

Internal Democracy and Democratic Consolidation of People Democratic Party (PDP) In Kogi State

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ABSTRACT

The study examined internal democracy and democratic consolidation of people democratic party (PDP) in Kogi state. Specifically, the study examined internal democracy and democratic consolidation and the consequences of poor party internal democracy on the party democratic consolidation. The study has its method rooted in the survey design using close and open ended structured questionnaire, textbooks, journals, internet materials, etc. using Multi Stage Sampling, 1919 study participants were randomly selected from the 12 local government, party leaders and these leaders comprised of 8 Local Government party chairmen and four Local Government party secretaries proportionally selected from across the 3 senatorial districts in Kogi State. Data obtained were quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed descriptively on percentage tables using the Special Package for Social Scientist (SPSS). Findings of the study show that; reveals that the level of popular participation in the party was very high, while adherence to nomination process is commendable, however, serious fears were expressed regarding adherence to party policies/constitution by the party leadership. This mixed result for the internal democracy mechanisms invariably has mixed consequences on democratic consolidation, ranging from stalling or abandonment of development projects, intra-party conflicts or violence among others are inevitable outcomes. The results of correlation analysis revealed that the party internal democratic mechanisms had positive impact on democratic consolidation. However, at the 5% level of significance, only adherence to nomination process ($r = 0.283$; $p < 0.050$) and adherence to party policies ($r = 0.046$; $p < 0.050$) had significant impact on democratic consolidation. The study recommends that; there is need to strengthen the internal democratic mechanism and legal frameworks for fighting the imposition of candidate within political parties in Nigeria. As things stand now, Nigeria's political parties are still perceived as those whose destinies are in hands of the power-brokers within the parties.

Keywords : Democracy, Internal Democracy, Democratic Consolidation, and Consequences of Poor internal Democracy

I. INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt the fact that the practice of democracy in Nigeria lacks essential internal democratic virtues that conform to international best practices as in the developed countries. It is characterized with kangaroo primaries organized by leaders of political parties in favour of their anointed, preferred or imposed candidates, unlawful

substitution and wrongful replacement of candidates who are voted through the people's mandate, the selection of candidates for political offices by the party overloads without recourse to due process and laid down regulations in the parties' constitutions among others. According to Metuh (2010), internal democracy required two instrumental elements. The first element involves organizing free, fair and regular elections of internal positions, as well as

candidates for representative bodies. The second entails equal and open participation of all members and member groups in such a way that interests are more or less equally represented. These two instruments are essential for creating an open and deliberative political party in which people can participate in elections equally but may also engage in participation or be represented in other ways. The inability of some cabals or the so-called godfathers among the Nigerian political parties to adhere to the principles of ideal democracy has resulted in the emergence of new parties, and various factions within the party, party defection among others, which have constituted a major threat to democratic consolidation. It is therefore pertinent to critically examine some challenges of internal democracy among the Nigerian political parties.

One major challenge of internal democracy among the Nigerian political parties since 1999 is the issue of party defection. The country has witnessed series of carpet crossing, with politicians jumping from one party to the other especially to the ruling party since the last decade of democratic governance. A number of reasons have been adduced to this ugly phenomenon. While some argued that over ambitious and selfish interest of Nigerian politicians were accountable for this problems, others hinged it o the lack of internal democracy among the political parties. It is essential to examine a chronicle of party defection in Nigeria since 1999. In 1999, Chief Evan Enwerem, having lost the gubernatorial primaries in the All peoples Party (APP) in Imo State, decamped and joined the People Democratic Party (PDP) on whose ticket he won a sensational seat (Odum, 2002). In Plateau State, Alhaji Alhassan Shaibu decamped from the APP and joined the PDP in 1999. Former Vice-President, Atiku Abubakar, a founding member of the PDP, defected to the Action Congress (AC) after a running battle with the former President Olusegun Obasanjo. In 2007 he contested the presidential elections on the platform of A but lost to the late President Umaru Yar'Adua. A few months

later, Atiku went back to the PDP where he contested the presidential primaries in 2010. In Ondo State, there was a mass cross-carpeting of PDP members to the Labour Party (LP) after Dr. Olusegun Mimiko had been declared the winner of 2007 gubernatorial election by the court of Appeal sitting in Benin. In fact, nearly all the members of Ondo State House of Assembly including Hon. Oyebo Aladetan, Hon. Henry Akinsuroju and the incumbent speaker (Rt. Hon Samuel Adesina) who were all elected on the platform of PDP decamped to LP between 2009 and 2010.

Defection was not limited to elected party members. There were examples of state governors defecting to the ruling party, the PDP. The first was that of incumbent governor of Bauchi state, Isa Yuguda who had won the governorship election on the platform of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) defected to the PDP with a large number of his supporters. Others include the incumbent governor of Imo State, Ikedi Ohakim, who won the governorship election on the platform of the Peoples Progressive Alliance (PPA) but defected to the PDP, Aliyu Shinkafi of Zamfara State (ANPP) and Saminu Turaki of Jigawa State (ANPP) all defected to PDP. Also, defection in recent times are not only peculiar to states, but also have involved senators and members of House of Representative.

The then six Senators elected under the platform of the ANPP, the Accord Party (AP) and the Action Congress (AC) cross-carpeted to PDP. These include Senators Salih Godwin (AC, Plateau State), Patrick Osakwe (AP, Delta State), Patricia Akawasike, (ANPP, Nasarawa State) and Sa'di Yaou (ANPP, Zamfara State). Since 2007 when the present National Assembly was inaugurated, no fewer than 13 senators and 15 members of the House of Representatives have defected to the PDP. Also, in 2011, Senator Ajayi Boroface who was elected on the platform of the LP to represent Ondo North Senatorial District has recently defected to ACN.

Another candidate who was also elected on the platform of LP, a member of House of Representative, representing Akure North Federal Constituency in person of Hon. Sunday Abegunde (aka Abena) has equally decamped to the ACN.

A critical analysis of party defection discussed shows that it is in two ways. First, there is great movement of politicians from different political parties into the ruling party with little to other parties towards the time of the general elections. The idea is to participate in parties' primaries. The second movement starts after the party primaries. At this stage those who lost in the party primaries move to their former parties or to new one or even to form a new party under which they intend to contest the next elections. However, there is nothing wrong in people cross-carpeting if they do not find the programmes of their party in consonance with their ideals. Meanwhile, it becomes dubious when politicians begin to mortgage their conscience as well as seek to pursue their private and selfish interest in the name of cross carpeting. This may have stemmed from the mere fact that politicians are too desperate to hold public office as a means of accumulating wealth. In advanced democracies, cross carpeting is done on principle, rather than on selfish and personal interest. The scenario of party defection in Nigeria today is political prostitution which lacks political morality and discipline another critical challenge of internal democracy in Nigeria is how party primaries are being conducted within the Nigerian political parties. The conduct of party primaries within the Nigerian political parties have failed to apply the provisions of the party's constitutions of all party members who are eligible and want to run for office in the conduct of their party primaries. Rather than conducting appropriate primaries, what we usually witness is either kangaroo primaries or the imposition of anointed candidates on the party without election and due process.

This problem has often times led to the loss of contest to opposition party especially in the stronghold of the incumbent party. Examples of such are the governorship elections in Anambra State in 2009; and that of Ogun State in 2011 where PDP was in control. For instance, in Anambra State, Professor Chukwuma Soludo, the former Governor of CBN was imposed on the State as the PDP governorship candidate by the national executive of the party without any primary. This act was not only rejected by the State chapter, but it also triggered a spate of petition writing and prosecution which in effect brought about factions in the party and last minute cross-carpeting of some members to the other parties. This was why the then Vice-chairman of the southeast zone of the PDP said that "Internal party wrangling denied our great party the governorship seat in the February 6 governorship election tolerate such development in any of the remaining states in the southeast zone. We are going to put all the machinery in place to ensure that PDP wins the remaining states in the zone come 2011" (Metuh, 2010). The case of Ogun State in 2011 gubernatorial election was a little bit different. Two different primaries were conducted by the party (PDP) in the state to choose the gubernatorial candidates for the election. The crisis between the party leaders resulted in the emergence of two factions which held two different primaries that invariably led to the emergence of two different candidates. The candidate of one faction led by former President Olusegun Obasanjo, in person of Brigadier Adetunji Olurin (Rtd) was accepted by INEC as the candidate of the party. This development made the second faction led by the former governor of Ogun State, Otunba Gbenga Daniel to defect to PPA with Chief Gboyega Isiaka as the standard bearer of the party. The outcome of this crisis led to the loss of the state which was initially controlled by the PDP to the ACN.

The high incidence of aggrieved members seeking redress in the court of law over injustice meted on

them as a result of the outcome of party primaries in the recent times is another challenge. This has to issuance of court injunctions and counter orders in attempts to stop one candidate or the other from contesting. The amendment of the Electoral Act of 2006 section 87 (7) by National Assembly which states that: “where a political party fails to comply with the provision of this Act in conduct of its primaries, its candidates for elections shall not be included in the election for the particular position in issue” later gave birth to Electoral Act of 2010 which states that: “Every political party shall not later than 60 days before the date appointed for a general election under the provisions of this Bill, submitted to the commission in the prescribed forms, the list of candidates the party proposes to sponsor at the elections, provided that the commission shall not reject or disqualify candidates for any reason whatsoever”. The use of the phrase “any reason whatsoever”, make INEC to be stripped of its ability to determine the qualification or status of any candidate submitted by a party, irrespective of any circumstances surrounding a candidate’s status. With this provision, the cabals or godfathers within the party now has the power to dictate, impose, and determine how, who and why a candidate can context in an election in which they are participating, even if INEC has doubts over the candidates credibility (Mbah, 2011).

Lack of internal democracy which causes party defection has resulted in the development of divided house. A good example of this was the case of the governor of Bauchi State, Isa Yuguda who defected to PDP from ANPP but his deputy refused to follow him. Initially the legislators in the house impeached the deputy governor, but the court reinstates him due to the unlawful impeachment. The governor is a PDP member and his deputy of an ANPP member. What a divided house? I will be very difficult for both of them to work in harmony and make a sensible progress politically. The deputy governor is

likely to face all sorts of intimidation and be sidelined in all areas of public service.

Indeed, it is morally wrong for an aspirant to use one political party as a platform to ascent power only to dump that arty at the least opportunity for another party. This is what is often referred to as lack of indiscipline among the Nigerian politicians. With the growing cases of defections to PDP in particular and the depleting member of the opposition, there is a mounting fear that Nigeria may gradually be moving toward a one-party state which may be inimical to the nation’s nascent democracy and its consolidation.

One of the greatest challenges of lack of internal democracy among political parties is the further fragmentation of position parties from where politicians have defected. It has created chances for the emergence of new political parties that lack strength; focus on the political scene and without manifestoes or ideology. Today, there are about 62 registered political parties from three in 1999 when the fourth republic began. Lack of internal democracy leads to the creation of mushroom political parties which results in the weakness of opposition parties. This development does not augur well for the development of party politics. This development does not augur well for the development of party politics in Nigeria. In fact it promotes money politics. This does not give room for ideology-based political parties to thrive and develop are formed and joined for personal interests.

Another underlying challenge which political party defection created by lack of internal democracy is the development of dishonest traits in some politicians. Odum (2002) captures this scenario when he argues that: politicians and prostitutes are two seemingly parallel professions. While the former supposedly displaying constitutional leadership virtue in governance, the latter is revealing social vice—the fabric of a decadent society. Incidentally, one common denominator for both appears to be

their loyalty, which standards on quick sand, shifting as mundane attractions glow in their adulterous eyes. The consideration, especially with the modern day politicians is where stakes may be lower and gains higher. It does not matter who is differ. So, while the prostitutes switch beds, the politicians change camp in this game of cross-carpeting. His is the internal ordering of our nascent democracy. Power is no longer a thing held in trust today. It has become a fraud which every politician is clamouring to hold (Mbah, 2011).

On the final note, the increasing cases of undemocratic practices in our polity as a result of lack of internal democracy among the Nigerian political parties and shows the problem of poor leadership among political instability. For examples, countries such as Malawi, Zambia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, have experienced a number of cases of party defection which had threatened the stability of the political system (Mbah, 2011).

This is no doubt the situation in the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) which more often than not occasions intra-party conflicts and rancor. Some of the sources of the intra-party conflict in the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) according to Mamodu (2013) includes taking major decisions by few of the executive members, discrimination or favouratism in the selection of candidate, jettisoning, zoning arrangement, arrogance of party executive among other factors/problems have eaten so deep into the People Democratic Party (PDP) that the resultant situation is defection of members to other (opposition) political parties. These cases partly contributed to the defection of five sitting governors of the People’s Democratic Party: Adamawa, Sokoto, Kwara, Rivers, and Kano States in 2013 to the All Progressive Congress (APC) which is the main opposition party. It is in consideration of the above identified internal wrangling within Nigeria political parties that has necessitated the current study, using PDP as a case study.

The study tested the following Hypothesis

Ho: The party internal democratic mechanisms has no significant effect on democratic consolidation

Ha: The party internal democratic mechanisms has no significant effect on democratic consolidation

II. Research Methodology

This research work adopted survey research method and made use of primary data as the main source of data collection through the instrument of structured and unstructured questionnaire. The study randomly selects one thousand nine hundred and nineteen (1919) respondents from twelve Local Government Areas across the three senatorial districts that made up Kogi State: Kogi Central, Kogi West and Kogi East Senatorial districts. The senatorial districts have a total of 21 LGAs, comprising of 9 in Kogi East, 7 in Kogi west and 5 in Kogi Central. Proportional random sampling was used to select 50% of the Local Government Areas in each district. This is because the LGAs are of unequal size or number. Thus, 5, 4 and 3 LGAs were chosen from Kogi East, Kogi west and Kogi Central Senatorial Districts respectively, which gave a total of 12 Local Government Areas.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 1: socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables		Kogi Centra l		Kogi East		Kogi west		Pooled	
		Fr eq	%	Fr eq	%	Fr eq	%	Fr eq	%
Sex	Female	1	32	3	36	2	32	65	34
		0	.2	4	.5	0	.1	7	.2
		8		0		9			

	Male	2 2 7	67 .8	5 9 2	63 .5	4 4 3	67 .9	12 62	65 .8
	Total	3 3 5	10 0.	9 3 2	10 0.	6 5 2	10 0.	19 19 0	10 0.
Age range (years)	18-25			1 8 7	20 .1	8	1. 2	19 5	10 .2
	26-32	8 4	25 .1	1 3 3	14 .3	9 1	14 .0	30 8	16 .1
	33-39	9 4	28 .1	2 1 1	22 .6	1 6 6	25 .5	47 1	24 .5
	40-46	2 0	6. 0	2 5 1	26 .9	1 4 7	22 .5	41 8	21 .8
	47-53	1 3	3. 9	1 2 2	13 .1	1 1 3	17 .3	24 8	12 .9
	>53	1 2 4	37 .0	2 8	3. 0	1 2 7	19 .5	27 9	14 .5
	Total	3 3 5	10 0.	9 3 2	10 0.	6 5 2	10 0.	19 19 0	10 0.
Educat ional qualifi cation	Primary school			1 9 8	21 .2	2 8	4. 3	22 6	11 .8
	Secondar y education	1 6 7	49 .9	3 6 3	38 .9	2 8 8	44 .2	81 8	42 .6
	OND/NC E	4 8	14 .3	1 8 4	19 .7	1 6 2	24 .8	39 4	20 .5
	HND/Uni versity degree	5 4	16 .1	1 4 2	15 .2	1 0 8	16 .6	30 4	15 .8
	Post- graduate	6 6	19 .7	4 5	4. 8	6 6	10 .1	17 7	9. 2

	Total	3 3 5	10 0.	9 3 2	10 0.	6 5 2	10 0.	19 19 0	10 0.
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Source: Field survey, 2014

Table 1 shows the personal characteristics of the respondents, namely their sex, age and educational qualifications. The pooled results revealed that 65.8% of the respondents were male while 34.2% were female. The results of the study will therefore capture the views of both genders in order to gain a better understanding of their perceptions of the issues investigated. The higher proportion of males may be because majority of the households interviewed were males. Similar trend was observed at the senatorial level, with males dominating with a percentage of 67.8%, 63.5% and 67.9% for Kogi central, Kogi east and Kogi west respectively.

The age distribution of the respondents indicates that highest modal categories were 33-39 years and 40-46 years with a percentage of 24.5% and 21.8% respectively. The average age of the respondents, at the aggregate level, was about 38 years, while for Kogi central, east and west it was 40, 39 and 40 years respectively. The finding suggests that the respondents were young and full of energy. About 10.2% of the respondents were 18-25 years, 16.1% were 26-32 years old while 12.9% were 47-53 years old while 14.5% were above 53 years old. The responses captured in this study thus reflect the different age groups, which is important in ensuring that their concerns are equally represented in a study of this nature.

In terms of educational attainment, Table 1 reveals secondary education to be the modal range (42.6%). About 11.8% had primary education, 15.8% had HND/university education while 9.2% had post-graduate certificate. The general results suggest that the respondents were literate. Thus, they would be able to understand political party constitutions and processes.

In political studies, it has been strongly advocated that the views or opinions of both men and women should be sought. This is pertinent since the government and international as well as local agencies have decried the tendency to relegate

women to the background. This is even more so particularly in Nigeria, whose nature and character inherently debars the effective participation of women in the political process.

Table 2: Democratic Consolidation

	Kogi Central		Kogi East		Kogi west		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean*	SD
The State enjoy freedom from dictatorship	4.24	.93	4.37	.86	4.03	.98	4.23	.93
Elections are conducted as and when due	4.61	.60	3.89	.95	4.28	.80	4.15	.89
Persons vying for political (elective) positions canvas/campaign for votes	3.53	1.01	4.26	.83	3.73	.95	3.95	.95
There is smooth/successful handing over of powers to the victorious	3.56	.61	4.05	.86	3.98	.87	3.94	.84
The rule of law prevails in settling political party disputes	3.59	.94	3.73	1.13	3.76	.91	3.72	1.03
The State enjoys better national unity	3.68	.85	3.58	.77	3.78	.86	3.67	.82
Elections are usually violence free at all levels	3.38	.94	3.14	1.01	3.63	.94	3.35	1.00
political party constitution does not prevail in matter of disputes among party members	2.88	.60	3.40	.74	3.38	.90	3.30	.80
The State citizens enjoy equal opportunities for social, economic and political development	3.04	1.11	2.86	1.14	3.45	1.09	3.09	1.14
There is improved development of democratic institutions in the state	3.07	1.15	2.73	1.19	3.46	1.11	3.04	1.20
Local /constituencies' elections are fair, credible and transparent	2.82	1.72	2.18	1.16	3.51	1.52	2.74	1.52
There is increased transparency in the conduct of government business	2.31	.78	2.58	1.08	2.95	1.00	2.66	1.03

*Agreed (mean > 3.00)

Source: Field survey, 2014

Table 2 shows respondents perception of the extent of democratic consolidation. The pooled findings reveal that respondents believed that the State and nation now enjoy complete freedom from dictatorship with a mean of 4.23, the conduct of elections as at when due (mean = 4.15), persons vying for elective positions now engage in active campaign

(mean = 3.95) and the smooth handing over of powers to the victor (mean = 3.94). These are the major areas of democratic consolidation noted by the respondents. Others include the supremacy of the rule of law as the arbiter of political disputes when all other alternatives fail (mean = 3.72), improve unity in the country and in the State in particular (mean = 3.67), improved voting process that is characterized by minimal or zero violence (mean = 3.35) and the fact that citizens enjoy better and equal

opportunities for social, economic and political development (mean = 3.09).

However, there were areas where respondents felt democracy had not been well consolidated. Respondents do not agree that government businesses were still perceived as lacking transparency (mean = 2.66), while local/constituencies elections were still considered to lack fairness, credibility and transparency (mean = 2.74).

Slight variation in responses was noted among party members in the three senatorial districts. For example, respondents in Kogi west (mean =3.38) and

Kogi east (mean = 3.40) agreed that the party constitution does not prevail in matters of dispute among party members, while respondents in Kogi central did not agree (mean = 2.88). similarly, while party members in Kogi west (mean = 3.45) and Kogi central (3.04) agreed that the party has brought about improvement in equal opportunities for social, economic and political development in the country, Kogi east respondents disagreed (mean = 2.73). however, there was a general consensus among respondents in the various senatorial districts that there has been increased transparency in the conduct of government business as a result of the party being in power.

Table 3 Consequence of Poor Internal Democracy

Variable	Kogi Central		Kogi East		Kogi west		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean*	SD
Abandonment of development efforts/project	3.73	1.20	3.98	.88	3.99	1.08	3.94	1.02
Distraction from development or governance objectives	3.87	1.05	3.89	.94	3.92	.98	3.90	.97
Members defecting to other political parties	2.98	1.18	3.69	.93	3.26	1.04	3.42	1.06
Conflicts/violence among party members	3.45	.72	3.17	1.25	3.54	.73	3.34	1.03
Engagement in anti-party activities by party members	2.34	1.03	4.16	1.06	2.39	1.11	3.24	1.40
Sabotage of development projects	2.88	1.27	2.39	1.44	3.12	1.17	2.72	1.36
Going to court to resolve party disputes	2.25	1.36	2.57	1.28	2.23	1.15	2.40	1.26

*Agreed (mean > 3.00)

Source: Field survey, 2014

The consequences of poor internal party democracy were examined and the results presented in Table 3. Based on the pooled values, major consequences of poor internal democracy as perceived by the respondents were abandonment of development projects in the nation or State in particular by political office holders (mean = 3.94), distraction from pursuance of development or governance objectives (mean = 3.90) and political defection

(mean 3.42). Others include engagement in anti-party activities by party members (mean = 3.24) and intra-party violence or conflicts (mean = 3.34). Sabotage of development projects (mean = 2.72) and resorting to court for constant settlement of party disputes (mean = 2.40) were not agreed to as being very serious consequences.

Major consequences of poor internal democracy as perceived by the respondents were abandonment of development projects in the nation or State in particular by political office holders, distraction from pursuance of development or governance objectives and political defection. Others include engagement in anti-party activities by party members and intra-party violence or conflicts.

Party defection was identified by the respondents as a serious consequence of weak internal democracy. According to Abimbola (2012), a major challenge of internal democracy among the Nigerian political parties since 1999 is the issue of party defection. The country has witnessed series of carpet crossing, with politicians jumping from one party to the other especially to the ruling party since the last decade of democratic governance. A number of reasons have been adduced to this ugly phenomenon. While some argued that over ambitious and selfish interest of Nigerian politicians were accountable for this problem, others hinged it on the lack of internal democracy among the political parties. In extreme cases, party defection can lead to collapse of government in power as noted by Hoeane, (2008) in Abimbola and Adesote (2012) who argues that in extreme cases of floor crossing, where the number of public representatives who have defected has been significantly high, such shifts of allegiance have led to the collapse of democratically elected government, such as in Lesotho in 1997.

Although going to court was not considered serious outcome of a poor internal democratic framework in this study, the high incidence of aggrieved members of a political party seeking redress in the court of law

over injustice meted on them as a result of the outcome of party primaries in the recent times has been identified as a major issue associated with a party internal democratic system. According to Mbah (2011), this has led to issuance of court injunctions and counter orders in attempts to stop one candidate or the other from contesting.

Abandonment of development efforts/project or distraction form pursuance of development objectives: Lack of internal democracy which causes party defection has resulted in the development of divided house. A good example of this was the case of the governor of Bauchi State, Isa Yuguda who defected to PDP from ANPP but his deputy refused to follow him. Initially the legislators in the house impeached the deputy governor, but the court reinstated him due to the unlawful impeachment. The governor is a PDP member and his deputy of an ANPP member. What a divided house? It will be very difficult for both of them to work in harmony and make a sensible progress politically. The deputy governor is likely to face all sorts of intimidation and be sidelined in all areas of public service. This situation will serious impede any development efforts in the state or local government as affected members or office holders are busy trying to 'save' their 'job' Mbah, (2011).

Test of Hypothesis

Ho: The party internal democratic mechanisms has no significant effect on democratic consolidation

Ha: The party internal democratic mechanism has no significant effect on democratic consolidation

Relationship between party internal democratic mechanisms and democratic consolidation [Correlation]

Independent variables	Democratic Consolidation (total)		Decision
	Coefficient (r)	Prob. Level	
Popular Participation	0.042	0.066	Significant

Nomination Process	0.283*	0.000	Significant
Adherence to Party Policies	0.046*	0.046	Not Significant

**Significant at the 5% level (critical $r = 0.0453$)*

The correlation results of reveals that the extent of popular participation is positively correlated with democratic consolidation ($r = 0.042$). Similarly, Nomination process and adherence to party policies have a positive correlation with democratic consolidation with correlation coefficients of 0.283 and 0.044 respectively. However, while popular participation was not significant ($p > 0.050$), the variables of nomination process and adherence to party policies were significantly correlated with democratic consolidation, since the calculated coefficients were greater than the critical correlation coefficient at the 5% level ($r = 0.045$).

Statistical Inference

The positive correlation between popular participation and democratic consolidation ($r = 0.042$) means that increased participation in the party politics will lead to an increase or improvement in democratic consolidation. Nomination process has a positive correlation with democratic consolidation ($r = 0.283$), implying that increased adherence to the party nomination process will lead to increase or improvement in democratic consolidation. Adherence to party policies also has a positive correlation with democratic consolidation ($r = 0.046$), implying that increased adherence to the party policies will have a positive impact on or lead to improvement in democratic consolidation. The result is significant since the computed r value (0.046) is greater than the critical r value at the 5% level of significance ($r = 0.045$).

The results of correlation analysis revealed that the party internal democratic mechanisms had positive impact on democratic consolidation. However, at the 5% level of significance, only adherence to

nomination process and party policies has significant impact on democratic consolidation.

1) Discussion of Findings

Although it appears that democratic consolidation may have been consolidated in certain areas, however, there were areas where respondents felt democracy had not been well consolidated. Respondents do not agree that the democratic institutions have sufficiently developed, government businesses were still perceived as lacking transparency, while local/constituencies elections were still considered to lack fairness, credibility and transparency.

Enjoying freedom from dictatorship was reported as one of the key outcome of the party internal democratization. This agrees with the assertions of Schedler (1998) that democratic consolidation entails the challenge of making new democracies secure, extending their life expectancy beyond the short term and of making them immune against the treat of authoritarian regression. Similarly, Diamond (1995) postulated that democracy can be said to be consolidated when and if it has become so broadly and profoundly legitimate among its citizens that it is very unlikely to breakdown or taken over by dictatorship.

Bratton, (1998) noted the supremacy of the rule of law in a democratized society when he asserted that there must be widespread acceptance of rules to guarantee political participation and political competition in such a situation. That citizens and political parties enjoy a great deal currency I who and how they choose who represent them at various level of government.

Accordingly, the democratic institutions that are being consolidated are: the constitution, the

legislature, the judiciary, political parties, electoral institutions, the press and the civil society. According to Joseph, (2008), democracy is being consolidated in Nigeria to ensure the realization and sustenance of the following:

- ✓ Guaranteeing of freedom for all against all forms of dictatorship. In a word, freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom from disease as well as other forms of freedom associated with democracy.
- ✓ Transparency and accountability in the conduct of government business.
- ✓ Provision of equal opportunities to the citizens for their social, economic and political development
- ✓ Enhancing national unity
- ✓ Continuous improvement in the building of democratic institution as there is no targeted end of democracy (Joseph, 2008).

In agreement with findings in the impact of party internal democracy on democratic consolidation, it is morally wrong for an aspirant to use one political party as a platform to ascend power only to dump that party at the least opportunity for another party. This is what is often referred to as lack of discipline among the Nigerian politicians, and with the growing of this trend of defections to the ruling party, the PDP in particular and the depleting member of the opposition, there is a mounting fear that Nigeria may gradually be moving toward a one party state which may be inimical to the nation's democracy and its quest for consolidation of same. One of the greatest challenges of lack of internal democracy among political parties is the further fragmentation of opposition parties from where politicians have defected. It has however created chances for the emergence of new political parties that lack strength, focus on the political scene and without manifestos or ideology. This emergence of rather weak and focus less political parties lead to the weakening of opposition parties and will have automatically turned

Nigeria into a one party-state. In such an atmosphere of no opposition/competition, there won't be room for ideology-based political parties to thrive and develop, hence one party functionally exist. All of these seriously hamper democratic consolidation in the country's effort to democratically thrive.

It is in consonance with this that Henshaw Jack opines that "far from its original image of democratic model, the PDP is today losing public respect as political party sincerely committed to democratic virtues. With the open and systematic disregard for basic norms of internal democracy, how would the PDP claim the high moral ground to preach democracy to other political parties, when it is displaying the tendencies normally associated with autocratic order.

IV. Conclusion

An examination of the internal democratic mechanisms of the party in Kogi State reveals that the level of popular participation in the party was very high while adherence to nomination process is commendable. However, serious fears were expressed regarding adherence to party policies/constitution by the party leadership. This mixed result for the internal democracy mechanisms invariably has mixed consequences on democratic consolidation. But if they are not some negative outcomes such as stalling or abandonment of development projects, intra-party conflicts or violence among others are inevitable outcomes.

In terms of democratic consolidation arising from the party internal democracy, the State and nation now enjoy complete freedom from dictatorship (mean = 4.23), elections are conducted as at when due (mean = 4.15), persons vying for elective positions now engage in active campaign (mean = 3.95).

Poor internal democracy was perceived by respondents to breed several vices such as

abandonment of development projects in the State (mean = 3.94), distraction of political office holders from pursuance of development or governance objectives (mean = 3.90) and political defection (mean 3.42).

The results of correlation analysis revealed that the party internal democratic mechanisms had positive impact on democratic consolidation. However, at the 5% level of significance, only adherence to nomination process ($r = 0.283$; $p < 0.050$) and adherence to party policies ($r = 0.046$; $p < 0.050$) had significant impact on democratic consolidation.

V. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. There is need to strengthen the internal democratic mechanism and legal frameworks for fighting the imposition of candidate within political parties in Nigeria. As things stand now, Nigeria's political parties are still perceived as those whose destinies are in hands of the power-brokers within the parties.
2. There is need to enhance the nomination process, party leaders should be discouraged from imposing candidates on party members.
3. Also, party rules should be strictly adhered to in the nomination process. Any ambiguous or obsolete aspect of the rule should be democratically addressed in order to minimize or eliminate conflicts
4. Party delegates should be encouraged to vote their conscience when casting their ballot This work has in its own way contributed to the existing body of knowledge going by the recommendation it has suggested, and it also serve as a recipe for further studies on the area of democracy and consolidation of same. If these recommendations are imbibed, it will foster democratic consolidation, with overall impact on national development.
5. The supremacy of the party hierarchy over elected officials should be made an article of faith
6. The successes recorded in the democratic consolidation processes need to be maintained
7. Electoral offenders need to be sanctioned to serve as deterrent.
8. A vibrant opposition is imperative if the democratic successes recorded are to be sustained.
9. Political parties should strive to establish clear and well-articulated rules in advance of each contest as this will go a long way in minimizing internal wrangling, while enhancing the legitimacy of those selected.
10. To foster adherence to party policies, party leaders should lead by example by submitting themselves to the party constitution. A situation where leaders disobey the constitution does not augur well for the future development of the party as it creates a precedence that other members will follow or make reference to.

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