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Democratization amidst Violence, Conflict and Wars: The Case of Nigeria

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Abstract

Despite the enthusiasm that greeted democratization in Africa and Nigeria in particular, it has turned out that expectation has run contrary with the reality. The wave of democratization in Africa has turned out to be wave of conflict, violence and war. This paper examines the dynamics of fraudulent elections in African most populous nations, Nigeria; a land with great potentials but lacking the fruits of potentials. Despite Nigeria's abundant natural resources and human capital, the country is lagging behind in terms of economic development and political stability; in essence, poverty and unemployment are on the increase. There is increasing nervousness or concern for the stability of democracy since the Nigerian transition to democracy in 1999. Therefore, this paper investigates the dynamics of unfree elections using qualitative method approach. The explanatory power draws from electoral authoritarianism. The findings show that the regime in power since 1999 till date has various motives for stealing elections. Political parties in Nigeria both the ruling party and the opposition are mostly of military background and wealthy Nigerians who are more interested to preserve the status quo. The conclusion is that to improve the quality of elections in Nigeria would require a change of attitude that hinders the prospect for democratic stability.

Keywords: Democratization; electoral authoritarianism; Spoils politics; Nigeria; Violence.

Word count: 10,11

Acronyms

A– Accord

ACN– Action Congress of Nigeria

CBN– Central Bank of Nigeria

ANPP – All Nigeria Peoples Party

APGA– All Progressive Grand Alliance

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

CPC– Congress for Progressive Change

DPP–Democratic Peoples Party

FGN–Federal Government of Nigeria

FMF- Federal Ministry of Finance

INEC – Independent Electoral Commission

LP– Labour Party

NLC–Nigeria Labour Congress

NNPC– Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation

PDP– Peoples Democratic Party

PPN– Peoples Party of Nigeria

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1.0. Introduction

Democratization moved across Africa in 1990s in such pattern Samuel Huntington refers to as “Waves”; which means democratization spread across the Continent from one country to another as happened previously in other Continents or regions of the world (Diamond, 1999:2; Grugel, 2002:33). However, the wave of democratization across Africa has been accompanied with a wave of violence, conflict and wars. The hope of authoritarian regimes genuine transition to democracy has rather given birth to all manner of democracies with prefix such as *pseudo-democracy*, *illiberal-democracy* and *semi-democracy* (Grugel, 2003:245). The only democratic credentials such regimes can boast of include holding regular elections, universal suffrage and multi-party participation but in most cases elections are not free and fair. Apart from elections, other factors such as transparency, freedom of association, freedom of speech and other attributes of electoral democracy are missing (Diamond, 2002:21). In some cases, the outcome of unfree elections is violence, conflicts and wars. For example, post-election violence is common in Kenya, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Nigeria and many others while grievances over stolen elections in Liberia, Serra Leone and Cote d’Ivoire resulted in civil wars, and the Great Lake region in the horn of Africa, Congo and Rwanda, civil wars spread across the borders to seven other countries (Vorrath and Krebs, 2009:3; Obi, 2011).

According to Ake (2003:38-40), power is the only means for one to secure economic and political freedom and politicians make use of ethnic identity to project their personal interests and as such, political competitions tend to degenerate into warfare. Barkan (2000:228-9) asserts that, states in Africa are the highest employers of middle class unlike in other countries; hence, they struggle to be in power to control resources that the state can confer for personal benefits but also to distribute to their clients, ethnic groups, friends and associates. In a similar manner, Kendhammer (2010:49) asserts that politics of ethnicity has increased the level of ethnic violence since the Nigerian transition to democracy. Recently, Baker (2011:34) described democracy in Nigeria as mainly a promise. The country faces formidable problems including ethnic, religious, and economic friction; endemic corruption; severe economic inequality; deepening violence; and political culture dominated by competing cliques of ex-generals and business tycoons who act as behind-the-scenes power brokers. Baker’s analysis reminds us about the circumstances that led to collapse of Nigerian infant democracy in 1965.

It was a political turmoil created by power struggle among various ethnic groups after the general elections of January 11, 1965 that culminated to military coup (Ake, 2003:103-4). But it was also due to corruption and mismanagement of the economy (Balogun, 2009:170-8).

Since the transition to democracy in 1999, electoral violence¹ is common in Nigeria. According to Human rights Watch,¹ in 1999 three hundred people lost their lives through post-election violence. Kendhammer (2010:49) reports on similar incidence, in one local government in Plateau State, Jos, North Central, ethnic violence in 2004 claimed at least 3000 lives. Nte (2011:1006-7) has similar accounts, between September 1999 and May 2007, Nigerian police recorded 37 cases, high profile assassination of politically active individuals. The number excludes hundreds of others killed in similar circumstances but not reported to the police due to lack of confidence in the Nigerian justice system. Even those that were officially reported, arrests were made in connection with the murders but till date no one is convicted. In addition, Obi (2008:78) reports, at least 70 cases of violence incidents were reported by the media between November 2006 and March 2007. And before the presidential election in April, 2011, there was an escalation of violence, bomb explosions, shootings and setting houses and other properties ablaze in the Northern state of Maiduguri, the city in the center of violence in the 2011 elections². Human Rights watch estimated 800 deaths, thousands lost their homes and properties to fire.³ From this perspective, this study investigates the case of unfree elections in Nigeria.

1.1. Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this thesis is to examine hindrances to free and fair elections in Nigeria. Nigeria is assumed to be the giant of Africa in terms of its population, over 158 million and also its political and economic importance in the continent and internationally. Despite her own challenges, Nigeria is an important contributor of peacekeeping troops to the United Nations and has mediated peace in the war torn countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Sudan and Togo; Nigeria is among the major exporters of high quality crude oil (Ploch, 2012: 21; Tar and Zack-Williams, 2007:546-7). In support of this assumption, Robert

¹ Electoral violence involves assassination of political opponents, voter intimidation, attacks against liberty and property of political adversaries, violence against elected officials, politically motivated riots, and ethnic or other forms of social cleansing (Schedler, 2006:157).

I. Rotberg, the President of World Peace Foundation and the Director of Program on Interstate Conflict in the Harvard Kennedy School in a special report titled “Nigeria: Elections and Continuing Challenges” asserts, “As Nigeria goes, So Africa goes.” (Rotberg 2007:3-6). What this phrase suggests is that, if something goes wrong in Nigeria, all African countries will feel the heat but if it goes right, all African states will benefit. In the language of the report “Nigeria’s welfare is Fundamental to Africa’s welfare” (Ibid: vii). This captures the important position of Nigeria in the continent. The specific aim is to examine the dynamics of unfree/unfair/fraud elections in Nigeria. The question for this investigation is: *What are the hindrances to free and fair elections in Nigeria?*

1.2. Significance

Previous studies contend that since the transition to democracy in 1999, Nigeria have never held free and fair elections (Obi, 2011; Kendhammer, 2010 and Rotberg, 2007). The four previous elections, 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 were won by the party in power since 1999, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) amidst widespread allegations of electoral mismanagement and fraud (Ploch, 2012:2). The outcome is that the PDP’s ‘success’ story is not success for democracy but electoral violence. Each time Nigerians go to the polls to elect their leaders there is a high probability that some people might be caught up in intimidation and violence. Despite the risk, Nigerians continued to participate in the electoral process. According to Ploch (2012:5), registered voters in 2011 elections were over 73 million. It means the people want democracy and would hope for free and fair elections to choose their representative. Therefore, the significance of this study is to understand the implications of unfree election in Nigeria.

1.3. Democratization in Nigeria–Brief Background

This section provides a brief history of Nigeria’s attempts to democratize since the early years of independence until present, identify her challenges and the changes that have occurred in the structure of the country as a result of trying to find solutions to Nigeria’s political problems.

Nigeria gained independence in 1960 and became a republic in 1963, West minister kind of liberal democracy but it wasn’t long before democracy collapsed in 1967 (Grugel, 2002:171).

According to Ake (2003:99-101), military coup in 1967 against the civilian government is assumed to be associated with “ethnonationalism”—politics of regions based on ethnicity. Colonial administrators created three regional governments dominated by the three dominant ethnic groups, Hausa-Fulani in the North, Ibo in the South-East and Yoruba in the South-West. Nigeria consists of 250 ethnic groups and the country has over 140 languages. Democratization provided the opportunity for every group within the big three to define their position in the emerging democracy to avoid marginalization. Conflict of interest degenerated into hatred, accusation of corruption and mismanagement (Tignor, 1993). Nigerian military took the advantage to overthrow democracy but counter coup followed. Eventually, combinations of many things led to three years civil war that ended in 1970 with reconciliation but that left military in power for 29 years.

During the period, coups and counter coups were taking place and in most cases military versus military with one exception, democracy lasted for four years from 1979 to 1983 and was overthrown again. The third attempt was terminated at birth, the final result of the presidential election held on 12 June 1993 was annulled and other elections already completed cancelled (Tar and Zack-Williams 2007:540-1). And the transition was delayed for nine years until 1999 when the country embarked upon fourth transition under the watchful eyes of another military head of state, Gen Abudsallam Abubakar (Kraxberger, 2004:83). Fourth transition was successful in the sense that, the General stepped down and military in uniform returned to their barracks but since then, ex-military men, former politicians and wealthy Nigerians that have been members of a club known as “G-34” are the ones ruling the country. According to Kendhammer (2010:57), G34 is a club of eminent Nigerians for the integration of political elites to preserve their economic and political interest. For example, leaders of major political parties in Nigeria were members of G-34. Former military head of state, General Olusegun Obasanjo (1976-1979) who became Nigerian President from 1999 to 2007. Retired General Mohammed Buhari, former head of state (1983-1985), presidential candidate for the biggest opposition party in Nigeria, Congress for Progressive Change (CPC). The situation is similar in all other big and smaller parties; their presidential candidates must come from a similar background. Since then, the group effectively colonized the political scene operating like a club that caters for the interest of their members and not a political party in the interest of the whole country. According to Kendhammer (2010:57), “PDP has been rooted less in a commitment to ideology than in a commitment to ‘incorporating diverse regional and parochial interests.’”

Since 1999, elections at every level, federal, state and local governments are battle reserved for the multimillionaires to fill public offices in Nigerian quasi- federated unit which consists of 36 states plus the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The additional states were created out of the three former regional governments that existed during colonization by subsequent military regimes (Kraxberger, 2004:85) to bring government closer to the people. Six zones, North-West, North-East, North-Central, South-West, South-East and South-South were further created to build a solid political landscape meant to integrate the states according to their culture and traditions. But it now serves as an avenue for efficient distribution of political spoils to the elites of the ruling party on a rotational basis to the offices of the president, the senators and the House representatives. In order to avoid marginalization or neglect of elites that exist in any ethnic group, PDP is efficient in the distribution of party spoils to states and local governments (Kedhammer, 2010).

1.4. Disposition

Following the previous chapter, the next is the method; it discusses the sources of data, type of data and end with limitation. Chapter three, theoretical framework, draws from perspectives on electoral authoritarianism. In case of Nigeria, this paper uses three analytical concepts, *fear of legal consequences*, *economic motives* and *political motives* originated from Schedler's book titled, "Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition." Chapter four is the analysis; discusses the role of Nigerian former president, Obasanjo; the motives for PDP continuous victories in presidential elections and the implications for fraudulent elections. Chapter five discusses the usefulness of the analytical framework and ends with the conclusion, which provides a summary answer to the main research question.

2.0. Method

According to Bryman (2008:30-1), a case study seeks to understand behaviour and the meaning of that behaviour in its specific context. For Punch (2005:144), a case study aims to

understand the case in-depth, and its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its context using whatever methods that seem appropriate. This is a case study and theory-consuming, draws from previous research on electoral authoritarianism to learn more about PDP victories in the presidential, governorship, parliamentary and local government elections since the Nigerian transition to democracy in 1999. PDP has been in power for nearly thirteen years and dominating in all the elective offices in the federal, the states and the local governments. Federal level comprises, election of members of the upper house of parliament known as the senate, election of members of the lower house known as the house of representative and election of the president while in the states, election of the Executive Governors, members of the state house of assembly, local government chairmen and their counsellors. In every election, PDP wins and won with very wide margin despite post-election violence, high unemployment and absolute poverty and deep-rooted corruption. According to Adam Przeworski cited in Schedler (2006:10), a regime is not assumed to be democratic if it fills executive and legislative offices by elections, but the ruling party never loses elections. Schedler added, overall democratic quality of a given electoral process has to apply to judge a regime and if one is missing such regime is not a democracy. This study focuses on fraudulent elections, measured by the result of parliamentary elections and public perception of members of parliaments and how democracy works in Nigeria.

According to Punch (2005:168-9), a case study may draw data from primary and secondary sources. Primary source includes different types of interviews, structured, semi-structured and unstructured; observation or survey data published online while secondary source includes books, journals, articles, reports etc. (Punch, 2005:144). This study makes use of multiple sources of data, National survey of political attitudes and values conducted in Nigeria by Afrobarometer from 2000 to 2008 covering seven rounds of surveys (see appendix A), Parliamentary election results for April 2011 published online by INEC. Secondary source includes special reports, books, journals and articles. According to (Punch, 2005:85), different sources of data can be combined and an advantage over single source, they complement each other and are highly recommended. According to Schedler (2006), what we can see in electoral authoritarian regimes are the election results, the official distribution of votes and seats between parties and candidates but that alone cannot be taken as a reliable expression of “the will of the people.” Rather, it represents the product of authoritarian manipulation. This study adopts Schedler’s approaches by looking at the election results and distribution of seats in parliaments.

2.1. Limitations

Schedler (2006:7) asserts, “the main methodological difficulty in identifying electoral authoritarian regimes lies in the obstacles they establish to the *visibility* of their manipulative practices.” In the case of Nigeria, there is no comprehensive result of all the elections held since the country’s transition to democracy from 1999 to 2011 so as to know the exact number of seats held by each party after every election. Though there were 73 million registered voters in 2011 elections (Ploch, 2012:5) but INEC website did not show the percentage that actually voted. Besides, the results of parliamentary elections held in April 2011 posted on INEC website were incomplete. The limitation is an indication of lack of transparency in the electoral process. In order to manage these shortcomings, this study uses combined data source, Afrobarometer national survey of political attitudes and values, special reports, media reports, journal articles and personal knowledge of the context.

3.0. Theoretical Framework

Due to their lack of essential democratic qualities, many third and fourth wave democracies are labelled *Minimalist* or *Pseudo democracy*. Przeworski describes minimalist democracy as ‘nothing short of miraculous’ and a means for conflict resolution (Grugel, 2002: 7). In the language of Larry Diamond pseudo-democracy is illiberal which means it’s repressive. One party dominates the others; election may be free but not fair, ban opposition from voting or contesting for electoral office. It has many variants and different degree of repressiveness, some are *semidemocracies* and others *hegemonic party regimes* (Diamond, 1999:15-6). They are all part of *hybrid regimes* or *electoral authoritarianism* (Diamond, 2002:24). Electoral authoritarianism situates third and fourth wave democracies on the middle ground; they are neither authoritarian nor democracy (Schedler, 2006; Levitsky and Way, 2002). In electoral democracy, elections are free and fair and those that take up political appointments are expected to be transparent and accountable to the electorate by making information about

their actions and activities while in the office available to the general public (Grugel, 2002:19). According to Schedler (2006:5), “many of the new electoral regimes are neither democratic nor democratizing but plainly authoritarian, albeit in ways that depart from the forms of authoritarian rule as we know it.”

3.1. Defining and Distinguishing Authoritarian Regimes

According to Levitsky and Way (2002:52-4), in competitive authoritarian regimes, formal democratic institutions exist to conduct free and fair elections but the incumbents often violate electoral rules to such an extent that they fall short of minimum standards for a democracy. Nevertheless, competitive electoral authoritarian regimes are not as restrictive, suppressive and fraudulent like electoral authoritarian regimes. In competitive authoritarian regimes, the incumbents may abuse the state resources but grant permission for the opposition to use state media, harass the opposition candidates and their supporters in a subtle manner. They may spy on opposition, journalists and other government critics and sometimes even assassinate members of the opposition but political and civil liberties, including freedom of the press, freedom of association, and freedom to criticize the government without reprisal are not openly trampled upon like in electoral authoritarian regimes. They use bribery and all manner of subtle manipulations to co-opt opposition and critics to seek cooperation. It’s not a full scale authoritarian but “diminished” form of authoritarian regime; such as those of Russia in 1996, Kenya in 1997, Ukraine in 1999, Zimbabwe in 2000, Ghana in 2000 and more. Due to availability of democratic institutions in competitive electoral authoritarian regimes, four arenas of contestation exist, electoral arena, legislative arena, Judicial arena and Media arena.

According to Levitsky and Way (2002:52-5), *Electoral Arena* is a competitive environment where elections provide the opposition a chance to compete with the incumbent with the chances to defeat the ruling party. However, the incumbent use of state resources and agents may facilitate its victory but it allows opposition access to state controlled media, independent or outsiders to monitor elections and verify the results unlike in an electoral authoritarian regime where the opposition are restricted. The presence of International election observers in many cases may prevent large scale fraud. Though, the incumbent might manipulate the final result to claim victory but it might lead to crises that will bring down the regime through

military coup or a kind of revolution as in Serbian elections in 2000 that led to removal of Milošević from the office.

Legislative arena is the focal point for opposition activities especially if the opposition has a majority in parliament but if the ruling party controls the majority, the House will be weak, a rubber stamp to pass policy of choice of the ruling party (Ibid). *Judicial arena*, the regime often tries to subordinate the Judiciary through impeachment or threat of impeachment and the appointment of judges and subtle bribery and other mechanism of co-optation (Ibid:56).

Media arena, the regime provides independent reporting and no censorship by the government unlike full autocracies where media freedom is restricted. As such, independent TV, Radio and Newspaper organizations operate freely and play a critical role as a watchdog by investigating and exposing government abuses such as “Peruvian media uncovered a range of government abuses, including the 1992 massacre of students at La Cantuta University and the forgery of the signatures needed for Fujimori’s party to qualify for the 2000 elections.” (Ibid. 57).

For Schedler (2006:5-6), the electoral authoritarian regime is neither democracy nor authoritarian but has some attributes of both. Access to power is by election not completely closed like in autocracies which might be through inheritance or appointed by the ruling class. Electoral authoritarian regimes open up political space for multi-party competition, allow universal suffrage for voting but severely manipulate the electoral process and electoral rules. Employing manipulative tools like restrictions, banning and suppression of the opposition candidates to ensure victory for the incumbent. It is systematic and widespread that they do not qualify as democratic and such, distinguish them from electoral democracies which do conduct free and fair elections but lack some attribute of liberal democracies such as checks and balances, bureaucratic integrity, and an impartial judiciary.

The important contrast between electoral authoritarian regimes and competitive authoritarian regimes is that, restrictive practices and intimidations are much more visible in the former than in the later. Electoral manipulation is more of subtle characters in competitive authoritarian regimes. However, both regime types, incumbent systematically manipulates the electoral process either by direct restriction of candidates, suppression, harassment and

intimidation or subtle co-optation to achieve victory in every election. There are various motives for fraudulent elections in electoral authoritarian regimes.

3.2. Motives and Means for Fraud Elections

According to (Schedler, 2002:117), in electoral authoritarian regime, incumbent always design strategies to steal elections and there are three motives for stealing elections such as *fear of legal consequences*, *economic motives*, and *political motives*. But also the leader desires to conduct elections and to win in order to claim legitimacy to satisfy internal and external actors (Ibid: 36).

According to Schedler (2006: 117), *fear of legal consequences* is due to the politics of plunder and abuse of power. It motivates incumbents to rig elections to remain in power. For example, former Presidents of Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos were alleged to have benefited from the privatization and assassinations of political opponents and supporters. He manipulated electoral process, used bribery, intimidation, threats of dismissals and violence to co-opt those in important political posts to support his regime. He had the control of the electoral commission of Philippines, “Commission on Elections (COMELEC)” and Judges of the Supreme Court of Philippines. In 1986, general elections in Philippine, Marcos party failed to secure outright victory using bribery, intimidation and violence that resulted in death of many but he influenced COMELEC. The Electoral Commission inflated numbers in the computer that gave Marcos victory. Eventually, when “peoples power” overthrew his regime, he escaped to United States due to fear of legal consequences but he could not find rest even in USA.

While in the United States, a case was filed against him for the murder of two Filipino American labour leaders active in the anti-Marcos politics, also, a group of 10,000 human rights victims in the Philippines through US attorneys sued Marcos for human rights abuse and another indictment from Manhattan court charged him for illegally purchase of properties in the United States with stolen Filipino government funds. Faced with pending court cases in his three years exile in the USA, he ran back to Philippines due to fear of legal consequences in the United States. At least in Philippine, he could still avoid persecution and enjoy

reasonable peace because some of those that enjoyed his extensive patronage may still be in their positions.

According to Schedler (2006:120) *Economic motives* assumes that fear of losing economic privileges and patronage makes the leader to steal elections. He may choose from menu of manipulations which includes redistributive election management, institutional bias: redistributive electoral rules, reserved positions; exclusion of opposition forces; repression, formal disfranchisement; coercion: voter intimidation; corruption: vote buying among others (Schedler, 2002:39). A leader, his family and associates benefit from “*crony capitalism*” which means, few people close to the regime monopolize the economy to accumulate wealth (Ibid). Out of power means that the leader could lose the economic benefits and as such the leader will manipulate the electoral process to retain power. The cases of Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine, Madagascar and Nigeria in 1990s are examples where economic motives made leaders not to surrender power but kept on manipulating the transition process to retain power (Schedler, 2006:120).

Economic motives in electoral authoritarian regimes encourage pervasive corruption or spoils politics. In essence, neopatrimonial practice which is pervasive in African politics due to norms of reciprocity, ethnicity and poverty (Barkan, 2000:230). In neopatrimonial regime, decision making is more of private than formal; constitution most times become a reference book needed on the shelf instead of a guiding instrument (Stockemer, 2009; DalBó and Powell, 2009). In most African countries, elective and non-elective positions are centralized for the disbursement of resources to maintain patronage. In Ake’s word, “[i] n Nigeria, for instance, the power of the president is reproduced at the level of the state with the governor; at the level of local government with the local government chairperson; and, at the level of most communities, in the chief or traditional ruler.”(Ake, 2003: 164). Neopartimomial regimes in Africa selectively and manipulatively grants economic favour and political security to selected groups like families, friends, prominent tribe or religious leaders among others to buy acquiescence that enables the regime retain power (Jordaan, 2010:237-240). According to Stockemer (2009:253), the leader has no respect for the constitution in which power and authority are defined. And as such, the Police, the Military high ranks, the Governors, the Ministers and the Commissioners among others act arbitrarily with or without the explicit permission of the ruler.

According to Schedler (2006:121), *Political motives* means that the leader is concerned for political security, which means, economic security, legal protection and patronage are the main reasons for the incumbents to steal elections but there is also personal reason, egotism. The leader feels that he is better than anyone else in managing the country and to accept defeat or to step down for another person means losing all chances of regaining high public office and retaining influence that goes with it to a wrong person. If the leader is finally persuaded by his inner caucus to step down for others, he employs “tutelary powers”; which means the leader may decide to surrender power to the candidate of his choice in return to influence their behaviour in order to remain relevant (Schedler, 2002:45). The most effective tool for powerful leaders that are no longer in the office is *tutelary powers*. Elected officials take instruction from their masters rather than exercising their constitutional powers (Ibid). In Nigeria, this type of practice is known as god-fatherism – a practice whereby prominent and wealthy individuals with strong patron-client networks facilitate the election of their associates to high office in order to influence their behaviour (Kendhammer, 2010:62).

4.0. Analysis

The analysis of this study draws from influential works of Schedler Andreas (2006) titled “Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition” and Schedler (2002) “The Menu of Manipulation”, complemented by the works of Levitsky Steven and Way A. Lucan (2002): “Elections without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism” Analytical concepts, *fear of legal consequences, economic motives and political motives* are drawn from electoral authoritarianism.

4.1. Fear of Legal Consequences

Schedler argues, the incumbents manipulates the electoral process to steal elections in order to retain power due to *fear of legal consequences*. The abuse of office, especially due to corruption and acquiring illegal wealth and violent repression of political opponents while in power.

This section examines Nigerian former President, Olusegun Obasanjo's motives for manipulating the electoral process to retain power.

The elections of 1999 that ushered the present democratically elected government in Nigeria were marred by intimidations and fraud (Diamond, 2002:21; Joseph and Kew, 2008:167). Post-elections violence that followed claimed many lives, public and private properties damaged (HRW, 2010). Similar situation repeated in 2003 and worse in 2007 (Ploch, 2012); and there were allegations of political assassinations during the same period (Nte, 2011; Obi, 2008). The president of Nigeria during the period, Olusegun Obasanjo was accused of massive fraud in connection with the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) (Nte, 2011:1004). He was also accused of assassinations and profiting from privatization (Nte, 2011), and at a point, association of legal practitioners in Nigeria known as Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) protested for his alleged selling of the country's refineries to his allies (Joseph and Kew, 2008:170-1). Obasanjo was alleged to have authorized Nigerian armed forces privately to invade a community in the Niger Delta, Odi and another community in Benue state, Zaki Biam because the youths in these communities fought and killed two soldiers on duty in their areas. The soldiers in a revenge mission set the village of Odi ablaze and killed 400 people in Zaki Biam (Elaigwu, 2007:11-12). Anambra State Governor, Dr Christ Ngige without any instruction from the constitutional court, without a decision from the parliaments, without any legal authorization whatsoever and without any offense but because he failed to pay a prescribed sum to his godfather, Christ Ubah⁴ he was kidnapped by the order of the state commissioner of police who were supposed to protect him. When Obasanjo was implicated in the case, he was alleged to have quietly arranged impeachment of the Governor formerly (Kendhammer, 2010:62).

In 2006, Obasanjo was alleged to have distributed so much money to members of parliaments to support his odious plan to amend Nigerian constitution to allow him run for the third term (Nte, 2011:1003; Omotola, 2008:55). Vice, President Atiku Abubakar support for those that opposed Obasanjo's attempt for third term bid for presidency severed their relationship. Obasanjo pushed for his resignation and remained without a vice president for several months before his tenure finally elapsed in 2007⁵. Obasanjo hatred for Atiku Abubakar due to the role he played that stopped his third term attempt prevented the former vice president from winning the internal party (primary) elections as the next presidential candidate for PDP (Joseph and Kew, 2008:170). Obasanjo manipulated the primary elections and extended it to the general elections.

Hence, when his attempt to amend Nigerian constitution failed, he chose a Muslim from northern Nigeria of Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, different from his to be the presidential candidate. Obasanjo is a Christian from south-west, Yoruba ethnic group. His choice was not based on religion or ethnicity but someone he could trust that will not investigate his activities while in the office. Therefore, he personally handpicked two former state Governors, Umaru Yar'Adua and his deputy Goodluck Eberes Jonathan to be the PDP candidates in the 2007 elections and influenced their fraudulent victory which was widely reported (HRW, 2007; Joseph and Kew, 2008; Rotberg 2007; Obi, 2008). Ploch (2012:3) asserts, PDP won with over 70% of the total number of votes cast during the presidential elections of 2007. Besides, PDP won in 29 out of 36 state governorship elections and controlled the majority of the seats in parliaments. Two largest opposition parties ANPP and CAN rejected the results.

According to the U.S.-based National Democratic Institute (NDI) delegation, “in many places, and in a number of ways, the electoral process failed the Nigerian people. The cumulative effect ...substantially compromised the integrity of the electoral process (Ploch, 2012: 3).

Obasanjo was afraid of legal consequences if he should lose power due to the above allegations against him. The elected President Umaru Yar'adua died in October 2010 after two years in office. The Vice- President Godluck Jonathan stepped into his position and 2011 election gave Jonathan another victory that made him to retain the seat as fourteenth president of Nigeria. By transferring power to Yar'adua and now Jonathan, Obasanjo successfully established a kind of ruling continuity due to fear of legal consequences. Nigerian constitution contains an immunity clause that prevents president, vice president, governor and vice governor from facing corruption charges while in office (Ploch, 2012:12). Though, Obasanjo is no longer in the office to be entitled to such immunity but he uses *tutelary powers* to control Jonathan. According to Schedler (2006), former leaders or influential individuals in electoral authoritarian regimes use tutelary power to influence the behaviour of the person that they put in the office. True, Jonathan's administration recently appointed consultancy firms to audit the financial transaction of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC)², the firms discovered massive fraud that has taken place in NNPC within a limited period, 2007 to 2009 when the dead President, Umaru Yaradua was in office but the investigation did not

² Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), the company that collect subsidies for Petrol Motor Spirit (PMS) and gives allocations for export of petroleum products, license foreign companies for extraction of Nigerian oil and the source of government oil revenue. In the past NNPC has been criticized for lack of transparency and the main focal point for corruption (Ploch, 2012:9).

extend to the period that the former President Obasanjo was in power from 1999 to 2007 despite being accused of fraud that linked to NNPC during his tenure.

Obasanjo's regime carried out extensive economic reforms and privatized most of the state owned enterprises through which he extended patronage to private sector and as such, silent various groups both the oppositions and media critics. According to Levitsky and Way (2002), media, TV, Radio and Newspaper organizations operate freely and play a critical role as a watchdog by investigating and exposing government activities in electoral competitive regimes. In Nigeria, media houses and CSOs do make noise about corruption and electoral fraud that cannot be hiding but most of the media houses and CSOs are entrenched in a patron - client relationship (Joseph and Kew 2008:170). With exception, the controversy surrounding Obasanjo's attempt to amend constitution which was widely reported but that is because it was too open. Even PDP parliamentarians prevented him not because it was against the Nigerian constitution but it will block the ambition of others in PDP from becoming president (Kendhammer, 2010). The liberal economic reforms which Obasanjo embraced made him assume that he had the solutions for Nigeria economic success and political stability and no one can do it better without him. He claimed to have a plan to create a corporate sector that could compete internationally with fast-growing economies such as Brazil's and Indonesia (Joseph and Kew (2008:168). The incentive provided by privatization attracted those that have a godfather connection to be involved in politics, the only means to share from the state resources.

4.2. Economic Motives

According to Schedler (2006:120), economic motives suggest that fear of losing economic benefits makes a leader in electoral authoritarian regime to steal elections. This section examines not just a leader's economic motivation for fraudulent elections but the entire regime.

In line with Schedler's assumption, some authors suggest that African politicians seek political offices because of resources available for distribution (Ake, 2003; Barakan, 2000; Obi, 2011). Nigeria has oil and gas which account for over 80% government revenues (Kraxberger, 2004; Ploch, 2012). According to Omotola (2008: 497), Joint report by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF) in 2003 titled

“Towards a sustainable debt strategy” stated that between 1973 to 2000, revenues from oil sales alone amounted to \$300billion. Currently, Nigerian government annual revenues from oil and natural gas is estimated to be over \$60 billion (Ploch, 2012). Therefore, Nigerian politicians compete to fill political offices in all the three levels of the governments, federal, states and local governments to share of the oil revenues but also to enhance one’s own status. Political post gives one a voice and freedom from poverty and opportunity to distribute state resources to family and friends (Barakan, 2010). In Nigeria, four hundred and sixty-nine parliamentary seats are available at the federal level, thirty-six state governors, and seven hundred and forty-four local governments that are filled with elected chairmen and extensive number of legislatures in the state house of assemblies (Rotberg 2007:Vii). Apart from elective posts, non-elective posts are extensive and attractive, the source of employment for many. It includes but not limited to 42 ministerial positions at the federal level⁶, several commissioners at the state level and other appointments to government administrative offices. Direct federal allocation goes to the elective posts such as governors and local government chairmen as well as to the ministers and other administrative units.

To be selected during primary elections to contest for general elections, it involves huge financial contributions from those seeking for political offices and the process is always manipulative like the general elections (Ploch, 2012:4). Besides, successful candidates always come through godfathers’ recommendation. Rotberg (2007:8) notes, it cost about \$10 million dollars to contest for the office of Governor of a state and about \$100 million for a presidential race. Joseph (2003:163) captured the political life in Nigeria, “...life in Nigeria is a rigged life... unless you are a multimillionaire you cannot win the local council elections in this country.” And once elected, the leader is in control of important appointments, approval of contract tenders and even employment within his or her political authority. Those not in the office uses *tutelary powers* to influence the appointment to various posts and employment positions to preserve their economic interests. The power is highly centralized at every level in Nigeria (Ake, 2003: 164).

Hence, important positions such as police and army chiefs and judges, chairman of INEC, Chairman of NNPC, Federal Ministers and a host of others are appointed by the incumbent president and parliament put their rubber stamp. Levitsky and Way (2002:56) argues that if the opposition has a majority in parliament, legislative arena becomes a battleground to influence decision making but if not, a rubber stamp to approve the decision of the ruling

party. PDP has the majority in both the senate and the house of representatives and as such, the presidential nominees have both houses approvals without a huddle. The loss of seats in both houses would mean candidates for political posts will be subject to opposition's endorsement. For the past twelve years they rotate political appointments and elites wait for their turn to get into the office to acquire their own wealth. Rotberg (2007:8) asserts, in 2006, most of the governors were assumed to be corrupt and their opponents envied them for their "allegedly ill-gotten wealth". Four PDP governors whose corruption were popular were later impeached for embezzlements. Metropolitan police arrested two in London for money laundering overseas (Ibid). Survey report in table 4.0 indicated that most members of parliament are corrupt.

Statistics: Corruption Members of Parliament (MP)

N Valid 2230
 Missing 94
 Mode 3,

Table 4.0

To what extent are members of parliament involved in corruption?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	89	3,8	4,1	4,1
	Most of them	1710	73,6	78,8	82,9
	All of them	372	16,0	17,1	100,0
	Total	2171	93,4	100,0	
Missing	System	153	6,6		
Total		2324	100,0		

Sources: Afrobarometer Survey data 2008; Author's compilation

In table 4.0, 16% believe that all the members of parliament are corrupt and 3.8% think that everyone is not corrupt while approximately 74% believe that most MP are corrupt. In addition to the survey, Corruption Perception Index (CPI), 2011⁷ Nigeria scored as usual 2.4 out of 10 in the cumulative average, which shows that Nigeria is among the worst corrupt nation in the world. The paper presented by one Nigerian delegate, Mijah Ethan at the International Conference in Bonn, Germany in 2007 reads,

...criminals have taken over the financial institutions, have control over the police and judiciary and are now in the process of taking over the legislative chambers. Given the fact that it is the legislature that has the power of impeachment, it does not take a leap of the imagination to conceive of a time when criminals will be in control of the executive. Then the lunatics would really have taken over the running of the asylum (Akinyemi cited in Mijah, 2007:7).

Mijah in the above citation captured the depressing situation in Nigeria in a figurative sense. Economy and security is already in the hands of a few and now the legislators who are the representatives of the people are corrupt, there is no safety. Though we cannot say exactly the type of corruption among parliamentarians but with the inception of democracy, parliamentarians and others take the opportunity presented by economic reforms that favours privatization to turn capitalists overnight purchasing state owned enterprise even though many have never managed glossary store successfully but rather a way to grab assets of the state and belong to those who owns the country. The type of privatization that exists in Nigeria is what Schedler (2006:117) refers to as *crony capitalism*. Few Nigerians with access to power are the one that oversees the sale of public enterprises and run the economy.⁸ They devalue state corporations and acquire it through diverse agents for personal enrichment (Elaigwu, 2007:15). They operate in an organized manner analogous to Mafia while at the same time the cost of public services which they were meant to provide like clean water, sanitation, health care, electricity and education have gone beyond the reach of the ordinary Nigerians. Absolute numbers of Nigerians 65% of 158million now live below the poverty line \$1.25 per day (Alkire and Santos, 2010). The regime in power since 1999 has no workable solution for poverty. Yet, the populace cannot remove the regime with their votes. But the majority are dissatisfied with the practice of democracy in Nigeria as shown in figure 4.1.

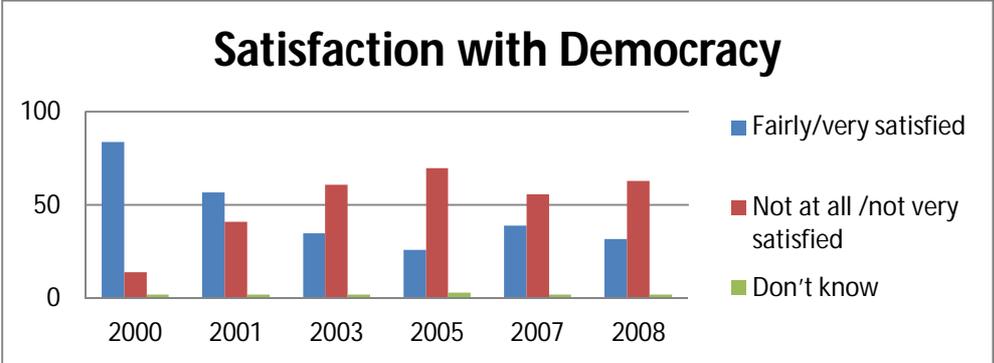


Figure 4.1 Satisfaction with democracy

Figure 4.1 shows that a survey conducted in 2000 immediately after the first election in 1999 that removed Military from power and brought in the present democratically elected government in Nigeria, 84% in a sample survey overwhelming answered 'fairly/very satisfied' with democracy. But one year after, the approval rate began to drop and the dropping rate was exponential. In 2001, 61%; 2003, 57% and by 2005, it has reached 26%. A gap of 58% within 5 years is visible; the gap is particularly depressing when compared with 14% in 2000 that answered 'not at all/not very satisfied' with democracy increased exponentially to 70% in 2005. And 56% in survey of 2007 with further increase to 63% in 2008.

From the above, we can see that decreasing support for democracy points to various directions, quality of elections, human rights abuse and rising unemployment and poverty. For example, Human Development Index (HDI) shows that sub-Saharan Africa has a score of 0,389 in 2010 next to Asia with 0,516 while Latin American and Caribbean are coming closer to OECD with a score of 0,704 in 2010 while OECD is 0,879 and South Asia 0,516 coming closer to East Asia and the Pacific 0,643 (see appendix B). The point is that while each region's score increases by a ratio of 0, 1 sub-Saharan Africa remains constant with minor increases. This reflects lack of improvement or even a decline in standard of living even though democracy and human rights are being promoted throughout the continent. World Bank country profiles show that sub-Saharan Africa lag behind with low GDP per capita, poverty rate above 50% of the total populations, life expectancy below 50 years, low literacy rate in most countries, high infant mortality and low school enrollment.⁹ Nigeria is depicted in this profile because Nigeria belongs to sub-Saharan Africa. According to Pogge, the situation in sub-Saharan Africa is "severe poverty, with all its attendant evils of low life expectancy, ill health, illiteracy, dependency and effective enslavement." (Pogge, 2005:1).

Among the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria has human and material resources that could improve the standard of living of many. For instance, Nigeria is the 12th largest world producer of crude oil and the 8th largest exporter and has the 10th largest proven reserves of oil and gas in the world (Euromoney, 2008). In 2006, Nigeria received praise as one of the first African countries to have completely offset her \$30 billion dollar debt owed to Paris Club (Ibid). Meanwhile, electricity remains epileptic, no railroad, motorways not in good condition, lack clean water and sanitation, massive unemployment and the country has no functioning refinery but has to import gasoline needed for her economy (Joseph and Kew 2008:168).

Contrary to the promise of privatization, it has not led to efficient services but poverty and massive unemployment leading to many youths taking dangerous profession such as kidnapping, robbery, drug smuggling, human trafficking, and advance fee fraud and petrol smuggling just to make a living. Nevertheless, an audit report by the KPMG International Cooperative (KPMG)", a Swiss company in conjunction with "S.S. Afemikhe & Co ("SSA"), a Nigerian company that audited NNPC financial transactions from 2007 to 2009 disclosed large scale fraud that has taken place in the corporation within the period covered.

The audit report shows that between September and October 2009, NNPC collected N14.9billion but paid to Federation account N4.2billion while N10.2billion missing. The report reads, "Exchange rate variances for 2007, 2008 and 2009 were estimated at N25.7 bn, N33.8 bn and N26.7" (FMF, 2010). Which means, sales for the previous years covered by the audit report, 2007, 2008 and 2009 with a total of N86.2 billion has also gone missing. It's interesting to note, exchange rate, Naira to the dollar at the time was between N117 and N150 to a dollar (Central Bank of Nigeria)¹⁰ Despite the report, none of the NNPC employees, not even the Chief executives of the corporation were called for questioning as regard the missing money from the corporation's account or to answer for the double dealings in foreign exchange transactions. No prosecution, which shows present government's involvement in the fraudulent practices that goes on in the NNPC but also a reflection of the avenues and patterns through which fund that should be used for development purposes are being siphoned to keep PDP in power while the masses suffer.

In a similar manner, past military leaders stole billions and retain power for a long period manipulating transition process due to their economic motives (Schedler, 2006: 120). For example, Easterly, William (2002) in his book titled "The Elusive Quest for Growth" asserts, \$12billion disappeared from the Nigerian oil revenue account during the regime of the military head of state Gen. Babangida (1985-1993)³. Another military head of state after him, General Abacha manipulated transition process from 1993-1997 (Diamond, 2002:27) but concealed his own loot above \$3.5 billion until his sudden death (Ploch, 2012:12). The billions of dollars that Abacha siphoned were transferred through banks in London to other European banks (Pallister, Wilson and Harriman, 2007:466). Apparently, the stolen dollars

³ Babangida was the president that annulled the presidential elections of 12 June, 1993 when the earlier resulted showed that his preferred candidate was losing the election (Ake, 2003:105).

were laundered through diverse agents, public and private but it was not immediately visible until after his death due to his influence and because those involved benefited from it.

In a similar manner, present regime uses state revenues that accrue from oil to buy the favour of public and private agents which enables them to cover up and retain power. It's a problem of neopatrimonial practice that is so pervasive in Nigeria. The leaders selectively and manipulatively grants economic favour and political security to selected groups, families and friends in order to buy acquiescence that enables the regime retain power (Jordaan, 2010:237-240). NNPC allocates licenses to export Nigerian oil based on the government directives, employment in NNPC and tenders for contract in NNPC are based strictly on the recommendation of those in power. And as such, nobody was held responsible for the discrepancies and fraud covered by the audit report because the missing billions may have been channelled to service patronage necessary for PDP to win future elections.

4.3. Political Motives

According to Schedler (2006:121), political motives suggest that incumbent in electoral authoritarian regime is afraid to lose his influence, distribution of patronage and power to control economic and legal resources and as such will steal elections to remain in power. Schedler (Ibid:36) argues, electoral authoritarian regime extends invitations to foreign electoral monitors in order to satisfy internal and external actors to claim legitimacy (Ibid: 36).

Since the Nigerian transition to democracy in 1999, in every general election, the PDP government extends invitations always to local and international election observers to come and monitor Nigerian elections (Obi, 2010). Observers are always of the view that the elections were fraudulent but in the recently concluded elections in April 2011, they said, it falls short of being free and fair but not like previous ones. In the language of the report to US Congress, Ploch asserts,

Nigeria's most recent elections, held in April 2011, were viewed by many as a critical test of the government's commitment to democracy. The State Department had deemed the previous elections to be deeply flawed, and some observers contended that Nigeria had not held a free and fair general election since the return to civilian rule in 1999.

The report suggests that the quality of elections in 2011 was an improvement in the conduct of elections since the Nigerian transition to democracy and an indication of commitment to democracy. Nevertheless, the presidential election invoked the anger of opposition supporters for allegedly stolen elections as usual. Post-elections violence in 2011 would contradict the view of the electoral monitors. According to Human Rights Watch,

The violence began with widespread protests by supporters of the main opposition candidate, Muhammadu Buhari [...], following the re-election of incumbent Goodluck Jonathan [...] who was the candidate for the ruling People's Democratic Party. The protests degenerated into violent riots or sectarian killings in the northern states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto, Yobe, and Zamfara. Relief officials estimate that more than 65,000 people have been displaced. [...] (HRW, 17 May 2011)¹¹

Post-election violence after April 2011 elections highlighted previous grievance for stolen elections and PDP is aware. INEC report on security readiness for a single state gubernatorial election, "We have deployed 22,600 regular policemen in addition to bomb experts and more than 2,800 riot police. Delta state police spokesman Charles Muka told AFP. It is the largest contingent ever deployed for a state election."¹²

There are 120, 000 polling stations spread across the 36 states and FCT in 2011 elections (Ploch, 2012:5). Despite the deployment of large forces, it does not prevent fraud or post-election violence. The ruling party has become more sophisticated in their manipulations, not the common and notorious way of rigging elections such as changing voters' lists with potential voters' names missing, ballot box stuffing, and intimidation of voters with political thugs and falsification of results (Agba, Coker and Ogaboh, 2010:193-5) which observers could see and report. Schedler (2002) argues, violence or the threat of it can keep voters away from exercising a free choice. For safety, many voters would prefer to avoid the scene of high police presence. Levitsky and Way (2002) argue that in a competitive electoral authoritarian regime, *electoral arena* is competitive because there are fewer restrictions for the opposition and the party in government could be defeated.

INEC listed on their website 56 registered political parties in Nigeria as at 2011 and that actually contested in various elections. But among those, only nine parties seem to be visible; which means each has at least one representative in parliaments either in the Senate or House of Representatives. They included ACCORD, ACN, ANPP, APGA, CPC, DPP, LP, PDP and PPN. The ruling party, PDP has an overwhelming majority in parliaments both in the Senate and House of representatives. Total number of seats declared after general elections in April,

2011 showed 64 seats for senatorial elections and House of Representatives 225. The ruling party, PDP had 64 senate seats or 70% of the total and in House of Representatives, 135 of 225 seats or 60%. The closest is ACN with 8 seats or 12% of Senate and House 27 seats or 12%; ANPP had 4 seats or 6% of Senate and House 21 seats or 9% ; CPC , 4 seats or 6% of Senate and House 20 seats or 8.9%; DPP had 1 seat for Senate and 1 in the House. Others have a few seats for House but none for Senate, APGA- 1, ACCORD- 2 and LP -8. This result is similar to the report of previous studies. In 2003, out of 109 Senate seats, PDP held 73 seats or 67% and House, 221 seats out of 360 or 61%. The second and third closest parties were All Nigeria Party (ANP now ANPP) with 28 or 26% for the Senate and House seats 94 or 26% while Alliance for Democracy (AD now ACN), 6 seats or 6% for Senate and 34 seats or 9% of the House (Rotberg, 2007:8). PDP also won 23 out of 36 state governorship elections and control almost 70% of local governments.¹³

Levitsky and Way (2002:55) argue that political systems descend into electoral authoritarianism when violations of the minimum criteria for democracy are so serious that they create “an uneven playing field between government and opposition” especially when the incumbent makes use of state resources to facilitate its victory. True, PDP has many advantages such as easier access to the media and raising money from business in which the party has granted licenses, and using government transport and staff for their campaign, developed party structure, geographically broad and deep unlike the opposition whose organizational strength concentrates in few strongholds. PDP distributes government jobs, appointments, and contract awards not only to their members but also leaders of weak opposition parties who form those parties to seek-patronage just to weaken the major opposition parties. Therefore, among the 56 registered parties, some are sponsored by the ruling party and a way to divide votes even in the opposition stronghold.

Besides, there is a perception that if a community did not vote the winning party, the party will neglect the community in terms of providing basic amenities such as local schools, health clinics, roads and water supplies during its tenure of office (Kraxberger, 2004). True or false, there is no empirical support but a myth created by PDP supporters to attract voters. But since the result of each polling station is announced openly by INEC, there is always fear that incumbent regime will win as always and as such, some communities might vote the winning party to avoid the regime’s neglect of their area. Vote buying is also built into a complex traditional believe such as giving gifts and nepotism or what Nigerian party slogan referred to as “I chop you chop” (Barkan, 2000:227). Traditional rulers receive patronage from the ruling party in the form of official cars, nomination of candidates for political appointment and

personal police bodyguards and in return to render their support whenever it becomes necessary. Ploch (2012:9) reports, an Islamic scholar was appointed to lead a team to conduct official government commission of inquiry into the cause of post-election violence in 2011. PDP used the Islamic cleric because the followers would easily be convinced and believe the outcome of the report but through this way, the religious leaders rendered support to PDP for the patronage they received.

Thus, PDP has the upper hand because of the power of incumbency and besides, those who benefits from the regime patronage for the past twelve years like Police and Army Chiefs, traditional Chiefs and Emirs, religious leaders, Pastors and Imams will mobilize support for the ruling party which contributed to PDP's victory in the April 2011 presidential elections. Local and international electoral monitors cannot easily observe subtle manipulations but PDP need legitimacy. The attack on political leaders, state infrastructures, traditional leaders and churches¹⁴ by "Boko-Haram"⁴ since 2000 till date reminds us about the motives of their attacks; the group is against the status quo (Ploch, 2012:14). Twenty-nine years of military rule survived by disbursement of resources to those that matters both as a public agents and private individuals to maintain patronage that preserved the status quo.

The heads of state dispensed favors, appointments, contracts, and other state resources to establish significant webs of dependent clients dispersed throughout the country. The ultimate aim of this broad strategy was to use state resources to cultivate regime supporters, creating an elite class heavily dependent on the continuation of the regime and the particular military head of state (Kraxberger 2004:85 based on Chazan et al., 1999; Bayart, 1993).

PDP like the military that the party replaced is using extensive patronage to retain power in every election. Skewed privatizations and government contracts in favour of a few are tools to prevent free and fair elections. The regime is not comfortable to see a new generation of Nigerians take power due to fear of legal consequences and loss of economic fortune and public influence. For example, all the allegations of corruption and abuse of office levied against the military and Obasanjo's regime have not been officially reported for investigation to commence. And so long as the same party with military background remained in power there will be no case against the former rulers. For this reason, all manner of patronage is employed to block opposition from winning future elections. But even if the opposition

⁴ "Boko-Haram" means, *Western Education is sin*.⁴ The group is of the view that western education and culture have corrupting influence and demand that Nigerian secular constitution be abolished in the northern Nigeria where they are based and replaced with Sharia-Islamic legal code (Adesoji, 2010; Ploch, 2012:14). The group is also against both the traditional and religious leaders, army and the police and those educated Nigerians, especially the politicians from the northern Nigeria, Muslims.

defeats the incumbent, unfree elections will continue because all the political parties in Nigeria are controlled by Generals and wealthy Nigerians that are more interested for their personal benefits and to preserve the status quo. Opposition is bitter over loss of economic fortune which the government in power is enjoying.

5.0. Discussion

This section discusses the usefulness of electoral authoritarianism in understanding the case of Nigeria unfair electoral competition.

The concept of electoral authoritarianism situates third and fourth wave democracies on the middle ground; they are neither fully flagged authoritarian nor democracy. However, classification of authoritarian regimes would place the case of Nigeria in the middle between the electoral authoritarian regime and competitive authoritarian regime but it lies heavily on former than on the later. And as such, selected criteria from the electoral authoritarian regime's perspective by Schedler such as *fear of legal consequences, economic motives and political motives* provide a useful framework of analysis to understand the case of Nigerian unfree elections.

For instance, the level of corruption and abuse of office by the former head of State, Obasanjo made him to be afraid of legal consequences. Parliamentarians are motivated by economic interest as well as PDP providing opportunity for a few to secure their source of income. And as such, twelve years of PDP in power guaranteed government contracts and appointments for a few which are the pillars for the party's victory in every election despite absolute poverty and high level of unemployment. Political motives illuminate the extent of PDP's patronage to various agents, public and private to achieve continuous victory.

In Nigeria election is competitive and private media and CSOs exist as in competitive authoritarian regime even though patronage prevents criticisms. Their actions must have contributed to lack of action to address issues of unemployment and absolute poverty.

5.1. Conclusion

To conclude, this section provides a summary answer to the central research question.

What are the hindrances to free and fair elections in Nigeria?

Though the transition to democracy in 1999 was successful but it did not change the class structure. To prevent power shift that could threaten economic and political interest and result in legal consequences for former military top ranks and wealthy Nigerians, they use position of influence and patronage to manipulate the electoral process for a single party, PDP to retain power. It appears that subtle manipulation of electoral process instead of direct repression is the major hindrance to free and fair elections in Nigeria. INEC mobilizes police to prevent electoral fraud at electoral arenas but the presence of too many police may intimidate and scare away voters especially when there are no benefits from previous elections. Various parties are registered and they participate in every election to seek patronage and assist PDP to maintain their winning. Besides, PDP co-opts influential traditional leaders, religious leaders and others who benefit from the spoils and their support continue to provide victories for the ruling party.

But continuous victory of PDP remains problematic, political violence, deep-rooted corruption, increase unemployment and absolute poverty. If the missing billions are well utilized, it could be used to provide infrastructures, improve the existing ones, introduce employment programs to address poverty and the rising unemployment in order to improve living standard of most Nigerians. And the youth that engages in kidnapping, robbery, drug and petrol smuggling would have found better jobs to do and avoid being used as an instrument to achieve fraudulent election victories.

Nigeria stability will depend on free and fair elections but where politics are reserved for ex-military Generals and multimillionaires, elections will be compromised, and victory achieved by intimidation and fraud cannot improve the living condition of the masses. The Nigerian government should avoid money politics and provide equal opportunity for all parties to win elections through the transparent electoral process. Political elites should bear in mind that to avoid electoral violence is a conscious choice of the leaders to make in order to prevent another military coup. Whether democracy will endure and reach the stage of consolidation in Nigeria only time will tell. We just have to wait and see.

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Appendix

Round4 Afrobarometer Survey Questions conducted in Nigeria 2008.

1. To what extent are members of parliament involved in corruption? (Code: Q50B).
2. Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Nigeria?

Variables: Satisfaction with democracy	2000 %	2001 %	2003 %	2005 %	2007 %	2008 %
‘A’ Not at all /not very satisfied	14	41	61	70	56	63
‘B’ Fairly/Very satisfied	84	57	35	26	39	32
Don’t know	2	2	4	4	5	5
Total number of respondents	3603	2210	2428	2363	2410	2408

Sources: Afrobarometer Survey data 2000 to 2008; Author’s compilation

Appendix B

Human Development Index

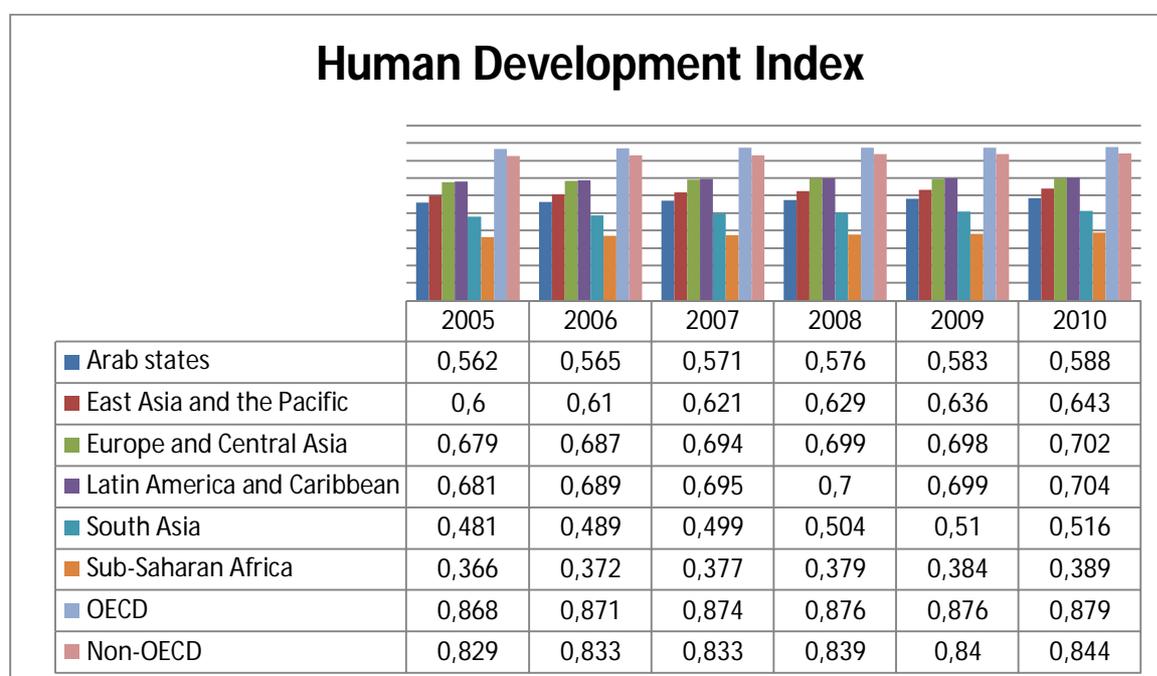


Figure 1 Human Development Index (HDI)

Source: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/>

0.8 to 1 signify very high score on the Human Development Index (HDI).

Author’s compilation

Notes

¹ The country summary on Nigeria in 2009 from Human Rights Watch World Report of 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/87680>

²http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704302704576252871485282258.html?mod=WSJ_World_LEFTSecondNews retrieved, April 10, 2011

³ Human Right Watch, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/05/16/nigeria-post-election-violence-killed-800>; retrieved, May 10, 2011

⁴ Christ Ubah, godfather to Governor Christ Ngege confessed to Nigerian audience in United States how he purchased victory for Chris Negege during 2003 gubernatorial election. This is what he said,

We, the PDP, did not win the election (of 2003). I have gone to church to confess. The election had no document. I called the result before 12 midnight. I gave INEC the money and asked them to call the result." The revelation caused an uproar as well as some applause in the hall. "The person we took his thing is here," Uba said, pointing at Peter Obi (the APGA candidate) who was sitting among the audience, in the back row. There was a thunderous applause as people looked at Peter Obi and some began to call him 'governor.' (<http://www.usafricaonline.com/anambrapolitics.html>) retrieved 22 May 2012 .

⁵ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5068076.stm>; retrieved 10 March 2012

⁶ <http://nigeriansabroadlive.com/list-of-nigerias-executive-ministers-and-their-portfolios/> retrieved, 11 June 2012

⁷ <http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2011/results/> retrieved, 22 May 2012

⁸ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6184156.stm>; retrieved 10 March 2012

⁹ (<http://data.worldbank.org/country> ; retrieved 10 March 2012

¹⁰ <http://www.cenbank.org/rates/exrate.asp?year=2009>; retrieved 23 May 2004

¹¹ <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/05/16/nigeria-post-election-violence-killed-800>; retrieved, 05 June 2012

¹² <http://www.inecnigeria.org/security-tight-as-nigerians-vote-in-key-poll/> retrieved, 09 June 2012

¹³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigerian_state_governors_2011%E2%80%932015_term; retrieved, 12 June 2012

¹⁴http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203479104577119852331155084.html?mod=WSJEurope_hp LEFTTopStories; retrieved 20 April 2012