From Transformation Agenda to Tsunami Phenomenon: A Randomized Analysis of the 2015 General Elections and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

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Abstract: Globally, elections have been the usual mechanism by which modern representative democracy has operated over the years. The universal use of elections as a tool for selecting representatives in modern democracies, describes the process of fair electoral systems. Essentially, the most important elements encapsulating the democratic agenda are popular participation, equitable representation and accountability. It is increasingly clear that democracy consists not only in winning elections but also in establishing organic relations with the people and allowing them to control their leaders by holding them accountable. In the developing democracies particularly in Nigeria, there are insinuations that the political gladiators always converse and solicit for votes from the electorates and soon afterwards, abandon the electorates as they assume office in the guise that their political fortunes are divine and not challengeable by any human institution. Against this backdrop, this paper aims at interrogating the circumstances that characterized the 2015 general elections and the failure of the PDP Presidential aspirant. Indeed, this session is therefore devoted to the analysis of the 2015 general elections and the PDP misfortune in Nigeria.

Key words: Elections · Democracy · Participation · PDP and Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Elections constitute an important element of representative government. Indeed, elections across the globe are forms of choosing representatives or leaders based on the choice of the electorates. In Nigerian elections, as one of the countries that operate Federal system of government with constituent units, the elected leaders represent people in different levels [1 and 2].

In the Pre-independent and post independent Nigerian state, elections have been conducted to usher in new leadership/government from one epoch to the other. Both the civilians and Military government transitions have witnessed election deep crises in Nigeria. These crises to a large extent were as a result of controversial circumstances in relation to lack of internal democracy of party politics which in many occasions have been described as the bane for not having free and fair elections in Nigeria. [3], aptly maintained that Nigeria’s chequered political history is bedeviled with the gory tales of electoral malpractices which have significantly impacted negatively on the nations polity. Effective management of the electoral process has therefore, become an imperative demand so as to ensure the sanctity, transparency and credibility of election results in the nation’s democratic setting [4]. This is so because there is empirical evidence over the years, which elections in Nigeria have historically fallen below standards and general expectations. To a large extent, Nigeria has not had a clear-cut and globally recognized free, fair and credible elections as all the elections that have been conducted in the country both before and after independence in 1960 have characteristically been marred by large scale violence and high level malpractices of all sorts [5].

However, in the 2015 General elections in Nigeria, despite some pockets of irregularities evidenced in late arrival or non-availability of electoral materials, falsification of election results in some areas, failure of the card Reader Machines and collusion with politicians and security personnels to subvert the process, the outcome of the 2015 general elections has been generally and globally accepted to be transparent and indeed, an improvement on past elections in the country.

Apparently, without minding the cacophonous and ding-dung song of Transformation Agenda of President Jonathan Ebele Goodluck, Nigerians have desired a change of the Goodluck Jonathan’s PDP administration
which has been generally accused of inefficiency, corruption, systemic failure, economic paralysis, contempt of the people, insecurity etc. Indeed, security was brazenly compromised as government security agencies, including the military conducted their responsibilities with clear partisan inclinations that left nobody in doubt that state apparatuses as important as security and military institutions became tools of political vendetta, electoral manipulations and subversion of democratic ethos.

Against this backdrop, a patient question became sacrosanct; what are the factors that led to the defeat of the PDP? Can a party that has been in power for fifteen years become an opposition party in a country in spite of its lofty transformation agenda?

Importantly, the cardinal objectives of this paper are;

- To analyze the 2015 General elections in Nigeria
- To interrogate the immediate and remote causes of PDP’s defeat.
- To proffer solution for future involvement of PDP in election in Nigeria.

In doing this, the paper is therefore divided into five sections. Section one deals with the general introduction, democracy and elections in Nigeria, evolution of people’s Democratic Party in Nigeria. Section two dwelt on theoretical framework and methodology. Section three captures the 2015 general elections outcome. The immediate/remote causes of PDP’s defeat and lessons from the elections is presented in section four, while section five wrapped it up with conclusion and recommendations.

**Democracy and Election in Nigeria: a Panoramic View:**

Historically, the theory of democracy is deeply rooted in the ancient Greek polity, which classified governance according to the number of participants in decision-making process. For them, a government is classified in a continuum which ranges from rule by one person (Monarchy), through rule by few (Oligarchy) to rule by many (Democracy).

Emphatically, what this suggests is that the locus of power and how power is exercised in the political system is pigeonholed on these classifications. Far from the above, the implication is that the few individuals who control a nation’s key financial, industrial and communication institutions, constitute the ruling elites—a small group that govern modern society [5].

Analytically, democracy is too complex and portrays different things to different people. To some, democracy is all about consensus government, freely chosen by the people for the pursuit of the ideals, aspirations, welfare, progress and overall interest of the people. A government of this nature operates at the mercy of the people who themselves, hold such government accountable through the process of periodic elections. Inevitably, it enables the people to govern themselves by means of constant interactions and discussions of issues of common interest, voting in elections and running for public office. Thus, a democratic government is driven by the collective ideas, energy, wisdom, understanding, knowledge and perceptions of the people rather than the views, opinion and ideas of a single individual who is at the helms of affairs.

[6], argues that democracy is;

> a system of government that meets three essential conditions: an extensive competition among individuals and groups (especially political parties) for all elective positions of government power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force; a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies at least through regular and fair election, so that no major (adult) social group is excluded and a level of civic and political liberties, freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations sufficient to ensure the integrity of political competition and participation.

The opinion of Diamond above suggest that democracy clearly requires institutional mechanisms, established procedures and organizations such as political parties, interest groups, legislatures through which public opinion is translated into government policy. More so, the most critical elements encapsulating the democratic agenda are popular participation, equitable representation and accountability. Through the democratic process, principles of accountability are institutionalized and through these principles, leaders are held accountable for their actions and inactions in the public realm by the collectivity of the citizenry acting indirectly through the competition of government of their elected representatives [7].

For [8], Democracy makes sense when it is used as a continuous process for the advancement and promotion of equal access to the good things of life and the promotion of fundamental human rights including,
the right to dignity; when it is used for combating poverty, investing heavily in healthcare facilities, education and human capacity building so that the people, not only would participate in democracy but would be able to defend it when necessary.

Relatedly, elections are regarded as key institutional mechanism of democratic governance, though definitional consensus about election is a matter of intellectual supposition. Consequently, elections generally, represent a means of measuring political expression and the exercise of state power legitimized and accepted as being derived from the people’s consent.

In the words of [9],

*In a democratic nation... periodic elections of executive and legislators constitute the principal institutional device for making sure that government shall derive it’s just power from the consent of the governed.*

Importantly, elections are legitimate means through which the citizens of a country choose their representatives in conformity with the dictates of modern democracy. Similarly, Adejumobi situates the symbolism of elections within the context of popular sovereignty and the expression of the social fact between the states and the people. For him, “it is the kernel of political accountability and means of ensuring reciprocity and exchange between the governors and the governed [10].

In a more amenable manner, there can never be a democracy without election. Transitions in numerous countries today have continued to reveal that democracy is possible without election. In its strictest sense, a political system is democratic to the extent that its most powerful collective decision-makers are selected through fair, honest and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote [11].

[12], opined that; “elections offer the electorate the freedom of choice, the power to hold elected leaders accountable and provide protection against perpetuation of arbitrary rule”. Howbeit, the imperative of a free and fair elections as a means of ensuring acceptable electoral outcome is indeed, essential and all-pervading hence, [13], advocates for a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies, at least through regular, free and fair elections such that no major social group is excluded.

Diamond’s view point above sparked off Mackenzie’s thinking when he asserts that elections can only be free and fair in an environment where there exists:

a. An independent Judiciary to interpret electoral law;
b. An honest, competent, non-partisan administration to run elections;
c. A developed system of political parties, well organized to put their policies, traditions and teams of candidates before the elections as alternatives between which to choose; and
d. A general acceptance throughout the political community of certain rather than vague rules of the game which limits the struggle for power because of some unspoken sentiments that if the rules are not observed more or less faithfully, the games itself will disappear [14].

In this context, election in Nigeria is a veritable instrument for modifying democracy particularly when it emphasizes the existence of “an honest, competent, non-partisan administration to run elections” and to this extent, the 2015 general elections in Nigeria is being analyzed.

**Evolution of Peoples Democratic Party in Nigeria:**
The people’s Democratic Party was founded in 1998 following the government’s announcement that democratic elections would be held in 1999, ending the 16 years of military rule in Nigeria. Since 1978, political parties in Nigeria have been required to represent national rather than regional or ethnic constituencies.

For the 1999 elections, the PDP, the All People’s Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD) met this legal requirement by having active offices in 24 out of 36 States. The PDP was founded by Alex Ekwueme, a former Vice President of the Country (1979-83).

The party had a broad membership drawn from traditional chiefs, academics and businessmen and proved especially popular with the army, as some 100 retired senior officers joined, including Olusegun Obasanjo, a former military leader of Nigeria (1976-79). Under his guidance, the PDP quickly became the country’s dominant party, although the All People’s Party and the Alliance for Democracy united in an unsuccessful attempt to overtake it. The party, which has a broad Political base, supports economic deregulation, human rights and greater funding for health care and education, among other goals [15].
In the 1999 elections the PDP won a majority of seats in the legislature and Obasanjo was elected President. In the 2003 elections the Party maintained a legislative majority and Obasanjo was re-elected President. The PDP had an unofficial Policy of rotating the Presidency between candidates from the Predominantly Christian south and the Predominantly Muslim North.

In 2007, the Party’s candidate was Umaru Yar’Adua, a Muslim and the governor of the northern state of Katsina. The Vice Presidential candidate was Goodluck Jonathan a Christian and the governor of the Southern state of Bayelsa. Yar’Adua was declared the winner of the 2007 Presidential election, although international observers strongly condemned the election as being marred by voting irregularities and fraud.

In 2010, power shifted unexpectedly to Jonathan, who assumed the role of acting President in February after Yar’Adua fell ill, he was sworn in to the Presidency following Yar’Adua’s death in May, 2010.

Jonathan’s announcement in September, 2010 about his intention to run in the 2011 Presidential election generated much controversy leading into PDP’s Presidential primaries, held in January 2011.

However, his overwhelming victory over his closest challenger, northerner and former vice President Atiku Abubakar, showed that Jonathan had considerable support, even in several of the Northern States and in spite of the fact that his candidacy would be a deviation from the Party’s unofficial rotation policy. Jonathan was victorious in the country’s 2011 Presidential elections, which was deemed largely free and fair by international observers.

In the 2015 elections, the longtime ruling Party found itself in a weaker position as infighting had resulted in several members leaving the party. Jonathan’s administration was under fire for not doing enough to combat corruption, to eliminate the threat from the deadly Islamic insurgency led by Boko Haram and many Nigerians felt that general living conditions had not improved. Furthermore, in 2015 much of the perennially fragmented opposition had united to form one party, the All Progressive Congress (APC) and the APC chose a strong candidate, former military head of state Muhammadu Buhari to face Jonathan in the 2015 presidential election. Eventually, Buhari defeated Jonathan, signaling an end to the PDP’s grip on the presidency which it had held since 1999. The party also lost its majority in the Senate and the House of Representatives to the APC in the legislative elections.

**Theoretical Paradigm:** The goal theory is employed as the theoretical umbrella for this study. The development of this theory is linked with Max Weber and Roberts Michels. However, Talcott Parsons popularized the theory by elevating goals of organization to central position as the raison d’etre of all organization [16]. This theory contends that all organizational activities are oriented and directed towards the achievement of set goals. Goals are regarded as value premises, which serve as the inputs to decision. Goals are essential elements of organization. To be effective, organization must clearly spell out its goals, objectives and strategies [17].

This theory possesses several appealing values. One of such striking values of the theory is that it provides the basis for standard performance and for passing judgment on the effectiveness of organization. Again, it provides guidelines for decision-making and justification for actions taken. It also helps to develop commitment of individuals and groups to the activities of the organization. As a corollary of this, attention is directed on purposeful behavior and basis for objectives and policies of the organization. More so, it gives indication of what the organization is really like, its true nature and character both for members and for people outside the organization [17].

Situated in the context of this discourse, the theory is quite apt and relevant to comprehending the true nature, character and behavior of political party like the PDP in the political process and the extent it succeeds in meeting the salient qualities of standing in for election in the 2015 general elections in Nigeria.

**Methodology:** Documentary design was employed in this study. Data were elicited from documentary instrument mostly from secondary sources through the review of relevant texts, journals, magazines, newspapers, official publications, direct observation, media commentaries, scholarly writings on elections and democratic consolidation in Nigeria and internet materials. The study employed content analytical methods wherein data collected through secondary sources were analyzed. This approach was necessary as it helped in gaining insight into the analysis of the 2015 general elections in Nigeria.

Ipso facto, the content analytical technique was relied upon to evaluate the data generated in the course of this study. For clarity of purpose, content analysis is a research technique adopted primarily for the objective, systematic and qualitative analysis and interpretation of information.
The 2015 General Elections Outcome: The 2015 elections were primarily scheduled to hold on 14th February, 2015. Unfortunately, the electoral umpire (Independent National Electoral Commission) postponed it by six weeks to 28th March, 2015 arising from the poor distribution of permanent voter cards and the daunting security challenges in the North-Eastern states of the country.

To ensure effective participation of the electorates in the election, Nigerian government closed its land and sea borders from midnight of 25th March 2015 until the end of the polling date. The elections however took place on March 28th, 2015 with the Presidential and National Assembly Polls while the gubernatorial elections and that of the state Assembly took place on April 11, 2015.

Essentially, fourteen political parties contested for the 2015 Presidential election. Table 1 below shows the number of Presidential candidates and their parties.

Table 1: Presidential Candidates and Their Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Allagoa Chinedu</td>
<td>People’s Party of Nigeria</td>
<td>PPN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ambrose Albert Owuru</td>
<td>Hope Party</td>
<td>HP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Adebayo Musa Ayeni</td>
<td>African People’s Alliance</td>
<td>APA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Comfort Oluwemi Sonaiya</td>
<td>Kowa Party</td>
<td>KOWA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Ganiyu Galadimma</td>
<td>All Congress Party of Nigeria</td>
<td>ACPN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Gideon Okoye</td>
<td>United Democratic Party</td>
<td>UDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Goodluck Ebele Jonathan</td>
<td>People’s Democratic Party</td>
<td>PDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Mani Ahmed</td>
<td>African Democratic Congress</td>
<td>ADC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Martin Onovo</td>
<td>National Conscience Party</td>
<td>NCP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Muhammadu Buhari</td>
<td>All Progressive Congress</td>
<td>APC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Rufus Salau</td>
<td>Alliance for Democracy</td>
<td>AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Sam Eke</td>
<td>Citizens Popular Party</td>
<td>CPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Tunde Anisowose Kelani</td>
<td>Accord Alliance.</td>
<td>AA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Even though fourteen (14) political parties were involved, our focus on this paper is centred on only two political parties- PDP and APC. The Presidential election was conducted on Saturday, 28th March 2015 in line with Article 134(2) of the Nigerian constitution which stipulates that a Presidential candidates will be duly elected after attaining both the highest number of votes cast, at each of at least two-third of the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). If no candidate satisfies the requirement, a second election will be held between the two leading candidates within seven days from the pronouncement of the result.

It should also be noted that Election Observer Missions (EOM) were deployed from the African Union (AU), Common wealth of Nations, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the European Union (EU). The EOM were led by Amos Sawyer, Bakili Muluzi, John Kufuor and Santiago Fisas respectively. There were also local observers from NGOs, Interest Groups and Faith Based Organizations [18].

Table 2 below is the tabulated outcome of the Presidential election, while table 3 represents the outcome of the gubernatorial election.

Table 2: 2015 Presidential Election Result

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>STATES</th>
<th>APC</th>
<th>PDP</th>
<th>%APC</th>
<th>%PDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>ABIA</td>
<td>13,394</td>
<td>368,303</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>96.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>ADAMAWA</td>
<td>374,701</td>
<td>251,664</td>
<td>59.07</td>
<td>40.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>AKWA-IBOM</td>
<td>58,411</td>
<td>953,304</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>94.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>ANAMBRA</td>
<td>17,926</td>
<td>660,762</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>97.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>BAUCHI</td>
<td>931,961</td>
<td>86,085</td>
<td>93.42</td>
<td>6.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>BAYELSA</td>
<td>5,194</td>
<td>361,209</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>98.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>BENEUE</td>
<td>373,961</td>
<td>303,737</td>
<td>59.69</td>
<td>40.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>BORNO</td>
<td>473,543</td>
<td>25,640</td>
<td>94.01</td>
<td>5.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>CROSS RIVERS</td>
<td>28,386</td>
<td>414,863</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>94.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>DELTA</td>
<td>48,910</td>
<td>1211,405</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>97.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>EBONYI</td>
<td>19,518</td>
<td>323,653</td>
<td>6.96</td>
<td>93.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>EDO</td>
<td>208,469</td>
<td>286,869</td>
<td>41.48</td>
<td>58.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>EKITI</td>
<td>120,331</td>
<td>176,466</td>
<td>40.02</td>
<td>59.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>ENUGU</td>
<td>14,157</td>
<td>559,185</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>97.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>FCT</td>
<td>146,399</td>
<td>157,195</td>
<td>47.72</td>
<td>52.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>GOMBE</td>
<td>361,245</td>
<td>96,873</td>
<td>78.85</td>
<td>21.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>133,253</td>
<td>559,185</td>
<td>19.24</td>
<td>80.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>JEGAWA</td>
<td>885,988</td>
<td>142,904</td>
<td>85.39</td>
<td>14.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>KADUNA</td>
<td>1,127,760</td>
<td>484,805</td>
<td>71.56</td>
<td>28.44</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>KANO</td>
<td>1,906,999</td>
<td>217,755</td>
<td>89.82</td>
<td>10.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>KASTINA</td>
<td>1,345,441</td>
<td>98,937</td>
<td>92.83</td>
<td>7.17</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>KEBBI</td>
<td>567,883</td>
<td>100,937</td>
<td>85.39</td>
<td>14.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>KOGI</td>
<td>264,851</td>
<td>149,987</td>
<td>62.86</td>
<td>37.14</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>KWARA</td>
<td>302,146</td>
<td>132,602</td>
<td>69.50</td>
<td>30.50</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>LAGOS</td>
<td>792,460</td>
<td>632,327</td>
<td>55.65</td>
<td>44.35</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>NASARAWA</td>
<td>236,838</td>
<td>273,460</td>
<td>46.30</td>
<td>53.60</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>NIGER</td>
<td>657,678</td>
<td>149,222</td>
<td>81.43</td>
<td>18.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>OGUN</td>
<td>308,290</td>
<td>207,950</td>
<td>57.82</td>
<td>42.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>ONDO</td>
<td>299,889</td>
<td>251,368</td>
<td>53.45</td>
<td>46.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>OSUN</td>
<td>383,603</td>
<td>249,929</td>
<td>59.69</td>
<td>40.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>OYO</td>
<td>528,620</td>
<td>303,376</td>
<td>64.98</td>
<td>35.02</td>
</tr>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>PLATEAU</td>
<td>429,140</td>
<td>549,615</td>
<td>43.85</td>
<td>56.15</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>RIVERS</td>
<td>69,238</td>
<td>1,487,075</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>96.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>SOKOTO</td>
<td>671,926</td>
<td>152,199</td>
<td>81.53</td>
<td>18.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>TARABA</td>
<td>261,326</td>
<td>310,800</td>
<td>48.21</td>
<td>51.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>YOBE</td>
<td>446,265</td>
<td>25,526</td>
<td>95.41</td>
<td>4.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>ZAMFARA</td>
<td>612,202</td>
<td>144,833</td>
<td>86.24</td>
<td>13.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Governorship Election Results.

Governorship Election Results at a Glance

1. Abia
   - Alex Otti: APGA (Inconclusive)
   - Nyere Anyim: APC
   - Okezie Ikpeazu: PDP

2. Adamawa
   - Jibrilla Bindo: APC (206.576 Elected)
   - Markus Gundiri: SDP (124.326)
   - Nuhu Ribadu: PDP (64.519)

3. Akwa Ibom
   - Udorn Emmanue: PDP (996.071 Elected)
   - Umana Umana: APC (89.865)
   - Samuel Akpan: AP (10.598)

4. Rivers
   - Nyesom Wike: PDP (1,029.102 Elected)
   - Dakuku Peterside: APC (124.896)
   - Tonye Princewill: LP (10.142)

5. Plateau
   - Simon Lalong: APC (564.913 Elected)
   - Gyang Pwajok: ADP (520.627)

6. Jigawa
   - Badaru Abubakar: APC (648.045 Elected)
   - Aminu Ringim: PDP (205.132)

7. Gombe
   - Ibrahim Dankwambo: PDP (285.369 Re-Elected)
   - Inuwa Yahya: AP (205.132)

8. Ogun
   - Ibikunle Amosun: APC (306.988 Re-Elected)
   - Gboyega Isiaka: PDP (201.440)
   - Akin Odunsi: SDP (25.826)

9. Oyo
   - Abiola Ajimobi: APC (327.310 Re-Elected)
   - Rasheed Ladoja: AP (254.520)
   - Alass Akala: LP (184.111)
   - Teslim Folarin: PDP (79.019)

10. Enugu
    - Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi: PDP (482.227 Elected)
    - Okey Ezea: APC (43.839)
    - Kanayo Oguakwa: PDC (4.814)

11. Lagos
    - Akinwumi Ambode: APC (811.994 Elected)
    - Jimi Agbaje: LP (659.788)

12. Delta
    - Ifeanyi Okowa: PDP (724.680 Elected)
    - Great Ogbor: LP (130.028)
    - O'tega Emerhor: APC (67.825)

13. Bauchi
    - Mohammed Abubakar: APC (654.934 Elected)
    - Auwal Jatau: SDP (282.650)

14. Kastina
    - Aminu Masari: APC (943.085)
    - Musa Nuhun: PDP (476.768)
    - Yakubu Lado: PDM (50.361)

15. Kaduna
    - Nasir el-Rufai: APC (1,117.635 Elected)
    - Ramallan Yero: PDP (485.833)

16. Kwara
    - AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq: APC (295.822 Re-Elected)
    - Simeon Ajibola: PDP (115.220)

17. Kano
    - Umar Ganduje: APC (1,546.343 Elected)
    - Sagir Takai: PDP (509.726)

18. Sokoto
    - Aminu Tambuwal: APC (647.609 Elected)
    - Abdalla wali: PDP (269.007)

19. Zamfara
    - Abdul Aziz Yari: APC (716.964 Re-Elected)
    - Mamuda Shinkafi: PDP (201.938)
    - Sani Shinkafi: APGA (2.385)

20. Ebonyi
    - David Umahi: PDP (289.867 Elected)
    - Edward Nkwego: LP (124.817)

Table 3: Continued

Governorship Election Results at a Glance

21. Niger
    - Sani Bello: APC (593.702 Elected)
    - Umar Nasko: PDP (239.772)

22. Nasarawa
    - Tanko Al-makura: APC (309.746 Re-Elected)
    - Labaran Maku: PDP (175.983)

23. Borno
    - Kashim Shettima: APC (422.932 Elected)
    - Allagi Ga’amo: PDP (313.878)

24. Benue
    - Samuel Ortom: APC (422.932)
    - Terhemen Tarzoor: PDP (313.878)

25. Cross River
    - Ben Ayade: APC (342.016 Elected)
    - Odey Ochicha: PDP (53.983)

26. Imo
    - Rochas Okorocha: APC (334.847 Elected)

27. Taraba
    - Aisha Jummai Al-hasan: APC (Inconclusive)

28. Yobe
    - Ibrahim Gaidam: APC (334.847 Elected)
    - Adamu waziri: PDP (179.700)

29. Kebbi
    - Atiku Bagudu: APC (477.376 Elected)
    - Sarkin-Yaki Belo: PDP (293.443)

APC – 18 States, PD P – 7 States, Inconclusive – 4 States, Total – 29 States


From the data on table 2 above, it is quite obvious that General Mohammadu Buhari (rtd) of All Progressive Congress Scored a total of 15,424,683, representing 53.96 percent of the total votes cast to defeat the incumbent President, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan who pooled 12,853,162 votes representing 44.96 percent.

Analytically, the results as evidenced in table 2 show that both leading candidates met the minimum requirement of 25 percent votes cast in 24 states. Though, APC candidate, Gen. Buhari defeated President Jonathan of the PDP with 2,571,521 votes in a historic election that Nigerians and the international community saw a Nigerian leader conceding electoral defeat for the first time in history. In the governorship election results as shown above, APC won in 18 states and PDP won in only 7 states with 4 states declared inconclusive by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

However, the historic concession of defeat by the incumbent President Jonathan Provokes a question as to what might have caused People’s Democratic Party’s abysmal failure in the 2015 General election in spite of its over 15 years of rulership in Nigeria? Of course, this will take us to the discussion of immediate/Remote causes of PDP’s Defeat in the 2015 General Election.

Immediate and Remote Causes of People’s Democratic Party (PDP) Defeat: Several factors contributed to the PDP’s defeat. For purpose of clarity, this section would be devoted to the discussion of these factors in detail.

631
Economic Issues: The PDP led government in Nigeria has over the years made campaign promises of transforming the Nigerian economy but all to no avail. This is because the fall in oil price and rising foreign exchange rate and as poverty level continued to rise astronomically, the perception of Nigerian citizens changed to the extent that they believed that the PDP government has unwittingly encouraged corruption and its adverse effects on the people. The political jiggery-pokery in the governance of the country inspired Nigerians to make cacophonous calls for change at all cost.

Security Challenges: The rising spate of insurgency in the country especially in the North-East claimed many lives of innocent Nigerians is another factor that led to PDP tsunami. This is occasioned by the fact that Nigerians lost faith with the Jonathan led administration in addressing the security challenges.

Lack of Internal Democracy in the PDP: The All Progressive Congress took advantage of the internal crisis suffered by the peoples Democratic Party. They opened their door so wide to welcome any aggrieved member of the PDP. Of course, this lack of internal democracy caused disaffection among influential Party chieftains notably governors; Tanko Al Makura of Nasarawa State, Rotimi Amaechi of Rivers State, Murtala Nyako of Adamawa State, Abdulfatah Ahmed of Kwara State, Rebiu Kwankwosa of Kano and former President Obasanjo, all dumped PDP and joined APC. The defection of these influential PDP members to APC adversely affected the fortunes of the Party [19].

Aggressive Membership Drive and Enlightenment Rallies: The APC as a party never played to the gallery. They organized mega political rallies and went ahead to sensitize its members at various political wards as far as engaging in house to house campaigns to educate the electorate on the need for change whereas PDP was busy chanting the song of transformation agenda under the garb of Transformation Agenda of Nigeria (TAN) which formed the basis of PDP’s Campaign strategy.

Presentation of Party Programmes to the Electorates: This is one of the major factors that contributed to the APC victories during the 2015 Presidential elections. APC assured Nigerians that the issues of insecurity will be a thing of the past immediately they take over the leadership of the country. The people, especially the Northerners being interested in the protection of their lives and property had no option than to vote for a party that has assured them of security.

The Card Reader Innovation: The immediate cause of PDP’s defeat was the introduction of the Biometric Card Reader Machine and the permanent voters Card (PVC), in the 2015 election, in spite of its dysfunction in some places. The Card Reader ensured that the incidences of rigging and related electoral fraud were greatly minimized.

APC Merger as a Counter – Force: The coalition that gave birth to the All Progressive Congress (APC), Provided a formidable match for the PDP in the elections. The merger represents victory for the APC largely because of the instrumentality of the South-West coupled with Pockets of Loyalists in other states within the South-East.

Lessons from the Elections: The outcome of the general elections of 2015 in Nigeria was a big lesson to all Politicians. It shows that Nigerians are becoming more politically conscious when it comes to voting in elections. Electorates want candidates that would serve them better as their preferred choices, not necessarily because of political party affiliation.

The PDP has learnt its lessons from its mistakes by taking electorates for granted. Instead of serving the general Public, PDP leaders were putting personal interest above public interest hence, the electorates voted some of them out including the PDP Presidential Candidate, Dr. GoodLuck Ebele Jonathan and some PDP governors.

Importantly, with the 2015 elections, the PDP shall assume the status of opposition with 45 Senators as against APC 64 in the 109 member chamber [20]. Again, the PDP members in the House of Representatives had dropped to 162 as against APC with 179, thereby putting it in the minority position in the nation’s lower chamber. Relatedly, PDP has also lost its vantage position in the Federal Executive Council for the same reason that PDP governors have dropped drastically in favour of the APC that has taken dominance.

The PDP’s tsunami resulted from poor management of its internal crises, inability to tame unbridled ambitions of its members, lack of internal democracy, corruption and the unmitigated imposition of unpopular candidates inter alia.
CONCLUSION

This paper in the context of the contention of the theoretical framework of analysis employed, examined the performance of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) in Nigeria in the 2015 General election. It established that the PDP has demonstrated incompetence in nurturing the values of democracy and governance. The PDP impedes the fundamental elements of democracy and good governance through its inability to promote equality, popular participation, accountability, transparency and respect for rule of law. Although the programmes and goals of the PDP were quite laudable, the party has not been able to systematically pursue and realize them especially the ding dung song of transformation agenda that characterized the GoodLuck administration between 2011 to 2015.

The PDP has been relentlessly bogged down by internal wrangling, squabbles, mutual distrust, open antagonism, vindictive war, washing of dirty linen in the Public and intolerance for opposition parties with reckless abandon to pursue its programmes and objectives. In net, there has been the disconnection between its policies and politics. Instead of pursing common interest, the party was beholden to the interest of selected few. It is this type of politics that led to mounting mass disillusionment and discontentment with President GoodLuck led government. Importantly, the people were increasingly alienated from the Nigerian state due to its rapid decline in capacity, legitimacy and relevance in promoting genuine development and sense of security among the Nigerian citizens.

Recommendations: From the analogy, the paper therefore made the following recommendations;

Firstly, the leadership of PDP must be involved in policy articulation and policy making and implementation in order to keep its adherents at various levels to the objectives of the party.

Secondly, the People’s Democratic Party must develop a mass based, oriented and directed approach. This is because, politics is the struggle for power and power in democracy and as proclaimed in the slogan of the PDP belongs to the people. It is not enough therefore to say power belongs to the people when in reality power belongs to only a pocket of individuals.

Thirdly, there has to be unity of command in the party leadership. Disciplinary measures must be taken against individuals or groups for actions inimical to the party’s ideological stance.

Fourthly, the membership of the PDP must learn to develop the spirit of sportsmanship in politics. This is because life is only a game of give and take and the game of politics should not be regarded as do or die affairs. Thus, the spirit of sportsmanship is a gateway to the elimination of indiscipline and the promotion of democratic tenets and good governance.

References


