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PROLIFERATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE CHALLENGES OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

Multi-party democracy offers citizens a wide range of choices during elections. Political parties have as their main aim, the opportunity to dislodge and replace the party in government. This aim is discovered not to be the driving force of most political parties in Nigeria's fourth republic rather they are more interested in offering themselves (for a fee) as brokers between the main parties (especially those in government) and the electorate. Political parties in Nigeria's fourth republic are discovered to be non-ideological but mercantile in operation, cosmetic in outlook, and rent-seeking inclined. The over-bloated number of political parties (91) in Nigeria's fourth republic poses daunting challenges for effective and successful election management; beyond this, the phenomenon constitutes a huge drain on the country's finances as the cost of elections continues to skyrocket proportionately to the number of political parties. Presidential electoral fortune has always oscillated between 2 main parties while 4 others have won few seats in the parliament. This study seeks to investigate why the uncontrollable growth in the number of political parties in Nigeria's fourth republic has become part of the polity; it seeks to evaluate how multiplicity of parties impacts on effective and successful election management in the country. Owing to the continuous abysmal performances of the parties during elections as well as the challenges to effective election management, pruning the number to a manageable size is recommended. The paper relied on secondary and quantitative data for analysis, while adopting the rational choice theory as the framework of analysis.

Keywords: Political party, party proliferation, election, multi-party democracy, democracy, democratic consolidation, election management, election management body (EMB)

Introduction

Multi-political party system is one of the most critical ingredients for engendering democratic consolidation especially in fledgling democracies like Nigeria; in view of the multiple choices it offers the citizens in leadership recruitment and change. Deepening democratic practices in all political climes requires a functional, virile and active party system (Aleyomi, 2013). There cannot be democracy without politics just as there can never be politics without parties (Rossiter, 1960). Elections in the

word of Eldman (1964), are important to democracy; political parties are the means through which voters' choices are simplified.

Notwithstanding the enormous benefits of variety of choices made available to citizens by the existence of multi-party democracy, the fourth republic Nigeria's experience is more of a curse rather than a blessing. The over bloated number of non-performing political parties that got themselves registered and subsequently found their names on the ballots at every election do so,

not for their interest in offering themselves as credible alternatives to the ruling party by capturing power through winning elections, but solely for the qualification for elections subventions from INEC. (Constitution FRN 1999 as amended, 2010 Electoral Act). At best, they exist only to make up the number of political parties to enable the sponsors of such mushrooms parties further their political mercantilism by accessing various subventions to political parties by INEC. It is a common place during the run up to the 2019 elections to see gubernatorial candidates of parties openly endorsing candidates of stronger parties for what many political pundits believe is monetarily induced. This ugly scenario played out in Ekiti State in 2018 where the African Democratic Congress (ADC) withdrew from the gubernatorial contest and subtly endorsed Dr John Kayode Fayemi of APC who later won the election (The Guardian May 15th 2018), the Zamfara State PDP governorship candidate Dr. Bello Muhammad Mutawalle perhaps playing on the psyche of the electorate in a well-attended press conference in Guzau announced that 8 political parties and their candidates had agreed to support his candidature (Daily Trust February 22nd 2019,).

The Rivers State Deputy Governorship candidate of African Action Congress (AAC) Mr Akpo Bomba Yeeh and the State Deputy Chairman of the party decamped to PDP and openly declared support for Mr. Nyisom Wike who was the PDP governorship candidate moment before the conclusion of the election. They were reported to have been offered financial inducement by Mr Wike (Leadership March 25th 2019, Daily Trust March 28th, 2019). Similarly but more pathetic is the solidarity and endorsement visit to Wike by

governorship candidates of 58 political parties in Rivers State led by Pastor Samuel Ihunwo the Chairman of Independent Democrats (Guardian 15th of May, 2018, Leadership Newspaper 2nd March, The Punch March 2nd 2019). In the same vein, the Inter-Party Advisory Council (I-PAC) led by its chairman Precious Baridoo also embarked on a pro Wike demonstration demanding the announcement of Wike as the Governor-elect of Rivers State even when the processes were yet to be concluded by INEC(The Guardian March 28th, 2019).

In Kano State, Amb. Ibrahim Gaya the gubernatorial candidate of United Peoples' Congress (UPC) led 42 other political parties to endorse Alh Abdullahi Ganduje the APC governorship candidate just 3 days before the election. (www.legit.com March 7th, 2019, The Nations March 7th, 2019). After the announcement of results of the supplementary election that was earlier ordered by INEC was made, the incumbent governor was declared winner, the main rival Engr. Abba Kabir Yusuf and his party, PDP rejected the election, but 42 other political parties under the aegis of Conference of United Political Parties (CUPP) under the leadership of Alh Nuhu Isa expressed satisfaction about the election and declared their support for Ganduje. They even went further to counsel the PDP and its candidate to approach the court for redress if not satisfied with the outcome of the election (The News March 27th, 2019) Some of the mushroom parties who funnily have being sponsoring presidential candidates in the previous elections have always ended up securing very ridiculous votes at the polls. (ThisDay March 2nd 20019). The combined forces of political parties (other than PDP which has always won the presidential and secured

comfortable seats in the bi-camera National Assembly until 2015 -2019 when the table turned in favour of the APC, ANPP, CPC, AC (and later ACN) APGA and APC have at one time or the other scored less than 1 million votes in previous elections between 2003 and now when parties became increasingly proliferated) that fielded candidates in presidential elections since 2003 have not being able to secure more than 5% of the votes cast in the elections (See table 2 below). Several of them have no presence in any ward across the nation. This study would curiously seek to provide answers to the following questions: i. why has the uncontrollable growth in the number of parties in the Nigeria's fourth republic become part of the polity? ii How has the increasing multiplication of parties impacted on effective election management?

The very unimpressive performances of the many parties among many other reasons call to question the rationale for the existence of such numerous number of such under-performing parties and whether or not it's reasonable for INEC to continue to retain such numerous political parties (Punch, March 7th, 2019 ThisDay March 2nd 20019 March 7th, 2019, The Nations March 7th, 2019 Guardian March 28th, 2019 Guardian 15th of May, 2018, Leadership Newspaper 2nd March, The Punch March 2nd 2019 Leadership March 25th 2019, Daily Trust March 28th, 2019 Daily Trust February 22nd 2019, The Guardian May 15th 2018 The News March 27th, 2019) whose sole aim is political merchandising - sponsoring candidates that will back out to support other candidate(s) in the middle of the race for financial gains as witnessed in the 2019 episode where endorsement of candidates were so rampant by other parties. One however begins to curiously

wonder if the party compromise and moderations preached by Rossiter is inter-party or intra-party in nature (Rossiter, 1960) and if yes, could that be done for economic reasons other than ideological and political interests of the party in furtherance of what Olaniyi called economic democracy and political democracy (Olaniyi, 1999).

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING AND ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTION MANAGEMENT

The essential nature of political parties is captured in the word of E.E. Schattschneider when he remarked that "modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties" (Schattschneider, 1942); an American scholar Rossiter seems to adequately agreed with Schattschneider in his work entitled *Parties and Politics in America* when he asserted that "no democracy without politics, no parties without compromise and moderations" (Rossiter, 1960:1). Political parties in the very view of Heywood "has become the major organizing principle of modern politics" (Heywood, 2013:221). Modern democracy has over the years, as a matter of necessity propagated parties as an indispensable factor in its operation (Johari, 2002:557). Parties and election are interwoven and undoubtedly chief among the basic ingredients of deepening democratic practices across the globe. Therefore, in understanding the extent and pace of democratic consolidation of a country requires an examination of the effectiveness of the party system in practice as well as the election and election management in such state. The rational choice and political economy theories are adopted as the theoretical framework for the

understanding of this study; which is providing the best election management practices in an atmosphere of a sizable and manageable number of political parties.

Rational choice theory which presumes that every human decision is guided by the knowledge of choices and benefits embedded in such decision, therefore every human interaction and actions are conditioned by choice and benefits. It is often criticized for ignoring the social interaction condiment of humans, placing humans as always knowledgeable about events. Portraying also, human actions as one always geared toward selfish gains may not always be correct as there are other factors that could interfere in the choice of humans. In spite of the limitations of this theory, its strengths and applicability suits the character and actions of Nigeria politicians and political parties, Nigerian parties in the fourth republic has rent seeking, pelf and financial gains as major aims, coupled with the fact that they lack the political and economic bases to compete and capture power, rather than engage in steady mobilisation and awareness, they prefer to enter into shady deals with the perceived stronger party for a fee. The result is endorsement and counter endorsement of candidates.

Political Parties

There exist variegated opinions among scholars as to the meaning and functions of political parties. In the view of Heywood, party is a group of people that is organized for the purpose of winning government power, by electoral or other means (Heywood 2013). Johari sees political party as an articulate organization of society's active political agents, those who are concerned with control of government powers who compete for popular support

with other group or group holding divergent views (Johari 2002). Johari still, while re-echoing Curtis states that parties are a "group of people who hold certain beliefs in common or who are prepared to support party candidates, work together for political victory, attain and maintain power" To Onobonije(1975), political party is an association of people who share similar opinion, views and beliefs about certain political end for the state or country and the means through which such end could be achieved.

Ubani quoting Appadorai (1968) defines a political party as a more or less organized group of citizens who act together as a political unit, with distinctive aims and opinions on the political questions of the state and who, acting together as a political unit, seek to control government (Ubani 2014).

Johari went further to prescribe 3 essential ingredients of a political party to include:

- i. An organization of persons who hold a common view on some important matters of public policy;
- ii. An organization of people whose main aim is to participate in the struggle for power; and lastly
- iii. A body whose members struggle to ensure the implementation of their policies and programmes through a legal and democratic means.

Heywood holds the opinion that associations are meant to exhibit 4 characteristics to be seen as political parties. To him, they must: 1) have as their main aim the exercise of government power by winning political office (formation of government); 2) formally organized and peopled with card carrying members (membership); they have issues and programmes they focus on (manifestoes) and to very large extent they hold and united

by a common political preferences, belief and general ideological identity (ideology). Stokes' opinion about the essence of political parties when he affirms that "far from an unfortunate consequence of human nature plus liberal freedoms, parties introduce effectiveness into democratic institutions" (Stokes 1999) appears to be most succinctly captured importance of political parties in the modern democracy. However, there seems to be a huge agreement among scholars as to what political parties are meant to do which among others include: simplification of electoral process, provision of alternative government, enlightenment of citizenry as well putting the government in power on its toes etc.

In terms of typology, the most common classification of parties is on the basis of the number of parties that is constitutionally recognized in the country. i.e. One party, two parties and three parties. Heywood classification of parties however slightly differs. To him, parties could be; i. cadre or mass, ii representative and integrative, iii constitutional and revolutionary, IV left wing and right wing (Heywood, 2013:222-224).

Election Management

Despite the significant space the conduct of elections occupies in modern representative democracies coupled with the fact that elections (be it referendum or representative) can only be the most important and single event organized in a country is perhaps the most unsubscribed topic in the political space; until recently toward the last quarter of the last century, unlike other aspects of governance, the management of multiparty democratic elections was not been previously accorded sense of news

worthiness and has thus, being kept under low profile when placed side by side with other political activities. It goes mostly unnoticed especially if well conducted but attract criticisms and undue publicity if it is disputed especially by losers who mostly challenge the outcome of such elections in the law court (Catt et al 2014, Al-Musbeh, 2011).

Notwithstanding the nature of the electoral management body, be it independent, government or mixed; independence, impartiality, integrity, transparency, efficiency, professionalism and service-mindedness are the outlined guiding principles that guarantee acceptable electoral process and results (Cat et al, 2014). But beyond these, the processes must be made very seamless and less cumbersome to attain a very acceptable output with less crises and rigor by the election management body (EMB). An electoral process with multipartyism no doubt poses greater challenge to effective election management compared to a two party system. The post-1945 Italian coalition government that lasted for just 10 months

(Heywood, 2013:240), thereby forcing the electoral body to untimely return to the drawing board lend credence to this position. One cannot agree less with Durverger's view of the tendency of having a 'second ballot' election is most likely under a multi-party system.

The Nigeria's forth republic proliferated multi-party system is consistently posing enormous challenges to effective election management in the country in a multi-dimensional fronts. Firstly, the number of days it take for final collation of election results and the number of invalid votes have continued to consistently increase

proportionately to the number of parties that participate in the election (see table 2). This view is corroborated by Festus Okoye, an INEC's National Commissioner in charge of voters' education and information when he said:

"the ballot papers are getting more complicated for the Nigerian people. Sorting, counting and entering the scores of candidates in Form EC8A series is becoming more cumbersome. Polls are closing late on account of the number of parties....." (Sahara Reporters April, 1st 2019)

On a second note, the financial implication of conducting elections is on the increase since 2003 when Nigeria political space started to witness uncontrollable increase in the number of political parties. The 2003 election was conducted at the cost of 60.5bn (Thisday 25 January 2006) while the 2011 election cost N122.9bn (Vanguard May 8th 2013) and the 2015 gulp a total of 108.8bn (Vanguard Oct., 2016) (it should be noted that the 2015 election witnessed a reduced number of party that participated) a whopping sum of 189.2bn was budgeted for 2019 election. The INEC chairman while defending the 2019 budget before the Senate, acknowledged the increase in the number of political parties as the key reason for the increase in the 2019 cost above 2015 (Premium Times April 29, 2019). The INEC chairman in his defense was quoted to have said: ".... associated with political parties, is monitoring of party primaries, congresses and conventions. There is also the

processing of nominations. We have 12,558 constituencies which mean INEC has to process about 141,778 nominations".

Nigerian party system in perspective

The Nigerian democratic history is one that has been frequently dotted with military incursions since her 'paper' independence in 1960. Safe for the first republic political parties that (some) pre-dated Nigeria independence, which were in the real sense of it, very civil, indigenous and devoid of non-political influences in terms of their formations, operations and management. Formation of political parties in the post-independence Nigeria (except those in the first republic) have always been superintended by the military, which in all cases bequeathed on the Nigeria political space parties system they deem fit for the country.

In the Beginning: Pre-Independence and Independence Political Parties

Nigeria political party system started with the formation of Peoples Union in 1908 which was founded by John K. Randle and Orisadipe Obasa; the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) was founded by Herbert Macaulay in 1923. These two parties, (domiciled only in Lagos as of that time) contested the September 20th 1923 parliamentary elections into the newly created Legislative Council (Lagos and Calabar). Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) won 3 (Lagos) out of the 4 seats while the Peoples Union won no seat as the remaining 1 (Calabar) seat was won by an independent candidate. Nigeria Youth Movement came into the political scene in 1938 and dwarfed the electoral fortune of UNDP who had won elections in 1922,

1928 and 1933 (Nwosu et al, 1998).

National Council of Nigeria and Cameroun which later transmuted into National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) was formed in 1944, Northern People Congress came to being in 1949 and Action Congress was formed in 1951, a splinter group from Action Group later in 1964 adopted Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) as a party. There were four main political parties in the Nigerian first republic as outlined above which were formed into two main alliances in conjunction with smaller political parties (especially during the run ups to the 1964 parliamentary elections) NPC and NNDP formed the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) while NCNC and AG the United -Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) (Onobonije, 1972:110-111). These alliances provided a semblance of two party system in the parliament. Other smaller political parties sprang up either before independence or immediately after independence to participate in the 1964 elections. They include: Borno Youth Movement (BYM), Convention People's Party of Nigeria and the Cameroons, Democratic Party of Nigeria and Cameroon (DPNC), Dynamic Party (DP), Igala Union (IU), Igbira Tribal Union (ITU), Kano People's Party (KPP), Lagos State United Front (LSUF), Mabolaje Grand Alliance (MGA), Midwest Democratic Front (MDF), National Independence Party (NIP), Niger Delta Congress (NDC), Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), Northern Progressive Front (NPF), Republican Party (RP), United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), United National Independence Party (UNIP) and Zamfara Commons Party (ZCP) (Wikipedia). It should however be

noted that only 7 political parties made impact in the 1959 election. They are: National Council of Nigeria and Cameroun (NCNC), Action Group (AG), Northern People's Congress (NPC), Igbira Tribal Union (ITU), Igala Union (IU), Mabolaje Grand Alliance (MGA) and Niger Delta Congress (NDC) (Wikipedia). The parties got proscribed by the military after it took over in 1966 (Onibonoje, 1972).

The 2nd, Aborted 3rd Republics and Abacha's Experience

The Nigerian second republic political space was unfrozen in 1978 with the re-appointment of Chief Michael Nsa Ani as the chairman of Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) by the Gen Olusegun Obasanjo led Military Junta. Ani has being earlier appointed to head FEDECO by Tawafa Belewa in 1965 (Premium Times, February 1, 2018). The electoral body accredited 6 political parties to participate in the 1979 elections. The parties approved were: the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), led Chief Obafemi Awolowo, GCFR; National Party of Nigeria (NPN) led by Alh. Makama Bida; the Nigeria People's Party (NPP), led by Dr. Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe, GCFR; the People's Redemption Party (PRP), led by Mallam Aminu Kano; the Great Nigerian People's Party (GNPP), led by Alhaji Waziri Kolo Ibrahim. The commission later considered and approved the application of Nigeria Advance Party (NAP), led by Dr. Tunji Braithwaite which was earlier declined in 1978 (Premium Times, February 1, 2018).

During the aborted Nigeria's third republic political experiment, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida (IBB), the military Head of State, through the Nigerian constitution of the Third Republic drafted in

1989 imposed a two party system on the country after proscribing 13 political associations seeking registration as parties. They were: the approved parties were National Republican Convention (NRC) which was tilted towards the right in term of political ideology and Social Democratic Party (SDP) that was ideologically aligned to left (Wikipedia). Babangida had in 1989 restored political activities which had since 1983 being put on ban. Government influence and control on the new parties was enormous as the military president was constantly meddling in their affairs. For instance, the primary election of SDP won by Musa Yar'Adua was concealed by the government for a reason best unknown. Yar'Adua was later banned from participating in electoral process that was concluded with the 12th of June 1993 presidential election. The parties were later proscribed by General Sani Abacha led military government in 1994.

Gen Sanni Abacha agreed to the counsel of his cohorts to transform himself into a civilian president after ruling the country with an iron fist for four years. In furtherance to the plan, he caused five political parties to be registered however with the intention of adopting him as their sole presidential candidate. The five party the Abacha government registered were: Committee for National Consensus (CNC); Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN); Grassroots Democratic Movement (GDM); National Centre Party of Nigeria (NCPN) and United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP). The lifetime of the party ended with that of Abacha in July 2008.

The Forth Republic Experience

The last in the annals of party experimentation being the hurriedly packaged General Abdulsalam Abubakar

led transition to civil rule of 1998/1999, which foisted a three regionally based political parties on Nigeria polity - Alliance for Democracy(AD)(popular in the South Western region), All Peoples Party(APP) which later transmuted into All Nigerian Peoples Party((ANPP) popular in the North) and People Democratic Party(PDP) mostly popular in the South Eastern and South Southern regions of the country(The New York Times, March 1st 1999). The death of Abacha which put an end to the life of his 5 parties that were often referred to as the leprosy finger of Abacha, had paved the way for the ascension of General Abdulsalam Abubakar whose government mid-wived the fourth republic. General Abdulsalam Abubakar made true his promise by organizing the shortest transition programme in the history of the country. He hurriedly packaged a constitution review and later came up with the registration of three political parties i.e. Alliance for Democracy, All Nigerian Peoples Party and People Democratic Party which eventually participated in the 1999 elections.

Opening the Floodgate of Parties Proliferation in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

The floodgate for the proliferation of parties in the Nigeria's fourth republic is the copious weakness of Section 222 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which dictates very simple requirements for party registration. The provision inter alia states that:

No association by whatever name called shall function as a party, unless –

- (a) The names and addresses of its national officers are registered with the Independent National Electoral Commission;

- (b) The membership of the association is open to every citizen of Nigeria irrespective of his place of origin, circumstance of birth, sex, religion or ethnic grouping;
- (c) A copy of its constitution is registered in the principal office of the Independent National Electoral Commission in such form as may be prescribed by the Independent National Electoral Commission;
- (d) Any alteration in its registered constitution is also registered in the principal office of the Independent National Electoral Commission within thirty days of the making of such alteration
- (e) the name of the association, its symbol or logo does not contain any ethnic or religious connotation or give the appearance that the activities of the association are confined to a part only of the geographical area of Nigeria; and
- (f) The headquarters of the association is situated in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

On the 8th of November, 2002, Chief Gani Fawehinmi(SAN) won a protracted legal battle against INEC for refusal to register his political association, National Conscience Party. The Supreme Court ruled that INEC failed to take into cognizance the provisions of Section 222 of the Nigerian Constitution while drafting the guidelines for party registrations. "This judgment marked the beginning of the upsurge in political parties ever since (Thisday Oct. 26th, 2018). The court subsequently voided 12 out of the 13 guidelines used by INEC and as such ordered that the party be registered. That landmark judgment though very celebrated

and well applauded as at that time, has proven to be very nocuous to the polity as the number of parties continues to increase uncontrollably over time. For instance, 30 political parties were licensed to participated in the elections of 2003, it grew to 57 in 2007 and 63 in 2011 (Thisday 16 Feb 2018 in <https://www.pressreader.com> , Punch March 27th, 2019). On August 16, 2013, two additional parties were registered bringing the total number to 30 after 35 parties had been deregistered in 2011 and 2012. Ten additional parties were registered on October 21, 2016 and 21 others were later registered bringing the total number to 68, the number of registered political parties has increased to 91 in 2019. As of the time of the election, about 140 political associations have submitted application to be licensed as political parties (Thisday, March 5, 2019).

INEC made a bold attempt to salvage the situation in 2011 and 2012 when it invoked relevant sections of the reviewed electoral by deregistering 7 parties on August 17, 2011 and on the 6th December 2012, INEC further deregistered 28 non performing parties. The deregistration exercise by INEC brought down the numbers of the party to 28 in 2012. This action of INEC did not go without resistance as some of the affected political parties filed and won legal action against the election management body for withdrawing their operational license (Thisday 16 Feb 2018 in <https://www.pressreader.com>). The Court of Appeal had on July 24th 2015 voided Section 78(7)ii of 2010 Electoral Act that INEC relied on to carry out the party deregistration exercise, thereby overruling Mach 6, 2013 High Court judgment which reinforced the power of INEC to deregister parties(Punch March 7th, 2019) in line with the 2010 Electoral Act.

Section 78(i & ii) states as follow:

The Commission shall have power to de-register political parties on the following grounds-

- (i) breach of any of the requirements for registration; and
- (ii) for failure to win a seat in the National or State Assembly election.

PARTY PROLIFERATION FOR NOTHING? : A GRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

Again, with an annual subvention by INEC of N60 million to each political party, the sincerity and altruism of most of the mushroom political associations masquerading as political parties is suspect. This view is lent a very strong credence by the fact that real electoral battles, since 1999, have been fought each time by two major political parties with one or two others standing on the fringes and the rest virtually missing in action.' (THISDAY 26 Oct 2018)

Political events and election results (tables and graphs below) have indicated that the increase in the number of political parties is a needles phenomenon which portend grave

danger for our democratic consolidation gains. The vast majority of them (parties) hardly feature candidates, even when they do so but not with the aim of winning elections but negotiating with stronger candidates with monetary reward in view. Political parties mobilize themselves for solidarity rallies in support of incumbents even when they (the parties) field candidates for such offices. Presidential candidates of 71 political parties jointly secured abysmal 3.1% of the valid vote caste in the 2019 presidential election, leaving the two leading parties with 96.8% of the votes. Many of them have no candidates in most constituencies. This study observed that if majority of 91 political parties feature candidates in elections, such would proof lots of difficulty for Nigerian population which is largely illiterate, result have shown that invalid votes increase proportionately with increase in parties (see table 2).

Besides, the trend portends financial wastages as well as lots of herculean task for election management body to conduct a hitch-free election. The parties' promoters have their eyes only on the subventions rather than winning elections.

Tabular representation of the upsurge in parties in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (1999-2019)

	1999	2003	2007	2011	2015	2019
No of parties registered	3	16	25	61	68	91

Table I. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

Summary of Parties Performances in Presidential Elections (1999-2019)

1999 (3 Parties) Total Valid Votes: 29,848,441			2003(20 Parties) Total Valid Votes: 39,480,489			2007(25 Parties) Total Valid Votes 35,397,517			2011 (20 Parties) Total Valid Votes 38,209,978			2015 (14 Parties) Total Valid Votes 30,276,602			2019 (73 Parties) Total Valid Votes28,323,583		
Parties (2)	Votes	%	Parties (20)	Votes	% of votes	Parties	Votes	%	Parties	Votes	%	Parties	Votes	%	Parties	Votes	%
PDP	18,738,154	62.78	PDP	24,456,140	61.94%	PDP	24,638,063	69.60	PDP	22,495,187	58.89	APC	15,424,921	50.9	APC	15,191,847	55.60
APP/AD	11,110,287	37.22	ANPP	12,710,022	32.19%	ANPP	6,605,299	18.66	CPC	12,214,853	31.98	PDP	12,853,162	44.9	PDP	11,262,978	41.22
			APGA	1,297,445	3.29%	AC	2,637,848	7.45	CAN	2,079,151	5.41	APA	53,537	0.19	PCP	110,196	0.40
			Others		2.58	Others	8121606	4.29	Others	1420787	3.72	Others		.89	Others		3.18
Total Caste Votes: 30,280,052 Invalid Votes: 431,611			Total Caste Votes: 42,018,735 Invalid Votes: 2,538,246			Total Caste Votes: Not available Invalid Votes: Not available			Total Caste Votes 39,469,484 Invalid Votes 1,259,506			Total Votes 29,432,083 Invalid Votes: 844,519			Total Votes: 29,614,190 Invalid Votes: 1,289,607		

Table II. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

Summary of House of Senate seats as won by Parties (1999-2019)

1999			2003			2007			2011			2015			2019		
Parties	No of Seats	%	Parties	No of Seats	%	Parties	No of Seats	%	Parties	No of Seats	%	Parties	No of Seats	%	Parties	No of Seats	%
PDP	59	56.4	PDP	76	53.6	PDP	87	79.81	PDP	71	65.1	APC	60	55	APC	61	55.9
APP	29	31.2	ANPP	26	27.8	ANPP	14	15.26	CAN	18	16.5	PDP	49	44.9	PDP	41	37.6
AD	20	12.4	AD	6	9.7	AC	6	5.50	ANPP	7	6.4	Others	-	-	YPP	1	
			Others	-		Others	2	1.83	Others	13	11.9				Others	3pending	

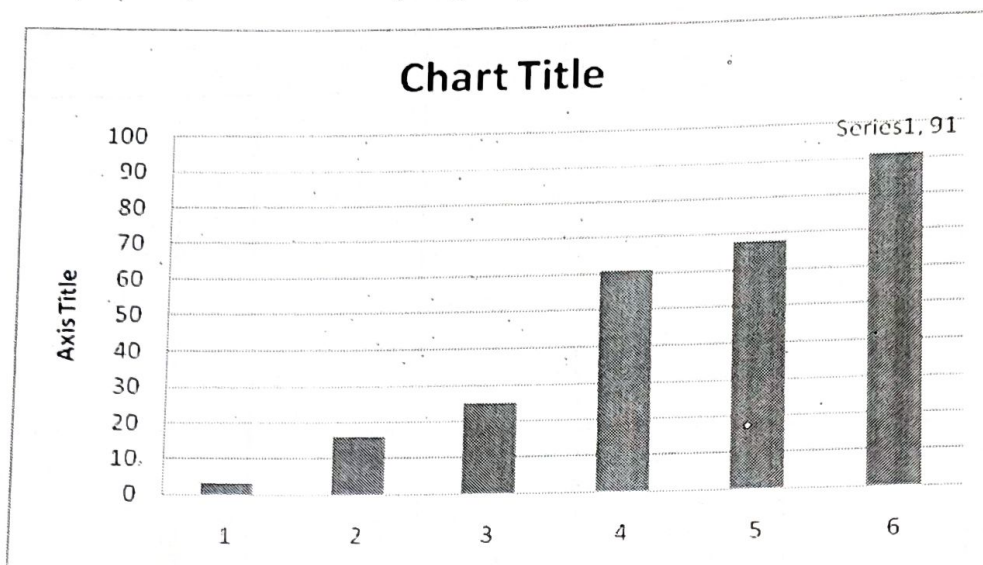
Table III. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

Summary of House of Representatives seats as won by parties (1999-2019)

1999			2003			2007			2011			2015			2019		
Parties	No of Seats won	%	Parties	No of Seats Won	%	Parties	No of Seats won	%	Parties	No of Seats Won	%	Parties	No of Seats won	%	Parties	No of Seats Won	%
PDP	206	57.1	PDP	223	54.49	PDP	263	54.49	PDP	203	46.6	APC	225	62.5	APC	217	60.2
APP	74	30.6	APP	96	27.44	APP	63	27.44	CAN	69	17.9	PDP	125	31.9	PDP	115	31.9
AD	68	12.4	AD	34	9.28	AC	30	9.28	CPC	38	14.7				APC	9	2.5
	0	0	Others	7	8.79		4	8.79	Others	52	14.4	Others	10	2.7	Others	11(8)	3.2

Table IV. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

Graphical representation of upsurge in parties from 1999-2019



Interpretation:

The figures 1-6 stand for 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 respectively

Figure I. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

1999 Nigeria's Presidential Elections

1999	Percent of Votes
PDP	63%
APP/AD	37%

Table II. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

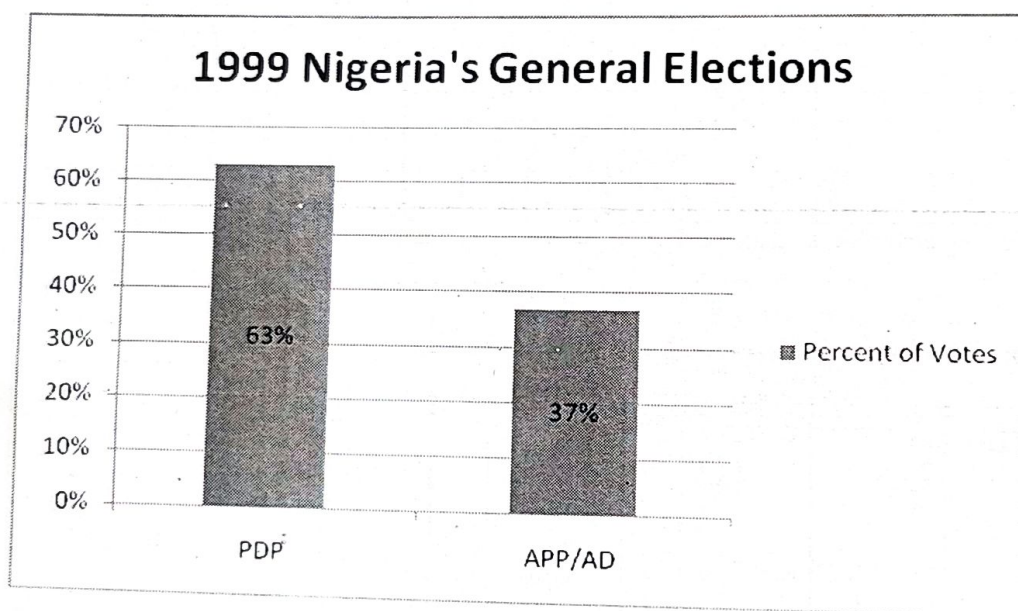


Figure II. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

2003 Nigeria's Presidential Elections

2003	Percent of Votes
PDP	62%
ANPP	32%
APGA	3%
Others	3%

Table V. Source: Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

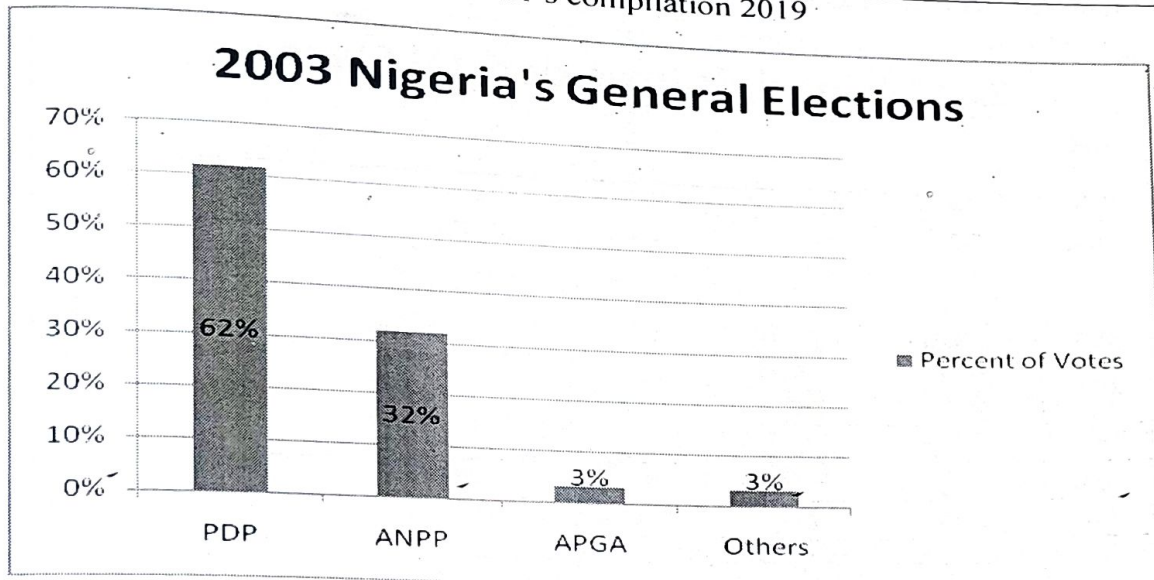


Figure III. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

2007 Nigeria's Presidential Elections

2007	Percent of Votes
PDP	67%
ANPP	19%
AC	8%
Others	4%

Table VI. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

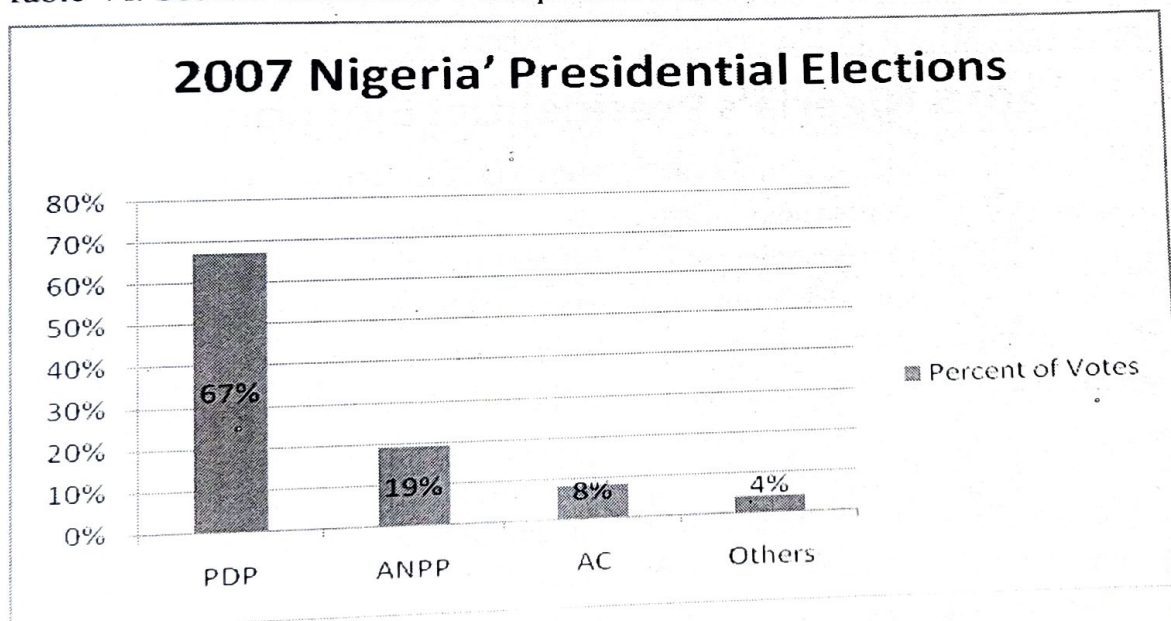


Figure IV. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

2011 Nigeria' Presidential Elections

2011	Percent of Votes
PDP	59%
CPC	32%
CAN	5%
Others	4%

Table VII. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

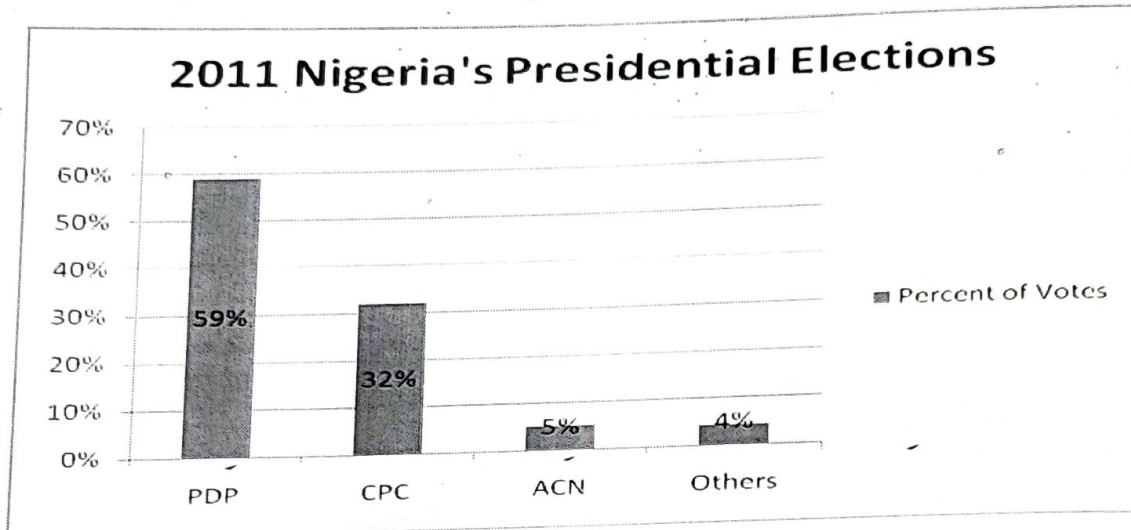


Figure V. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

2015 Nigeria' Presidential Elections

2015	Percent of Votes
APC	54%
PDP	45%
APA	0%
Others	1%

Table VIII. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

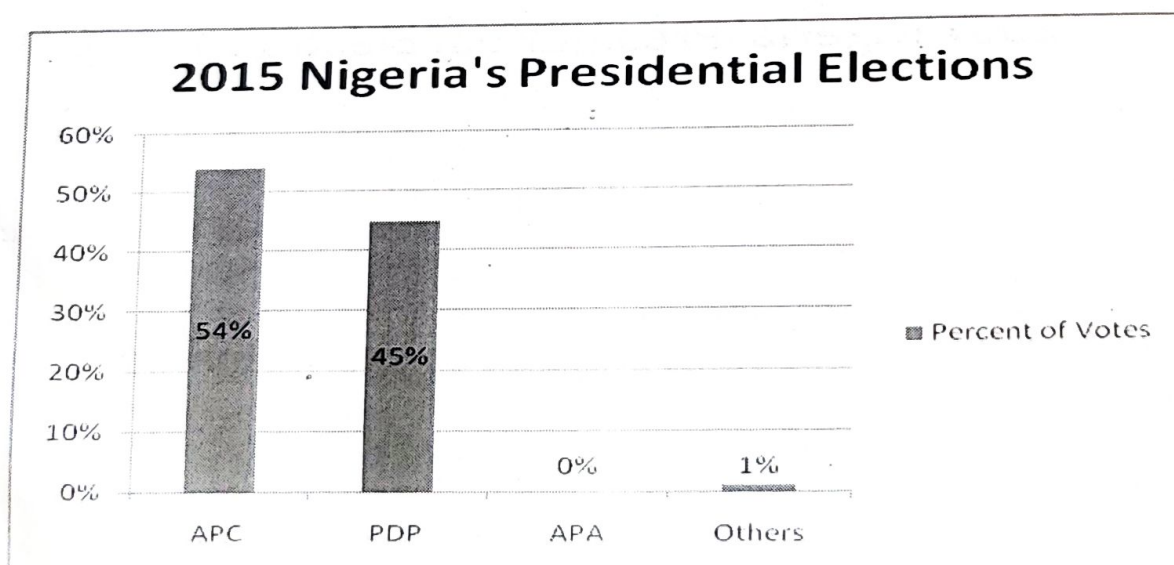


Figure VI. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

2019 Nigeria's Presidential Elections

2019	Percent of Votes
APC	56%
PDP	41%
PCP	0%
Others	1%

Table IX. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

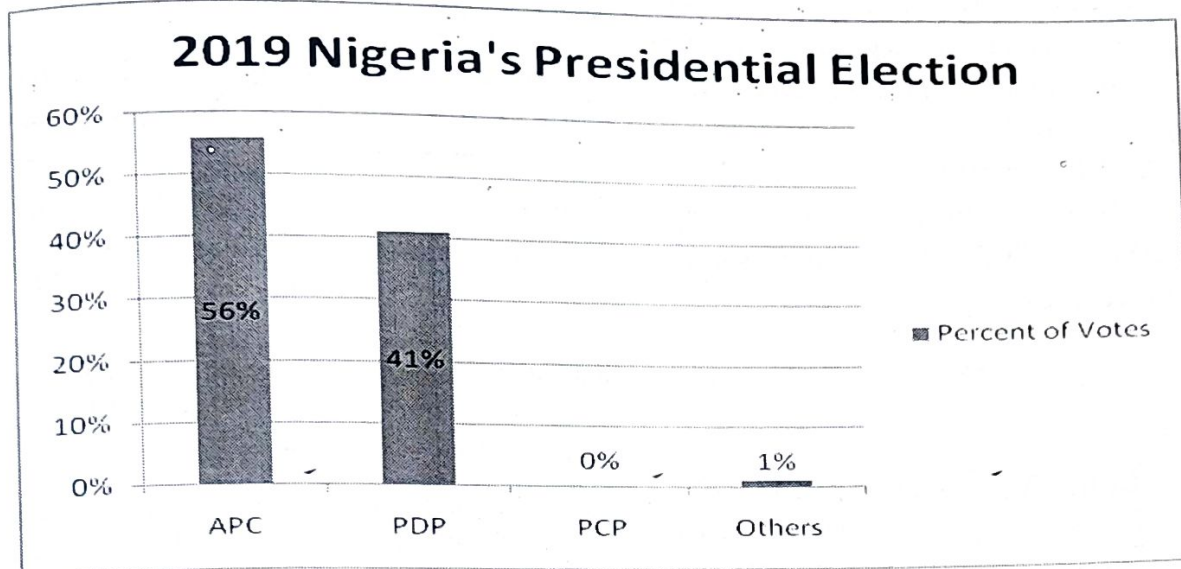


Figure VII. Source: Researcher's compilation 2019

Conclusion:

This study establishes that parties are proliferated for nothing as they stand no chance of winning elections, they constitute themselves into a cog in the rolling of effective election management. The new trend of political merchandising could bequeath a weak political leadership on the polity. Therefore, there should be basis for coalition between parties and not the 'beer parlour arrangement' currently been witnessed.

The paper came to a conclusion that the election management body (EMB) must activate its constitutional power of deregistering parties that fail to live up to the constitutional standard. In doing this, it must also seek for legislative empowerment to make the registration procedures for parties more stringent and more strength to delist parties that perform below

expectations. Nigeria should take a clue from the United States of America about funding of political parties. The idea of funding parties from tax payers' money (which appears to be the most significant factor for the upsurge in proliferation of parties) must be de-emphasized.

Section 222 of the Nigerian constitution must be amended to create registration hitches for intending political parties as well as empower INEC to delist poorly performing parties.

The periodic drain on the national resources in terms of annual subvention and procurement of electoral materials, monitoring the primaries of parties, difficulty in the election management in term of the size of ballot papers, collation and announcement of results taking days to conclude because of the numerous parties that scored zero and whose must be

included on the INEC forms, confusion of voters in term of choice of candidates resulting into high rate of invalid votes due to the size of the ballot papers could be greatly minimized by a drastic reduction in the number of political parties to at most 5. This is because the political and electoral trends since 2003 have shown that not more than 5 out of the numerous parties have had little electoral impacts since then (see tables and figures above).

It is hoped that with the current situation where subvention to parties has being outlawed (THISDAY 26 Oct 2018) sanity will return to the polity.

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