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RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Electorates and Electioneering Process: A Global View of Democratic System

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Electorates in every society are empowered by the constitution to exercise their rights to vote in removing any government that has become unpopular. The unpopular government has attained its position from its bad styles of leadership and ill-treatment of people who have elected them into leadership positions. The study examines elections as a power in the hands of the electorates who are faced with challenges such as insecurity, corruption, poverty, and the like. The study also explores the activities of the government that portray it as unpopular among the electorates. Secondary data is sourced for this research from books, newspapers, journals, and online platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and others alike. Structural Functionalism is used as the theoretical framework of analysis in this paper. The study concludes that election is a democratic tool in the hands of the electorates which can easily be used as a function in ensuring good governance in their society but faced with some challenges such as insecurity that led to defunctionalize. Unpopular government has been discovered to be a temporary existence that is always short-lived since the power of the electorates is non-contestable. It is therefore recommended that serious awareness should be created at all times to keep the electorates informed of their power to effect change of government with the use of elections.

INTRODUCTION

Electorates are constitutionally empowered to choose their leaders in their society through the process of an election. It is a full demonstration of democratic power that leaders emerge out of the exercise of democratic election. Historically, the exercise of these fundamental human rights has faced a level of challenges such as insecurity, maladministration, ignorance, and the like that in many ways impact the outcome of elections conducted. Right from the time of Nigeria's 1960 political independence and the 1999 return to democracy, elections in Nigeria have not changed from being a security threat. The threat ranges from death, taking away ballot boxes, shootings, and killings (Akpan, 2017).

Until the twentieth century, nondemocratic systems were the rule and norm in the world. This situation has existed until recently when a majority of people have announced the high quality of democratic systems. Throughout America, there is togetherness in the region when it comes to acknowledging that elections stand for the democratic process used by citizens to choose who

represents them (Muñoz-Pogossian, 2009). In this light, electoral rules and procedures are important to democratic representation; among other things, they affect how elected officials campaign for office, interact with constituents, and trade policy

The election is very vital for the achievement of good governance in every political system with the application of electoral laws. The laws guiding elections and their methods are greatly needed to indicate the representation of people; they have a great impact on how political candidates create awareness of their political campaign, relate with the people of their constituency, and draw their policies. In the real constitutional participation of the electorate, "only the ballot box avails a steady chance for the people to choose who represents them to charge the government with responsibilities, and to remove the rogues out at the right time. Electoral systems are ordinarily seen as some of the main fundamentals of a democratic platform, where other positive outcomes emanate from" (Cited in Rudolph, 2018, P.1). Unseating an unpopular government is indisputably an outcome of electorates function in a democratic structure. Agbu (2016) in his clarification maintained that:

> The concept of democracy and election are not always viewed as the same but when an outcome of any election turns out to be free, it is termed the eye of democracy. A free and fair election is a requisite for democracy to stand. A democratic government correctly indicates a government made up of the freely offered people's approval as shown in an election. Once the ingredient of free approval is not in existence in an electoral process, the result will change from democracy to dictatorship, 2016, P. 91).

Apart from insecurity, a level of maladministration, corruption of electoral officials, and bad governance have negatively affected the outcome of elections and demeaned the efforts of electorates to unseat any unpopular government or even in the change of any government. A good example is how the voting rights of Togolese are being compromised and in some cases even denied because of faults in the process of election. The continuous disputation emanating out of various elections conducted in Togo indicates a connection between the execution of electoral laws and processes in polling stations and the human resources that partake in the execution of electoral duties (Olujide et al, 2011).

Despite the values attached to elections in democracies and the reason for secure, crisis-free, free, and fair elections for a stable society and lasting democracy 'elections in Nigeria have been known for much violence, the most notorious and most often cited as an example is the Western Region election crisis of 1965' (Nwolise, 2013). The outcome that led to this crisis must have been caused by different units of the political system as they endeavored to exercise their rights. The right of an electorate casting of their votes is not assured only due to legal basis and accomplishes administrative needs. The consideration of a poll officer shapes whether a duly registered citizen can enjoy his constitutional right to vote. For a voter to cast a ballot, the poll worker helps the voter by locating his name on the voter's register using an identification document shown by the voter. Then, the poll worker sends the voter to the designated polling station (Electoral Code, 2012, in Amegnran 2017, p.1). All processes carried out in an election are orchestrated towards the achievement of democracy. To ensure democracy, the electoral process needs to be rebranded:

> The exercise of democracy is to rebuild the characteristics of elections, the opinion of the numerous stakeholders in the political system such as; the organs of government, the political parties, political class, the people, the means of communication, the Civil Society Organizations, the agencies of government (the military, the paramilitary, the police) the foreign donor organizations and the global community. The major reason for reforming the process of elections is to wipe out people's negative understanding of the body charged with the management of elections. The loyalty, patronage, and participation of the stakeholders like the

masses ensure the contribution of their quota towards nation-building (cited in Caleb et al, 2019, p. 1239).

The efforts of a democratic system lay on the nature of institutions that exist in the country and the value of the functions of those institutions. Burlacu (n.d) argues that the level of political representation and accountability, the manner of choice for people's representatives, and their political behavior are affected by the institutional arrangement and the quality of governance (Burlacu, n.d).

Conceptual Framework

Election

Historically, Election is a conception of the Nigerian colonial state that is linked to the demand for political office and power attainment (Akpan, 2017).

Election is generally understood as a procedure by which holders of public offices are periodically chosen by a set of individuals in the society that are referred to as electorates. Election is part of the main principles of democracy. Election as opined by scholars as Hungtington (1991), Jega (2014), Monkes (2013), and Nwolise (2007) is synonymous with democracy and no representative government survives without it (cited in Odeyemi et al, 2016, p. 2).

Elections comprise a lot of procedures that enable different countries to move from autocratic to democratic regimes which are best referred to as transformational instead of transitional. As part of the positive impact of elections, it has expedited the coming to light of democratic regimes in Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Mali, Senegal, and South Africa. As a result of non-democratic government and prolonged civil wars, many firm societies have come forth in Guinea, Liberia, Niger, and Sierra Leone. In some situations, elections have been controlled to legitimatize tyrannical authorities or to assure the enthronement of dynasties on the continent (IPI, 2011, P. 1).

Election empowers the citizens as electorates to choose the leaders they desire to control their affairs as they at the same time unseat the leaders who have become unpopular within the society. In all, election embodies participation, responsibility, legitimacy, service delivery, representation, and accountability.

Electorates

The American Heritage Dictionary of English (2000) elaborated on electorates as a collection of all certified voters. Word Net 2.0 English Dictionary (2003) described it as an embodiment of citizens with franchise, that is, those certified to vote. In a similar word, The Free Merriam–Webster Dictionary explained it as an embodiment of citizens qualified to vote. Many explanations hereby indicate that voters are certified voters or those who are certified to cast their votes for a political party or their preferred contestants (Olujide, et al, 2011). The behaviour of electorates is very vital to the outcome of every election.

The behavior and the power of the electorate are bound to have effects on the outcome of how they choose their representative or unseat an unpopular government in an election. The choice made in an election embodies the representatives chosen and the governance, policy formulation, and then the administration. Different systems of elections have been practiced and they all have left implication marks in the system, such as the one-party two-party, and the multiparty systems. Coalitions of political parties have also had their effects on the processes, security, legitimacy, and general outcome of elections at the general or global level. The outcome of the electoral system of Argentina and Uruguay are shown as examples;

Each of the 25 electoral divisions possesses its electoral guides. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that up to eleven provinces province exercise the "double simultaneous vote," as in Uruguay. These electoral rules permit simultaneous intra- and inter-party contests. Political parties showcase numerous individuals who contest in opposition to others but whose votes are joined together to explain the party that got the highest number of votes. The best candidate is the most-voted candidate in the most-voted party. Two partisan and institutional characteristics added to the good outcome of Argentinean democracy from democratization in 1983 to the 1994 constitutional amelioration. First, the two-party system made sure that the president would contain a reasonable number of lawmakers in Congress. Second, these lawmakers exercised a minimal to high level of conduct, assisting presidents to pass legislation with proportional relief (IDEA, 2005).

When electorates experience electoral malpractice as; Steering the structure of bodies in charge of elections to the benefit of one or more electoral candidates in violation of the laws of inclusivity, impartiality, openness, or transparency, such as via gerrymandering, malapportionment, over-restrictive franchise or candidacy regulations, rules of campaign that lead to inequalities among contestants. Lack of observer access to electoral procedures (Agbu, 2016, p. 93).

Unpopular government

It is vital here to grasp what popular government entails to understand unpopular government. When the government is directed by the people through their participation in the election of their executives and lawmakers, it is best termed popular government. Popular government as submitted by Bradford (1899) is a type of administration in which the citizens decide who leads them instead of being led by those to whom they have no choice, and in which participation in this decision of leaders is in the hands of the mass of the people through widely diffused rights of suffrage. It can be said that popular government has some democratic features embedded in it since, "democratic administration is different from dictatorial administration in law-making and public policy reactive to the belief of citizens" (Weale, 2021, p.2). Democracy in this light needs the people to exercise their rights and connect their opinions to the activities of the government.

Unpopular government on the other hand is used as a term for a nonperforming government. It also refers to a government that has failed in its responsibility to the general public. Going by the application of Vis (2009), the level that a government goes after the reformation of unpopular social policy during its administration contributes to its 'gains' or 'losses' in social and economic factors it tackles. As revealed by Ibru (2019, p.1) President Muhammadu Buhari justified his "unpopular policies and programs"… "doing unpopular things tackling difficult individuals, and taking on fixed interests who are already adapted to the corrupt era. Things must be done rightly regardless of whose interest is affected".

The comfort of a government can make it enjoy its popular season while a state of deterioration in socio-economic can trigger the risky pursuit of unpopular reforms. It is seen as risky because unpopular policies ordinarily do conflict with public interest. Similarly, unpopular reformations are highly implicating and not easy to take because "every officer in elective position must appraise if keeping their appointment is more vital than making a tough choice that is needed in better job performance" (ILG, 2003, p.1). It is then crystal clear that electorates can demonstrate their constitutional power through the use of election in the removal of unpopular government which is also a harvest of democracy. In this light, the contributions of a democratic system do not only rely on the nature of the country's organizations but also the values possessed by these organizations. The level of political representation and accountability, how the electorates choose their leaders, and

their political behaviors are affected by the institutional set-up and the quality of governance that can make it popular or unpopular (Burlacu, n.d).

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative method where secondary data is sourced for this research from books, newspapers, journals, and online platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and others alike. Structural Functionalism is used as the framework of analysis in this paper. The study in its arrangement started with an introduction, followed by a conceptual framework, theoretical framework, discussion of different points raised in the study such as security, education, poverty, roles of institutions and organizations, conclusion, and recommendations.

Theoretical Framework

Structural Functionalism is a sociological theory that tries to offer the reasons society functions in its ways by concentrating on the relationship betwixt the different social institutions that amount to society (e.g., government, law, education, religion, etc) (Karki et al, 2019, p.92). Structural functionalism, especially in the work of Talcott Parsons, Robert Merton, and their students and followers, dominated sociological theory for many years (Cited in Karki et al, 2019, p. 92). Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer, and Robert K. Merton were accordingly the other theorists easily linked with the development of structural functionalism (Cited in Ajah, 2018, p. 19).

Structural functionalism is a theoretical framework with the assumption that a large system works together to improve commonality and steadiness. It is a theory that appreciates both the social structure and social functions. It involves looking at society using macro-level teaching, which is a larger concentration on the social makeup that generally shapes society. Structural functionalism is a set of relatively steady and styled associations of social units Talcott Parsons was particular about four functional imperatives for every system, namely; adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency (Ajah, 2018, p. 19) As informed by this theory, the actor has basic duty to improve the social system while the social system controls the activities of the actor which in other words explains how people are important in the life of an individual through their roles (Karki et al, 2015).

1) As a system, society (or culture) is made up of different sectors (like, institutions, groups, roles, associations, and organizations), which are interconnected, interrelated, and interdependent. 2) Each sector carries out its activities – it adds its impact to the whole society (or culture) – and also, its duties in association with other parts. 3) A reform in one sector causes a change in another sector, or at least touches the performance of other sectors, this is made possible since there is a close linkage between all the sections

4) The entire society or culture – for which we can use the term 'whole' – is higher than the ordinary totaling of sections. It cannot be lowered to any part, or no part can define the whole. A society (or culture) has its own identity, its own 'consciousness', or in Durkheim's words, 'collective consciousness' (eGynankosh, n.d, p. 18.

In the application of this structural functionalism theory, electorates are actors in the Nigerian Political System, especially during the electoral process. Electorates have the power to demonstrate in choosing their representative to unseat any unpopular government but he is not alone and needs other parties to work positively unitedly for positive results. The INEC, political parties, the executives, legislatures, judiciary, and governmental and non-governmental organizations have vital roles to play to ensure that rules guiding the conduct of elections are followed towards positive outcomes. If different institutions, organizations, and individuals that operate in the same political system with electorates fail to uphold the principles of democracy and the stated rules guiding the conduct of elections, the efforts of electorates will fail. Under this situation, some manipulations that may come in during the period of elections, such as rigging, buying of votes, desperado of corrupt

officials, snatching of ballot boxes, electoral violence, and political apathy will contribute to unfree and unfair elections. When these are allowed to play out, the unpopular government continues to be in governance irrespective of the people's discontent and illegitimacy embedded in it. As provided by structural functionalism, the cooperation of the different units in a political system brings about the achievement of goals towards development. In ratification of this position, elements of society are functional if they add to social steadiness and dysfunctional if they disorganize social steadiness (Oyekunle, 2021).

Merton, a student of Talcott Parson did not agree with him on individual contributions, he maintained that individuals' functions can be either manifest (intended), latent (unintended), or dysfunctional (having unintended undesired effects) which is different from Parsons' structural-functionalism, which predominantly emphasizes manifest functions (Potts, 2015, p. 79). In other words, the contributions of individuals or units in the political system do not always have a positive impact on the system since it can also negatively impact them.

Structural Functionalism has been heavily criticized. Izuogu (2019) in his critique of the theory maintained that the theory is a threat to social order, it confuses issues of norms and values of society, it is a deviance that undermines trust and it diverts valuable resources. The individual with all actions is not valued by the theory because the individual's actions are controlled by the larger society. The theory did not recognize electorates' actions as very vital in the exclusion of other units of the political system. Scholars have criticized structural functionalism in different ways:

- Structural Functionalism uses an ecological model to understand society
- only presents a simplistic and static model of society/systems focused on order and equilibrium, rendering it unable to adequately account for transformation and change
- is excessively abstract and cannot be applied empirically
- Over emphasises the importance of integration within the system, while downplaying the role of the individual and agency in the system and
- does not address issues of self-reference, complexity, or conflict (Cited in Potts, 2015, p 83).

Structural Functionalism is an impactful theory that sees every part of society, its activities, and its contributions to society. It brings sections of the society to achieve the needs of the society such as in electoral activities involving the electorate, the commission (INEC), and all stakeholders.

Authors have adopted structural functionalism in the successful analysis of their work;

Ajah (2018) adopted Structural Functionalism theory in the analysis of his work 'Educational Training of Inmates in Awka and Abakaliki Prisons, Nigeria' and concluded that educational training is an essential ingredient to any prison system that works to bring down the rate of crime and recidivism. Okeke et al (2022) in their work 'Conceptual Issues in the Social Sciences: Variants of Accountability adopted Structural Functionalism and concluded that Accountability is the adhesive that binds societal structures to functionalism, and is difficult to divorce from responsiveness. These have shown how important the structural functionalism theory fits in such analysis as shown in this study.

THEMES OF DISCUSSION

Election as the power of the Electorates; democracy, constitution, legitimacy, public opinion, and international organizations.

Improved participation of electorates is very vital in every political process as it assures inclusivity, legitimacy, accountability, and responsibility of all stakeholders in the administration. This condition inadvertently avails security, a sense of belonging, and a share in all available dividends of democracy.

Democracy comprises the observation of the features that embody democracy which are listed as follows;

- There exist free and fair election
- Election must be conducted periodically
- Fundamental human rights are accepted and assured by a body of law and honored by the state. These include the people's rights to life, liberty and property, freedom of speech, freedom of movement, freedom of association, or religion and of thought, equality before the law, etc
- The government must consult the populace before making major national decisions
- There must be respect for the rule of law
- The judiciary must be fearless and independent and independent of the executive and the legislature
- There must be a separation of power among the three arms of government, i.e. executive, legislature, and judiciary.
- There must be a formidable opposition (Gomment, 2013, p.73-74).

The electorate in the demonstration of power to successfully choose a representative must be availed with comprehensive features of democracy as outlined. The existence of these features does encourage citizens to participate in voting without the fear of their vote not counting.

> Kenya has pulled together peacebuilding and conflict-waging elements in its improvement programs to find out weak communities and support the accommodation of diversity. A heavy international presence stopped expected violence among supporters of officeholder Joseph Kabila and opposition contestant Jean-Pierre Bemba at the end of the presidential election's first round. Twenty thousand peacekeepers from the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) were spread, in addition to European Union troops and quick response forces situated in the region. The UN presence based on further assisted the organization of the electoral monitoring group,

> That contributed primarily to reducing fraud and procedural weaknesses (IPI, 2011, P.4).

Challenges facing the Electorates; corruption, insecurity, lack of political ideology/ Illiteracy, Poverty.

Insecurity

Akpan (2017, p.10) proposed that electoral security is very vital to the management of elections without which the overall success of the election might not be achieved. Essentially, research dealing with the issues of association of election and massive insecurity and the terror that electoral insecurity brings to human life seems scant, pointing to the urgency of workable electoral insecurity mitigation plans (Daudu, Osimen ,& Shuaibu ,2023).

As part of the efforts towards the provision of security during the election, the security agencies are always charged with the responsibilities in support of the democratic process. Comment (2013) submitted that, as an arm of the criminal justice system, the police have the duties of maintaining law and order before, during, and after the election which is among the statutory duties assigned to the Nigerian Police Force by the Police Act (1964). The opinion of International observers in 2003 remains that; Security forces were seen as a tool towards success for ruling the People's Democratic Party (PDP) (Gomment, 2013).

The high level of electoral crisis experienced in the post-election phase of the Popular Consultation in East Timor (1999) and the Kenyan presidential and parliamentary elections (2007) stands at the violent end of the spectrum, as thousands of individuals were killed or displaced. By contrast, electoral conflict can show itself in acts of personal intimidation as in the case of the Kosovo municipal elections (2000). In this case, the government in Belgrade threatened to discontinue state pensions for Serbs in Kosovo if they took part in those UN-supervised elections.

Insecurity is a great challenge to the power of the electorate as it discourages the willing voter and raises the level of political apathy in society. Apart from Nigeria as a country known for its different forms of insecurity, especially about elections, Kenya and Congo are also good examples;

> Kenya from the period of 1963 has been involved deeply in many forms of political and social unrest. The post-election turmoil of late 2007 and early 2008 was what has occurred severally. Similar election-related violence in Kenya took place in 1992 and 1997. In the intertribal clashes that pushed through in 2007 during the repulsion between the incumbent, Moi Kibaki, and the challenger, Raila Odinga, approximately 1,300 people died and hundreds of thousands became homeless. Widespread sexual violence against women also disrupted the post-election structure. (IPI, 2011, P.4). The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) held its first post-conflict elections. Roundtable panelists in reminiscence held that the elections were the most costly and perhaps the largest ones the United Nations has ever conducted. The amount cost is nearly 600 million US dollars and saw the registration of 26 million people. Thirty-three candidates took part in the race for president in the election; approximately 10,000 candidates contested for 500 parliamentary positions; and 50,000 polling stations were put in place (IPI, 2011, P.4).

Violence is an obstacle to the participation of people in electoral activities and makes possible the foisting of candidates, programs, and policies, which, in turn, generate violent responses to those who lost in the election and the electorates (Nwolise, 2007, p. 155). In this light, Akpan (2017) informed that security cannot be separated from election since they have inherent cooperation and the viability of the electoral system is caused by its political environs, election is tagged free, fair, and credible to the level where security is well kept by specified electoral programs, law and order (p.4).

Poverty

Lack of knowledge and that of riches have resulted in a lot of electoral mishandling easily. It has made it hard for the birth of a level playing ground politically. A bad contestant who lacks ideas concerning governance may be rich. These riches have made him access hungry and desperate minds, print posters to educate the electorate, and bribe all the stakeholders in the electoral process. This is mainly because wealthy contestant or their godfathers may equally have resources to induce the poverty-stricken before or on the day of elections to control the voting and the electoral process. It is equally possible to buy over hungry voters polling and counting officials and law enforcement agents. All these electoral officers can be induced to facilitate, the rigging of elections by wealthy politicians. Poverty has also created avenues for coming into place of the new dangerous development in Nigerian and African politics, godfatherism, and godson syndrome. The godfathers in most cases are men of wealth who had the election of less wealthy politicians for electoral profit after the election. (Zafar, 2010, p.1).

The connection between socio-economic state and turnout remains strong when race is held constant. Caucasians, native-born Latinos, and African Americans all voted at similar rates when their socio-economic status was held constant (cited in Reynolds, 2009, p. 10). The poor become vulnerable when they become the electorates that need to choose their representatives. According to Akpan (2017, p. 6)) security in electoral contexts can be conceptualized within the power relations

embedded in the dynamics of capitalist accumulation ethos in which the poor are used to formulate and achieve the political desire of the elite at the peril of the poor (Akpan, 2017, p.6)

Illiteracy

The backwardness in the South African electoral system is a result of high-level illiterate adults which amounts to nearly 5 million. As confirmed by the Minister of Education, Unicef.org about 54% of the population has not reached a reasonable level of education and this remains a challenge during voting (Cited in Achieng, 2013, p.3). The contention has been that both the political office seekers and the electorates are rarely given adequate education on the function and basis for elections resulting in poor conduct of elections (Akpan, 2017). Uninformed electorates are bound to fumble on issues of electoral decisions. When electorates can read and write they will be capable of casting their votes unassisted. The inability of electorates to read and write has wide implications since such people can be misdirected at the point of voting within the polling station. Under this situation, the electorate remains responsible for any intended or unintended action. The electorates turn out to be dysfunctional once they fail to contribute positively to the development of the political system. Apart from the real act of voting, illiterate electorates find it difficult to grasp the processes of election and commit to the building of its success.

Roles and constraints of organized institutions

All organized institutions have constitutional rights and owe allegiance towards

UNDP (2015) entails the different styles required for political participation which touches all sections of election: 1. The legal framework: a review of electoral law and its impacts on youth political participation; 2. The pre-electoral phase: recognition and support for youth as community and political party leaders; 3. The electoral phase: mobilizing youth as voters, candidates, observers, and active participants in all facets of the electoral process; and 4. The post-electoral phase: promoting youth voices in the legislature and government (UNDP, 2015, P. 35). Foundationally, the United Nations has prepared the space for nations irrespective of war as different functions and commitments thrive globally.

> To save the coming generations from the terror of war, which is already double in this our generation has caused great sorrows to humans, and to stabilize faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations emanating out of treaties and other sources of international law can be sustained, and to support social development and better quality of life in larger freedom (UN, 1945, p.2).

In the provision of international organizations such as the United Nations, the achievement of fundamental human rights is of utmost importance and this must be upheld towards global peace.

Institutions in the Election Crisis

The African Union (AU) established the Panel of Eminent African Personalities led by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to chair deliberations. These inputs led to a weak political agreement, the National Dialogue, and Reconciliation. Traditional leaders, like village chiefs and religious authorities, were hired in the East Timor Popular Consultation

(1999) to successfully arbitrate identity claims for Timorese enrolling to cast vote without certification papers or cards (USAID, 2010, p. 10)

Civil society organizations can play great roles in solving the challenges facing electorates. Guinea-Bissau experienced electoral conflict in the early 2000s. Making efforts to stop crises in the ramp-up to the 2005 elections, the International Peace Project formed a new group – the Citizens' Goodwill

Task Force (CGTF) – to organize a national campaign in voter education and peacebuilding. The CGTF's functions comprise media activities and debates of candidates. On Election Day, the CGTF deployed "peace brigades" at polling stations that helped poll officers and intervened in slight misunderstandings between voters. The election was widely incident-free (USAID, 2010 p.33).

With the intervention of institutions and organizations a steady political system can be made stronger via justice, honesty, accountability, and transparency. This level of steadiness can be successful via organized education and the result will largely rely on various classes of improvement. In the last fifty years, Africa has become popular for its political unsteadiness but one thing that awaits explanation remains why leadership continues to be the main trouble of Africa (Chukwudi et al, 2019, p 182)

Similarly, the implementation of technology in the organization has the intention and force to shape things around its area of operation (Nikaj, 2017)

This section elaborates on how specific institutional features may impact either objective differentiation between candidates, voters, citizens, and parties, the clarity of information about these differences, or voters' motivation to act upon performance or ideology-related differences as perceived (Burlacu, n.d). INEC is charged with responsibilities as to:

> i) coordinate, undertake, and oversee all elections of the offices of the President and Vice President, the Governor, and Deputy Governor of a State, and the membership of the Senate, the House of Representatives, and the House of Assembly of each State of the Federation; ii) register political parties according to the provisions of this Constitution and an Act of the National Assembly; iii) check the organization and operation of political parties, including their finances; iv) arrange for the annual examination and record taking of the same and make information public information; v) arrange, conduct, maintain and revise the enrolling of individuals that are certified to cast their votes for the reason of any election; vi) check political campaigns and regulate the conducting of political parties during electioneering; vii) ensure that all Electoral Commissioners, Electoral, and Returning Officers take and subscribe to the Oath of Office prescribed by law; viii) delegate any of its powers to any REC; and ix) execute such other activities as may be delegated to it by an Act of the National Assembly (Sani, 2015, p.116)

Through the creation of the election and its commission, INEC is charged with the responsibility in the conduct of elections with a level of independence. Analysis has shown that the independence of INEC in the conduct 2007 General elections turned out controversial and then left its autonomy and neutrality questionable (cited in Sani, 2015, p.114).

Caleb et al (2019) emphasized that there is an increased rate of putrefaction among INEC personnel especially the ad-hoc staff. 244 or 67.77% of the respondents consented that some INEC officials are corrupt. The rise of corruption in INEC is a manifestation of the intensified state of corruption in Nigeria among the ruling class where the desperation to win an election at all costs has been the prime motivator of this massive corruption in INEC (p. 1243).

Media and publicity

Electoral campaigns in the United States would not have become what it is today without the impact of media. The media functioned as the simplest way for campaign information to be sent to the public. Studies have revealed that campaign messages watched from commercials, news programs, and newspapers tend to withhold more than information sent out on other platforms (cited in Reynolds, 2009, p. 15). When electorates are better enlightened on all facts about elections, candidates, and their fundamental human rights as a demonstration of power, they will be able to vote better.

There are situations where citizens are not convinced they will take part in voting. Such individuals are not informed about political participation or even the election itself. They neither know about what the government is doing right or wrong nor the ideologies of different political parties in the contest. In this situation, there is a high tendency of political apathy among the supposed electorates in the society which has high implications for democracy

Throughout U.S. history, states have adopted a variety of electoral rules and procedures, and contemporary U.S. legislatures are a heterogeneous group. The choice of electoral procedure was often based on very little thought or careful analysis (Taylor, 2013). Nowadays, however, electoral democracy is observed as needed, but not enough atmosphere for a perfect governing procedure (Burlacu, n.d).

CONCLUSION

Elections in their entirety are a complex procedure that is also faced with complex problems. The electorates with all their functions in the political system belong to a unit that needs other component units in the complex system to achieve such tasks as the removal of unpopular government. In the electorates' efforts to demonstrate their power, they are faced with numerous challenges such as insecurity, poverty, institutional decadence, and illiteracy/ignorance.

Recommendations

All efforts must be made to ensure realistic solutions that will help resolve all manners of electoral manipulations and in the same light boost the quality of democracy. Public enlightenment on the privacy and constitutional rights of citizens to cast their votes devoid of intimidation and harassment. The Enlightenment must brace up with new technologies in place. The use of electronic biometric devices in the conduct of Nigerian elections and the education of Nigerian voters should continue to improve as the process keeps abreast of the global changing and progressive technology. In this light, voter education is highly necessary considering this era of new technological invention. Consequently, the inability of electorates to choose their representatives wisely is dysfunctional to the valued complex political system.

In other words, the conduct of the 2023 general elections of presidential and gubernatorial should be made to be better than the 2015 and 2019 general elections. The new improvements in the election must be subject to approval by the National lawmakers and must be made to be part of the country's Electoral Act. The INEC as an electoral body must be upgraded in statutory electoral functions and status and these can be achieved with transformational constitutional reforms that can empower it more with the ability and structures to conduct elections independently of other arms of government to avoid the fear of favour.

Public opinion should never be neglected even when the government engages in pursuit of policy reformation. Efforts should be made to sensitize the general public on the expected values of policies. It is obvious that the federal structure has effects on the conduct of elections, its outcome, and acceptance which demands restructuring of Nigeria's federal system of government to reduce the level of discontent among the general public united from diverse ethnic, cultural, or religious backgrounds that most times inform their choice of representatives

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The authors do not have any conflicting interests.

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