

ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of political parties in consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. This study was guided by the following objectives; To examine the role of PDP and APC in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria, To determine the factors limiting the political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria, To examine the effect of political parties politics and internal democracy of the democratic process in Nigeria.

The study employed the descriptive design; questionnaires in addition to library research were applied in order to collect data. Primary and secondary data sources were used and data was analyzed using the Pearson correlation statistical tool at 5% level of significance which was presented in frequency tables and percentage. The respondents under the study were 100 citizens of Nigeria. The study findings revealed that even though the political parties are trying their best, they still need to do more to ensure the consolidation of Nigeria democracy. This research will be a contribution to the body of literature in the area of the political parties activities and the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria, thereby constituting the empirical literature for future research in the subject area.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	i
Approval Page	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	ii
Declaration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iii
Dedication	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iv
Acknowledgement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	v
Abstract	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	vi
Table of Contents	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	vii

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.1	Background of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1.2	Statement of General Problem	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1.3	Objective of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1.4	Research Questions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1.5	Hypothesis-	-	--	-	--	-	-	-	-
1.6	Significance of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1.7	Scope of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1.8	Definition of Terms	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

CHAPTER TWO – REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1	Theoretical Framework-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.1.1	Elite theory-	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
2.2	Conceptual Framework-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.2.1	Democracy-	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
2.2.2	Political party-	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
2.2.3	Relationshipbetween political parties and democracy	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
2.2.4	Activities of Nigeria political partiessince 1999-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.2.5	Conceptof political party and democratic consolidation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.3	Review of Related Literature-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.4	Summary-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

CHAPTER THREE – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.2	Research Design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.3	Area of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.4	Population of Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.5	Sample size and Sampling Techniques	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.6	Instrument for Data Collection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.7	Validity of the Instrument	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.8	Reliability of the Instrument	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.9	Method of Data Collection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.10	Method of Data Analysis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

CHAPTER FOUR – DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0	Introduction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.1	Data Presentation and Analysis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.2	Characteristics of the Respondents	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.3	DataAnalysis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.4	Testing Hypothesis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.5	Summaryof Findings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.6	Discussion of Findings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

CHAPTER FIVE – SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0	Introduction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.1	Summary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.2	Conclusion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.3	Recommendations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	References-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Appendix	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Presently, the call for freedom and democracy echoes across the globe. The world has witnessed phenomenal shift from authoritarian style of governance to democratic rule. The fact still remain that state is no longer interested in interacting with other state where democracy is not practiced. It then follows that any country desirous of relevance within the world system must be seen as democratic compliance (Omotola, 2008). African states are not left out in this development. Though, argument in some literature shows that the reasons for supporting democracy in Africa, specifically Nigeria, do not mirror Western perception. Thus, African looks more at democracy in economic terms than political ideology (Saliu, 1999). The global recognition of democracy eventually paved way for the re-birth of democratic government in Nigeria on May 29, 1999. The struggle for democratic government in Nigeria during military era is almost the same as anti-colonial struggle. This is because both the promoter and supporter of democracy in Nigeria are highly committed and dedicated before the transition comes to reality. In the process of achieving it, many of them lost their life, some were even detained while those who escaped the two gone on exile (Saliu, 2004). Now that democracy becomes Nigerian "Public good", credible institutions are required to defend the system. It is in this context that democratic consolidation and sustainability become imperative. Thus, democracy requires among others the supportive structures, such as political parties. These Political Parties will serve as mediating institutions through which differences in ideas, interests and perceptions of political problems at a given time can be managed (Omotola, 2008). The fact still remain that "the strength and effectiveness of Political Parties is directly proportional to the degree of resilience democracy enjoy" (Mimiko, 2007). It is against this background that this study is concerned with the role of political parties in consolidation of democracy in Nigeria and the extent of party's contribution to the survival and consolidation of democracy in Nigeria with special focus on PDP and APC. Nigeria has a multi-party system, with two or three strong parties and a third party that is electorally successful. PDP and APC remains the strongest parties in Nigeria in the opinion of the researcher.

The All Progressives Congress (APC) is a political party in Nigeria, formed on 6 February

2013 in anticipation of the 2015 elections. APC candidate Muhammadu Buhari won the presidential election by almost 2.6 million votes. Incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan conceded defeat on 31 March. This was the first time in Nigeria's political history that an opposition political party unseated a governing party in a general election and one in which power transferred peacefully from one political party to another. In addition, the APC won the majority of seats in the Senate and the House of Representatives in the 2015 elections, though it fell shy of winning a super-majority to override the ability of the opposition People's Democratic Party to block legislation. The party is the result of an alliance of Nigeria's three biggest opposition parties – the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) – and a faction of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) – merged to take on the People's Democratic Party. The party received approval from the nation's electoral umpire Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on 31 July 2013 to become a political party and subsequently withdrew the operating licenses of the three predecessor parties (the ACN, CPC and ANPP). In March 2013

The People's Democratic Party is a major contemporary political party in Nigeria. Its policies generally lie towards the centre-right of the political spectrum. It won every Presidential election between 1999 and 2011, and was until the 2015 elections, the governing party in the Fourth Republic although in some cases, amid a few controversial electoral circumstances. The longtime slogan of the People's Democratic Party has been "Power to the people". During the party's National Convention in Port Harcourt, Rivers State on 21 May 2016, David Mark, a former President of the Senate of Nigeria, introduced "Change the change" as the party's campaign slogan for the 2019 general elections. However, this study is examining the role of both PDP and APC in the consolidation of Nigeria Democracy.

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