**THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA**

***ABSTRACT***

*This study was undertaken to evaluate political participation and democratic consolidation in Nigeria. Three objectives and three research questions were formulated to guide the research. The study adopted thematic format in its literature review. The theoretical framework used was structural functionalism and research design used in the study was expos facto design and content analysis was used to evaluate the topic under discussion in line with each objectives. After the analysis the study was able to discover among other things that, the engagement of citizens in public affairs is the benchmark of the liberal democratic system. The availability of participation opportunities and the concomitant enabling process and institutional pre-requisites, allied with positive political orientations to the political system, make it possible for citizens to choose their leaders at elections and also influence the public policy process, and ultimately, the longevity of the democratic system of government. Based on the above findings, the study recommends among other things that, strong political mobilization can help in debasing the overall strategic framework of Primitive Accumulation of Votes (PAV) otherwise known as rigging.*

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background of the Study**

Political parties are traditionally the most significant intermediary organization in democratic societies. Students of political parties have commonly associated them with democracy itself. Political parties, as “makers” of democracy, have been so romanticized that scholars claim that neither democracy nor democratic societies are thinkable without them. In other words, the existence of vibrant political parties is a sine qua non for democratic consolidation in any polity. It is patently ironic that political parties in Nigeria largely pursue (and profess) democracy outside the gates and resist it within the gates (Orji, 2013; Ibeanu, 2013).

Democratic governance with its ideal of elective representation, freedom of choice of leaders, rule of law, freedom of expression, accountability among others, has become the acceptable system of government all over the world. It is a form of government in which the supreme power of a political community rests on popular sovereignty. According to Oyovbaire (1987) 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 delegates authority to agents to implement the broad decisions made by the people through majority vote.

Accordingly, Osabiya (2015) further asserted that in modern societies, political parties are very essential to political process. They have become veritable instrument or adjunct of democracy in any democratic system. Political parties are not only instrument for capturing political power, but they are also vehicles for the aggregation of interests and ultimate satisfaction of such interests through the control of government. Obviously political parties are crucial to the sustenance of democratic governance.

Towards the end of the last century, Africa like the rest of the world witnessed the “third wave of democratization” when authoritarian regime and one party governments were replaced or supplanted by elected civilian governments or administrations. Nigeria described by Ette (2013) as one of the strongholds of dictatorship in the continent was caught in the snowballing effect of the wave after twenty-nine years of military dictatorship. After several years of failure attempt by the past military regimes of Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida and Sani Abacha, democracy formally gained root in the country on 29 May, 1999.

Nigerians were full of hopes and expectations that hard earned democracy will usher in improvements in standards of living, good governance, improvement in security and what Mohammed (2013:573 described as freeing of natural resources from the iron fist and jaw of greedy officials to that of enterprising and efficient social services delivery in health, education, sports and prevention of modern day slavery such as human trafficking as well as rehabilitation of infrastructural facilities, poverty alleviation and reduction in unemployment, inequality and improvement in general socio-economic development.

Disturbingly, eighteen years after the inception of the present democratic dispensation, the political landscape is yet to show clear evidence of good governance. Elections and electoral processes are subverted; there have been wide scale of political violence and killing in many parts of the country; upsurge in ethnic militia groups who make life unbearable for the citizenry; general insecurity and high profile terrorism in the northern part of the country as well as kidnapping and bunkering of the petroleum pipelines in the southern part of the country which obviously have become a major threat to her democratic process and consolidation (Adeosun, 2014:1).

The rudiments of a true democracy are good governance, fair and legitimate elections, justice, equity, accountability, transparency, responsible leadership, political education of the masses, respect for the rule of law and importantly corporation among the different branches of government. Regrettably, the practice of the so-called democracy in the 21st Century Nigeria is intrinsically characterized by electoral frauds orchestrated by political parties (Obidimma andObidimma, 2015:43).

Moreover, mainstream rhetoric in Nigeria media and popular discourses of the polity is often centred on the claim that Nigeria is “consolidating its democracy”. The evidence on the ground, however, contradicts this claim (Momoh, 2013:1). It is perhaps most appropriate to liken the relationship between political parties and the sustenance of democratic rule in a particular society to that which exists between the umbilical cord and the foetus (Yagboyaju, 2012:54).

Political parties are at the heart of examining the health of any form of democracy. Orji (2013:1) argues that ‘to talk, today, about consolidating democracy, is to talk about a system of competitive political parties’. Therefore this research study seeks to examine the role of political parties in consolidation of democracy in Nigeria with particular references to the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive Congress (APC).

**1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Consolidating Nigerian democracy through the functioning of political parties has remained an albatross. The history of Nigeria’s democratic experiments demonstrates that elections and political parties have generated so much animosity which has, in some cases, threatened the corporate existence of the country, such as happened after the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election and in other cases instigated military incursion in to political governance, most notably in 1966 and 1983. At the heart of electoral crisis in Nigeria is the lack of credibility for the official results of elections leading to the rejection of such results by the opposition political parties.

Since the inauguration of the Fourth Republic, a pattern is already emerging which points to the fact that political elites have not learnt much from the mistakes of the past. The various crises plaguing the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive Congress (APC) in the annals of defections in the National Assembly, cross carpeting of governors, lack of internal democracy among others are vivid instances of this tendency. Lack of party discipline continues to feature prominently in the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive Congress (APC) political parties. This action ends up heating up the polity; a situation that portends dangers to democratic consolidation in Nigeria. This danger has resulted to the high level of political abduction, harassment, arson, and assassinations, withdrawal of credible and qualified professionals in the race. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the role of political parties in consolidation of democracy in Nigeria.

**1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The major objective of the study is to examine the relationship between political parties and democratic consolidation in Nigeria. Other specific objectives are:

1) To examine the relationship between political parties and democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

2) To examine the effect of intra-party crisis on the democratic process.

3) To investigate the effect of party-members defections on democratic deepening in Nigeria.

4) To interrogateif lack of internal democracy by the PDP and APC is affecting the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria.

5) To extrapolatethe challenges of consolidating democracy in Nigeria.

**1.5 Research Questions**

The questions that this study seeks to address are:

1) What is the relationship between political parties and democratic consolidation in Nigeria?

2) In what ways do intra-party crisis have any effect on the democratic process in Nigeria?

3) To what extent will party-members defection affect democratic deepening in Nigeria?

4) To what extent doeslack of internal democracy by the PDP and APC affecting the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria?

5) What are the challenges of consolidating democracy in Nigeria?

**1.6 Significance of the Study**

Previous researchers have been very divergent in their views about the possible correlates of political parties and democratic consolidation in Nigeria, this study will therefore be of great significance as it will add to the already existing body of knowledge in this regard.

It is anticipated that the analytical, conceptual and theoretical analysis will not just contribute to understanding of the dynamics of political parties and democracy in Nigeria, but will articulate sound policy recommendations to foster democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

In a whole, the outcomes of the study will serve as a useful tool for students of the Lagos State University, who would want to carry out further research in this domain. It would also be useful to scholars in political science. The study would in fact be significant to policy makers and implementers at large, as they will find the result and recommendations of the study very useful.

**1.7 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study defines the research boundary. Therefore this study encompasses political parties and democratic consolidation in Nigeria vis-à-vis the inter-party crisis, party-members’ defection, lack of internal democracy and the challenges of democratic consolidation in Nigeria. The study will be limited in scope to thePeople’s Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive Congress (APC).

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**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will consist of three major sections which are the theoretical framework, conceptual framework and the review of relevant literature. The theoretical framework will present theories that explain the relationship between political parties and democracy consolidation. The conceptual framework will be made up of the description of various concepts including the History of Nigeria politics, the Political parties in Nigeria, term democracy and its consolidation and the roles of APC and PDP in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. The review of relevant literature will consist of past studies conducted in the subject area, its aim and outcome.

**2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

**2.1.1 ELITE THEORY**

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 (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). In unveiling 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 (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 (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 (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 like 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 (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). From the above theoretical relationships, Elite theory has explained the role of Political parties in consolidating the Nigeria democracy.

**2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

**2.2.1 DEMOCRACY**

Democracy is a concept that does not have any universally accepted definition. In spite of the differences in conceptualization and practices, all version of democracy in the view of Osaghae (1992), share one fundamental objective of “how to govern the society in such a way that power actually belongs to all people”. Chafe (1994) argued that democracy is the involvement of the people in the running the political, socio-economic and cultural affairs of their society. The degree of involvement of the people in the total control of their polity, within the standard of natural justices, determines the degree of democratic substance of a political system (Sadeeq, 2008). This shows that the peculiar virtue of democracy is thought to lie in the fact that it is only government that can advance the interests of all the members of a politically organized community (Barry, 1992).

Schumpeter (1990) defined democracy as an institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide, by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote. Competitive struggle, according to this definition, is that individual can take advantage of whatever loopholes they perceived in their opponents’ political strategy and thereby rise to power. Held (1982) conceptualized democracy as a cluster of rules and institutions permitting the broader participation of the majority of citizens in the selection of representatives who govern them. In the course of summation of varied definitions of democracy, it is deduces that democracy provides opportunities for the people to freely exercise their franchise in the selection of their representatives and leader. This type of exercise, excluded the use of force and coercion through the state apparatus.

**2.2.2 POLITICAL PARTY**

A political party is an organized group of people with at least roughly similar political aims and opinions that seek to influence the public, policy by getting its candidate elected to public office (Likoti, 2005). Edmund Burke defined political party as a body of men united for promoting their joint endeavours that national interests upon some particular principles in which they all agreed (Ojo, 2009). The existence of political parties according to this definition must be based on the principles of promoting national interest. This is because political parties are often expected to have their membership spread across the country. This explain, for instance, why Nigerian constitution required parties to reflect federal character before they can be registered (Tordoff, 1999). Similarly, Osumah (2009) conceives political party as a voluntary association organized by persons bind by common interests or aims, which seeks to acquire or retain power through the election of its candidates into public office. Here political party was perceived as an instrument of acquiring political power in order to implement government policies.

Political Parties are integral part of the process of institutionalizing democracy. Thus, political parties according to IDEA (2000) produce the candidates, set the parameters of issues and agenda within which elections are to be held and they are expected to perform these duties periodically. The, functions of a political party were summarized by Egbewole and Muhtar (2010) as:

1. Stimulating the citizenry to take a greater interest in election and activities of government.
2. Defining political issues of the day and sharpen the choice between alternative paths.
3. Presenting candidates who are committed to announce position with respect to issues.
4. Majority party provides basis upon which government can be operated.
5. Accepting responsibility to govern upon winning election.

In addition, Political Parties, according to Huntington (1968), perform the functions of ordering the political system; they serve to structure political process and ensure that citizen participation in that process is orderly; they seek to provide a distinctive collective identify for their followers, one that is premised upon acceptance of basic rules of the national political arena. As a result of these functions, Diamond (1997) asserted that political parties remain important if not essential instruments for representing political constituencies and interests, aggregating demands and preferences, recruiting and socializing new candidate for office; organizing the electoral competition for power, crafting policy alternatives, setting the policy-making agenda, forming effective governments, and integrating groups and individuals into the democratic process.

In order to perform these functions positively, political party should be guided by distinctive ideology which will sell them to a core set of electorates and distinguish them clearly from other political parties.

At this juncture, ideology becomes important feature of political parties. Party ideology, according to Seruton is moral systems that enshrine the sanctity of contact and promise between them (parties) and electorate; it constitute the political doctrine from which a programme of political actions emanates and on which basis citizens choose how they will like to be ruled (Sambine, 2004). In his opinion, Nnoli (2003) posited that ideology is very important aspect of politics, not only by serving as a cognitive structure for looking at society generally and providing a guide to individual action and judgment, but as a powerful instrument of conflict management, self identification, popular mobilization and legitimization. The party’s policies plus strategies for achieving them and code of conduct for party members are encapsulated in ideology. On this basis, Simbine (2005) posited that parties and their manifestoes need to espouse the ideology on which they plan to run the government in order to give the electorates a clear picture of where the country is heading to and to decide whether or not to work in that direction. Absence of ideology in parties will therefore make it difficult for political parties to harmonize members view on political issues.

**2.2.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY**

In a democratic setting, political parties are so important to the extent “that neither democracy nor democratic society can exist without them” (Omotola, 2009). Democracy depends on parties to survive, since the structure of elections, from citizen participation to candidate selection and presentation of competing political programmes, are done by political parties. The role of political parties become viable when there is an orderly political succession in society. Parties provide order to political process “by regularizing the procedure for leadership succession and for assimilation of new groups into the political system, parties provide the basis for stability and orderly change rather than for instability” (Huntington, 1968). These invariably prompted, Katz (1980) to conclude that modern democracy is party democracy; the political institutions and practices that are the essence of democratic government in the Western view were the creations of political parties and would be unthinkable without them. It is deduced that the foundation of any government in a democratic setting anchors on the growth of effective party system.

Meanwhile, to consolidate democracy, political parties are expected to exhibit the following features as suggested by Kehinde and Adejumobi, (2007) ; they must be composed of likeminded people whose world views are similar, they must promote a set of programmes embodying the version, mission and manifestoes of the party and designed to meet the needs of the public; they must be mass based, which helps to legitimize them; they must evolved gradually and systematically over time, with identifiable leaders who constitute their rallying points; they must exhibit characteristics of intraparty conflict in their operations. Once political parties exhibited these features for a considerable time the democratic process can be characterized as consolidated.

Political parties play two important roles in a political process: they form a government or they serve as opposition (Matthias, 2007). Dolo (2006) defines opposition parties as “partisan political institutions that are intentionally designed to temper the ruling party’s excesses while still pursuing both legislative and presidential offices.”For democracy to flourish there must be viable opposition parties on ground. Opposition party according to Egbewole and Muhtar (2010) is expected to engage in constant criticisms of the governmental policies which are formulated by the majority, to scrutinize carefully the manner in which these policies are administered, and to keep the possibility of alternative legislative policies and administrative practices constantly in the result of this, Dolo (2006) argues that “an authentic democracy is one where the ruling party has an effective opposition.” Therefore, in a society where opposition parties were suppressed, democracy itself becomes hopeless.

**2.2.4 ACTIVITIES OF NIGERIA POLITICAL PARTIES SINCE 1999**

Right from the formation period, fourth republic parties are the composition of people from diverse opinion. The founders of these parties share nothing in common than intra-party crisis. Omoruyi posited that the manner of origin of the parties does not fit into what we know from literature, their composition can be viewed as mere instruments of transition from military to civil rule (Omotola, 2009). Starting from the origin of the first three political parties, the ruling PDP was described as mixed bag of persons with different ideologies, that is, the conservative, the radicals and the progressives; who do not only misunderstand themselves but are regularly feuding. The AD was a Yoruba based party, formed just to see that power returned to the south west. The compositions of APP (later ANPP) are the set of politicians who supported or served under Abacha regime (Adebayo, 2008). This explains why the current dispensation witnessed more intra-party conflict than the previous ones (Olaniyan, 2009).

The tussle for power and control of the party machinery become the order of the day, as some members parade themselves as founders of the party. Sambine, (2004) posited that those who own or play major roles in the formation of the parties end up being dictatorial. In PDP for example, the former PDP chairman, Ogbe (2004) lamented that there were individuals who did not see themselves as being members of the party, who rather sought to own the party or to own part of it and to dictate to the party.

Consequently, the crisis in PDP prompted Sambine (2004) to argue that the party is run as factions and caucuses with many bigwigs posing as members of Board of Trustees and others as elders and leaders of the party. The collision among these group manifested in frequent change of party leadership. Within eleven years, the PDP had six chairmen, out of which none of them complete his tenure. Besides the internal wrangling between former President Obasanjo and his Vice Atiku, the issue of Zoning within the party nearly broke the party into pieces. The rift within APP (later ANPP) led to expulsion of twelve strong members in October 2002. Similarly, the crisis in Alliance for Democracy (AD) at the beginning split the party into two camps and later led to the exit of prominent members of the party. The breakaway group formed a new party, the Action Congress (AC) which metamorphosis into the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN).

Similarly, the activities of godfather in political parties render the parties ineffective in the process of discharging their responsibilities. These godfather impact negatively on democracy by restricting citizen participation as a voter or candidate. Also in an undemocratic way, they imposed candidates’ right from local level to national level, on agreement that they surrender the state treasury to them (Omotola, 2007). These kinds of agreement explain why the dividend of democracy becomes mirage in our society. Thus, democracy has no meaning once it failed to improve on the life of citizens. The legitimacy of leaders whose process of selection fallout of democratic norms is highly questionable at the expense of national stability (ICG, 2007)

The trend of internal crisis within the parties since 1999 shows that parties in Nigeria spend more time on reconciliatory process, than on a programme that would benefit the electorates. It is equally deduced that failure of political parties to embraced dialogue in resolving their internal crisis is antithetical to democratic consolidation. Since the principal tenet of democracy is the possibility it offers to resolve crisis through dialogue, without recourse to violence, even when they are irksome (IPU, 2006).

On the issue of ideology, parties in Nigeria possess none. All the sixty-three political parties, range from the dominant one (PDP) to the peripheral (party with no single elective seat) failed to be identified with one ideology. In the face of ideological emptiness, Sambine (2005) posited that most of these parties were only seeking cheap publicity, and come up with the ambitions to satisfy those not accommodated in the older ones. “Due to unclear cut ideology, politicians behave like political bats changing party affiliation” (Aina, 2002)

Absence of party ideology can also be explained from the angle of executive- legislative relation. Despite the fact that PDP dominate the National Assembly between 1999 and 2015, the executive find it difficult to get enough support to ensure easy passage of its bills. The frosty relations between the executive and the legislative, is as a result of weakness of the political party which fueled the impeachment saga in the fourth republic. Less than a year, for instance, the first senate president and the speaker at the National Assembly was removed. The winds of impeachment also blew to some states executive and legislature. For instance, in Abia state the speakers of state House of Assembly were removed twice between August 1999 and June, 2000. (Omotola, 2008). The implications of the frequent impeachment were captured by Adejumobi and Kehinde (2007) as first, it absorbed the attention and energies of the main actors within the parties, diverting their focus from urgently needed internal party organization and planning for elections. Second, it reinforced the non adherence to due process and rule of law. Third, it created fear, apprehension and tension in the political environment, and decelerating preparations for the elections. Fourth, it created an uneven playing field for actors between and within political parties.

The activities of all the parties shows that they possessed non identifiable ideology that serve as motivating force, which is expected to be the source of their manifesto (Ajetunmobi and Kehinde, 2007). They failed to have a grand strategy of enlighten the electorates that would make them secured people votes. For instance, in 2007 the most visible message of the Action Congress (AC) campaign is that a vote for AC is a vote against the PDP government. The Democratic People’s Party (DPP) presidential candidate promised free compulsory education for all if elected president; given that Sokoto where he is their current Governor has one of the highest illiteracy levels in the country (NDI, 2007). Similarly, the PDP promises to make Nigeria one of the 20 greatest economies by the year 2010 (NDI, 2007). It is deduced that most of the candidates failed to address fundamental questions of Nigeria’s development. The focus of the campaign, according to COG (2007) revolved around personality of the candidates. That made it difficult to distinguish between the sixty-three (63) registered political parties in terms of ideology and policy.

The undemocratic conduct of political parties also contributes in no small measure to the political violence and political assassination in Nigeria. As party abstained from healthy intra-party rivalry in the process of candidates selection, the venue of party primaries were mostly turned into violence gathering. In Benue state, for instance, fighting erupted in Aliade town, on 9 December 2006, after PDP allegedly reversed the result of the state assembly primary, replacing the winner, Tsetim Ayarger with Ashema Chado.

On the issue of opposition, the current number of political parties in view of ICG (2007), suggesting a more democratic polity, a widening of political space and more options for voters. But most of these parties are composed of individuals whose personal interests are threatened by the existing governments and thus decided to join the opposition party. The existing opposition’s party in Nigeria today lacks the integrity to stick to their stance on some salient political issues as it affects the citizenry. The priorities of all these parties is what they will gains in politics. Opposition parties in Nigerian democracy remained ineffective due to their failure to form coalitions that will give a strong opposition to the ruling party and make them obey the rule of the game for people to enjoy the dividend of democracy, scholars emphasized the need for alternative policy in Nigeria, for instance, Isakpa (2008) said, if ruling politicians are failing the people, it is the responsibility of the opposition to step in, in a credible, robust, articulate, clear and coherent manner, to provide alternative policy options on how to deal with the challenges that confront the country and the majority of the Nigerian people.

Once the elections is over, the interest of common man in no longer in the opposition party’s agenda. They will be struggling to be part a unity government initiated by ruling party. Members of Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), after 2007 general elections for example, abandon their party and presidential candidate to be part of the Unity government introduced by ruling party (PDP). The presidential candidate (Muhammed Buhari) of the party (ANPP) was persuaded by his party leaders to drop his case against the ruling party despite the admission of the president that the election is characterized by fraud (Gabriel, 2012). The PDP that has ruled Nigeria since 1999 for sixteen years of slow development lost power the strongest opposition in the 2015 general election and Muhammed Buhari was elected as the president of Nigeria. Against the expectation of Nigerians, the civilian transition to opposition was easy and violent free as the then president Goodluck Jonathan conceded defeat and congratulate the opponent, thereby creating calm between the raging followers. This move by Goodluck Jonathan has really consolidated Nigeria democracy by restoring the lost hope and confidence of Nigerians in the political system.

**2.2.5 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, (Udofia 1981; Obah-Akpowoghaha 2013) describes a political party as a body that 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, democratic consolidation is a function of party 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 in the political parties 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 known. Once this process is interrupted by some class, then what exist is just artificial politics devoid of the general will.

**2.3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The section contains the empirical review of past literature on the subject area, political parties and democracy consolidation in Nigeria. Obah-Akpowoghaha (2013) examined the factors that determined the emergence of party’s candidates and the impacts of party’s lack of intraparty conflict 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 intraparty conflict in Nigeria. He concluded that party politics in the area of nomination, selection and elections have negative implications on democratic consolidation in Nigeria. Among other things, he also concluded that lack of intraparty conflict within political parties as a limiting factor in Nigeria’s attempt to deepen democracy. Nigeria’s First and Second Republics, political parties were regionally based, and their activities led to the collapse of those experiments. The existence of vibrant political parties is a sine qua non for democratic consolidation in any polity.

Also, in a study by Dode (2010) to explores an important aspect of Nigeria’s Fourth Republic politics, which is about the role of the PDP (Peoples Democratic Party) in general and President Olusegun Obasanjo in facilitating the consolidation of democracy in the country in particular. The study posits that there is a direct relationship between the character and conduct of a country’s political parties and the degree of democratic consolidation in that country. The researcher also argues that seven years into the ‘democratic’ dispensation, Nigeria has not scored high when placed in the same matrix with countries that are heading towards stable democracy. In attempting a discourse of this issue, the democratic theory propounded by Joseph Schumpeter was adopted as the theoretical framework of the study. From this, some research questions were posed that state: is democratic competition fully at play in Nigeria’s Fourth Republic? Are opposition parties alive to their political responsibilities in the country? It was argued that the opposition parties in Nigeria which ought to serve as alternative parties from which the electorate should choose if they so decide, have been strategically weakened through the overt and covert strategies of the ruling PDP and the lack of total commitment on the part of politicians to the national course. He further argues that more than 90% of the political parties in Nigeria are fragile entities, hence, have only developed shallow roots in the society, and concludes on the note that Nigerian political parties have failed in their democratic responsibilities of aggregating social interests, representing specific constituencies, and serving as intermediaries between state and society which are the tenets of democracy consolidation.

Akubo and Yakubu (2014) asserted that political parties play very critical roles in democratization of any nation. Central to the successes and failures of electoral politics is the cardinal and strategic functions of this all important and an integral organ of democratization which is core to its development. The dawn of the Nigerian fourth republic has witnessed renewed and sustained activities of political parties which is the most complex and critical institutions of democracy but undoubtedly has either shaped or stagnated the deepening and consolidation of democracy. With heavy reliance on secondary data supported by analytical approach, the study x-rayed the role of political parties in the democratic consolidation of Nigeria’s Fourth Republic. The climax of the analysis is the identified challenges plaguing democratic consolidation since the commencement of the fourth republic i.e. lack of institutionalization and personalization of political parties; Godfatherism; Absence of intraparty conflict within the political parties and incessant party/political violence. The party system in Nigeria is still weak and vulnerable with no visible signs of adding value to the democratic consolidation. It was recommended that issues of organizational capacity, effective leadership, intraparty conflict, discipline, institutionalization and personalization, ideological platforms of mobilization and linkage to civil society and the masses should be addressed.

**3.4 SUMMARY**

This chapter is the literature review of this study which is made up of three parts (the theoretical and conceptual framework, and the review of related literatures). Elite theory was used to explain the role of Nigeria political parties in the democratic process in the theoretical framework. The conceptual framework also presents the overview of democracy, political parties and the relationship between them. It also contains the activities of the Nigeria political parties since 1999 and the role of political parties in consolidation of democracy. The past literatures was also reviewed in the third section of this chapter.

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**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.1 **Introduction**

 This chapter intends to give a clear description of the method and procedures involved in carrying out this study and ways by which information on the subject matter of this research study are collected and organized for proper analysis. The methodology employed in this research study is explained under the following headings:

* research design,
* population of the study,
* sample and sampling techniques,
* research instrument,
* validity and reliability of the research instrument,
* method of data collection and analysis

3.2 **Research Design**

A research design is a plan that guides the researcher in the various stages of the research process. Research design may be experimental, case study or an observation. This research work adopted the descriptive survey design. The descriptive survey design deals with the systematic collection of facts from a target audience or population. This design was adopted by the researcher because it will help to ascertain the true role of political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria.

3.3 **Population of the Study**

 The population of this study consists of the entire members of People Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressives Congress (APC) all the over Nigeria.

3.4 **Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

 A sample is the subset of population selected for a study. Sampling deals with selecting a sample. The sampling method to be used for the study is convenience sampling with a sample size of 100 citizen of Nigeria. The sample for this study was drawn from the population of the study.

3.5 **Research Instrument**

The research instrument that will be used for this study is questionnaire. The questionnaire was selected by the researcher because it had the capability of eliciting factual data from a given population. The questionnaire will be titled: **“Role of political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria”**. The questionnaire will be divided into two (2) sections covering the research questions raised in chapter one of the study. The various sections are as follows:

* **Section A:** Bio-data of the respondents
* **Section B:** Role of political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria.

3.6 **Validity of the Instrument**

 The research instrument was validated by the project supervisor. The instrument was prepared by the researcher and submitted to the project supervisor for scrutiny. The corrections made by the supervisor were carefully incorporated by the researcher in order for the instrument to be valid.

3.7 **Reliability of the Instrument**

 The reliability of the instrument was done by the researcher through the test-retest method. That is to say, the instrument was pre-tested twice before proceeding to administer the instrument to the respondents in the two selected parties (PDP & APC).

**Table 3.1: Reliability test**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Cronbach’s Alpha** | **Cronbach’s Alpha on Standardized item** | **N of items** |
| 0.821 | 0.755 | 5 |

The table 3.1 above presents the reliability and validity of the instrument used in determining the role of political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. The cronbach’s alpha of 0.821 is high enough and indicated that the instrument used for the collection of data in this study is reliable and valid.

3.8 **Method of Data Collection**

 The questionnaire which was the instrument for data collection was administered to the respondents (Political parties members) by the researcher personally. The questionnaire was collected back from the respondents immediately after completion in order to avoid mutilation and to record high response rate from the respondents.

3.9 **Method of Data Analysis**

The retrieved copies of questionnaire were analyzed using simple percentage and frequency count. This statistical tool was selected by the researcher because of its simplicity and relevance to the research work. The analysis will be done with the software known as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS**

**4.1 Introduction**

 This chapter deals with the presentation and the analysis of primary data obtained by the researcher through the administration of structured questionnaire. The data are presented using tables, mean and standard deviation to enhance quick understanding of the result achieved.

 The questionnaires were segmented into two sections; sections A and B. the section A was concerned with the bio-data of the respondents. The section B were centered on the questions raised in the questionnaire to elicit the respondents’ responses. It therefore follows that the presentation based on the responses of the respondents will be done in two sections in this chapter. Thus, section A will involve the presentation and analysis of the biographic data of the respondents, while section B is on the presentation and analysis of the respondents’ responses. From the one hundred (100) questionnaires distributed to the respondents, 100 copies were retrieved. This represents 100% response rate.

**4.2 Section A**

**Table 4.1: Sex of respondents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of respondents**  | **Percentage**  |
| Male | 59 | 51.0 |
| Female | 41 | 41.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100% |

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2016

 The above table shows that 59 persons representing 59% are male while 41 persons representing 41% are female. This result indicated that the number of male respondents is more than that of the female.

**Table 4.2. Educational qualification of respondents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of respondents**  | **Percentage**  |
| Primary  | 7 | 7.0% |
| Secondary | 11 | 11.0% |
| Tertiary  | 63 | 63.0% |
| Others  | 19 | 19.0% |
| Total | 100 | 100% |

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2016

 Table above shows the educational qualifications of the respondents. It indicates that 7 persons who represent 7% of the respondents are Primary school certificate holders; 11 persons representing 11% have Secondary school certificate; 65 respondents representing 65% have acquired the tertiary level of education while only 19 persons representing 19% of them have other qualifications.

**Table 4.3: Age of the respondents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Age range** | **Number of respondents**  | **Percentage**  |
| 18-25 | 6 | 6.0% |
| 26-35 | 31 | 31.0% |
| 36-45 | 34 | 34.0% |
| 46 and above | 29 | 29.0% |
| Total | 100 | 100% |

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2016

The above table shows the age range of the respondents who are the party members of Political parties. 6% of the respondents are between 18-25 years of age, 31% are between the age of 26-35 years old, 34% are between the ages of 36-45 years and 29% of the respondents are age 46 years and above.

**Table 4.4: Level of participation of respondents in Politics**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of respondents**  | **Percentage**  |
| Active politician | 100 | 100% |
| Non-politician  | 0 | 0% |
| TOTAL | 100 | 100% |

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2016

The table above revealed that all the respondents that participated in this study are active politicians.

**Table 4.5: Political parties of the respondents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Political parties | **Number of respondents**  | **Percentage**  |
| PDP | 50 | 50% |
| APC | 50 | 50% |
| TOTAL | 100 | 100% |

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2016

The table above revealed that equal numbers of Political parties responded to the necessary questions during the course of this research.

**ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**Table 4.6: Role of Political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Question** | **SA** | **A** | **TOTAL POSITIVE RESPONSE** |
| 1 | The Nigeria democracy can be described has well consolidated | 9(9%) | 42(42%) | 51% |
| 2 | Political parties has contributed to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria | 14(14%) | 39(39%) | 53% |
| 3 | Political parties in Nigeria has continued to work towards national interest  | 5(5%) | 29(29%) | 34% |
| 4 | The distinctive ideology of PDP as a party has contributed significantly to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria | 32(32%) | 24(24%) | 56% |
| 5 | The distinctive ideology of APC as a party has contributed significantly to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria | 28(28%) | 24(24%) | 52% |

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2016

The table 4.6 above reveals the responses on the role of Political parties in the consolidation of Nigeria democracy. 51 % of the respondents indicated that the Nigeria’s democracy is well consolidated while 53% of the respondents admitted that political parties have contributed to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. Also, only 34% of the respondents indicated that political parties in Nigeria has continued to work towards national interest while 56% supported that the distinctive ideology of PDP as a party has contributed significantly to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria and 52% of the respondents indicated that distinctive ideology of APC as a party has contributed significantly to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria.

**Table 4.7: Factors limiting the political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Question** | **SA** | **A** | **TOTAL POSITIVE RESPONSE** |
| 6 | There are factors limiting the political parties (PDP & APC) in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria | 34(34%) | 47(47%) | 81% |
| 7 | Corruption is a major factor limiting the political parties (PDP & APC) in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria | 47(47%) | 49(49%) | 96% |
| 8 | Ethnicity and discrimination is a factor limiting the political parties (PDP & APC) in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria | 25(25%) | 43(43%) | 68% |
| 9 | Absence of likeminded people whose world views are similar in the political parties (PDP & APC) is hindering consolidation of democracy in Nigeria | 33(33%) | 24(24%) | 57% |
| 10 | Inability to design the manifestoes of the party (PDP & APC) to meet the needs of the public and mass based has hindered consolidation of democracy in Nigeria | 29(29%) | 25(25%) | 54% |

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2016

The table 4.7 above reveals the factors limiting political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. The results indicated that 81% agreed that there are factors limiting the political parties (PDP & APC) in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria while 96% of the respondents indicated that corruption is a major factor limiting the political parties (PDP & APC) in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. Also, 68% indicated that ethnicity and discrimination is a factor limiting the political parties (PDP & APC) in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria while 57% indicated that the absence of likeminded people whose world views are similar in the political parties (PDP & APC) is hindering consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. Also, 54% of the respondents opined that inability of the party (PDP & APC) to design the manifestoes to meet the needs of the public and mass based has hindered consolidation of democracy in Nigeria

**Table 4.8: The effect of political party’s politics and intraparty conflict on the democratic process in Nigeria.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Question** | **SA** | **A** | **TOTAL POSITIVE RESPONSE** |
| 11 | Political activities by the parties over the years has strengthened the democratic process | 8(8%) | 39(39%) | 47% |
| 12 | Intraparty conflict practiced by PDP has contributed positively to the democratic process | 12(12%) | 39(39%) | 51% |
| 13 | Intraparty conflict practiced by APC has contributed positively to the democratic process | 24(24%) | 29(29%) | 53% |
| 14 | There is significant differences in the ideologies of Political parties | 2(2%) | 11(11%) | 13% |
| 15 | The political ideologies of the parties (PDP & APC) has developed the democratic process in Nigeria | 21(21%) | 27(27%) | 48% |

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2016

Table 4.8 above reveals the effect of political party’s politics and intraparty conflict on the Nigerian democratic process. 47% of the respondents indicated that political activities by the parties over the years has strengthened the democratic process while 51% indicated that intraparty conflict practiced by PDP has contributed positively to the democratic process. Also, 53% of the respondents indicated that intraparty conflict practiced by APC has contributed positively to the democratic process while only 13% admitted that there are significant differences in the ideologies of Political parties. Also, 48% indicated that the political ideologies of the parties (PDP & APC) have developed the democratic process in Nigeria.

**HYPOTHESIS TESTING**

**Table** **4.9**: Correlation coefficient of the role of Political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria

|  |
| --- |
| **Correlations** |
|  | PDPideologyandconsolidationofdemocracyinNigeria | APCideologyandconsolidationofdemocracyinNigeria |
| PDPideologyandconsolidationofdemocracyinNigeria | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .005 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .943 |
| N | 100 | 100 |
| APCideologyandconsolidationofdemocracyinNigeria | Pearson Correlation | .005 | 1 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .943 |  |
| N | 100 | 100 |

Source: SPSS (Version 21) Output

From the Pearson correlation analysis above, the coefficient value of 0.005 is very low and indicates that Political parties has not played a very significant role in the consolidation of Nigeria democracy. Also, our sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.943 which indicates that there is no statistically significant correlation between activities of the political parties (PDP &APC) and the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria.

**Decision rule**: from the results indicating a lower correlation value, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship in the activities of the political parties (PDP & APC) and consolidation of democracy in Nigeria is accepted while the alternate hypothesis is rejected.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Three research questions was raised and analyzed in this study. The first was examining the role of Political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. About half of the respondents indicated a positive response. This shows that even though the political parties are trying their best, they still needs to do more to ensure the consolidation of Nigeria democracy. 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.

The second research question was raised to examine a lot of factors affecting the political parties in contributing to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. It was revealed that corruption, ethnicity, godfatherism, absence of like-minded persons in the parties and the inability of the party to prepare a manifesto that is public oriented has hindered their contribution towards consolidation of democracy in Nigeria.

The third research questioned raised examined party politics, intraparty conflict and development of the democratic process. It was revealed that the parties lack intraparty conflict and operated on the same ideology. Nnoli (2003) posited that ideology is very important aspect of politics, not only by serving as a cognitive structure for looking at society generally and providing a guide to individual action and judgment, but as a powerful instrument of conflict management, self identification, popular mobilization and legitimization.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION**

**5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The aim of this study is to examine the role of political parties (APC and PDP) in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. Three research questions were raised in this study and 300 respondents were randomly selected. The study adopted a descriptive survey method using both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The data used was collected using questionnaire and interview as primary source; textbook, journal and internet as secondary source. The result revealed that the political parties (PDP & APC) play some roles in the consolidation of democracy but it is not statistically significant.

**5.2 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. In conclusion, the positive efforts is needed on the part of the political parties to ensure the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria.

**5.3 RECOMMENDATION**

Following the results, summary and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made by the researcher:

1. Political parties must effectively perform the function of political education of its members among others building and manifestation of intraparty conflict under the supervision of an independent electoral body which would aid and reflect a stable interparty activities.
2. 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.

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Section A: Respondent’s Demographics**

1. Age as at last birthday: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender: Male Female
3. Level of Education: Primary [ ] Secondary [ ] Tertiary [ ] Others [ ] (pls specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you participate actively in politics? Yes [ ] No [ ]
5. What political party do you belong to? APC ( ) PDP ( )

**Section B:**

Role of political parties in consolidation of democracy in Nigeria (A case study of Political parties).

Role of Political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Question** | **SA** | **A** | **U** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1 | The Nigeria democracy can be described has well consolidated |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Political parties has contributed to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Political parties in Nigeria has continued to work towards national interest  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | The distinctive ideology of PDP as a party has contributed significantly to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | The distinctive ideology of APC as a party has contributed significantly to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria |  |  |  |  |  |

Factors limiting the political parties in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Question** | **SA** | **A** | **U** | **D** | **SD** |
| 6 | There are factors limiting the political parties (PDP & APC) in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Corruption is a major factor limiting the political parties (PDP & APC) in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Ethnicity and discrimination is a factor limiting the political parties (PDP & APC) in the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Absence of likeminded people whose world views are similar in the political parties (PDP & APC) is hindering consolidation of democracy in Nigeria |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | Inability to design the manifestoes of the party (PDP & APC) to meet the needs of the public and mass based has hindered consolidation of democracy in Nigeria |  |  |  |  |  |

The effect of political parties politics and intraparty conflict on the democratic process in Nigeria.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Question** | **SA** | **A** | **U** | **D** | **SD** |
| 11 | Political activities by the parties over the years has strengthened the democratic process |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | Intraparty conflict practiced by PDP has contributed positively to the democratic process |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | Intraparty conflict practiced by APC has contributed positively to the democratic process |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | There is significant differences in the ideologies of Political parties |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | The political ideologies of the parties (PDP & APC) has developed the democratic process in Nigeria |  |  |  |  |  |