



Election and good governance in Nigeria: A reflection and analysis of 1999-2019 electioneering process and governance system in Nigeria

Chinnah Promise Chinwe

Faculty of Social Sciences, Political Science Department. (Public Administration) Post Graduate Student. Ignitus Ajuru University of Education. Rumuolumemi, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

Abstract

The recent concluded general election in Nigeria especially in Rivers State puts one in a very pensive manically melancholic mode on the future of Nigeria democracy, and one is tempted to ask rationally what system of democracy is been practiced in Nigeria. The electioneering process in Nigeria has never improved since independence as Nigerian elections and electioneering processes has been characterized and marred with irregularities and other undemocratic practices that are accepted by Nigerian political actors and gladiators covertly and overtly perpetrated by politicians, electoral umpire, security agencies and other partners that are supposed to stand out to ensure that election are conducted in a fair and free manner. This study gave the conceptual explications of variables in the topics. Elite theory was used as the theoretical framework, primary and secondary data were used in data collection. A brief history of Nigeria political system was stated, features of elections and governance system discussed. The nexus between election and good governance explicated. In conclusion from the nexus between election and good governance it was clearly apparent that Nigeria is still groping on political naivety and democratic rascality under the guise of elite theory. Election results in Nigerian in the fourth republic experiment have never been the will and wish of the people results are aberrational aberrations that surround our electioneering process and governance system. This paper made some recommendations on how to correct these odoriferous sagas that has enveloped our political scenario and governance system.

Keywords: election, and good governance

Introduction

It is sardonic and laughable to hear people say that Nigeria is a democratic state. It wonders my imagination as I am very skeptical and cynic about it because the democracy I learnt in school is quite different from what we have seen been practiced in Nigeria, unless there is another definition of democracy that has Nigerian origin, content and context. From 1960 1st October, Nigeria gained her political independence till now nothing seriously has change positively in our political system and electioneering processes. Democracy is all about masses welfare, benefits anchored on majority rule, respect for human rights, and rule of law. Reverse is the case in Nigerian political and democratic scenario. Few hegemonic oligarchies have access to our patrimonial wealth since independence. The military and civilian administrations in Nigeria have succeeded in maintenance of two classes of people in the society, the rich and the poor. There is gully erosion in Nigerian democratic system that has deepened, darkened and hardened the heart and consciousness of Nigerian political gladiators and actors. They don't look at the electorate to be anything and their welfare not considered. Nigerians are impoverished on daily bases to the betterment of the few political actors and gladiators.

The dividends of good governance has remained illusory to Nigerian majority, they are fed up with unrealistic promises during election and given peanuts sequel to Election Day or few days to election. Prebendalism and kleptocracy has bedeviled Nigerian political atmosphere. Majority of the people lives in

abject perpetual poverty while the few macroscopic oligarchy lives in perfect luxury on our common wealth. It is unbelievable that a nation as rich as Nigeria in both natural and human resources cannot boast of ordinary one functional refinery. The nation is plagued with unemployment, lack of social amenities and infrastructural decay. The East West Road has been under construction close to two decades nobody is bothered about the completion of the road. Health sectors nothing to write home about, educational sector strike every day, no electricity, insecurity everywhere, yet our budget has been on the increase. Nigeria is a nation that has made no positive political headway rather politicians and political actors sees their political position as a leeway to siphon our common wealth. Nigerian natural human resources, numerous political postulations by political scientist and scholars, nothing to write home about positively. The billions spent on INEC from 1999 till date is just like gold that sank into Atlantic Ocean. There are factors and forces that has quagmire the functionality of INEC her powers.

The nostalgic feelings attached to the just conducted election in Nigerian and Rivers state in particular portend a great danger as such ugly development if not eschewed is tantamount of plaguing a nation into crises whose destructive calamity will be catastrophic. It is a known fact that our political class is responsible for lack of underdevelopment as politics in African continent determines other structures and substructures in the society. The economic sector cannot be revamp positively

because the political system is corrupt. The zero sum game of our political elite to the masses has continued to usher pockets of bad governance. The nexus between people's welfare and good governance can only be guaranteed when the will and wishes of the people count through sound, credible free and fair election. There is relationship between good electioneering process devoid of internal party wrangling and external sophisticated digitalized rigging methodology advanced by Nigerian political actors and gladiators. This relationship could be negative or positive; it all depends on what the electioneering process produced. From available data, facts and cursory reminiscent of past and current political history it is obviously obvious that our leaders has never been the true representatives of the people. The few Elite have always succeeded in circumventing the will and will of the people using all instrumentalities of power within the state and her apparatus. Sophisticated electoral malpractices are covertly and overtly seen, killings to retain or get political power is no longer a crime. The perpetrators of those bastardly electoral crime and vices are not brought to justice. The judiciary is been influence and quagmire the best bidder get justice. There is no uniformity in the legal system. The relativity of Nigerian legal system is a worrisome development to justice and equity. When once the wishers of the people are subverted through electoral malpractices bad governance is enthroned. Nigerian has been wallowing in endemic poverty as a result of the above fact, despite all resources put together. The government of the day becomes government of the elite by the elite and for the betterment and enrichment of those particular elite in power, I call the system of government practice in Nigeria Elitocracy as defined above. Democracy in Nigerian has lost her conceptual universal definition of majority rule to minority rule in Nigeria unless something urgent is done to reverse the trend of things.

Conceptual explication

Election: There are so many definition of election according to how authors looked at it. Wikipedia (2015) sees an election as formal group decision – making process by which a population chooses an individual to hold public office. Election has been in used for donkey years in ancient cities like Greece and Rome and throughout history has been used to elect, choose leaders, rulers of the people. It is the process of voting to choose someone to be the political leader or representative in government. Omodia (2009) ^[23] posited that election is the process for evaluating the political performance of the representatives of the people either for purpose of returning back to political offices or replacing them with perceived better representatives. According to Omodia election entail assessment and evaluation of political office holder for replacement or remain in power with new mandates for those that have performed creditably well. Is this possible and practical in Nigerian political climate? Anglin (1998:557) maintained that election is the most critical and visible means through which all citizens can peacefully choose or remove their leaders and which is evidently costly affairs. Powell (2004) posited that elections are the principle instrument that compel or encourage the policy-makers to pay attention to citizens. This means that functions and power of election cannot be overemphasized in shaping our polity for better but the funniest thing is that the electorates don't understand the power of their votes, the political actors and gladiators are not ready to create such enabling environment that will ensure such freedom of

choice where will of the people will prevail. Multiparty systems coupled with the private candidates in elections are veritable instruments in the electoral process for democracy to flourish. A party forms the government the other stand as opposition to checkmate and regulate the activities of the ruling party and proffering solution on how it can be better done on the alternate side. That is what is obtainable in civilize world and advanced nation. No wonder Krissa (2005:5) postulated that opposition is government in waiting. On that premises then the ruling party ensure and tries their best to win electorate confidence and admiration by embarking on programs and policies that will ameliorate their suffering people or call it dividends of governance because if the party fails they are likely to be voted out from power. This singular reason accounts for high level of democracy and good governance in western nations unlike in Nigerian where electorate votes and voice does not count as election result are manipulated with sophisticated digitalized rigging methodology. Joseph (1999; 11) ^[9] Posited that the prime purpose of election will remain the legitimation of whatever regime that currently hold governmentand far from been autonomous operation; they reflect the character of the political order and especially the degree of risk incumbents are willing to tolerate. Adejumo (2006:66) postulated that in “ African elections are in simple terms window- dressing rituals with no real political meaning other than the stuffing of ballot boxes behind closed doors. They are just administrative formalities which have become standard signs of good conduct adopted by Africans government to western states and international institution on which they are financially and politically dependent. This definition of election is clear manifestation of what happened in the just concluded general election of 2019 in all most al the state of the federation. I will just add with the use of federal or state instrumentalities and institutions (security agencies and electoral umpire) to cow and intimidate the electorates, we witness the use of cult boys and girls trained on how to handle gun bought by political actors in the state all to circumvent the electoral process to the whims and caprices of their pay masters at all coast. Election is just formalities in Nigeria I totally kowtowed to Adejumo (2006) thesis. Beetsch (2008) deposited that election is the process whereby an electorate choose by voting officers either to act or its behalf or represent it in an assembly with a view to governing or administering. Robert (1971) ^[8] defined an electoral system as the institutionalized arrangement by means of which an election is conducted and the purpose of the election fulfilled the term, according to Hagw and Agu (2009) it also covers the legal and practical realities of voters registration and election administration as well as prices rule for translating. Nohlen (1999) ^[11] postulated that electoral system determine the rules according to which the voters may express their political preferences and according to which it is possible to convert votes into parliamentary seats or in government post. Pastor (1999) ^[14] pointed out that whether an election is source of peaceful change or course of serious instability mainly depends on the character, competence and composition of a numbers of institutions. An electoral system is the totality of all methodologies, mechanisms, institutions and processes put in place for successful credible free and fair conduct of an election and change of government that has legal backing in the constitution of a state or nations. Voting is done through political parties via democratic system. What is

Democracy? The most common known definition of democracy is that of an American President, Abraham Lincoln "government of the people by the people and for the good of the people". Reference.com defined democracy a system of government based on the principle that states power is vested in the people and may be used by the people or their elected officials. It may be direct or representative. Sartori, (1965) Democracy as the power of the people and the rule of the people. Appadorai (1975) Describes democracy as a system of government under which the people exercise the governing power, either directly or through representative, periodically elected by themselves. Schumpeter (1967) defines the democratic method as institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals requires the power to decide by means of competitive struggle for the people vote.

Dahl (1989) gave a comprehensive definition of democracy by stating some vital elements for democracy to function which includes

- a. High level of civil liberties
- b. Political pluralism (extensive competition by contestants including individuals, groups or parties for government.
- c. Political participation that provides the choice of the electorate to select candidates in free and fair election.
- d. Elaiḡwe (2004) sees democracy as a concept that has five different characteristics which must be used to understand its full meaning.

They are

1. The locus of authority in a democratic polity. He maintained that the political authority in a democratic polity must originate from people. This point to the fact that the leaders must be chosen by the people through a free and fair process.
2. The second characteristic according to him is that democratic system/government must be based on rule of law. This talk of due process, obedience to the rule and regulation. It ensures that the law rules rather than men. That arbitrary abuse of power should not be tolerated in any form anywhere in a democratic system.
3. Thirdly, that in a democratic system, there must be legitimacy. This means that leaders' election must be through a legitimate action and process. The leaders have the mandate from his people and must rule rightly to satisfy his people. Satisfaction of the masses welfare must be the interest of leader/ruler, bearing in mind why he/she was elected.
4. Choice is the fourth characteristics. This means that there must be alternatives for one to choose from. The existences of multiparty system were candidates should be provided for the electorate to choice from. Besides, it also connotes that the people should have right to effect change in leadership through periodic election that goes with free and fair election. Change of policy through public opinion pool too.
5. Transparency and accountability is the final characteristics as postulated by Eliagme (2004) it behooves on leaders/rulers in a democratic system to be transparent and accountable to the people in discharging their duties. Leaders should be held accountable for all their action and inactions. There should be room for evaluation of their policies and programs of their action.

Oludayi (2006) view democracy as a system that allows people to decide when, where and how to choose their leaders, such decisions are not end on themselves but based on the need for leadership to perform well, be ready to subject themselves to free and fair elections as and when necessary and will be willing to accept the outcome of such election in good faith. He further postulated that the democratic system goes with assessment; good leaders should be rewarded through re-election, respect and obedience and honored by the people while bad rulers should be sanction either legally or morally. Huntington (1991) sees democracy as a form of government base on sources of authority of government; purpose served by the procedure for constituting, in his postulation he added that leaders must be selected through peaceful competitive election process by the people. Prezeworski (1996) viewed "Democracy as a system where political office is filled through regular, free and fair election between competing parties with the possibilities of a winner freely assuming office. Siegle (2005) Democracy means governance system in which leaders are selected through free and fair election with institutions that fosters a share distribution of powers and citizens have extensive opportunities to participate in political life. Oyovbaire (1987) defined democracy as a system of government seeks to realize a generally recognized common good through a collective initiation and discussion of policy questions concerning public affairs and which delegate authority to agent to implement the broad decision made by the people through majority vote.

From the above definitions of democracy, the most comprehensive are that of, Darh and Eligwe, the two definitions covers all that is needed to be covered. In election there are processes ranging from the formation of political parties and registration, electioneering period and finally election proper which includes casting of votes and declaration of candidates by the electoral umpire climaxed by the formation of government by the party that won the election. There are procedures for those aggrieved to seek for redress and reclamations of lost / stolen mandate. There comes the election tribunal and court. All these process and procedure are contained in the constitution of the country or Act of parliament.

What is good Governance? UNDP (2005) defined good governance as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a county's affairs at all levels. This includes mechanism, processes and institution through which citizens and group articulate their interest, exercise their legal right, meet their obligations and mediate their differences in pursuit of the collective good. Asian Development Bank (ADB 2009) Defined good governance as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's social and economic resources as for development. It is referred to as the quality of the institution to make, implement, and enforce sound policies in an efficient effective and inclusive manner. World Bank (2004) defined good governance to mean promoting fairness, transparency and accountability. Institute of Governance (IOG 2000) viewed good governance to mean an interaction among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decision are taken and citizens or other stake holders have their say. It is basically about how power relationships and accountability, who has influence, who decides and how decision – makers are held accountable. Boeninger (1992) Posited that good governance has to do with

capabilities of a political system to exercise authority, will legitimacy, adjudicate conflict as well as carry out effective program implementation. Kukah (1998) said good governance is government that responsible, accountable, and transparent in policy formulation and implementation. NEDA (2006) Postulated that the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a nation affairs at all level, which comprises of mechanism, processes and institution.

From the above definitions of good governance one can infer without equivocation that good governance has been a serious problem in African nations and Nigerian in particular, considering the level of natural and human resources the nation is endowed with, and her level of underdevelopment. Nigerian as a nation since independence has suffered so much in the hands of the oligarchy that has piloted the affairs of the nation. Governance in Nigerian is purely centered on the interest of the few ruling elite since 1960. Few of them, their cronies and children have dominated the political arena. Good governance is what every nation desired to achieve for her citizenry apart from Nigerian where good government is seem as a sin by those that has handled the affairs of the nation. The alarming rate of unemployment, insecurity, lack of social amenities, poor infrastructural development, rotten educational system, epileptic power supply, poor health sector, sophisticated electoral malpractice, arson, robbery, killing, corruptions and other atrocious vices that has enveloped the entire nation Nigeria. ABD (2013) listed four basic element of good governance and five principles of good governance. The four elements includes: Accountability. (b) Participation (c) Predictability. (d) Transparency. The five principles of good governance are (1) Legitimacy and voice. (2.) Direction. (3.) Performance. (4.) Accountability. (5.) Fairness. From the above elements and principles of good governance one is in a better position to decide for himself/ herself if Nigerian since 1999 till date has experience good or bad governance. I left that for you to make your inference.

Kofi Annah (UN) posited that good governance is ensuring respect for human right and the rule of law, strengthening democracy, promoting transparency and capacity in public administration. United Nation enumerated the following listed eight principles of good governance.

1. Participation; This principle states that people free to express their view, opinion through legitimate organization or representation.
2. Rule of law. Legal framework should be enforced impartially mostly on human right.
3. Consensus- oriented; this means mediating different interest to meet the broad consensus on the best interest of the community.
4. Equity and Inclusiveness; people should opportunities to improve or maintain their well –being.
5. Effectiveness and Efficiency: Processes and institutions should be able to produce a result that meets the needs of their community while making the best of use their resources.
6. Accountability: Governmental institutions, private sectors and civil organization should be held accountable to the public and institutions stakeholders.
7. Transparency: Information should be accessible to the public and should be understandable and monitored.

8. Irresponsibleness: Institutions and processes should serve all stakeholders.

The above definition of good governance is from United Nation an international organization, Nigeria is one of her members. From all standard Nigeria political actors and gladiators has never and ever come up with good policy and programme that will lead to good governance.

Thesis statement

That Good governance is a product of credible, free and fair election. When and where majority rule either directly or indirectly, there interest is protected and leaders will be accountable to the masses.

Objectives of the study

1. The study examined the relationship between credible election and good governance.
2. The role of political elites and their antics to subvert and circumvent the will of the people during election via sophisticated rigging methodology.
3. The paper highlights and discussed in details the features of Nigerian political system from 1999 till date. (fourth republic experiment)
4. Finally, this study proffered solutions on some of the challenges militating against good governance in Nigeria.

Research questions

1. What are the effects of bag governance?
2. What are the dangers in electoral malpractices?
3. Have you benefited anything from government since 1999 till date?
4. What are the possible solutions to ensure good governance?

Mehodology

Data for the study was collected through primary and secondary sources. The researcher made used of historical and descriptive analysis to examine and evaluate the relationship between credible election and good governance. Thus secondary data like journals, textbooks, newspapers, government white papers, gazettes, online materials were reviewed and analyzed. Besides, the researcher also asked some oral relevant questions to some political actors and gladiators including the electorates.

Theoretical framework

Elite Theory in political science, public administration and in other field of study has been in existence for donkey years as they have been used successfully in analyzing issues and phenomenon in political science. Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941), Vifredo Pareto (1846-1923), Robert Michels (1876-1936) and Maxweber (1864-1920) are major proponents of the Elite theory. In their respective explanations of the theory they consistently maintained that in every society there are two classes of people and that the few rules the majority because the few have outstanding achievement in so many things and thereby have superiority over those that don't have. That this few persons have always succeeded in exercising ruling functions, politically, economically, socially, over the vast majority. The few set of people are outstanding in everything, namely intellectual, material, even with high moral superiority hence they established their dominance over them.

This study is anchored on Elite Theory. What is Elite Theory? Wikipedia (2017) Elite is a small group of people who control a disproportionate amount of wealth or political power. It refers to people very few in numbers that have greater influence, authority, power to control and dominate others. This means that these groups of persons are few in number but superior and powerful in any nation, group or association. Ekeh (1983) Defined Elites as small members, who play an exceptional influential part in the affairs of society in specific field. He refers to them as decision makers whose powers are not subject to control by anybody in the society. Nnolin (1981) Stated that political Elites are those who have an influence in shaping the values and attitudes held by their segment of the society. Folola (2005) viewed Elites as those who are able to realize their will even if others resist, and who have the most of what there is to have –money, power and prestige.

Relating this theory to Nigerian nation, it is evidently that our political environment since independence both democratic and military has been dominated by the same Elites. The dynamics in political change has never effected the change in the class of people that occupy the political position. It has been the same set of people, the same aristocrats. The Elite has been there and will always be there if nothing drastic is done about it. Elite manipulates and dominate all the sectors in the nations. They use their resources and connections including state apparatus and institutions to get anything they wish to get in the nation. Frankly speaking election does not remove them from office or position, election is for the poor mass which does not represent their interest but represent the interest of the Elites. Elite have access to human and capital resources of the nation and decides how it can be shared among them. All elective positions are for the Elite, all contracts are for the them, all abandoned contracts and projects are done by them, all form of corruption are within them, all form of electoral malpractices are orchestrated by them, jumbos salaries are for them, the bad economic condition of the nation is for their benefits. The above is the rationale why Olusegu Obasanjo emerged as a civilian president after ruling Nigeria as a military president same to Muhamadu Buhari and many others.

Features of elite theory

1. Elites as the name implies has always been small in number but mighty in power and influence. This means that democracy as a concept in society like Nigeria where they exist is a mirage.
2. Elites are highly organized and united. All the bickering you see among them is to exploit the poor and siphon public resources.
3. Elite exercise monopoly over power in all area of human endeavor in the society, and crush any opposition at all coast using their resources and influence.
4. They are very conscious and mindful of their interest no compromise is their mantra.
5. They are found in every society, group and association in Nigerian.
6. The iron law of oligarchy represent the Elites, they are interested in selection and manipulation not election knowing very well that they will lose if election is conducted in free and air manner.
7. Elites are realist in approach and orientation, to them idealism is meaningless.

8. Elites ensure that majority rule is not practice in Nigeria; majority rule is an abstract concept.
9. Power is limited to inter-elite.
10. The minority that rules get their original power through coercive power and manipulations.

The ten (10) points mentioned above are prevalent in Nigerian political scenario that is what is operational and obtainable in Nigeria. The few names have remained dominant in Nigerian political history at all level of government. The emergence of Alhaji Shehu Sagari as president was the product of Northern Myfia, not the votes cast by any of you reading this material. The coming of Olusegun Obansajo to power as a civilian president was decided by the few military heads of state and stakeholders in the military as a compensation for the Yoruba ethnic nationality to what happened to Late Abiola the acclaimed winner of June 12 election. In furtherance of this facts the way Late president Musa YarAdua emerged as the presidential candidate of PDP to the detriment of those that really spent their time, energy and wealth is a clear indication. People like Peter Odili, Donald Duke, to mention but few. We all saw what happened to vice president Dr, Goodluck Jonathan when YarAdua died. It was grace of God that made him president that was why he lost when he recontested despite everything he did to pacify the Elite. The same groups of people have ruled NIGERIA.

Nigeria political history

Nigeria gained political independence from Great Britain on 1st October 1960. Sequel to the attainment of independence, there has been election in colonial Nigeria right from 1922 when the elective principle was introduced by Clifford constitution of 1922, which led to the formation of political parties followed by other electioneering procedures and processes. At the attainment of independence two political parties formed a coalition government NPC and NCNC while the AG stood as the opposition. In 1st October 1963 Nigeria became a republic. The joy of independence was short lived by a military coup that perceived the civilian government to be irresponsible, corrupt, characterized by violence, nepotism, ethnic sentiment and mutual distrust. The first republic ended on 16th June, 1966, by a military government headed by General J.T.U Aguyi Ironsi. He ruled from 16th June 1966-26th July 1966. He changed Nigeria to a unitary state with rule of degree.

General Yakubu Gowon ruled from 1st August 1966-29th July, 1975. He was a military head of state at 31 years. He fought assiduously and gallantly to ensure the unity of the nation despite the separationist movement by the Biafran. The civil war lasted for thirty months. General Murtala, R Mohammed ruled from 30th July 1975 till 13th February 1976. General Olusegun Obasanjo ruled from 13th February 1976 -30th September 1979. The military came in power through coup. General Obansajo planned for hand over to a civilian government set electioneering processes in process election was conducted under a multiparty system Alhaji Shehu Shagari as president and Dr. Alex Ekweme under Nigerian people(NPN) He ruled from 1st October 1979 – 31st December 1983. The civilian regime was characterized with corruption, nepotism, kpleptocracy, cronism and embezzlement

of public fund. On the 31st December 1983 General Muhammadu Buhari overthrown the civilian government that marked the end of the second republic. Nigerian started with another journey with Kharki men till 1999.

General Buhari ruled from 31st December 1983 – 27th August, 1985. General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida ruled from 27th July 1985- 26th July, 1993. IBB as fondly called set up process for democratic ruled but annulled the election that was conducted under his watch, which was adjoined to be the most free and fair election o Nigerian soil. He formed an Interim National Government headed by Earnest Shonekan from 26th August 1993 -17th November 1993 when General Sani Abacha overthrown the interim national government and ruled from 17th November 1993 – 8th June 1998, he died in office. General Abdusalami Abubakar succeeded him and ruled from 9th June 1998 till – 29th May 1999. Abukakar modified the transition program of Abacha and finally elections were conducted he handed over to a another civilian government under the leadership of Olusegun Obasanjo who ruled from 29th May, 1999- 29th May 2007, Umaru Musa Yar Adua took over from Obasanjo from 29th May 2007 – 5th May 2010. He died in office and the vice president Dr. Goodluck Ebelle Jonathan took over the mantle of leadership as the president of the country, he completed their remang tenue contested and won as president. He ruled from 5th May 2010 -29th May 2015. Another general election was conducted in the country there Muhamadu Buhari emerge as winner defecting the incumbent president Dr Jonathan. Who honorably accepted defect and congratulated Buhari, Who has been power from 29th May, 2015 till date.

Both civilian and military heads of state has failed Nigerians in all area of life there is nothing to show as same issues they claimed to come to correct was replicated in their own tenure in a more modernized deteriorated level. Kleptocracy, tribalism, corruption and ethnic sentiment. Elite has been the sole beneficiary of Nigerian patrimonial wealth right from independence till date. Nigerian government has just been like a vicious circle with those that have access to our money leaving the masses to wallow in abject poverty.

Data analysis

Democratic experiment the journey so far fourt republic experince

Nigerian democratic experience has so many bad lessons as experience shows that more than 98 percent of the nation populations are of the same opinion. This potent a great danger to the nation and children unborn if nothing drastic is done to correct it urgently. The fourth republic experience is not in any way better than other republics. All the political parties that contested election in the fourth republic had ethnic, tribal and religious coloration. The PDP was dominant in the north, Alliance for Democracy in the west, ANPP in the north,. There was no national political party with national interest and sound political ideology. Each political party draws much population on where its founders are based. APGA was only known in the South East zone of the nation as its founder hails from there. Political parties in the fourth republic lacked sound ideology. Those that have, failed to implement it when they were in power. PDP under Obasanjo as president couldn't achieve anything to better the life of Nigerians, YarAdua came up with seven point agenda, Jonathan came up with transformation agenda, and none was

achieved because of corruption, embezzlement and cronyism. APC came up with change mantra as a slogan through out there first tenure nothing positive came out of it. They have changed to NEXT LEVEL as a slogan let us see how there next level will either higher or lower the nation. A political party without national interest and outlook cannot easily articulate the will and will of the people. Political parties without sound ideology and manifesto can only wallow to govern the people. It is a clear indication that they have planned to fail in, only to enrich themselves and their cronies. Political parties manifesto in Nigerian is not what one can write about. It is laughable to see political party say they will build market, borehole and construct roads. Are those things not part of their categorical fundamental duty of government?

Nigeria political terrain lack internal democracy this has led to crises upon crises. They don't adhere to democratic principles as the will of the people are not allowed to play. Political actors and gladiators through powers and influence, manipulate the party as a private property. The issues of defection, suspension and cross carpeting are as a result of wrangling over who controls the party executives and structure. In the just concluded 2019 election, APC in Rivers state had so many court cases, which was not different in Zamfara and in Imo state. In Imo state, APC lost the election to PDP an opposition party, which earned the governor of Imo state Rochas Okorochoa suspension from the party. In Rivers state APC had no candidate for the gubernatorial election. In Rivers state Accord Party had court case resulting from internal wrangling court disqualified their governorship candidate from contesting election few days to Election Day. At the national level the same scenario played out imagine in PDP someone that has been jumping from one party to the other since the beginning of the fourth decamp to PDP and he got the presidential ticket of the part to the detriment of those that have suffered to build the party. The recent court judgment on who is the authentic presidential candidate of SDP after the presidential election is laughable that of APC court also delivered another judgment election all these are mockery to democracy. Nigerian political system in the fourth republic political parties lack internal democracy. Internal democracy is seen as a litmus test for external democracy which will be transmogrified in good governance. The representatives of the people will be accountable to the people not to those that manipulated the democratic process for them to emerge and win elections as we have seen in Nigeria.

Besides, the fourth republic in review we have witness high influence of godfatherism. Ayode (2009) defined godfather as a term used to describe the relationship between a godfather and godson. A godfather is a kingmaker, boss, mentor and principal, while godson is the beneficiary and recipient of the legacy of godfather. Basseyy and Enetak (2008) postulated that godfatherism connotes the power and influence of people who are politically relevant in deciding who gets nominated to contest elections and who eventually wins the election. Kolawole (2004) defined godfather as an institution of political kingmakers through which certain political office holders of tenuous political clout come into power. As the name implies godfather, etymologically means people with extra ordinary power and influence in the political/ economic arena and electioneering process to determine who get what position in the nation. They are Elite in the political arena that wants their interest to be

protected and represented in every political dispensation. Most of them are in the economic sector, educational and in all other sectors they ensure that their interest is always protected by any government in power. Politics is the quickest means to make wealth there are people in the business of sponsoring people for election and they get paid in hundred folds in form of money and contracts from the government which in most cases are not executed. The issue of godfatherism is a cog in the wheel of development and god governance. The issue of godfatherism dealt with Anambra state seriously with negative impact it's destruction brought the state on limelight of development. In Edo state Lucky Igbinedon used it to defeat a prominent governorship aspirant of PDP known as Alhaji Azeez Garuba, Musa YarAdua used it to emerged through the northern myfia as the presidential candidate of PDP against some other notable presidential candidates that spent their time, energy and resources in campaign. When the rightful people choices are not produce government will not come up with good useful programme and polices for the people. There is a lacuna created already during election.

Another close issue related to godfatherism is what I called fraternitism. I defined fraternitism as the brotherhood and fraternal patriotic bonds tied to shrine gods or goddess to protect members of the same fraternity politically and otherwise. The political battle you see today in many states of the federation is not the surface politics you are seeing, it goes beyond that. It is a battle of which fraternal groups controls the political power. There are cases where better candidates that pick forms are asked to step down by the stakeholders of the party for just no good reason. Consensus candidates are used to seal their demonic deal. There are states, from the list political positions to the highest are occupied by people of the same fraternity. It must be mentioned that the destruction of okija shrine ushered in rapid economic, political and infrastructural amenities in ANAMBRA state. There are states mortgage like that, they need political liberation from fraternitism. The political party you see in those states are camouflaged for their underground group. They are busy recruiting both old and young for the growth of their union. This has negative effect in our democratic system and cannot ensure good governance. As a result of this some people cannot be prosecuted, or even asked why projects are abandoned. These set of people protect the interest of their members and place them in any available juicy position. The say you must belong before you belong or you end, your political career halfway.

Furthermore, democratic experiment in Nigeria in the fourth republic has left Nigerians with great nostalgic feelings and palpable fear about the future and development of this nation. The high rate of violence prior and sequel to the Election Day, the election date is the worst. Many Nigerians were assassinated because of elations, properties burnt. Electoral violence is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria right from colonial era. One expected a positive change but to the greatest, dismal disappointment and perplexities the reverse is the case. In 2011 there was electoral violence in 12 states in Northern Nigeria that claimed the lives of 800 persons including 10 corps members of the National Youth service Corps (NYSC) serving there fatherland in Bauchi state with ethnic and religious colouration.. This is sardonic and barbaric a sin against humanity and natural justice. In 2015 electoral violence was intensified as there were serious issues ok killing, snatching of ballot boxes, use of thug,

hate speeches and character assassination on media and public campaign ground. What AIT did to Buhari during campaign on their television is undemocratic and unacceptable in any western civilized nation of the world. Political parties in Nigeria use character assignation as manifesto and party ideology during electioneering processes. Aggressive, abusive languages, campaigns based on personal frictions, fraternity superiority are brought to bear on national issues and matters. Cultist are mobilized militia trained to snatch ballot boxes, intimidate people on election day and shoot around pulling stations to cause panic to enable them rig election.

In Rivers state what happened in the last concluded general election was an eye saw. Immunity was used as impunity before, during and after the election. There were killings in all parts of the state with pockets of atrocious electoral crime mostly in, Abonnema, Ahoada West, Khana to mention but few. In fact more than 40 persons lost their lives during the last general election. There were tenable cases of other electoral frauds. Vote –buying and use security personnel to perpetrate electoral crime were visibly seen. The use of federal might was made more manifest in 2019 unlike what we saw in 2015. Electoral fraud and rigging are what we have seen so far in the journey on democracy. The Elite are responsible for all these crimes just to keep themselves relevant and retain political power at all coast. They fraternize with secret cult members; empower them negatively for distortion of election and manipulation of electoral process to their favour. The consequences are not farfetched as we have seen recent cult classes and killing that have enveloped the state after election. The issues of armed robbery at gun point and snatching of cars are on increase. The high rate of insecurity in some states of the federation can be attributed to political actors and gladiators actions and inactions in empowering people negatively and their failure to come up with developmental programmes and policies that will improve the lives of those boys and girls they used during election. This is anathema, offensive odoriferous saga in Rivers state and Nigeria in general as elections are marred with brutality, hooliganism, criminality, impunity, thuggery, gangsterism. Awopeju (2011) highlighted on the issue of violence. Rigging of election has gone digital it get sophisticated day by day. The use of underage in some part of the states is not a welcome development to the nation democracy.

The electoral umpire in Nigerian has failed the nation; Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has failed Nigerians woefully. The independency of INEC is questionable. We have had cases where officers of the commission collect money to favour a particular candidate. Result sheets are sold to politicians by INEC officials and their adhoc staffs, some Resident Officers of the commission have also compromised their integrity. There are logistics and administrative issues that affect INEC. INEC have used federal power and might to favour any candidates they prefer to win in an election. We have seen INEC postpone election severally, cancellations of votes in some areas, and declaration of an election inconclusive. In all of these there are so many reasons attached to it below. INEC an umpire has not done enough. Registration and distribution of voter's cards is not encouraging. Monitoring of political parties primaries and other of their activities is not done properly by INEC. No wonder there are so many cases in court against INEC conduct of election. There are litigations upon litigations in courts before and after election.

Nigerian democratic experiment in the fourth republic showed that over 75 percent of national wealth are used to service political office holders. Politicians in Nigeria earn the highest salary in the world yet Nigerian is rated among the poorest nation in the world. It is highly incredible but credible a senator takes home 13.5 million naira every month as running cost while House of Representative member collects 12million as running cost not as salary, with Constituency project of 200million naira which is not accounted for in any form. It is alleged that a senator takes home 29million naira a month while House of Representative members earns 8million as salary and 12million as running cost. Senators have refused to make their salary known to the public. They have appropriated our national wealth to themselves yet minimum wage for the common man is tagged at 18,000, senators are ready do anything about it until labor threatened to go on strike. Deduct the above from national pause of 109 senators and 360 reps members you will discover that the nation just exists for the benefit of the political office holders; the same scenario is replicated at both state and local government level. What a councilor gets in Nigeria as salary a professor doesn't get it in the university. This is the reason why politicians will everything humanly and satanically possible to retain power considering the jumbo salaries and other paraphernalia of office attached.

Another issue that has marked Nigerian democratic experience in the fourth republic is share the money syndrome and symptom. Nigerian oil monies are shared by the political elites and their cronies. National wealth is not for development rather shared among the few people in power. They transfer the siphoned wealth to foreign account. Travel abroad for holiday, leave and medical treatment. They are busy buying properties all over the world while Nigeria economy is among the poorest in world. Recently it was discovered that money meant to buy arms to fight Boko Haram was diverted to few individual pause. They award contract to themselves and inflate the prices; the dramatic irony is that those contract are not executed, for instance the East West –Road has stayed close to two decades uncompleted.

In the democratic journey so far, opposition has never found it easy to exist in Nigeria. Any party in power in Nigeria since the fourth tends to intimidate, marginalized and suppress opposition. The use of federal might, apparatus and agencies to suppress opposition has been like a recurring decimal since the beginning of fourth republic. Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC), Directorate of State Services (DSS) are used to deal with opposition. It started from Obasanjo era continued till date. I don't want to go into details about that. The issue is that no matter how corrupt you are if you defect to the party in power your sins are forgotten and forgiven. Opposition in Nigeria political climate is seen as a crime which is not part of democracy. It is laughable many corrupt politicians today that defected to APC are seen as saints the same scenario played while PDP was in power.

There is over concentration of power at the center as the federal government has beaten more than what it can bit. The revenue sharing formula is in favor of the Federal government followed by the state and then local government. There is nothing like true federalism in Nigerian federal system. Federal government has used its power to deal negatively with the state in terms of projects execution and allocation of wealth. We are all living

witness to what Olusegun Obansajo did to Tinubu Ahmed 1999-2007 when he was governor of Lagos state. The state was starved of fund and federal allocation for some months because Tinubu Ahmed and the entire Lagos state were in opposition party. Rivers state government when Ameachi was the governor didn't benefit much from federal project because Ameachi was in opposition party. The relationship that exists between state government and local government is seen as an appendage not as component units same applies to federal and state.

The issue of revenue sharing formula and how it is shared does not represent federal system of government, the manner federal government has monopoly and access over all revenue in the nation is unfederalistic. Imagine Local Government Area as third –tier of government exist on the wish and willing of the state government, governor decides who becomes Local Government Chairperson, when to remove, appoint and even suspend elected chairperson. There are state that have refused to conduct election at the local government for years they purely depend on appointment of care-taker that will rule for three months, whose appointment can be renewed once. The money meant for local government areas are paid to state's account the governor of the state decides whatever he/she wants to give to state. The state joint account at both the federal and state federal exist on papers only dominated by superior units.

Elections cost Nigerians so much money, upon that the will of the people are not allowed to play. The politics of winner takes it all. Prebendalism cronyism and nepotism. Corruption and non dependent of the judiciary. Delay in settling and resolving election matters in court.

From available facts and figure based on the above explicated and expounded issues discovered about Nigerian democratic experience. It is apparent that Nigeria development is anchored on good electioneering process, credible, free and fair election is a panacea for good governance.

The nexus between election and good governance:

The nexus between election and good governance cannot be overemphasized as election is not only critical but crucial in the democratic setting of any nation and to a great extent determines their level of development mostly in Africans nations where politics is seen as the super structure and is used to shape and determined all other sub structures. There are political postulations, theories and researches on elections and good governance. I have hypothesized that good governance is a result of credible, free and fair election. The subversion of the people will in election is directly and indirectly the enthronement of bad governance. There can either be positive or negative connection between election and good governance. It all depends on the outcome of what is operational and obtainable in the nation as a result of the election process.

All forms of election aberrational aberrations are sponsored by the Elites to circumvent the will of the masses to their favour. Elections in Nigerian has always been a matter of do or die; political actors and gladiators do everything, I mean everything humanly, spiritually and satanically possible to retain power or get to power using the same poor impoverished citizens, this is dramatic. To the Elites, election is waste of time and resources, at the end of every election their will prevails, all their preferred candidates wins in all elective positions and get political appointments. The nexus established is that those nominated and

selected by the Elites through faulty elections that form the government will only be responsible and accountable to those that have helped them to win election. Where is the will of the people? The electorate and the entire citizens will be left to their fate and faith in God. Good governance is a by-product of credible free and fair election. When the will and wishes of the majority are besieged and circumvented by the Elite good governance becomes a mirage.

I wish to state without ado, that good governance is a product of good credible, free and fair election. A faulty election will produce faulty governance; a cursory retrospect from Nigerian democratic system depicts that clearly in governance system. No wonder, despite Nigerian natural and human resources, nothing tangible is seen in any sector that we have ever had leaders for once nor endowed with natural resources, rather the few getting richer the poor wallowing in endemic poverty. Nigeria majority have not benefited from democratic governance and processes since 1999 till date. With high level of unemployment, low income per capital, lack of social amenities, lack of infrastructural facilities, bad roads, no power, high level of insecurity, robbery, killings, endemic disease, poverty, high mortality rate, illiteracy, environmental pollution and degradation are effect of bad governance, it shows that the masses have not benefited anything from government since 1999 till date. The problems of Nigerian today can be ascribed to faulty electoral system and process.

The role of the Elite in Nigerian political and democratic system is to control perpetually the machinery of government. They do this at all cost right from the formation and registration of political using all possible means to circumvent the wish and aspirations of the masses to protect their interest. The bad economy in Nigerian today is for their betterment.

Summary

This paper examined in details the features and characteristic of Nigerian democratic experiment from 1999 experience pointing out some of the abnormalities that has enveloped democracy and governance system in Nigeria. Elites are a major problem against democratization and good governance in Nigeria. Their role in every society as seen in this paper is worrisome. Nigeria political history given in a brief retrospect, the nexus between election and good governance was discussed. This paper conclude that good governance starts from credible, free and fair election where the voices and will of the people will prevail this will make representatives accountable to those that elected them to power against the will and will of the few ruling oligarch the Elite.

The researcher made the following recommendations on how good governance and credible free and fair election can be achieved in Nigeria.

1. That INEC should be really independent, be proactive and recruit intelligent adhoc staff with good credibility.
2. Politics should be made less lucrative by paying them minimum wage as applied to civil servants. This will reduce the exodus of other professionals to politics and will reduce the spirit of do or die to retain and maintain power.
3. Internal democracy should be encouraged within political party and outside the party this is the only way the masses can their interest represented in government.
4. Leader should be made to be accountable to the people periodically this should be backed up a legally.

5. Immunity clause should be removed from the constitution as leaders have turned it to impunity.
6. Let there be general sensitization and orientation of the electorate about democracy and its operations.
7. All electoral matters should be concluded before swearing in ceremony to any position.
8. Nigerian judiciary should be overhauled and be independent.
9. The use of federal might, agencies and security men should be stopped.
10. Electoral laws should be made clear and all offenders be punished according to the law.
11. Political parties should come up with clear manifestoes and blueprint about their party.
12. There should be electoral monitoring commission.
13. Politics should not be taken as matter of do or die. Political culture be introduced in Nigerian.
14. Opposition should be allowed to exist in accordance with the law of the land.
15. Godfatherism and Elitism should be watched and checkmated.
16. Local Government autonomy, separation or conciliation of joint account.

If the above recommendations are taken seriously there will be positive nexus between election and good governance. Credible, free and fair election is directly and indirectly the enthronement of good governance in any political setting. When the people are allowed to choose their leader independently without manipulation the government of the people will be formed which is called democracy.

References

1. Ademoyega A. *Whey We Stock*. Evans Brothers Ltd, Ibadan, 1981.
2. Anifowose R. *Violence and Politics in Nigeria Tiv and Yoruba ;Experience* Enugu: Nok Publishers International, 1982.
3. Boening R. *Governance and Developmental :Issues and Constraints* " Proceeding of The World Bank Annual Conference on Development Economics, 1999.
4. Beetse K. *Electoral Malpractice and Political Violence in Nigerian; A Case study of Kwande local Government Area of Benue State.*, Unpublished Project Work at Benue State University, Markudi, Nigeria, 2008.
5. Ekeh. *Colonialism and Social Structure*. Inaugural Lecture University of Ibandan, 1983.
6. Folola T. (ed) *The Dark Webs; Perspectives on Colonialism on African*. Carolina Academic Press, 2005.
7. Kukah MH. *Democracy and Good Governance* " In Ayodele,E (ed) *African National Unity and Development*. Ibadan. Siban, 1998.
8. Robert GK. *A Dictionary of Political Analysis*. Longman Group, 1971.
9. Joseph R. *State Conflict and Democracy in African*. In Joseph.R (ed) *State Conflict and Democracy in Africa*. Boulder, 1999.
10. Nnilin O. *Development Underdevelopment Is Nigeria developing in Okwudibia Nnolin* (ed) *Path to Nigerian Development*. CODERSIA, Senegal, 1981.

11. Nohlen D. Election and Electoral System : Proportional Majoritarian and Mixed System ; New Delhi MacMillian Press, 1996.
12. Olusegu Obansajo. Nzeogwu. Spectrum Books Ltd.Ibadan, 1987.
13. Mohammad A. Governanance and Good Governance: A Conceptual Perspectives. 10 (1) 65-77.
14. Pastor R. A Brief History of Electoral Commission; In Self-restraining State; Power and Accountability in New Democracies. Boulder ; Lyune Rienner, 1999.
15. Abiodun O. Nigerian Democratic and Electoral Process Since Amalgamation Lessons From Turbulent Past, IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social sciences. 2014; 19(10):25-37.
16. Aregbesola MO. Explaining The Concept of the Nigerian Elite: The Elite Theorist Perspectives. 2013; 19(1):126-140.
17. Awopeju A. Election Rigging and the Problems of Electoral Act in Nigeria.Afro Asian Journal o Social Science. 2011 2(24):1-17.
18. Beetsch K, Akpoo T. Good Governance And Credible Election : Panacea For Conflict Resolution in Nigeria. Journal o Good governance and Sustainable Development in Africa. 2014; 2(2):146-151.
19. Fukuyama F. What is Governance. Center For Global Development, 2013,. www.cgdev.org.
20. Kifordu HA. Political Elite Composition and Democracy in Nigeria. The Open Area Studies Journal. 2001; (4):16-31.
21. Jayum AJ, Nwoke PO. The Electoral Process and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria. Journal of Polities and Law. 2011; 4(2):128-138.
22. Makinda S. Democracy and Multip arty Politics in African. The Internal Journal of Modern African Studies. 1996; 34(4):55-573.
23. Omodia SM. Elite Recruitment and Political Stability in the Nigerian Fourth Republic, Journal of Social Science. 2010; 24(2):129-133.
24. Omilusi M, Ajibola OPA. Party Politics And Democratic Governance in Nigeria : Historical Perspective. International Journal o Multidisciplinary Academic Research. 2016; 4(4):37-46.
25. Shankyala TS. Political Thuggery, Election in Nigeria and the Law. Nigerian Institute of Advance Legal Studies. 2010; 2:24-25.
26. Udo LU. Democracy and Good Governance in Nigeria : Challenges and Prospects. Global Journal of Human-Social Science Political Science. 2015; 15(3):1-8.
27. Uzonwanne MC, Ezenekwe RU, Iregbenu PC. Electioneering Campaign And The Nigerian Economy. International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management. 2010; 4(3):650-662.
28. World Bank. Governance, The World Bank Experiment. washinton DC The Wold Bank, 2008.
29. UNDP. A Common View, A Common Journey, 2004.
30. UNDP. Governance & Sustainable Human Development. A Policy Document, 1997.
31. United Nations Economic and social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. What is governance?, 2010.
32. UNDP Governance and Development, 2012.
33. USAID. Democracy And Governance,Assessment of Nigeria, 2006, www.usaid.gov/pdf
34. Asian Development Bank. Country Governance Assessment, 2005.
35. Asian Development. Governance Sound Development Management, 2005.