly as a function of response to conflict (Gould, 1999).

### **2.2.1 Relevance of the Theory**

This research effort is anchored on the somewhat inevitable state of intra-party conflict in Nigeria, based on the conviction that in all social groups, while there is cooperation, conflict cannot be jettisoned completely. Hence, this the theory of intra-group cooperation therefore explains why despite the power relations which exist within political parties and the varied interests usually pursued by party members which sometimes threaten the survival of the group, the party members try to close ranks by integrating their incompatible interests in the larger interest of the party so as to forge a common and united front to articulate the corporate objectives of the party.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the study discussed the methodology underpinning the research work. Here, we uncover the techniques employed to sample, gather and analyze data in order to provide appropriate answers for the research questions and actualize the objectives of the research. Therefore, this chapter disinters the research design, research method, research approach, sampling technique, instruments of data collection, and method of data analysis. Expatiations are also made on how instruments have been validated and data collected and analyzed.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Leedy (1993) asserts that research design refers to the common sense and clear thinking necessary for the management of the entire research endeavour and a complete strategy upon the central research problem. Research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted and includes the collection and analysis of data which are relevant to the research (Kothari, 2004). It refers to the overall mapped out strategy, approach and technique employed for meticulous and systematic investigation to acquire relevant data for the sake of meeting the research objectives and answering the research questions.

Hence, for the purpose of this study, the researcher adopts mixed research design to seek for the relevant information needed from the study population who form the scope of this study. Kothari (2004) posits that case study can be explained as complete and careful observation form of a qualitative analysis of a social unit that places more emphasis on the full analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their interrelations. Saunders, *et al.* (2009), submits that an existing theory can be challenged by simple and well-constructed case study in spite of the suspicions of its unscientific feel. This research effort, therefore, has been hinged on case study as it underscores full contextual exegesis of a limited number of events

and/or conditions and their relations. Similarly, this design is chosen because it gives premium to the interrelation of events with other similar situations in other organizations as the one being researched. This study takes into account a concrete analysis of the effects of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria, paying particular attention to the experiences of the two dominant parties in the country – the All Progressive Congress (APC) and the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) – at the 2019 general election in order to reecho the appropriate opinion to cushion the causative agents of these internal party conflicts

**Objective 1:** to examine the nature of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria

***Required type of data:*** secondary data

***How data were obtained:*** the researcher painstakingly gathered viewpoints, arguments and propositions of different scholars which could answer the research question 1 of the study. Existing literatures on the nature of intra-party conflicts were carefully reviewed to accomplish the objective. A thorough understanding of the nature of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria will facilitate the process of understanding its source and causes as the case may be. Essentially, secondary data were employed to discover the solipsistic nature or otherwise of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria.

***How the data were analysed:*** content analysis is employed to dissect data collected.

***Expected result based on existing theory:*** it has been established by the existing theory that intra-party conflicts in Nigeria has been occurring more prominently since the commencement of the Fourth Republic (1999) which was the birth of absolute democratic dispensation in the country. Intra party conflicts have been recurring, and they apparently result in unmitigated factionalisation within a political party across different levels of government in Nigeria, serving as inroads to the progress, growth and development of Nigeria. Intra-party conflicts in Nigeria are swamped with sentiments and aggrandizement. These internal conflicts are evinced in

Nigeria through the breakup of parties and subsequent formation of factions, and the manifestation of party crisis is rampant defections across parties.

**Objective 2:** To evaluate factors that incite intra-party conflicts in Nigeria

**Required type of data:** secondary data

**How data were obtained:** gathered views and submissions of scholars as they help address question 3 of the research study. The researcher examines the existing literature on factors that cause intra-party conflicts among party members and/or leaders in Nigeria. This is obviously relevant because the bedrock of intra-party conflicts cannot be shunned in the process of inquiring its effects on election. Similarly, ascertaining these causative agents of intra-party conflicts is important considering the fact that party members are supposed to have common interests and goals in line with the constitutional establishments of the country and the party. It is equally imperative due to the fact that the causes easily pave way for the best remedy to the intra-party conflicts. Hence, secondary data were employed to establish the factors that incite intra-party conflicts in Nigeria.

**How the data were analysed:** content analysis has been deployed to analyse collected data.

**Expected result based on existing theory:** existing theory maintain that political parties in Nigeria deployed several tricks or ways to deny some members participation in primary election. These include the nomination of a particular candidate by powerful figures within the party such as state governors, godfathers, moneybags etc. enlisting the supports of these few powerful members threaten the chances of others who may be forced to withdraw from contesting. Zoning which denies some section of the members who are not from a particular zone from contesting; the use of violence and thugs to intimidate members who want to go against all odds to contest; and monetization of the electoral process, which makes it very expensive for some people who intend to aspire for an elective position, are the major causes of dissensions among party members. The few high-ups in the hierarchy determine winners

and losers against the party's cohesion. Lack of party ideology has been established by already existing hypothesis as the cause of incessant intra-party conflicts in Nigeria, and this portends that party ideology must not be sabotaged in the activities of the party.

**Objective 3:** to examine the effects of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria.

**Required type of data:** primary and secondary data

**How data were obtained:** the researcher gathered the viewpoints and submissions of political leaders, tribunal members, INEC officials, community-based organizations and some notable party members to access primary data on the effects of intra-party conflicts on the performances of the two leading political parties - the APC and the PDP – in the 2019 general election in Nigeria to answer the third research question. The researcher equally considers some literatures that expose the effects of intra-party conflicts in a political dispensation. Primary data is very pertinent to be able to unleash reliable data as the sources are knowledgeable personalities in the political realities of Nigeria; hence, the data gathered facilitate the exposition of the effects of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria with specific focus on the 2019 general election.

**How the data were analysed:** data gathered are analysed using content analysis

**Expected result based on existing theory:** existing theory maintain that intra-party conflicts exponentially affect the performance of the party in question in a negative way. In most cases, parties knotted with internal imbroglio are likely to experience factionalisations where party leadership structure suffer serious blow with regards to selection of qualified candidates for elections. These conflicts delay, and sometimes inhibit, parties' appropriate representation at the polls.

### **3.2 Sampling Technique**

Sample refers to the part of the study population which is feasibly considered for investigation rather than the whole population. Albeit sampling does not guarantee hundred percent accuracy of research, it eases the burden of enquiring from everyone who forms



potential respondent in the study population. The method of purposive sampling was used to develop the sample of the research under discussion. According to this method, which belongs to the category of non-probability sampling techniques, sample members are selected on the basis of their knowledge, relationships and expertise regarding a research subject (Freedman *et al.*, 2007). In this study, therefore, representatives of the selected political party leadership (APC and PDP)-2, representative of INEC-2, some members of election tribunals-3 and some community-based organisations-2 have been sampled (totaled 9), due to their special relationship with parties in Nigeria and their relevant experience in politics and, particularly, the 2019 general election in Nigeria; to dig deep into the intricacies of intra-party conflicts and extensively find out their negative effects on elections in Nigeria. We have specifically sampled these stakeholders because of time, financial and personnel constraints coupled with the fact that the stakeholders have more in-depth knowledge of many intra-party conflicts and how they affect elections in Nigeria.

### **3.3 Research Method**

For the sake of gratifying and meeting the set objectives of this research work, a qualitative research method is adopted. One of the popular attributes of a qualitative method is its appropriateness for small samples, coupled with the fact that its results are not measured in quantities. Emphasising the basic advantage of a qualitative method of research, Collis and Hussey (2003) submit that it offers a complete description and analysis of a research subject, without limiting the scope of the research and the nature of participant's responses. Of course, while adopting a qualitative method, it is imperative for the researcher to have the necessary finesse and adeptness for investigate deeply into the case under study.

In the words of Kothari (2004), qualitative approach is a function of a researcher's perception and impressions whereby he gives his subjective assessment of attitude, opinions and behaviors. Qualitative research focuses on gathering of verbal and written data rather than

measurement. It is in most cases based on subjective opinions of both the respondent and the researcher. Therefore, the suitability of qualitative method for this research is due to its aptness to address the research topic in accordance with the research objectives.

### **3.4 Research Approach**

This study basks in the inductive research approach which allows the research to begin with particular observation which is oftentimes employed to infer conclusions and equally produce a sort of generalized theory. The inductive approach is also appropriate because it takes cognizance of the context where research effort is being made, while it is most apposite for small samples that produce qualitative data. However, as established by Dezin and Lincoln (2005), the main weakness of the inductive approach is that it produces generalized theories and conclusions based only on a small number of observations, thereby the reliability of research results being under question. The approach is yet apt for this work because it is almost impossible for the researcher to reach out to every party in Nigeria considering the timeframe and financial constraint of the research.

### **3.5 Instruments of Data Collection**

An in-depth interview is adopted for the purpose of this research. This type of interview is used to unveil the feelings, emotions and perceptions of the respondents with regards to a particular research subject, dwelling on personal and unstructured questions which normally serve as guides for the researcher during interview sessions. This sort of interview allows for a face to face interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer and reduces drastically the rate of non-response in an enquiry. In conducting the research, a semi-structured questionnaire is used to further facilitate the process of gathering data by the researcher. Some questions are prepared so that the researcher can gear the interview towards the accomplishment of the research objectives, while further additional questions are raised in the course of the interview session.

### **3.6 Method of Data Analysis**

For the sake of analysing data collected from the in-depth interview, the study adopts content analysis. According to Moore & McCabe (2005), this is the type of research whereby data gathered is categorized in themes and sub-themes, so as to be able to be comparable. One of the advantages of content analysis is that it helps to simplify any seeming complex data collected. Similarly, content analysis avails researchers the ability to structure the qualitative data gathered in a manner that facilitates the satisfaction of the objectives of the research.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

## DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter focused on the presentation, interpretation and analyses of information collected in the course of the study. Information was obtained through interviews and observation and was systematically presented, interpreted and analyzed to obtain valid information for drawing conclusions.

### 4.1 Discussion of Findings

This research effort has been tailored towards the consequential reality of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria, paying attention to the consistent imbroglio that has knotted the most prominent political parties in Nigeria and the issues that provoke internal conflicts in order to amplify the necessity and logical means of addressing them.

Hence, the study has found out series of factors that incite intra-party conflicts in Nigeria and particularly the effects it has on electioneering, which are pointed out in the following key points:

This work has ascertained some findings based on its objectives. Hence, we find it imperative to align each of these findings to its appropriate objective in order to justify the satisfaction of the major focus of the research – ascertaining the effects of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria.

**Objective 1:** to examine the nature of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria

**Finding:** It has been discovered, having acknowledged the inevitability of conflicts amidst social groups that party members in Nigerian political parties are always at loggerheads, particularly when potential leaders (candidates) are imposed on them. In other words, leadership issue manifests in most cases of internal conflicts in political parties, because a President may act as the profound leader of the party; governors also strive to double as the state chairman of the party, which is totally against the dictates of the Nigerian Constitution.

Put differently, the elite leverage on their power and capacities to impose candidates on the party, while party members who are ill-favoured and aggrieved counteract such imposition and question the illicit actions of the so-called moneybags, as the ambitions of the aggrieved to contest are being amputated. Basically, intra-party conflicts in Nigeria are bedecked with clashes of interests; situations where party members become absolutely contradictory in the pursuit of political goals, while they try to influence the process of making decision in order to curry favour and advantage to their sides. In most instances, party members tend to create their factions to further amplify their voices and grievances in consonance with their political goals.

**Objective 2:** To evaluate the factors that incite intra-party conflicts in Nigeria

**Findings:** the study discovers that intra-party conflicts have been sort of rampant in Nigeria due largely to lack of clear-cut party ideologies. The reason is that ideology is meant to control the programmes and actions of parties. The existence of political parties is hinged on ideology so much so that there may be no sense of direction, internal squabbles, among others, if ideology is lacking in a political party. Political elites in Nigeria share avarice and promiscuous attributes as traits that sabotage the political standard and welfare of the party.

Lack of internal democracy breeds intra-party conflicts. This is evincing in situations where party leaders and elites boycotts the party's constitution which heightens democracy, for the purpose of gratifying themselves. Internal democracy is most required in the selection of candidates for elective positions both within and outside elections, as it has been observed that what normally causes fractionalization or conflicts in most Nigerian political parties is the issue of selection of candidates through party primaries for elective positions in general elections. Ethnicization of party politics, excessive western influence on democracy, poor leadership, and indiscipline within the party, among others spur intra-party conflicts in Nigeria.

It is equally discovered that the inevitability of the APC internal conflicts, particularly, is attached to the pedigree of the party, as political actors of varying parties coalesced to form

the party because of their variegated political pursuits. Hence, the need to contend for positions as related to the ambition of each of these political gladiators who have converged from different backgrounds and affiliations leading to difficulty and complexity in the selection of apt candidate to win election.

There is a great level of undetermined party policy positions within the PDP as a political institution, and there is almost no difference between every other political party in Nigeria paying attention to the ideological underpinning of the parties. We found out that political parties in Nigeria follow the same route in establishing their political ideologies, as all the politicians easily crisscross between parties where they influence their new political parties, and as such adopt the same antiquated method and ideology for party administration which may not impress the a good number of the party members.

**Objective 3:** To assess the effects of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria.

**Findings:** Intra-party conflicts jeopardize the party's image, and this makes the citizens have negative inferences of such political party. As a result of this, citizens find it rather misleading to encourage people to join or support a political party where conflicts are hardly resolved, because when you support such party, you are only trying to prompt corruption, dictatorship, nepotism, disintegration and backwardness into the developmental trajectory of the country.

Because most Nigerian political parties operate with similar ideologies knotted with oppression and internal conflicts, well-meaning individuals are discouraged to join political parties in full-fledged. Meanwhile, political parties, especially the PDP find it taxing to field a trustworthy candidate, and this in turn jettisoned their opportunity to win the 2019 general election.

Importantly, decency and peaceful elections can only be foreseen when reconciliation committees successfully douse tensions of the atrocities factions in a party are liable to commit.

In other words, the study found out that aggrieved party members who have masterminded and engineered factions within the party extend the internal conflicts and grievances to the general polls by conniving to rig elections.

Opposition parties, PDP especially, were reluctant to challenge or petition to the core the result of the general election because of lack of unity and absolute loyalty on the part of the party members, which was inspired by candidate impositions and political propaganda by the party leaders.

The study equally finds out that the 2019 elections showed a shortfall of internal democracy in the APC and the PDP, as a result of the overwhelming petitions and court cases by party orchestrated by party members against the party's leaders' impositions. This in turn affected the moral right of the opponent party to complain inordinately about the outcome of the general election.

Largely, intra-party conflicts bring about bad image within the political party which weakens and/or sabotages the party's capacity to win an election without rigging or money politics as the case maybe, as electorates lose trust in such conflict-ridden political party. Those in government would turn out to be elected as they are saddled with the public trust, if the strongest opposition party also grapple with internal conflicts; and the crisis will keep lingering till after the elections.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the summary of findings, conclusion of the writer and recommendations based on the findings gotten from each research objectives.

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

Basically, intra-party conflicts in Nigeria are bedecked with clashes of interests; situations where party members become absolutely contradictory in the pursuit of political goals, while they try to influence the process of making decision in order to curry favour and advantage to their sides. In most instances, party members tend to create their factions to further amplify their voices and grievances in consonance with their political goals. Lack of internal democracy breeds intra-party conflicts. This is evincing in situations where party leaders and elites boycotts the party's constitution which heightens democracy, for the purpose of gratifying themselves.

Internal democracy is most required in the selection of candidates for elective positions both within and outside elections, as it has been observed that what normally causes factionalisation or conflicts in most Nigerian political parties is the issue of selection of candidates through party primaries for elective positions in general elections. Ethnicisation of party politics, excessive western influence on democracy, poor leadership, and indiscipline within the party, among others spur intra-party conflicts in Nigeria.

Intra-party conflicts jeopardize the party's image, and this makes the citizens have negative inferences of such political party. As a result of this, citizens find it rather misleading to encourage people to join or support a political party where conflicts are hardly resolved, because when you support such party, you are only trying to prompt corruption, dictatorship, nepotism, disintegration and backwardness into the developmental trajectory of the country.



## **5.2 Recommendations**

This research work suggests the following recommendations, having accentuated the effect of intra-party conflicts on elections in Nigeria:

There is a swift need for political parties in Nigeria to realize party ideologies beyond the papers. Many scholars have underscored the absence of party ideologies in Nigerian political parties which is not actually the problem as these parties really have the ideologies documented in their party constitutions. It is, however, profoundly imperative that Nigerian political parties constantly stipulate and implement their party ideologies in their political operations.

Internal wrangling should be raised and addressed without unnecessary delay. When there is a controversial issue in a political party, the leadership of the party should see it fit to raise such controversy and call every person involved to order on time. This will surely bolster the confidence of the party members and the electorates for belonging to and supporting a trustworthy party. However, when conflicts are allowed to linger for quite a long period of time, it becomes a great wound for the party leadership to deal with. Stringent conditions/penalties should be established for politicians who are fond of cross-carpeting. These conditions should be basically attached to vacating an elective position being occupied by such personality. This will decrease the pace of otiose crisscrossing that is popular among Nigerian political gladiators.

It is crucial to make sure that internal political structures are designed in a way that does not just consolidate the party, but also prepare the political party sufficiently enough to meet the requirements of the Nigerian people. The reason is that when political parties work effectively well, it naturally translates to better governance and an assurance for democratic dividends for the general populace.

Lastly, political re-engineering is a profound necessity in the current political reality of Nigeria. This should be realized through a deliberate and aggressive re-orientation programmes

which should be organized with the aim of educating, enlightening, and informing the party members, electorates and stakeholders about the political system of Nigeria.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The overarching standpoint of this research effort is anchored on the fact that internal conflicts within political parties in Nigeria have multifarious subtle and obvious ways it affect the process of democratization in the country. The conspicuously commercial perceptions most Nigerian politicians have for politics have been related to the major drive for desperation to clinch political power at the detriment of party ideology and popular support. This has been a major causative factor for intra-party conflict as other party members are prone to creating factions that can assure inclusivity in its dispensations; a faction that will not be superfluously concentrated on the elite, but to the wellbeing of the entire party members.

Meanwhile, factionalisation is a syndrome that should not be encouraged in a political party, as it affects negatively the party's attractiveness before the citizenry and electorates alike which has a consequential effect on the party's performance in electioneering. In furtherance, this study underscores that conflicts cannot be absolutely avoided in a political party with multitudes, for such party is prone to experiencing divergent opinions and interests towards a political cause. Expectedly, intra-party conflicts can easily jettison the core value of absolute representation. Political parties are expected to realize series of institutional guarantees so that they can perform beyond expectations; and to realize this, internal democracy must be ensured.

As established in this work, unless the internal political workings of a party are admirable and enticing, truly democratic, well-meaning and well-intention personalities may not join a political party and, consequently, well-intention people may not come into power. This will swiftly remind one of the popular beliefs that the worst of us are ruling the best of us.

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pp. 118 – 134.

## Appendix 1

### List of Respondents Interviewed

S/N	NAME	ADDRESS	DATE
1.	Olanipekun Ajibade	Ori-oke Pure Water Area,	18th Jan., 2022
2.	Mr Adekunle Ojo	44 Orisunbare street, along Borepo axis,	19th Jan., 2022
3.	Comrade Olajide Adigun	14 Dagbolu area, Obada,	19th Jan., 2022
4.	Oladimeji Idris	Iwo road, Ibadan, Oyo state	18th Jan., 2022
5.	Chief Musefiu Ade	Eleyele area, Ibadan, Oyo state	18th Jan., 2022
6.	Senior Advocate of Nigeria	45 Dagbolu area, Ifon-Osun, Osun state	20th Jan., 2022
7.	Asked not to disclose		
8.	Asked not to disclose		
9.	Asked not to disclose		

## **Appendix 2**

### **In-depth Interview Question Guide**

1. As a patriotic Nigerian, what is your overall comment on the political conflicts that occur in Nigerian political parties?
2. How would you describe the nature of intra-party conflicts that happen in the major political parties in Nigeria?
3. What do you observe as the major causes of all the political wrangling that swamp the two prominent political parties in Nigeria – the APC and the PDP?
4. As far as you are concerned, what are the probable effects of these intra-party conflicts on candidate selection and subsequently the general election?
5. Considering the conduct of the 2019 general elections in Nigeria, do you think intra-party conflicts affected the elections at all?
6. What were the effects of the intra-party conflicts experienced by the APC and the PDP on the 2019 general election?