Party Politics and the Challenges of Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the factors that determined the emergence of party's candidates and the impacts of party's lack of internal democracy on democratic consolidation in Nigeria. These were with a view to examining party politics and the challenge of democratic consolidation in Nigeria. This area of political process has be a clog on the wheel of democratic consolidation in Nigeria since independence, 1960. Most research studies emphasize theories of democracy and political party and with little attention on party politics (intra-politics) and vis-à-vis democratic consolidation in Nigeria. However, the findings of the study showed that 95% of respondents agreed that money and class were the major factors that undermined or determined the position of candidates in Nigerian election, while 90% of respondents also agreed that the power of incumbency and godfatherism greatly determined the emergence of party's candidates. Almost 90% of respondents agreed that tribalism, ethnicity, nepotism and sectionalism were major factors that have caused party's lack of internal democracy in Nigeria. The study concluded that party politics in the area of nomination, selection and elections have negative implications on democratic consolidation in Nigeria. Among other things, the study also concluded that lack of internal democracy within political parties as a limiting factor in Nigeria's attempt to deepen democracy.

Keywords: Party politics, Political party, Elections, Democratic Consolidation, Elite Theory

1. Introduction

The size and complexity of modern society makes it a far cry from the ancient city-states of Greece where direct democracy was practicable. The emergence of modern societies rehabilitated the atomized individuals into political parties with the primary responsibility of capturing and running democratic government. Thus, the survival of democracy in modern society rests partly on the ability of political parties to recruit people into party and elective offices, aggregate and articulate interests, politically educate, socialize and integrate the people (Norris 2005; Montero and Gunther 2003 and Ujo 2009).

There is growing evidence of declined public confidence in parties the world over; political parties have deteriorated in membership, organization, and popular involvement and commitment to democratic ideal. The Nigeria situation is not an exception. Since the Nigerian State returned to democratic governance in 1999, party activities especially in the areas of selection, election, accountability, discipline, etc appear to be far below democratic requirements such that Nigeria democratic project has been the subject of intense debate in many quarters (Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013). Besides, political parties were neck-dipped into all manners of anti-democratic activities including: electoral manipulations during primary and secondary elections, thuggering, hooliganism and vandalism during elections, party cross-carpeting, political assassination of political opponents, arising from unfair method of selecting party's flag bearers and generally lack of party's internal democracy (Dike 2003). Research has shown that most Nigerians believed that internal party democracy does not only affect the credibility of the elections, but also the quality of leadership, governance and economic development. Moreover, according to Sartori and Duverger (cited in Okhaide 2012) stressed that internal party democracy is very important for the functioning of the democratic system as a whole.

On the other hand, they further stressed that logic of party competition rather than internal party democracy is the element that makes democracy functioning. In Nigerian, there seem to be total disregard for internal party democracy among the registered political parties particularly as it relates to the conducts of parties primaries conducted between the 26th of November 2010 and 15th of January 2011, where candidates were nominated to contest the April 2011 general elections on the platform of their political parties (Okhaide 2012; Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013). From above, the study will further probe the activities of political parties in Nigerian Fourth Republic with the view to analyzing their proficiency in functional areas as elite recruitment, political socialization, interest articulation, interest aggregation and political integration which are supportive ingredients of an enduring democracy.

2. Research Questions

- What are the factors that determine the emergence of party's candidates in Nigerian election?
- What is the impact of the quality of internal democracy on democratic process in Nigeria?

3. Objectives of the Research

The objectives of the study are to:

- assess the factors that determine the emergence of party's candidates in Nigerian election; and assess the impact of the quality of internal party democracy on democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

4. Methodology

The study used primary and secondary data which seek to investigate party politics in area of candidates' nominations, selection and elections in Nigeria. The primary data was collected through questionnaire. A total of 300 respondents were purposively selected from three states (Oyo, Enugu and Kaduna) and Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The states are selected to reflect the political centres of the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria. The Federal Capital Territory was selected because the headquarters of all existing political parties in Nigeria and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) are located in Abuja.

For the purpose of this research, a provision for Null Response Rate of 10% was made since we were not assured of getting back the entire 300 questionnaire we intended to administer and some respondents may not fill their questionnaire appropriately. So, we added 10% of 300 questionnaire which is 30 questionnaire to the 300 so that we would be sure of getting a desired sample size of 300. Therefore, we administered a total number of 330 questionnaire out of which we retrieved 312 from the respondents and finally 300 questionnaire was utilised for the data analysis. The target population consisted of the national and state officials of the selected political parties, officials of INEC and the general public. The distribution of the sample is as follows: 10 INEC officials in each of the location; 8 officials from the ruling People's Democratic Party in each state and 18 from Federal Capital Territory; 25officials from each of the four leading opposition parties (All Nigeria People Party, All Progressive Grand Alliance, Action Congress of Nigeria and Congress for Progress Change) that is, 25 each for the four location; also 20 respondents from the general public for the four location. Secondary data was collected from relevant books, journals, magazines, articles, newspapers and materials from the internet on political parties and democratic consolidation. Data collected was analysed by simple statistical tools such as tables, bar-chart, pie-chart, standard deviations, etc and content analysis.

5. Scope of study

The study focuses on party politics in the area of nomination, selection, elections and democratic consolidation in Nigeria within the time frame of 1999 to 2011. The choice of 1999 and 2011 was informed by the fact that this period coincides with a time when Nigeria experienced prolonged military rule between 1984 and 1999 while this first back to back multiparty election was held in 2007 and 2011. However, occasional references shall be made to earlier experiences, especially during the First, Second and Third Republics, in other to buttress our positions

6. Literature Review and theoretical framework

Our conception of party politics in the Nigerian would be viewed from Elite theory perception of the scheming mechanism, manoeuvring and political machinations of the elites during inter and intra party politics in Nigeria. We begin this section with the concept of political party and democratic consolidation

6.1 The Concept of Political Party and Democratic Consolidation

Democratic consolidation is the process by which a new democracy matures, such that it is unlikely to revert to authoritarianism. It also assumes two things, the first being that there is already in existence a state of democracy characterized by all democratic features via periodic election, security of life and property, fundamental human rights and freedom, constitutional stability as a fulcrum of society and governmental stability and also opportunities for equality, justice and fair play. On the other hand, it assumes that there is a need to consolidate the base of the existing democracy. This implies making firmer, more solid and more resilient the base of the existing democracy (Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013).

However, in a society where democratic consolidation is apace, political parties play an important role of creating a relationship between government and the citizenry. The relationship is fostered by the support given to the parties by the people in exchange for information from the parties about the government. In other words, a vital stage in the process of democratic consolidation is the involvement of the masses through socialization and the recruitment of capable hands into the political system anchored on a systematic procedures and policies for selecting individuals. On a similar analysis, David E. Apter (cited in Udofia 1981; Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) describes a political party as follows:

> It organizes public opinion and test attitudes and to transmit these to
> government officials and leaders so that the ruled and rulers, public
> and government, are in reasonably class accord. Their form is
> determined by entire socio-political framework of the society. They

> require a constitutional framework or political regime congenial to
> their functioning; and they depend upon groupings in the society for
> their membership. Political parties are subgroups in the systems
> with their own means of generating power.

However, there is still a major disagreement among political scientists on how best to define a political party. There is for instance, a genre of literature on political parties which has acquired the distinctive name stasiology that is political parties as subject. Scholar like Max Weber (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) defines political parties as contending groups that struggle for political control within corporate bodies. According to Neumann (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013), "Political party is an organization of society active political agents who compete for popular support with another group or persons holding diverse views". This definition places politicians and a candidate for leadership recruitment into both elective and appointive positions as principal actors and the objectives of party organization is to capture governmental powers. This definition is similar to that of Mildred Schwaz and Kay Lawson (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) who opined that: "A political party is an organization that nominates (presents) candidates to stand for election in its name and seeks to place representatives (leader) in the government" By the theme and context of these definitions, the primary objective of political parties is that they seek to organize and dominate the organs of government and to provide governmental and national leadership.

However, for party politics is the totality of actions and inactions exercise by political parties in a state. However, democratic consolidation is a function of part politics. In other words, the growth of democracy in a country is as a result of conducive environment created by the interaction of political parties in a state. A negative interaction where actors (political parties) breach the code of conduct the in system or electoral process and undermining the constitution of the state, this will impact negatively on deepening democracy. Conversely, positive interactions of political parties both inter/intra parties' activities will signal a geometrical growth on democracy. Democracy is a concept that revolves around and about the will of the people where the minority rights are properly ensured. A negative interaction of party politics describes politics without the people and is an enthronement of autocracy. Moreover, the ultimate goal of election itself is to measure, assess, articulate and integrate the needs of the electorates. Election is an avenue where by eligible voters and candidates make their will know. Once this process is interrupted by some class, then what exist is just artificial politics devoid of the general will. On this basis, we start the next section with the Elite theory in relation to party politics and its implications to democracy in Nigeria

6.2 The Elite Theory vis-à-vis Party Politics and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria

The Elite Theory as popularized by Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, Roberto Michels, Wright Mills, among others, no doubt obviously explicates the Nigeria political system considering the fact that most political parties that exist in the country either be classified as cadre or elite parties which manipulates the sentiments of the masses for the selfish objective of acquiring economic base (Varma 2006). At this point what constitute political power varies from one society to the other but the difference may be minimal. In Nigeria, political power can be viewed from the perspective of those who have occupied one political office or the other, especially retired military and other public officials such as top civil servant, past ministers and so on. These are the group of persons that have been circulating themselves in governance since the country's independence in 1960 (Dike 2003).

One of the advocates of elitism, Pareto (cit. Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) believes that elite in different occupations and strata generally come from the same class: those who are wealthy are also intelligent; they have an aptitude for mathematics and moral character. To him, society, thus, consists of two classes: (1) a higher stratum, the elites, which are divided into governing elite, and non-governing elite, and (2) a lower stratum, the non-elite. Pareto's focus of inquiry was the governing elite which, he believed, rules by a mixture of force and cunning (Varma 2006). This last analysis unveils the traits of some Nigerian politicians; particularly the band of retired military Generals and top government officials that have entered the political scene. This is where Roberto Michels "Iron Law of Oligarchy" comes to play. From all available indications, these individuals have been on top of their professions but still cling very tight to the ruler-ship of the country using their Party as well as the title of a 'General' for intimidating others. The point here is that political parties no longer functions as expected, precisely because decision and information are made and circulated by the few. This has really paralyzed the growth of the democratic process in the country.

However, according Roberto Michels (cited in Varma 2006) proceeded to demonstrate that every organization – whatever its original aims – is eventually reduced to 'oligarchy', that is, the rule of the chosen few. He held that majority of human beings are apathetic, indolent and slavish. They are permanently incapable of self-government. So they have to bank upon their leaders for pursuing their social objectives. Trade unions, political parties and other organizations are the vehicles of such leadership. These manipulative devices of the masses by the political elites according to the elite theorists exist because the elites are better organized and possess class

consciousness when compared to the masses. In south western part of Nigeria, it is a contest between elites and the popularity of a given leader. This manipulative process is a complex one that threatens the survival of the polity not only because of the contradiction of interests among the elites as a result of extravagance lifestyle, but also because the political elites tend to manipulate ethno-religious sentiments as tools for the acquisition of political support. Also, members of this dominant elite group are powerful, well organized and politically skilful to such an extent that they are 'capable of exploiting their positions so as to preserve the elite's domination over other members of the society. This point explains the leadership pattern of the People Democratic Party (PDP) whose aim is to rule the country for sixty years (Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013).

However, as a movement or party grows in size, more and more functions have to be delegated to an inner circle of leaders, and, in course of time, the members of the organization are rendered less competent to direct and control them, as a result of which the officers acquire greater freedom of action and develop vested interest in their position. They cling desperately to their new powers and privileges, and become almost irremovable. Once the leader reached the pinnacle of power, nothing could bring them down. "if laws are passed to control the dominion of leaders, it is the laws which gradually weaken, and not the leaders.". It is however important to emphasize the various forms of elite. These include: bureaucratic elites, religious elites, military elites, traditional elites, etc. It is also important to state that elitist classifications are not mutually exclusive in the sense that an individual elite can fall within more than a classification. Such classification also varies from time to time. For instance, the military elite during a military regime could also be qualifying as political elite, especially when he is involved in the authoritative allocation of state resources (Varma, 2006).

The implication of the above is that since elitist classifications are not mutually exclusive, it means that the political elites could easily depend on other elitist class for the manipulation of support for power acquisition. This is quite visible in Nigeria in the form of traditional rulers influencing support for political candidates or bureaucratic elites in the civil service influencing the electoral process in order to keep their jobs. Besides, political elite aspiring for elective offices had on several occasions used the instrument of money to buy votes and manipulate electoral outcomes (Ayoade 2008). Also, political thugs and hooligans have been recruited to create instability during election by disrupting and snatching ballot boxes. Dudley (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) sees instability in Nigeria as a result of the constitutional impropriety of the elite. As he puts it, "stability can only be maintained if the behaviour of leadership and actors is consistent with rules of the game or if the boundary-determining rules are respected"

However, in Nigeria, the activities and inputs of the elites is so pronounced that before the end of a recruitment process or election the results have been predetermined and if there is contrary outcome on the proposed results, the elites attempt to use economic and political means to influence the results. This was very rampant during 1999, 2003 and 2007 election at the state level as well as the national level. A case in mind is the political conflict between the then Party Chairman of People's Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Audu Ogbeh, and former President Olusegun Obasanjo which led to the forceful removal of the former Chairman of the party (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013). Other examples are evident on the pattern of cross-carpeting of politicians, emergence of factious executives which snowballed into dual or multiplicity of executives within the same political party. The above points buttress Gaetano Mosca and Robert Michels theses on that "the elites possess economy power and control the political system.

Conversely, in the area of political recruitment, the support base for democratic governance in the ongoing democratic dispensation is on the high side as a result of the failure of military governance. However, the recruitment process adopted by the political parties during the onset of this democratic process t when we had three political parties – Alliance for Democracy (AD), All People Party (APP), and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) was not different from the old in that the recruitment focus was on the elites. The only difference, perhaps, was that while that of the AD was sectional, PDP and APP were more national in their outlook. In the second phase with the further registration of political parties bring their number to 50; political parties became even more sectional in their outlook. The above scenario, in terms of socialization and recruitment in the Nigerian, no doubt, had a far-reaching implication on the interest articulation and aggregation functions of parties. This is because the recruitment focus of the parties, to a great extent, determines the interest to be articulated and aggregated (Omodia 2010).

However, the case that vividly comes to mind is the formation of the Action Congress (AC) by the former Vice-President Abubakar Atiku and other former PDP chieftains live Tom Ikimi and Audu Ogbeh, among others, who felt disadvantaged by the politicking within the PDP-led government (Dode 2010). The resultant effect of the above is that the PDP though the party in power at the centre and still on control of majority of the states of the federation, have lost some of her strongholds in States like Edo, Abia, Imo, Anambra, Ondo, Bauchi (Ayoade 2008). And currently, the report also that the internal crisis rocking the PDP that has assumed its ugly face in President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's administration sends a danger signal to the nations stability, security and might propel the unthinkable return to military rule. Question then remained unanswered whether the prediction

by Former United States Ambassador to Nigeria John Campbell is right or wrong. Whilst emphasis has been laid more on the PDP, the emergence of strong oppositions from ACN, CPC and other parties to form All Progressive Congress (APC) cannot be ignored and coupled with the emergence of New-PDP faction (led by Baraje, Oyelola, Atiku and others PDP bigwigs) that has vowed to unseat President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan for his 2015 presidential ambition (see Vanguard Sept., 4 2013; The Tribune Aug., 18 2013).

 The implication therefore is that, the political elites are so powerful either as a means of reaching out to the masses or for acquiring political power through electoral rigging. This explains the focus of political parties on the elites in terms of interest articulation and aggregation. For political communication, the fact that the political process has been widened with the registration of up to 63 political parties and although some where later deregistered, however, the system has witnessed functional political communication in term of demand emanating from the people but with poor channel into the political process and poor system capability to process the demands into policy outputs with effective communication to the people (Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013). However, a research work carried out by Moveh David Omeiza (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) on ''a comparative study of globalization and democratic consolidation in Ghana and Nigeria'' reveals that:

> The more the peripherals state derives huge revenues from commodity export the more it will be able to exercise a significant degree of independence by resisting external pressure to imbibe liberal democratic values and vice-versa. Similarly, the higher a peripheral country's aid per capital from the core the more it will be able to consolidate its transition to democracy. Hence just as the transition to civil rule was engendered significantly by external stimuli, democratic consolidation is also not unconnected to external factor. *Here the role of the political class towards consolidating democracy, issues of internal party democracy and politics of tolerance will go a long way in socialising and integrating the populace concerning democratic values*

According to Okechukwu Okoh (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) a professor of Southern University Law Centre, Baton Rouge Louisiami USA carryout a study titled "The challenge of Democratic Consolidation in Africa, Nigeria as a Case Study" identified the following as the major challenges facing the African states: domestic challenges, organizing credible election, improving the condition of government, revamping public institutions, improving security, counteracting anti-democratic sentiments, citizen and leaders. It is on the above observations that Makinda (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) asserts:

> Democracy is only possible if the structures, processes and institutions, through which the people will is expected to be addressed, accommodate their interests, values and aspiration. Constitutional democracy continues to falter not only because of the conduct of leader but also because of inefficient, ineffective and deteriorating public institutions.

More credence for this thinking was forthcoming with the work of Leftwich (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) in his book talked of states of development where after listing conditions for democratic survival, he goes on to mention five factors for democratic endurances which are: affluence, growth, declining inequality, absence of breakdowns and parliamentary rather than presidential governance in new nations. These are almost an exact replica of the Przeworski (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) thinking in predictors of democratic survival. Corroborating the above views, Linz and Stepan (cited in Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) observes that, the composition and consolidation of a democratic polity must entail serious thought and action concerning the development of a normatively positive appreciation of those core institutions of a democratic political society – political parties, elections, electoral rules, political leadership, interparty alliances and legislature-by which society constitutes itself politically to select and monitor democratic government.

7. Data analysis and findings

This section presents the analysis of data and discussion of the results. The first part of the analysis deals with the socio-demographic and political characteristics of the respondents. The socio-demographic characteristics include sex, age and the geo-political zone of the country where the respondents come from. The political characteristics include the political party they belong to in Nigeria, the positions the respondents hold in the party, their favourite political parties and the influences and pressure electoral officers faced during elections. The second section consists of questions that specifically target the objective of the study which is to examine the factors that determine the emergence of party's candidates in Nigerian election; and the impact of the quality of internal democracy on democratic consolidation in Nigeria. The first section of the study utilized categorical

or nominal variables while the second section utilized ordinal variables such as likert scales.

7.1 Presentation of Socio-demographic Data of Respondents through Pie-chart and Tables

KEY: ACN: Action Congress of Nigeria; PDP: People's Democratic Party; APGA: All Progressive Grand Alliance. LP: Labour Party; AP: Accord Party. CPC: Congress for Progressive Change

	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	211	70.3%
Female	89	29.7%
Total	300	100%
Age		
20-40 years	151	50.3%
41-50 years	96	32%
51-60 years	33	11%
61-70 years	20	6.7%
Total	300	100%
Which geo-political zone of Nigeria are you from		
North West	54	18%
North Central	29	9.7%
North East	13	4.3%
South East	52	17.3%
South West	127	42.3%
South-South	25	8.3%
Total	300	100%
Which political party do you belong to in Nigeria		
PDP	59	25.7%
ACN	50	18.2%
CPC	42	14.1%
APGA	10	5.2%
Accord	3	1.6%
Labour	7	3.7%
Others	129	31.5%
Total	300	100%

The information on table 1 revealed that there were a lot more males than females in the study (70.3% vs. 29.7%). The age distribution of the study revealed that most respondents were in the age group 20-40. This was followed by the age group 41-50. The least number of respondents were the elderly men and women in the age group 61-70. The South Western part of Nigeria had the highest number of respondents (about 40%), followed by the North West and South East, which had about 18% of respondents each. North central and the South-South both had the least number of respondents (less than 10%). People's Democratic Party (PDP) had the highest number of respondents and constituted 30.9% of respondents followed by Action Congress (ACN) which constituted 26.2% of respondents. Accord Party had the least number of respondents (1.6%).

7.2 A Distribution of the Sex of Respondents using a Pie-Chart

KEY

Sex

Male
Female
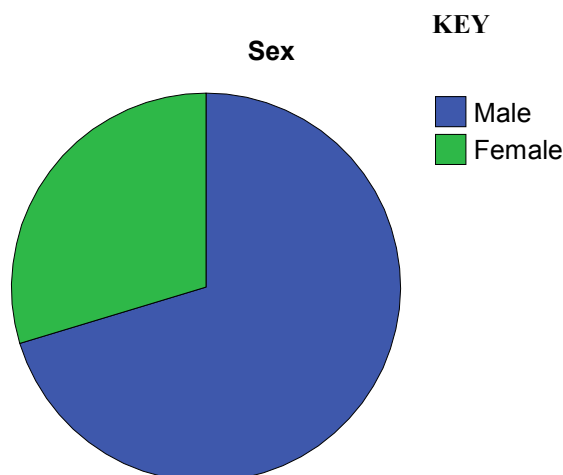
Table 2. Percentage Distribution of the Respondents by their Socio-Political Characteristics

What is your status in Nigeria's politics		
Member	62	29.3%
Elected Officer	53	20.1%
Electoral Officer	56	19.1%
Others	129	31.5%
Total	300	100%
As an electoral officers in Nigeria's, have you been influenced during election		
Influenced	88	39.3%
Not influenced	83	29.2%
Others	129	31.5%
Total	300	100%
Ways electoral officers were influenced		
Through threats	69	27.3%
Through bribery attempts and promises of money	58	24.1%
Promises of favour to get employment	44	17.1%
Others	129	31.5%
Total	300	100%
Favourite parties of respondents		
PDP	61	22.2%
ACN	92	36.1%
CPC	47	6.8%
APGA	12	3.8%
Accord	3	1.2%
Labour	11	3.7%
All parties	8	3.2%
ANPP	14	3.9%
Others	52	19.1%
Total	300	100%

From table 2 above, slightly more than 50% of respondents reported to be members of different political parties in Nigeria, 24% were elected officers into different positions while 20% were electoral officers. These 20% who were electoral officers were youth corp. member at the time of the election. The respondents were asked if they were influenced or not as electoral officers during the last election and over 70% of them reported that they were

influenced in one way or the other. These ranged from being threatened, being promised with money and attempted to be bribed as well as being promised favours such as promises of assistance to secure job opportunities. Over 40% were influenced with promises of money and attempted bribery, 36% were influenced with promises of job opportunity and 20% were influenced through threats. Most respondents (36.1%) mentioned Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) as their favourite party in Nigeria, 22.2% reported People's Democratic Party (PDP) as their favourite party, while 6.8% reported CPC as their favourite and 19.1% represents others.

8. Research Question 1: What are the factors that determine the emergence of party's candidates in Nigerian election?

The study revealed some factors that determine the emergence of party's candidates in Nigerian elections such as the role money and class plays in determining the choice of party leaders, incumbency and Godfatherism, the role of tribalism, ethnicity, political favouritism, nepotism and sectionalism in dictating political party recruitment among other factors. For instance, about 95% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that money and class are the sole determinants of choosing party's leaders and that it later has an effect on party's primaries. About 90% of respondents also agreed that incumbency and Godfatherism are factors that determine electoral outcomes in Nigeria. About 90% agreed that Godfatherism is another factor that controls primary and general election in Nigeria. Over 90% agreed or strongly agreed that ethnicity and political favouritism dictate the process of selection of party's flag bearers in Nigeria's election. Almost 90% of respondents agreed that tribalism, ethnicity, nepotism, sectionalism are some of the factors that dictate political party's recruitment in Nigeria. This information is shown in table 3 below

Table 3. Percentage Distribution of the factors that determine the emergence of party's candidates in Nigerian election.

	Frequency	Percentage
Money and class are the sole determinant of choosing party's leaders and later has an effect on party's primaries		
Disagree	8	2.7%
Undecided	5	1.7%
Agree	102	34%
Strongly agree	185	61.7%
Total	300	100%
Incumbency and Godfatherism are very strong factors that determine electoral outcomes in Nigeria		
Disagree	25	8.4%
Undecided	4	1.3%
Agree	105	35.4%
Strongly agree	163	54.9%
Total	300	100%
Godfatherism is major factor that control primary and general election in Nigeria		
Strongly disagree	4	1.3%
Disagree	20	6.7%
Undecided	5	1.7%
Agree	113	37.7%
Strongly agree	158	52.7%
Total	300	100%
Ethnicity and political favouritism dictate the process of selections of party's flag bearers in Nigeria's election		
Disagree	18	6%
Undecided	8	2.7%
Agree	180	60%
Strongly agree	94	31.3%
Total	300	100%
Tribalism, ethnicity, nepotism, sectionalism are some of the factors that dictate party politics in Nigeria		
Disagree	30	10%
Undecided	7	2.3%
Agree	174	58%
Strongly agree	89	29.7%
Total	300	100%

9. Research Question 2: What is the impact of parties' lack of internal democracy on democratic process in Nigeria?

The study also examined the impacts of parties' lack of internal democracy on the democratic process in Nigeria and the findings showed that a relationship exists between them. About 80% of respondents either agreed or

strongly agreed that intra party crises are as a result of the imposition of candidates on party's members during election processes in Nigeria. About 75% of the respondents also agreed or strongly agreed that cross-carpeting of party's candidate is as a result of lack of due process of selecting candidates for elections. This information is showed in table 4 below.

Table 4. Percentage Distribution of the impact of parties' lack of internal democracy on democratic process in Nigeria

	Frequency	Percentage
Intra party crisis is as the result of the imposition of candidates on party's members during election processes in Nigeria		
Strongly disagree	5	1.7%
Disagree	34	11.3%
Undecided	16	5.3%
Agree	146	48.7%
Strongly agree	99	33%
Total	300	100%
Cross-carpeting of party's candidate is as a result of lack of due process of selecting candidates for elections		
Strongly disagree	3	1%
Disagree	48	16%
Undecided	21	7%
Agree	124	41.3%
Strongly agree	104	34.7%
Total	300	100%

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of the lack of internal democracy among political parties and how it is tending to slow down the pace of democratic consolidation in Nigeria

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Selection of candidates or party's standard bearers in Nigeria's elections is based on ethnicity, money and class affiliations	4.2967	.88578	300
Incumbency and Godfatherism are factors that determine elctoral outcomes in Nigeria	4.3670	.87572	297

Table 6: The Correlation Coefficient of the relationship between internal democracy among political parties and the pace of democratic consolidation in Nigeria

Correlations

		Selection of candidates or party's standard bearers in Nigeria's elections is based on ethnicity, money and class affiliations	and Godfatherism are factors that determine elctoral outcomes in Nigeria
Selection of candidates or party's standard bearers in Nigeria's elections is based on ethnicity, money and class affiliations	Pearson Correlation	1	.883
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	300	297
Incumbency and Godfatherism are factors that determine elctoral outcomes in Nigeria	Pearson Correlation	.883	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	297	297

10. Discussion of Findings and Challenges of Democratic Consolidation

 In this section, the study revealed different factors that constitute challenges to the democratic process in Nigeria. The different politicians that happened to be the respondents highlighted Godfatherism, tribalism, ethnicity, nepotism, sectionalism among others as barriers to achieving democratic consolidation in Nigeria. The study also revealed that the political environment was not conducive enough for the electoral officers to do their job. Electoral officers who are supposed to be neutral reported being threatened, promised to be paid and so on which would have certainly compromised the system as some of them might have collaborated with political parties to rig elections.

The study also showed that the emergence of party's candidates through unfair processes in some situations cause some party members to defect from one party to the other due to inconsistency of party's policy during parties primary elections as well as the imposition of candidates on party members which often happen. Most respondents agreed that political primaries are conducted on the basis of selection and not election. This is not healthy for the Nigerian political system as candidates who are not capable but influential may be selected over those who have what it takes. It is important to note that as long as these numerous factors continue to prevail in Nigeria, many credible and capable candidates who are "change agents" may be denied the opportunity to serve their fatherland. Politics in Nigeria is very attractive in terms of the incentives and this is one major reason why many politicians are desperate to take up positions. If politics is made less attractive and politicians are paid much less salary, it might discourage many from engaging in these social vices in order to attain power. The Nigeria political system needs to be overhauled because as long as incumbency, Godfatherism, electoral fraud and other barriers are important determinants of electoral outcomes in Nigeria, it will be difficult to make progress as a nation.

11. Conclusion

From the perspective of elite theory it was vividly observed that the mechanism for elite recruitment in the Nigeria is within the system approach which to a great extent is exclusive of the input of the masses. This no doubt has led to the recycling of political actors, and when new elites are created, they are merely representing the interest of the political elite class (godfathers) through the maintenance of the status-quo of social relations between the political elites and the people. Thus, this dysfunctional social relation in terms of governance could be checked if political elites are recruited through an open process that is encompassing of the masses. This

could be achieved in an environment of matured political culture where there are free and fair elections, and the political actors view themselves as public servants rather than masters. For this to be achieved the political system has to be de-monetized, political education enhanced through functional basic education, and the economy well improved so that people do not get into politics as a result of idleness or viewing it as a quick means of wealth acquisition. Since political parties constitute functional institution for political elite recruitment in a democracy, it is important to accentuate that the functions, purpose, and structures of political parties should be well defined and deeply rooted in the people with the hope of improving the system. This implies that political parties must effectively perform the function of political education of its members among others building and manifestation of internal democracy under the supervision of an independent electoral body which would aid and reflect a stable interparty activities.

This, no doubt would provide the foundation for an enduring democracy that would be appreciated by all and sundry. However there is need to reform and overhaul the entire electoral processes, electoral officers especially those into the state and national assemblies, should be made part- time, while the monetary value attached to them be less attractive. This way, only those that are committed to national development would offer themselves for elections. Besides, thuggery and violence which always characterized past elections due to selfish desire to accumulate wealth through political power while in office would be reduced, if not curtained.

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