

Intra-Party Conflict And Prospects Of Democratic Consolidation In Nigeria

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abstract: Democracy appears to be the basis of modern day political development in the world over. Political party and concomitant election is the tool necessary for the achievement of the sought-after and admirable political arrangement (democracy). The study in all ramifications observed among others that in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, the state of democracy has not really yielded the expected result. Therefore, the focus of this study is on the intra-party conflict and the democratic consolidation in Nigeria. We adopted observation method of data collection which enhanced our usage of secondary data. Descriptive qualitative method was utilised for the analysis of generated data. Theoretically, the study adopted system analysis as the fulcrum around which it oscillated which emphasized among other postulations that the political arrangement of the society is systemic in nature through inputs and outputs loops. However, the study resolved that the non-democratic nature engendered by intra-party conflict in Nigeria contributed a lot on the challenges of democratic consolidation in country. As a result, we suggested among others that the Nigerian political parties should go back to the drawing board and understand their socialisation role. With this, they can instill in the minds of the members the general democratic credos which they will exhibit if eventually enthroned to power. By implication, this will go a long way in consolidating democracy in the country.

Keywords: Democratic Consolidation, Election, Intra-Party Politics, Political Parties, and System Analysis

I. Introduction

Man as intoned by Socrates is a social animal. This implies that the gregarious nature of man abhors in all ramifications the idea of isolated life. Therefore, man has to live in politically organised enclave that is guided by laws. This is imperative because of the insatiability and seemingly selfish nature of man. To begin with, when we observe the life of men around us, we cannot fail to be struck by two facts: as a rule, every man desires to have his own way, to think and acts as he likes; and at the same time, everyone cannot have his own way, because he lives in society, where one man's desires conflict with those of another. The relations of the individual members of society with one another, therefore, need regulation by government (Appadorai, 2004:3). Drawing from the above exposition relating to the necessity and the essence of rules and regulations guiding our public life, government is formed. This government consists of a body of persons that make decisions. Ideally, the decisions ought to be in the interest of the general populace. Essentially, what constitutes the body, the procedures and processes by which the laws are formulated agitated the minds of the political philosophers, whether by the assemblies of the elders (gerontocracy), the committee of the wealthy (plutocracy), the nobles (aristocracy), the experts (technocracy), and the general populace (democracy). This last form of political arrangement appears to be the best form of government (Okonkwo, 2015).

Etymologically, the word democracy is derived from two Greek words "demos" which means "people" and "cracy" which means "rule" or "government", literally "meaning rule by the people" however, all the attempts by extant authorities in defining the term emphasise the centrality of people (the majority) in the governance of the state (Obi & Oddih, 2006;36). Heater, (1964:134) suggested that democracy is not only a form of government but a way of life or an attitude of the mind. Hence he went further to aver that democracy is 'essentially a method of organising society politically'. It is a system of governance in which the rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives.

Unequivocally, democracy revolves around participation on the part of the electorate and accountability on the part of the leaders. Essentially, there are some rudimentary platforms that will enhance actual operation of democracy in a given state which political party is the most decisive. For Nnoli (2003), political party is a group of people who share a common conception of how and why state power should be organised and used. He further emphasised the significance of this definition in three phases: 1) political parties are organised and differ from other organisations, 2) party activities relate to the interest of the people and finally, 3) political parties differ from other political groups because they do not only tend to influence government policy but also undertake or seek to undertake the responsibility for formulating and implementing

government policy. This is what separates political parties from all other such organisations as trade unions, professional associations and so on.

Essentially, intra-party conflict appears to thwart orderliness in any democratic setting, by serving as impediments to proper and objective nomination of candidates for party primaries. According to Scarrow (2000), democracy needs strong and sustainable political parties with the capacity to represent citizens and provide policy choices that demonstrate their ability to govern for the public good. With an increasing disconnect between citizens and their elected leaders, a decline in political activism, and a growing sophistication of anti-democratic forces, democratic political parties are continually challenged. In Nigeria for example, democratic process no doubt has been bedevilled by poor party politics as a result of not only ethnicisation of party politics, poor political leadership, excessive westernisation of the concept 'democracy', party indiscipline, lack of clear cut party ideologies, the politicisation of the higher echelon of the military profession among others but also and more worryingly, lack of internal party democracy (Ntalaja 2000).

Similarly, Azazi (2012) has identified the zoning arrangement in the Peoples' Democratic Party, (which is the ruling party in Nigeria since the return to democracy in May, 1999) as one of the reasons for the rising level of insecurity in the entire country (The Punch April 28, 2012). One can therefore posit that the desperation for political power in the country is because —power seekers in Nigeria see politics as an avenue for making money, a sort of open sesame to wealth to be in power is to control state resources that are often converted to personal use (Edoh, 2002). This probably implies that the acquisition of political power is not an end in itself, but only a means to an end and the ultimate end of course is economic power and the primitive accumulation of public wealth for personal use by the political elites.

Nevertheless, this study is geared towards interrogating the nexus between intra-party conflict and democratic consolidation in Nigeria. For the purpose of brevity, the study is structured as follows: Introduction, clarifications of the concepts of democratic consolidation and intra-party conflict, theoretical compass, evidence of intra-party crises in Nigeria, intra-party conflict in Nigeria and prospects of consolidation of democracy, conclusion and prognosis.

II. Conceptual Clarifications

2.1 Democratic Consolidation

To conceptualise the concept of democratic consolidation, Ogundiya & Baba maintained that the core ideas and ingredients defining democracy are participation and accountability; that the people determine who govern them, and that those who govern give account of their stewardship European through periodic election is one of the most important mechanisms for the realisation of the objectives of democratisation. It is also important to note that, elections are not only meant to ensure, confirm or re-affirm the legitimacy of the governors through a regular consent, but also to provide a fertile ground for democracy to thrive (Ogundiya & Baba, 2007).

Essentially, democracy in the view of Okolie (2006:172) denotes a way of life in a society in which each individual is believed to be entitled to an equality of concern as regards to chances of participating freely in the values of that society. In a more limited sense however, it is the opportunity of the members of the society to participate freely in the decisions, which affect their live individually and collectively. The process on the other hands entails theoretical and practical stages, conditions and movements towards realisation of the democratic governance. Democratisation can be understood as a process subdivided into three phases: (i) the liberalisation phase, when the previous authoritarian regime opens up or crumbles; (ii) a transition phase, often culminating when the first competitive elections are held; and (iii) the consolidation phase, when democratic practices are expected to become more firmly established and accepted by most relevant actors (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986; Linz and Stepan, 1996).

The concept can therefore be regarded as a governmental system that involves the widest spectrum of participation, either through elections or through the administration of the accepted policies. It is a government founded on the principle of rule of law which is against arbitrariness, highhandedness, dictatorship and also antithesis to military regime (Kwasau, 2013:183). The conceptualisations of democracy above by different authorities logically centre on participation and accountability. Therefore, consolidation of democracy on the other hand implies the maintenance, fortification and sustainability of the fundamental principles of democracy. In the same vein, Diamond (1999) sees democratic consolidation as the process of achieving broad and deep legitimation such that all significant political actors believe that popular rule is better for their society than any other realistic alternative they can imagine. It also connects the act of reducing the probability of the breakdown of the system to the point where democracy can be said that it will persist. However, the conceptualisation of democratic consolidation is in-exhaustive in the existing literature, therefore the paper suffice to migrate to the explication of intra-party conflict which is a vital phrase in the discourse.

2.1.1 Intra-Party Conflict

The phrase intra-party conflict is concept coined to embrace all the tussles and wrangling within a political party that are inimical to normal nomination and/or election of party flag bearers, as against inter-party politics which is political activity among different political parties. This ugly trend manifests in the form of opposition within a political party. As a corollary, (Okoli, 2001) avers that intra-party opposition is political opposition obtainable within a political party. It is an internally generated opposition whereby a dissident group of a ruling party constitutes itself into a splinter movement that stands opposed to the activities of the parent party. This is characterised by the emergence of parallel party structures and leadership, as well as partisan alignments and re-alignments among the party faithful around the attendant parallel party platforms.

To stress further, Okoli (2001:3) enumerated factors that are responsible for intra-party opposition as follows: Personality difference, clash of socio-economic interests, ideological incompatibility, etc, among politicians. Adding to the above is the contextual pathologies of (party) politics in Nigeria, among which are:

- (i) The Hobbesian character of politics where struggle for state power is seen as a 'do or die' affair; in this context, politics incidentally becomes a crude warfare.
- (ii) Internal characteristics of political parties, which are exemplified in organizational and operational defects, poor sense of party discipline and loyalty, lax party supremacy, and gross ideological deficits.
- (iii) Influence of money politics and personality cult, which gives rise to cabalism, godfatherism, and the likes.
- (iv) The incumbency factor, whereby the ambitions of the incumbent political executives (party leaders) contradict with those of some party elements in such a manner that precipitates gang-up and intra-party wrangling.

Still on the track of unveiling the propelling force behind the intra-party conflict in Nigeria, Mbah submitted thus:

The Petit-bourgeois found out that although they have acquired political power, they were not truly in control of the economy. However, they understood that political power offered opportunities for economic power and therefore the opportunities inherent in their political power were best and perhaps the only way they had to create economic base for themselves (Mbah 2011:9)

In another development, Shale & Matlosa (2008: 13) identifies the causes of intra-party conflict to be:

1. Favouritism – promoting one's kith and kin;
2. Unequal sharing of resources (leader's constituency gets a lion's share);
3. Lack of regular meetings; and
4. Centralized authority – power concentrated at the top.

Similarly, Rubin et al. (1994) reiterated that intra party conflict is triggered by factors such as:

- i. Favouritism – promoting one's kith and kin;
- ii. Unequal sharing of resources: (leader's constituency gets lion's share)
- iii. Centralize authority: Power concentrated at the top.

Nonetheless, the clarification of the concept of intra-party conflict and its attendant harbinger are devised to sharpen the focus of the study which is more or less to unravel the link between the intra-party conflict and the prospects of democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

III. Theoretical Compass

In this study, we adopt system analysis as the theoretical framework around which the study will revolve. The major propounded of the theory is David Easton who draws heavily from works done by Dawin in biology and it is developed by some other scholars. The proposition of the theory among other things is that living entities are complex and highly integrated. The heart, lungs, blood digestive track and brain perform their function in such a way as to keep the animal active. Take away one organ and the animal dies. Damage one organ and the other components of the system alter their functions to compensate and keep the animal active (Mbah, 2007:273).

More so, political system model views political arrangements through inputs and outputs analysis. The inputs into the system include money, support and demands. The outputs therefore, involve the public policies produced by the system. Also, there is a feedback loop response to policies which initiated new demands and so on (Easton, 1953). The environment involves the people and their diverse needs which may be ecological, biological, personality, social etc. while the political system includes the executive, legislature and judiciary. They are the elected ones to represent the people in the government. However, to ensure stability in the system, the people send in their needs to the political system after some analysis, the system brings out the reply as an

output. Then, if the feedback is favourable, the people will uphold their support but when the reverse is the case, the people will withdraw their support hence, the system will collapse.

By a way of application, political party is a part of the political system which has a decisive socialisation role in the society. This made it to be fertile training ground for impending politicians. Essentially, the democratic rudiments and ethos are supposedly inculcated in the minds of the politician in those political parties. Therefore, the proper working of the democracy should without reservation stem from and/or be observed in the intra-party activities which the politicians or better still the leaders will undoubtedly exhibit in their inter-party operations. Axiomatically, if the intra-party arrangement is undemocratic in nature, obviously the inter-party politics will correspondingly be characterised by the democratic deficiencies. This is so because once a part of the system is affected, automatically the remaining parts are inadvertently involved.

Nonetheless, the issue of democratic consolidation in the country should be faced squarely starting from the party level (intra-party). The political activity within a particular political party should be checked for democratic contrivance. By extension, the more the parties realise their socialisation role, the more they inculcate the democratic credos to their members. The more they mobilise democratic principles during party primaries and the more the challenges to democratic consolidation in Nigerian political system are resolved.

IV. Evidence Of Intra-Party Crises In Nigeria

Theoretically, this segment of the study shall bring to the fore an analysis of some intra-party conflicts in Nigeria. To begin with, during the first term in the presidency of the PDP which lasted only four years, the Party had more than three National Chairmen – Chief Solomon Lar, the pioneer chairman, Chief Bernabas Gemade and Chief Audu Ogbe. The states and local governments had their own due share of unusually high turnover. This trend was reproduced in other two major parties – the AD and APP. Through the second tenure – 2003-2007, there was even higher rate of turnover, as the souls of all the parties were virtually seated in the pockets of the political chief executives depending on the level of government in the Federal structure at which a party holds political sway – for the PDP it was at the Federal, State and local levels. For the AD, it was the six states of the South West – Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti and this only for one term of office 1999-2003; because from May 2003 the President who is also of South West extraction, had tricked all the Governors of the AD into a deceptive pact that turned out to be monumental political suicide. And so the AD almost fizzled out of the country's political landscape as the PDP swept five states leaving only Lagos, where the Governor, Bola Tinubu had displayed delectable smartness and never yielded his political constituency to President Obasanjo's political trap (Onyishi, 2012).

The crises in the leadership of so many chapters of almost all the parties had provided ready-made excuse for party members who are enamored of party flirtation in search of greener political pasture. Hence, the political lexicon of Nigeria soon became saturated with "defection", "decamping", "cross-carpeting" etc. Such cases have become legion and they apply to all the political parties. What is more, between 2007 and 2011 general elections not less sixty political parties mushroomed and about twenty-five appeared in the ballot papers of the 2001 General Elections. Right from the inception of the present Republic, Politicians have shown no qualms about moving in and out of political parties, depending on their perceptions of political advantage; the First Senate President in this dispensation, Senator Evans Enwerem, was originally the governorship candidate of the All People's Party (PPP) in Imo State (Mbah 2011:6).

But he lost his bid to bear the flag of his party for the subsequent general election. He decamped to the PDP before the general election; upon offer of senatorial ticket by the Party leadership. He did not only win election to the senate but was also rail-roaded by Chief Obasanjo's Presidency and the national leadership of PDP to the Senate Presidency. In Plateau State, Alhaji Alhassan Sbaibu, for a relatively frivolous reason, decamped from the All Peoples' Party (APP) and joined the PDP in 1999. As a compensation, the President appointed him member, Northern Nigeria Development Company (NNDC). In Cross River State, not less than severe prominent APP and AD members cross-carpeted to the PDP. Another striking decamping during the Obasanjo regime was that of his Vice-President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar. He was a foundation member of the party, having played active role in late Musa Yar'Aduah's PDM. He defected to the Action Congress which became the new name of Alliance for Democracy (AD) after an open pitched battle with his boss, the President: contested as the presidential candidate of the Action Congress in 2007 general elections, returned to the PDP in 2011 (Mbah 2011)

Furthermore, as if it was not enough for him, he ludicrously decamped again from the PDP; became a leading force in the formation of the New PDP and subsequently joined the emergent organisational colossus now known as the All Progressives Congress (APC). Without mincing words, intra-party conflict, real and contrived, resulted in a spate of defections also involving governors of different party affiliations: the Governor of Bauchi state up till 29th May 2015, Alhaji Isa Yuguda was a PDP member, failed to pick the party gubernatorial ticket in 2007, decamped to now All Nigerian People Party (ANPP), won the election under latter's platform and subsequently decamped back to his original party, the PDP. The former Governor of Imo

state as originally a member of PDP, decamped to Progressive People's Alliance (PPA), won election under its platform and almost immediately reverted to PDP; Governor Theodore Orji of Abia State followed the same pattern by changing party identity from PPA to PDP. The Governor of Ondo State, Dr. Olusegun Mimiko won his governorship election on the platform of the Labour Party (LP) but later decamped to the PDP. In the North, Aliyu Shinkafi of Zamfara State (ANPP) and SaminuTuraki of Jigawa State (ANPP) defected to the PDP (Mbah, 2011:7).

The Nigeria National Assembly is by no means spared of this gale of defections and cross carpeting, as a result of intra-party conflicts, as no fewer than thirteen Senators and thirty-five members of the House of Representatives had switched party between 1999 and 2013, when 'psunamic' rapture balkanised the so called Africa's largest party, the PDP. At the Mini-Convention that the PDP conducted in 2013, seven state governors – Kano, Kwara, Rivers, Sokoto, Adamawa, Niger and Jigawa– with their teaming supporters walked out of the venue, the Eagle Square in Abuja moved to the Yar'Adua Centre where they addressed a press conference and announced their intention to form a new party to be called the new PDP. After initial running battle with the parent body, and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the n-PDP decide to strike a deal for a merger with the now mega party – the All Progressives Congress (APC). The party eventually won the presidential election in March 2015 and a reasonable majority of state governorship seats. Ever since its inauguration at the centre the pattern of defection has reversed in its favour. Early August, 2015 a former state chairman of the PDP and leading members of the party in Bayelsa state decamped to the APC at the state party rally that was massively attended by both national regional and state officials of APC plus their teaming supporters/ followers. The decamped members reeled out a plethora of reasons for their action (Onyishi, 2012).

5. Intra-Party Conflict In Nigeria And Prospects Of Consolidation Of Democracy

Since Nigeria has assumed the status of independence, the political parties has been challenged by many conflicts of different dimensions. This as a matter of fact culminated in political instability in the country. As a result, this segment of the study is set to interrogate intra-party conflict and prospects of democratic consolidation in Nigeria. In doing this, the study identified the following reasons among others as the cause of the incessant intra-party conflict and way of ameliorating the hydra-headed cankerworm which has eaten deep into the annals of the political system. These problems involve the following:

5.1 Weak Institutional Structure Of Nigerian Political Parties

Where parties are weak and ineffective, politics is reduced to unbridled opportunism and the overt self-serving interest of individual politicians who may derail the nation-building process and the democratic project. Without strong political parties and political institutions that are accountable and effective, that can negotiate and articulate compromises to respond to conflicting demands, the door is effectively open to those populist leaders who will seek to bypass the institutions of government, especially a system of checks and balances, and the rule of law (Aleyomi, 2013).

This is what characterises the various institutions of governance in Nigeria and that is why those so called political godfathers could easily influence and thwart the democratic processes of the political parties. For instance, in all the political parties in Nigeria none could boast of having a clearly defined procedure for choosing their candidates during primary elections. That is why primary elections of political parties in Nigeria are always controversial and full of crises. Instances include the sudden emergence of late President Yar Adua's candidature as the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in 2007 presidential elections. He was single handedly imposed on the party by the then president Olusegun Obasanjo. This act caused other aspirants and other party faithful to move to other political parties. A notorious instance of what happened between Rotimi Amaechi and Celestine Omehia as well as the Ifeanyi Araraume examples in Rivers and Imo states respectively readily come to mind in this regard.

Another striking example was what happened in Anambra State chapter of the PDP where Professor Charles Soludo was imposed on the chapter as governorship candidate for the state by the National Executive of the party. The act triggered a spate of petition writing. The effect brought about factions in the party and last minute cross-carpeting of some PDP members to another parties. The imposition of Bamanga Tukura as the new PDP chairman is anti-core value of intra-party democracy. The imposition of Tukura was against the wish and consent of the people who had already voted Babayo ab initio as the representative from North East zone, where PDP had zoned it chairmanship seat to. Babayo won the zonal primaries but when it got to the PDP national convention his victory at the zonal level was put on the back burner and he was shortchanged (Aleyomi, 2013).

This various actions as stated above generated a lot of controversies in PDP which is in party as most of their party Faithfull's decamped to other political parties. Also it distracts the government from engaging in active policies that will enhance and improve the standard of living of its people but rather trying to resolve the crisis generated within the members and finding ways to dame the tempers of the aggrieved members. What happens is that the government will lose control of the confident it has on the people if at all Nigerian have ever

have confidence on their government for some years now. It must be noted since one political party has tended to dominate the political sphere of Nigeria since 1999; the citizens do not elect their government because they are handpicked.

5.1.1 Lack Of Political Ideology

It must be clearly stated that the most important vehicle of any political party in an ideal society should be its ideological position. In reality, however, this is seldom the case. Perhaps, due to the shallowness of democratic roots especially in Nigeria and the developing countries as a whole, other forces of identity particularly ethnicity and religion would appear to have taken the place of ideology. The rising influence of money politics represents another crucial limiting dimension (Nugent, 1999; Omotola, 2004).

Ideology is like a superstructure upon which every other thing is built on. It consolidates political party. It precedes party structure, organisation and manifesto. It is a set of ideas, beliefs and representations common to a specific social group. It consists of ethical interpretations and principles that set forth the purposes, organizations and boundaries of political life. One of the ways to assess the degree of internal democracy in a party is to ask who helps determine the content of the party's electoral promises which are in line with party ideology. In the most inclusive of parties, individual party members may be asked to vote on specific policy positions. More usually, parties do choose the less inclusive option of asking party conference delegates to endorse a set of commitments prepared by a platform committee. Often, the deliberation process may be more open than the actual vote. Party policy committees may take pains to show that they are listening to different viewpoints, for instance by holding consultation meetings around the country or soliciting comments via local (wards), State National Executives or Internet. Similarly, party leaders may permit an airing of viewpoints during debates at party conferences (Wayne, 2001).

Among all political parties in Nigeria none have an identified ideology rather you see a mixture of capitalist and conservative ideologies, liberal and labour ideology and even ones you cannot situate where they belong. Political parties in Nigeria are pendulums that swing depending on the nature and dynamics of the politics of the day. That is why politics in Africa and in Nigeria in particular is often regarded as 'do or die' affair making the game of politics dirty in Africa. Until lack of ideology is addressed in Africa and Nigerian politics, intra party conflict will continue to be part and parcel of Nigeria politics.

5.1.1.1 Interests Of The Party Stalwarts

It is no longer news about the activities of State governors and the Presidents in Africa and in Nigeria in the conduct of election and choosing of candidates to contest for various political offices. The President and the State governors are often seen as leaders of their party in the State and they command and control the structure of the party. This action makes it imperative that any person that has interest in contesting any political office within the state or at the national level must be endorsed by the State Governor or sometimes the President. Moreover, there are individuals that have the financial capability to sponsor political parties and even candidates in time of election. But the implication is that sometimes particularly in Nigerian politics, sponsoring of political party candidates tantamount to financial investments for these elites that sponsor political parties. The truth is for any political party to function effectively there is serious need for financial backing from the members of the political party. These members of the party are sometimes made to pay monthly dues and some contributory fees to boost the economy of the party.

Kura, (2011) maintained that importance of party funding is underscored by the contribution money can make in democracy and especially in developing economies where few elites control both the sources and distribution of money. By implication as noted by Aleyomi, (2013) money more than anything, is a source of political power and political power in turn is a source of economic power. It is rather unfortunate that the electoral act guiding the conduct of elections and the activities of political parties are not squarely followed and the powers that be make it very difficult for the laws to be effective unlike what is obtainable where the laws work in the western societies. To buttress our point further in 2003 general elections, almost the governorship candidates of the ruling political party then, the PDP (Peoples Democratic Party) were single handedly selected by the then President Olusegun Obasanjo. The party primaries of the party throughout the country were sham which made the court to nullify most of the governorship elections.

Instances of what happened at Anambra State chapter of PDP between 1999 and 2006, Chief Emeka Offor and Chris Uba made the state ungovernable because they were one of the outstanding PDP financiers. Chief Emeka Offor not only tormented Dr. Chinwoke Mbadinuju, the then governor of Anambra State, but also dominated the running of the affairs of the State. The pinnacle of the ugly situation was the abduction of Dr. Chris Ngige (former governor) in July 2003 because Ngige opposed to the move of Chris Uba (godfather) to colonize the State. Interestingly, PDP did not bother to carry out any investigation or disciplinary actions rather Ngige was made to leave the party with ignominy. Other similar crises include impeachment of Rasheed Lodoja

in Oshun State, Celestine Omehia and Rotimi Amaechi Rivers State, Ugwu and Arurume in Imo State. These impeachments and replacement of candidates had the influence of the presidency then whom substitute party faithful any how he deemed fit simply because he commands the party since he is the President and the leader of the party.

5.1.1.1.1 Selection Of Candidates

This remains one of the most difficult processes in choosing who will represent the party in an election. The mode of selecting candidates differs from one party to the other. Some party may decide to use the open ballot system as is widely used by political parties in Nigeria. This is usually done at state and national levels but records have indicated that these primaries are not devoid of intra party conflict as many candidates have resorted to judicial justice to reclaim their stolen mandates. In Nigeria, the selection of candidates by political parties have not been easy because of the way most of these parties are structured and the way the leaders exercise influence in thwarting the democratic processes of their party to favour the desired candidates. Instances of what happened between Rotimi Amaechi and Celestine Omehia as well as the Ifeanyi Ararume examples in Rivers and Imo states respectively readily come to mind in this regard.

In 2007, Musa Yar'Adua was single handedly imposed on the party by Obasanjo as his successor to the surprise of many party members. Another striking example was what happened in Anambra State chapter of the PDP where Professor Charles Soludo was imposed on the chapter as governorship candidate for the state by the National Executive of the party. The act triggered a spate of petition writing. Currently in Enugu state in this 2015 governorship election that took place on the 11th of April, the outgoing governor single handedly choose Ugwuanyi Ifeanyi as his next successor. This has generated a lot of tensions among the members of the PDP in the state. This arrangement of handpicking of candidates by the powers that be in Nigerian politics has seriously hindered the development of democracy as elections in the country is characterized by various court petition hanging on the neck of those assumed to have won the election. This court petition makes them not to perform in office as their minds and attentions are focused on winning the case at the various courts. Again, many of them that were assumed to be elected initially were removed from office by the courts through landmark judgments.

V. Conclusion

This paper interrogated the nature and character of intra-party politics and the incessant condition of the democratic consolidation in Nigeria. The study observed among others that the intra-party conflict in the country is a bane to the democratic consolidation. In the same vein, we adopted System Analysis which views the activities in the society as being systemic which means that once a particular part is affected the general body is affected. Therefore, the undemocratic posture of party primaries in the country goes a long way in creating and recreating itself endlessly not only in the intra-party politics but in the inter-party arrangements which inevitably culminated in challenges to democratic consolidation in the general polity. To arrest the anomaly, we suggested ways forward under the prognosis below.

VI. Prognoses

Axiomatically, it will be a wide goose chase for us to end this academic journey abruptly without proffering a lasting solution to the issues at stake. Therefore, the paper recommended as follows:

1. Internal democratic governance within political parties and argued that when such is done it will be reflected at the national level, with this reflection, democratic culture will be developed among the citizens and democratic regime will be instituted in Nigeria.

That political parties should be guided by a given ideological basis upon which any member that wants to join such political party should be aware and guided by it. This we believe will guide the party from the hands of power hungry elites that may use the party for their own selfish interest.

2. The imposition of candidates into any elective position should be abolished. The right of every member must be respected and preserved. Consensus candidature and selection of candidates must be played down at all level.

Candidate emergence must be given constitutional backing instead of substituting such person for a candidate of selective approval. This as we noted earlier undermines the democratic nature of political parties and undermines democracy at the national level.

3. The parties should be guided by the constitution of the country and the electoral act and the electoral body in charge should make sure that the laws as they are stipulated are obeyed by the political parties.
4. Finally, we must note again that parties have structures, and they should not allow the influence of the elites to contradict these structures as erring members should be properly disciplined.

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