

ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ITS EFFECT ON NIGERIA POLITICAL SYSTEM

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Abstract

Political system performs a number of functions in a political entity. Among these functions is that of representation. In modern liberal democratic theory, the electorate votes for people to represent them. Most times the platform for election is provided by political system. Nigeria started experimenting with representative democracy in 1922. A population of 771,317 made up the population of this, using a statistical tool called Taro Yamani, sample size was determined which is 400. Simple random sampling technique was used to determine our sample population. Questionnaire was the instrument used for the research and 329 copies of questionnaire were returned. The researcher formulated specific research questions and hypotheses to guide the study. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentages and frequencies for the research questions and chi-square for the hypotheses. The research recommended that centre should maintain rule of law as top priority of any elected leader in Nigeria from the federal to the local government level and should establish collective effort in decision making in which every part is duly represented; mutually beneficial decisions are made; only these can bring positive impact on Nigeria political system.

Keywords: Politics, Godfatherism, Political Parties, Democracy, Elections.

1.1 Introduction

When party politics was introduced in Nigeria in 1922 via the Clifford Constitution, its major impediment was the restriction on political participation and representation. The political parties were limited in terms of number, only two of them: the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) and the Lagos Youth Movement (LYM that emerged in 1934), and in terms of spread of their activities. Their activities were limited to the coastal towns especially Lagos for the LYM and Lagos and Calabar for the NNDP.

This is coupled with the fact that only four people were elected in the election (Omodia 2010). Nigeria has come a long way since 1922 in terms of the number and spread of political parties. The number of political parties and their spread seems to give the impression that representation has become an important requirement for the existence of political parties. For example, one of the requirements stipulated for the registration of political parties in the political transition to the Nigerian Fourth Republic was that aspiring political associations needed to garner at least ten percent of the votes in twenty four out of the thirty six states to qualify for permanent registration (Aina 2002).

This requirement seems to suggest that political parties were expected to really show capacity to represent the people. However, in the preparation for the 1999 elections, this requirement had to be watered down to avoid the emergence of a two party system. This is why the

Alliance for Democracy was registered as the third party in 1999 (Aina 2002). Since that time there has been an exponential growth in the number of political parties and this has given the impression that the grounds of representation have increased. The number of political parties has grown from three in 1999 to thirty in 2002, fifty in 2007 and about fifty seven today. However, instead of this meaning more representation, it has not. As the number of parties increased their relevance in terms of being channels of representation has diminished (Egwemi 2009). In fact the existence of political parties seems to have major threat to political representation in Nigeria today. A political party is an organised group of people with a sui generis label and possibly an acronym that, primarily recruit, train and field candidates to be elected to vacant public offices by eligible electorates through the constitutional means of periodic election. In a democratic dispensation, political parties are indispensable and the salient roles that they play cannot be over emphasised. Concerning their functions, political parties articulate and aggregate the interest of the people, educate the masses on electoral, political and socio-economic matters, represent the people at the national, state and local level; sustain the democracy of a country and lastly, act as a watchdog (i.e. the opposition party) to the ruling party which continuously keeps it on its toes for the greater good of the country. It is no wonder E. E. Schattschneider said “political parties created democracy, and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties (Schattschneider, 1942).

Asides being registered organisations with a unique label or acronym, political parties are characterised by their ideology and manifesto. “Ideology represents a typically crucial element of political parties and their activities” (Omotola, 2009:616). This paper examines the role of political parties and its effect on Nigeria political system with the focus of unfolding the nexus between political parties and political representation in the Nigerian State. It argues that the existence of political parties has not meant political representation in Nigeria. The paper identifies and discusses the factors that have affected representation in Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of Problems.

It is very essential to have a close look on the policies that have affects on Nigeria political system, this is done with a view to examining party politics and the challenge of democratic consolidation in Nigeria. This area of political process has been a cog in the wheel of democratic consolidation in Nigeria since independence, 1960. Most studies done emphasized theories of democracy and political party and paid little attention on party politics (intra-politics) and vis-à-vis democratic consolidation in Nigeria. Nepotism and sectionalism were major factors that have caused party's lack of internal democracy in Nigeria.

To that effect, this research proposes to address the following problems:

1. Godfatherism as a challenge to party system in Nigeria
2. Obstacle that hinder the impact of political party in Nigeria
3. Nepotism and sectionalism as part of challenges of Nigeria political party

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to identify the effect of political parties on Nigeria political system. The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the effect of party system on Nigeria political system.

2. To identify the obstacle that hinder the impact of party system on Nigeria political system
3. To give suggestions and recommendations on the improvement of Nigeria political system.

1.4 Research Questions

The researcher poses the followings research questions to help guide the study:

1. What are the effects of party system on Nigeria political system?
2. What are the obstacles that hinder the impact of party system on Nigeria political system?
3. What are the ways to improve the performance of Nigeria political system?

1.5 Statement of Hypothesis

The study formulates the following hypotheses

1. there is positive effect of party system on Nigeria political system
2. there is obstacle that hinder the impact of party system in Nigeria
3. there are ways of improvement of Nigeria political party system Nigeria

1.6 Significance of Study

This study has both empirical and theoretical significance.

Empirically, this study will be of immense benefit to political system in realizing its goal. It will be of immense benefit to policy makers in the formulation of pragmatic policies and frameworks that will guide party system in Nigeria.

The study also will be of immense benefit to Nigeria as they struggle to achieve political stability.

Theoretically, the research will be an addition to the robust literature on the effect of political party in Nigeria it will benefit future researcher on the topic or related topics.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study covers the role of political parties and its effects on Nigeria political system. It will be restricted to political system in Nigeria and on the way forward.

1.8 Limitation of Study

In a study of this nature, some factors limit the researcher from doing more jobs expected to be done. Some of them are the inability of respondents to accept and respond to the questionnaire distributed. Some were afraid of responding to the questions because they were not sure of what the research was aimed at.

The research topic is relatively new and past research works were difficult to locate in libraries, journals portals and other internet websites. The researcher mitigated all these shortcomings by digging deeper for relevant materials and acquiring them which helped in reaching empirical findings.

1.9 Definition of terms

Political Party: is an organized group of people who have the same ideology, or who otherwise have the same political positions, and who field candidates for elections, in an attempt to get them elected and thereby implement the party's agenda.

Political System: is an organized structure set up by a nation to achieve political objectives.

Review of Related Literature

2.1 Conceptual Framework

This paper examines the activities of political parties in Nigeria's fourth republic with the focus of unfolding the nexus between political parties and political representation in the Nigerian State. It argues that the existence of political parties has not meant political representation in Nigeria. The paper identifies and discusses the factors that have affected representation in Nigeria. Before going into the discussion however, a clarification of the key concepts of Democracy, Elections, Political Parties and representation was made in the next section.

2.1.1 Democracy

Democracy is essentially a system of government in which the people control decision making. It is a system of government that ensures that power actually belongs to the people (Omotola, 2006). According to Schumpeter democracy entails "institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions, which realizes the common good by making the people decide issues through the election of individuals, who are to assemble in order to carry out its will" (in Omotola, 2006:27). It is an institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote (Omotola, 2006:27). Democracy therefore from the perspective of this paper is viewed as a governmental process which encompasses the competitiveness for power in order to control political decisions in an atmosphere where civil liberties are exercised.

2.1.2 Political Parties

Political parties may be defined by their common aim. They seek political power either singly or in cooperation with other political parties. In this wise, Schumpeter has opined; the first and foremost aim of each political party is to prevail over the others in order to get into power or to stay in it" (Schumpeter 1961: 279). The distinguishing factor from other groups in a political system is this goal of attaining and/or maintaining political power. Adigun Agbaje has identified three characteristics that distinguish political parties from other seemingly similarly constituted organizations. These are; - It is a label in the minds of its members and the wider public especially the electorate. - It is an organization that recruits and campaigns for candidates seeking election and selection into public political office. - It is a set of leaders who try to organize and control the legislative and executive branches of government (Agbaje, 1999:195). The conception of this paper therefore is that political parties are the political structures and organizations through which people seek political offices especially in a democratic setting.

2.1.3 Election/Representation

Election as we have hinted is a major aspect of democracy. Elections, broadly conceived, refer to the process of elite selection by the mass of the population in any given political system. Although controversy rages among political thinkers about the nature of representation, there is one point of universal agreement; the representation process is intrinsically linked to elections and voting. Political representation is implicit in the very idea of constitutional government and elections are essential to the functioning of a truly representative government. Representatives, acting on behalf of the electorate make the legislative and executive decisions that voter in the aggregate could not possibly make for themselves, considering the sheer numbers of people involved (Anifowose, 2003). The link between elections and democracy should be clear from the above “for thus far, no superior method has been evolved for selecting the leadership of a democratically ruled society”. (Ojo, 2007:6). As important as elections are in a democracy, it is important to note that they do not always lead to representation. This is to the extent that the incidence of fraud may characterize certain elections such that even when the people come out to vote, their votes do not count. Election rigging and other fraudulent electoral practices frustrate the democratic aspirations of citizens who have voted or would have voted into office someone else other than the eventual winner.

2.1.4 The Nexus between Political Parties and Representation

Democracy is about participation and representation. Participation is the extent to which individual members of society take part or get involved in the activities in their societies. Representation on the other hand, refers to the process by which people get chosen to act in the interest of the community or sectors thereof.

In modern day where the dominant form of democracy is indirect or representative democracy, political parties are the principal mechanism for ensuring citizen participation and representation in public policy (Agbaje, 2005), and in fact through which individuals share the democratic values. Thus, a political party is an organized group of individuals who share similar political beliefs, opinions, principles, aspirations and interest with the sole aim of capturing political power and exercising it through the formation of government. In democracies, a political party is “a more or less permanent institution with the goal of aggregating interests, presenting candidates for elections with the purpose of controlling governments and representing such interests in government. It is thus a major vehicle for enhancing participation in governance” (Olarinmoye, 2008:67). Political parties therefore, are saddled with the responsibility of recruiting competent individuals for political leadership through periodic elections, educating the electorate through political rallies and dissemination of information about government policies as well as serving as a vehicle for the articulation and aggregation of the interests of people. Thus, they serve as the pivot upon which the entire political process revolves.

In other words, there can be no meaningful democracy without a properly functioning political party system. It is obvious therefore, that political parties constitute the heart of democracy. The more vigorous and healthy they are the better assured is the health of the democratic process (Agbaje, 1998). It is therefore difficult to imagine any modern democracy without political parties as they are the connecting links between diverse groups of peoples and governments. (Olarinmoye, 2008). In this paper, we argue that as important as political

parties are to democracy in theory the activities of political parties in Nigeria especially the antics of the dominant Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has not made for effective political representation in the country. In the discussion that follows this paper examines four variables which have in tandem with the activities of political parties led to a representation deficit especially in Nigeria's fourth republic. These factors have been used by the dominant PDP to deprive the majority of Nigerians representation.

2.3 Theoretical Frame work

A theory or the triangulation of theories (depending on whether a single theory is comprehensive enough or not) in a research work is there for the purpose of analysis. In other words, it is used for explaining the causation-effect of a phenomenon, and if possible, to make predictions. In the discipline Political Science, there are several mainstream theories that can be used for analysing political parties in a polity. But considering the theme of this paper, the most appropriate theory for the study of Political Parties, Ideology and the Nigerian State is none other than the "Group Theory" The group theory became widely used after critics faulted the elite theory arguments as posited by the Italian Sociologists Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca and, the German Sociologist, Roberto Michels. According to the chief proponent of the elite theory, Vilfredo Pareto, a society is divided into two broad strata the stratum of the elite, where power is concentrated. This minority class is further divided into two the governing and non-governing elite and lastly; the stratum of the non-elite (the masses) which is the majority class. Contrary to this, the group theorists argue that power is not concentrated in the minority class of elites but rather diffused or dispersed among different interest groups that compete against one another (Varma, 1975; Gauba, 2003).

2.4 Empirical review

The empirical review of this research work is derived from the previous studies supporting or in line with the subject matter of the study which is "role of political parties and its effects on Nigeria political system.

Omodia (2011) did a comparative analysis of The Effect political parties on Nigeria political system. Political parties perform a number of functions in a political entity. Chief among these functions is that of representation. In modern liberal democratic theory, the electorate votes for people to represent them. Most times the platform for election is provided by political parties. Nigeria started experimenting with representative democracy in 1922. The extent of representation was so little, only four Nigerians were elected and they covered only Lagos and Calabar. With the advent of more political parties it was expected that this pattern would change. Unfortunately, even though we now have more political parties, this has not translated to representation. A number of factors have contributed to this lack of political representation in the country. These include but are not restricted to electoral fraud, the activities of godfathers, the partisan role of the electoral management body and the security agencies among other sundry reasons. This paper makes the case that in Nigeria and especially since 1999 party politics has not brought about political representation. It argues that as the number of political parties has increased in the country, there has been a paradoxical decrease in the extent and scope of representation in the country. The political parties that exist are not people cantered, since the people are often manipulated out of the representational process.

2.5 Gap in the review of related literature

There has been enormous literature on role of political parties and its effect on Nigeria political system. These studies however did not do a holistic research on the role of political party and its effect on Nigeria political system. This research attempted to fill that lunch

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted survey research design which is descriptive in approach. It is systematic collection of data in standardized form from an identifiable population or representative.

3.2 Source of Data

The research utilized two types of data collection which are primary and secondary source of data collection.

- Primary source
- Secondary source

3.3 Location of the Study

The research took place at some selected local government areas in Enugu sate Nigeria.

3.4 Population of the study

The population of this study is made up of 771,317 people in the five local government area, which are among the local government that make up Enugu state, Nigeria.

3.5 Sample Size Determination

According to Odo (1992) sampling is a process of selecting a proportion considered adequate to represent the entire existing characteristic with a target population for the purpose of generalizing the findings. The sample size of this study was determined from the populations which are the residents and local government staff.

Taro- Yamani (1964) was used to determine the sample size. Yamani is of the opinion that it would be time consuming and exorbitant to get large sampling of the population. He is also of the view that to get effective coverage of the population, this formula should be applied;

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size

N = Population of the Study

E = Level of Significance of error or limit of tolerable error estimated to be
5% or 0.05

I = is constant

We apply it in this study thus:

Calculating the sample size from the total population we have

$$N= 771,317$$

$$n = \frac{771,317}{1+771,317(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{771,317}{1+771,317(0.0025)}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 &= \frac{1,064,757}{1+1928.25} \\
 &= \frac{1,064,757}{1929.23} \\
 &= \frac{1,064,757}{1929.23} \\
 &= 399.80 \text{ (approximately 400)}
 \end{aligned}$$

3.5.1 Sampling Techniques

The technique used in selecting the sample of this study is the random sampling. In random sampling, every person or item to be sampled must have an equal chance of being picked for the sample.

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

The instrument used in this research study was questionnaire. Copies of questionnaire were distributed to elicit information from respondents. Likert-scale was used to generate data from the questionnaire. The information was put and attached to the questionnaire as follows: strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

Data were collected for this study through the use of questionnaire and was supplemented by use of journals, magazines textbooks, internet resource and other compiled materials existing in the libraries.

3.8 Validation of Instrument

The researcher employed a pilot test technique to establish the validity of the study instrument. In testing the validity of the instrument, the researcher administered the questionnaire to twenty persons other than the sample respondents. This was done in order to note similarity in responses.

3.9 Reliability of Instrument

Bowen and Weisberg (1980) defined reliability of an instrument as a process of obtaining information on the degree to which a measure will yield similar result for the same subject at different time under different conditions on a consistent dependable and accurate way.

3.10 Method of data analysis

In analysing the data collected using the questionnaire; the researcher used the simple percentage method of data analysis. The analysis was represented in tabular form for easy understanding and it consists the number of respondents and the corresponding percentages. Chi-square was used as the statistical tool used for testing more than two populations, using data base on two inadequate random samples.

3.11 Instrument Return Rate

The researcher distributed 400 copies of the questionnaire and 329 were returned. The instrument return rate therefore is 82.25%.

Table 3.3 Instrument Return Rate

L.G. A	Number distributed	Number returned	Number rejected	No used
Udi	60	56	4	56
Nkanu-East	50	48	2	48
Igbo-eze North	77	70	7	70
Enugu North	144	138	6	138
Udenu	69	65	4	65
Total	400	329	23	329
Percentage	100	82.25	5.75	82.25

Source: research Data, 2018

Presentation and Analysis of Data

4.1 Presentation of Data

This chapter provided for the presentation and analysis of our research questions and text of our hypotheses. Simple percentage and frequencies were used in the analysis of our research question while Chi-square was used for hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What are the effects of party system on Nigeria political system

Table 4.1: effect of party system on Nigeria political system.

S/N	Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
1	Power only favour the rich	48 14.5%	32 3.9%	18 5.4%	4 1.2%	3 0.9%	105
2	Nation is not at peace	30 9.1%	28 8.5%	12 3.6%	3 0.9%	2 0.6%	75
3	Hinder economic development	35 10.6%	25 7.5%	22 6.6%	4 1.2%	0 0%	86
4	Give room For political instability	22 6.6%	26 7.9	13 3.9	1 0.3	1 0.3	63
	Total	135	111	65	12	6	329

Source: Research data, 2018

Research Question 2: What are the obstacles that hinder the impact of party system on Nigeria political system?

Table 4.2: obstacles that hinder the impact of party system on Nigeria political system.

S/N	Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
1	Lack of fund	42 12.7%	48 14.5%	7 2.1%	4 1.2%	6 1.8%	107
2	Selfish interest of those in power	38 11.5%	38 11.5%	6 1.8%	6 1.8%	3 0.9%	91
3	Lack of peace and orderliness in the nation	33 10%	32 9.7%	4 1.2%	4 1.2%	2 0.6%	75
4	Freedom denial	29 8.8%	16 4.8%	3 0.9%	3 0.9%	5 1.5%	56
	Total	142	134	20	17	16	329

Source: Research data, 2018

Research Question 3: what suggestions and recommendation do we have on the improvement of Nigeria political system?

Table 4.3: suggestions and recommendation do we have on the improvement of Nigeria political system

S/N	Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
1	Providing basic social amenities to the citizens	42 12.7%	45 13.6%	6 1.8%	7 2.1%	5 1.5%	105
2	Utilizing government money effectively	40 12.1%	22 6.6%	3 0.9%	3 0.9%	4 1.2%	72
3	Equitable revenue allocation	38 11.5%	30 9.1%	7 2.1%	3 0.9%	1 0.3%	79
4	Government position should be by zoning	35 11%	30 9.1%	4 1.2%	4 1.2%	0 0%	73
	Total	155	127	20	17	10	329

Source: Research data, 2018

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

4.2.1 Test of Hypothesis One (H₁)

Testing

The research hypotheses one sought to ascertain positive effect of party system on Nigeria political system

We now state the null hypothesis

H₁: there is positive effect of party system on Nigeria political system

H₀: there is no positive effect of party system on Nigeria political system

We have to note that chi-square is an important extension of hypothesis testing. it is used when it is required to compare an actual/ observed frequency with a theoretical or expected frequency, chi-square have been applied in this study.

Constructing the test statistics:

Response	O _i	E _i	(o _i – e _i)	(o _i – e _i) ²	(o _i – e _i) ² /e _i
Strongly Agree	135	65.8	69.2	4788.64	72.8
Agree	111	65.8	45.2	2043.04	31.04
Undecided	65	65.8	-0.8	0.65	0.00
Strongly Disagree	12	65.8	-53.8	2894.88	43.6
Disagree	6	65.8	-59.8	3576.04	54.3
Total	329				201.74

Calculated value = 201.74 The free of freedom, n-1 = 5-1 = 4

Degree of freedom. The level of significance = 0.05. The critical value at 4 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance = 9.49.

Decision Rule:

Reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, if the calculated value is greater than the critical value. Otherwise reject the alternative hypothesis.

Decision

Since the calculated value (201.74) is greater than the critical value (9.49) the researcher accepted the alternative hypothesis which states there is positive effect of party system on Nigeria political system.

4.2.2 Test of Hypothesis two (H₂)

Testing

The research hypotheses one sought to ascertain is obstacle that hinder the impact of party system in Nigeria

We now state the null hypothesis

H₁: there is obstacle that hinder the impact of party system in Nigeria

H₀: there is no obstacle that hinder the impact of party system in Nigeria

We have to note that chi-square is an important extension of hypothesis testing. It is used when it is required to compare an actual/ observed frequency with a theoretical or expected frequency, chi-square have been applied in this study.

Constructing the test statistics

Response	oi	ei	(oi – ei)	(oi – ei) ²	(oi – ei) ² /ei
Strongly Agree	142	65.8	76.2	5806.44	88.2
Agree	134	65.8	68.2	4651.24	70.1
Undecided	20	65.8	-45.8	2097.24	31.9
Strongly Disagree	17	65.8	-48.8	2381.44	36.1
Disagree	16	65.8	-49.8	2480.04	37.7
Total	329				175.8

Calculated value = 175.8 The free of freedom, n-1 = 5-1 = 4

Degree of freedom. The level of significance = 0.05. The critical value at 4 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance = 9.49.

Decision Rule:

Reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, if the calculated value is greater than the critical value. Otherwise reject the alternative hypothesis.

Decision

Since the calculated value (175.8) is greater than the critical value (9.49) the researcher accepted the alternative hypothesis which states that there is an obstacle that hinders the impact of party system in Nigeria.

4.2.3 Test of Hypothesis Three (H₃)

Testing

We now state the null hypothesis

H_i: there are recommendations on the improvement of party system in Nigeria

H₀: there is no recommendation on the improvement of party system in Nigeria

We have to note that chi-square is an important extension of hypothesis testing. It is used when it is required to compare an actual/ observed frequency with a theoretical or expected frequency, chi-square has been applied in this study.

Constructing the test statistics

Response	O _i	E _i	(o _i – e _i)	(o _i – e _i) ²	(o _i – e _i) ² /e _i
Strongly Agree	155	65.8	89.2	7956.64	120.92
Agree	127	65.8	61.2	3745.44	56.9
Undecided	20	65.8	-45.8	2097.64	31.8
Strongly Disagree	17	65.8	-48.8	2381.44	36.1
Disagree	10	65.8	-55.8	3113.64	47.3
Total	329				236.12

Calculated value = 236.12 The free of freedom, n-1 = 5-1 = 4

Degree of freedom. The level of significance = 0.05. The critical value at 4 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance = 9.49

Decision Rule:

Reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, if the calculated value is greater than the critical value. Otherwise reject the alternative hypothesis.

Decision

Since the calculated value (236.12) is greater than the critical value (9.49) the researcher accepted the alternative hypothesis which states that there are recommendations on the improvement of party system in Nigeria.

Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of findings

The study finds out that it is no longer news that most Nigerian political parties today are ideologically barren if one looks at it from the angle of their ideologically-unguided party manifesto and the frequent defection of members across party lines. Not helping matters is the continuation of the ideology neoliberalism for the Nigerian State which was introduced to the country through the 1986 Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) by the neo-liberal financial institutions the IMF and World Bank.

5.2 Conclusion

Political parties in Nigeria over the years and especially since 1999 have failed to perform one of their key functions namely representation. Political parties have flourished literally speaking since 1999 but this has not been translated to effective representation. A number of reasons have been responsible for the increasing number of political parties and the paradoxical lack of representation. Suffice to say as this paper has shown that the key reason for lack of political representation is electoral fraud. The extent of fraud that has trailed elections in Nigeria since 1999 has led to the crisis of representation.

For the existence of political parties to translate to representation, the electoral process as it is at present needs to be overhauled. First, the electoral management body really needs to be made independent. Secondly, electoral fraudsters need to be punished through effective institutionalization and implementation of enabling laws. Until these issues are adequately tackled, the quest for political representation will remain a mirage.

5.3 Recommendations

In the light of the findings in this research paper, the following are strongly recommended: Political system already formed in Nigeria but obviously lack an ideology should take out time to adopt one, be it home-grown or a foreign ideology, while those with a nebulous ideology should clearly state their ideology.

Political system should desist from cooking-up programmes only to get the masses to vote for the candidates they field to be elected to the different public offices at the federal, state and, local level. Rather than luring the electorates with what they want to hear, political parties should come up with a comprehensive, feasible and lucid manifesto.

The number of registered political parties in the country should be downsized from 91 to a reasonable number.

The continuous defection of party members should be discouraged by political parties. This is possible if they henceforth have in place stringent rules and regulations on the admission of members without fear or favour.

The ideology, neoliberalism, should be replaced with the ruling party's ideology, which must have been well considered as suitable for piloting a developing country like Nigeria to greater height.

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