

## Comparative Analysis of 2015 and 2019 Presidential Elections in Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

The study examined the issues and challenges that confronted the Nigerian Election Management Body, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the processing of the 2015 and 2019 Presidential Elections in Nigeria. The researcher used questionnaire, oral interview and group discussions, as well as other secondary sources (books, journals, magazines, internet materials etc) for the collection of data for the study. Participatory theory of Democracy was used in the discussions. The major findings of this study show that prolonged and delayed court orders, pronouncements, and judgments cause logistic challenges to the Electoral Management body. Other findings include that vote buying and monetary inducements make some electorates and even some personnel of the INEC to disregard proper electoral processes. This unethical conducts do not augur well with our growing democracy. The study recommends that judiciary should endeavour to conclude elections petitions in good time before the proposed election date. Further there is need for attitudinal improvement by many Nigerian electorates in order to improve our election results..

Keywords: 2015 and 2019 Presidential elections.

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### INTRODUCTION

The 2015 Presidential Election in Nigeria was contested mainly between the then ruling party, the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) and the newly formed All Progressive Congress (APC). That was because the two main political parties, (the Peoples' Democratic Party and All Progressive Congress) scored a total of twenty eight million five hundred and eighty seven thousand five hundred and sixty four (28,587, 564) votes representing, 98.92% of the total valid votes cast in the 2015 Presidential election [1].

The formation of the All Progressive Congress was because the other political parties that were in opposition to PDP from 1999-2015 knew that they could not be able to win and displace PDP without formation of an alliance. That alliance gave birth to the All Progressive Congress. Objectives of the study

The study was set to achieve the following objectives.

- Source and explain areas where the Independent National Electoral Commission needs to improve upon in the preparation of the next presidential election.

- Proffering recommendations on how to make the next presidential election more credible, peaceful and more acceptable.

The study addressed the following research questions

- a) What are the challenging issues that confronted 2015 and 2019 presidential elections in Nigeria.
- b) Did the Electoral Body (INEC) improve the quality of 2019 Presidential Election over that of 2015.
- c) How would the Electoral Body conduct the next presidential election in Nigeria to take care of the logistics and other challenges encountered in 2015 and 2019.

### METHODOLOGY

Relevant Primary sources of data (Observation, interview, group discussions and questionnaire) were sourced from respondents while the secondary data were obtained from existing literature documented in books, journals, published articles, magazines, newspapers, government publications and internet materials.

Further, the views of the respondents in respect of significant improvement in the processing and credibility of 2019 Presidential Election over that of 2015 were computed using chi-square statistics.

**Preparation for 2015 Presidential Election by the main opposition parties**

As the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) ruled Nigeria from 29<sup>th</sup> May 1999 to 28<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the other political parties noted that they may not be able to displace PDP and rule the country without formation of an alliance. They therefore decided to form an alliance. The All Progressives Congress (APC) was formed as an alliance of some opposition political parties namely, the Action Congress for Progressive Change (ACPC), the All Nigeria

Peoples Party (ANPP) and the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) [2]. During the primary election of the All Progressives Congress (APC) held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014, the retired Major General Muhammadu Buhari (former Military Head of State) who came second in 2011 presidential election defeated other contestants in the alliance. The other contestants in the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014 primaries of APC were Rabiw Kwankwaso (former Kano State Governor), Alahaji Atiku Abubakar (former Vice President), Rochas Okorochoa (the then Imo State Governor), and Chief Sam Nda Isaiah who was a news editor. On 17<sup>th</sup> December 2014, APC chose Professor Yemi Osinbajo, a legal luminary as the Vice Presidential candidate of the party.

**Table 1. Result of the APC 2014 primary Election result**

CANDIDATE	VOTES OBTAINED	PERCENTAGE
Alahaji Muhammadu Buhari	3,430	57.2
Alahaji Rabiw Kwankwaso	974	16.3
Alahaji Atiku Abubakar	954	15.9
Alahaji Rochas Okorochoa	400	10.4
Alahaji Sam Nda Isaiah	10	0.2
Total	5,992	100

Sources: Nigerian Eye Magazine

**2015 Presidential Elections in Nigeria**

The 2015 Presidential election was held on 28<sup>th</sup> day of March 2015. The series of the elections were first scheduled to commence on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2015 but were postponed mainly to ensure that majority of Nigerians collected their Permanent Voters Cards (PVC) and to reduce the actions of Boko Haram insurgency in North-eastern states of Nigeria. The presidential election was extended to 29<sup>th</sup> March 2015 in some places due to delays caused by the use of biometric card reader machines.

The 2015 Presidential Election was special in the sense that it was the first time in Nigeria an incumbent President lost re-election. The main opposition candidate Alhaji Muhammadu Buhari won the presidential election by more than 2.5

million votes. The incumbent President Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan conceded defeat on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, even before the entire results from the 36 states were announced, which exemplified humility and quality of good leadership character which he (Jonathan) had been preaching that, *“nobody’s political ambition is worth the blood of any Nigerian”*. That singular act by President Jonathan saved a lot of impending crisis that could have destabilized Nigeria. This display of sincerity and honest spirit of sportsmanship exhibited by President Jonathan should be copied by Nigerians in political positions. [3] The President elect (Alahaji Muahmmadu Buhari) was sworn-in on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The 2015 Presidential election result is as shown on table 2

**Table 2: 2015 PRESEDENTIAL ELECTION RESULT FROM THE INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (NERC)**

**DATE OF THE ELECTION: MARCH 28, 2015  
SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

S/N	NAME OF STATE	CODE	NO OF REGD. VOTERS	NO OF ACCRED VOTERS	APC	PDP	NO OF VALID VOTES	NO OF REJECTED VOTES	TOTAL VOTES CAST
1	ABIA	AB	1,349,134	442,538	13,394	368,303	391,045	10,004	401,049
2	ADAMAWA	AD	1,518,123	709,993	374,701	251,664	636,018	25,192	661,210
3	AKWA IBOM	AK	1,644,481	1,074,070	58,411	953,304	1,017,064	11,487	1,028,551
4	ANAMBRA	AN	1,963,427	774,430	17,926	660,762	688,584	14,825	703,409
5	BAUCHI	BA	2,053,484	1,094,069	531,598	86,085	1,020,338	19,437	1,039,775
6	BAYELSA	BY	605,637	384,789	5,194	361,209	367,067	4,672	371,739
7	BENUE	BN	1,893,596	754,634	373,961	303,737	683,264	19,867	703,131
8	BORNO	BO	1,799,669	554,759	473,543	25,640	501,920	13,088	515,008
9	CROSS RIVER	CR	1,144,288	500,577	28,368	414,863	450,514	15,392	455,906
10	DELTA	DT	2,044,372	1,350,914	48,910	1,211,405	1,267,773	17,075	1,284,848
011	EBONYI	EB	1,071,226	425,301	19,518	323,653	363,888	29,449	393,337
12	EDO	ED	1,650,552	599,166	208,469	286,869	500,451	22,334	552,785
13	EKIITI	EK	723,255	323,739	120,331	176,466	300,691	8,754	309,445
14	ENUGU	EN	1,381,563	616,112	14,157	553,003	573,173	12,459	585,632
15	GOMBE	GM	1,110,105	515,828	361,245	96,873	460,599	12,845	473,444

16	IMO	IM	1,747,681	801,712	133,253	559,185	702,964	28,957	731,921
17	JIGAWA	JG	1,815,839	1,158,428	885,988	142,904	1,037,564	34,325	1,071,889
18	KADUNA	KD	3,361,793	1,746,031	1,127,760	484,085	1,617,482	32,719	1650,201
19	KANO	KN	4,943,862	2,364,434	1,903,999	215,779	2,128,821	43,626	2,172,447
20	KASTINA	KT	2,842,741	1,578,646	1,345,441	98,937	1,449,426	32,288	1,481,714
21	KEBBI	KB	1,497,763	792,817	567,883	100,972	677,003	38,119	715,122
22	KOGI	KG	1,350,883	476,839	264,851	149,987	421,328	17,959	439,287
23	KWARA	KW	1,181,032	489,360	302,146	132,602	440,080	21,321	461,401
24	LAGOS	LA	5,827,846	1,678,846	792,460	632,327	1,443,686	52,289	1,495,975
25	NASARAWA	NS	1,222,054	562,959	236,838	273,460	511,547	10,094	521,641
26	NIGER	NG	1,995,679	933,607	675,678	149,222	813,671	31,012	884,683
27	OGUN	OG	1,709,409	594,975	308,290	207,950	533,172	26,441	559,613
28	ONDO	OD	1,501,549	618,040	299,889	251,368	561,056	22,379	582,435
29	OSUN	OS	1,378,113	683,169	383,603	249,929	642,625	20,758	663,373
30	OYO	OY	2,344,448	1,073,849	528,620	303,376	881,352	47,254	928,606
31	PLATEAU	PL	1,977,211	1,076,833	429,140	549,615	982,388	18,304	1,000,692
32	RIVERS	RV	2,324,300	1,643,409	69,238	1,487,075	1,565,461	19,307	1,584,768
33	SOKOTO	SO	1,663,127	988,899	671,926	152,199	834,259	42,110	876,369
34	TARABA	TR	1,374,307	638,578	261,326	310,800	579,677	23,039	602,716

35	YOBE	YB	1,077,942	520,127	446,265	25,526	473,769	17,971	491,767
36	ZAMFARA	ZF	1,484,941	875,049	612,202	144,833	761,022	19,157	780,179
37	FCT	FCT	885,573	344,056	146,399	157,195	306,805	9,210	916,015
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>67,422,005</b>	<b>31,746,490</b>	<b>15,424,921</b>	<b>12,853,162</b>	<b>28,587,564</b>	<b>844,519</b>	<b>29,432,083</b>

<b>a</b>	<b>Total Number of Registered Voters</b>	<b>67,422,005</b>
<b>b</b>	Total Number Accredited Voters	31,746,490
<b>c</b>	Total Number of Valid Votes	28,587,564
<b>d</b>	Total Number of Rejected Votes	844,519
<b>e</b>	Total Number of Votes Cast	29,432,083

**Source:** INEC

The number of registered voters in the 2015 presidential election was sixty seven million four hundred and twenty two thousand and five (67,422,005). Out of the number of registered voters, the number that were accredited to vote was thirty one million seven hundred and forty six thousand four hundred and ninety (31,746,490) representing 47.09 percent of the registered voters. This shows that less than fifty percent (50%) of the registered voters participated in the election. There is therefore great need for more political education in Nigeria, so that more Nigerian would participate in

determining who will lead them. The greater the number that participate in elections the more popular and more acceptable that government would be.

The total number of votes obtained by the other twelve (12) political parties during the March 28, 2015 presidential election was three hundred and nine thousand four hundred and eighty one (309,481) which was 2.0% of the total votes which President Muhammadu Buhari obtained.

The Number of votes obtained by twelve (12) other Presidential Candidates in 2015 election are as follows.

**Table 3: 2015 other Political Parties, their presidential candidates and votes they obtained**

S/N	Name of political party	Presidential Candidates	Gender	Abbr	Total votes obtained
1	Accord Alliance	Sen. Tunde Anifowose-Kelani	M	AA	22,125
2	Allied Congress Party of Nigeria	Alhaji Ganiyui O. Galadima	M	ACPN	40,311
3	Alliance for Democracy	Rafiu Salau	M	AD	30,673
4	African Democratic Congress	Dr. Mani Ibrahim Ahmed	M	ADC	29,666
5	African Peoples Alliance	Ayeni Musa Adebayo	M	APA	53,537
6	Citizens Populace Party	Chief Sam Eke	M	CPP	36,300
7	Hope Party	Chief Ambrose Albert Owru	M	HOPE	7,435
8	KOWA Party	Comfort Oluremi Sonaiya	F	KOWA	13,076
9	National Conscience Party	Chief Martin Onovo	M	NCP	24,455
10	Peoples Party of Nigeria	Allagaoa Kelvin Chinedu	M	PPN	24,475
11	United Democratic Party	Godson Mgbodile O. Okoye	M	UDP	9,208
12	United Progressive Party	Dr. Chekwes Okorie	M	UPP	18,220
<b>Total votes obtained by 12 other political parties</b>					<b>309,481</b>

Source: INEC

### 2019 Presidential Election in Nigeria

Even though Nigeria as at 2019 has over ninety (90) political parties, the 2019 presidential election was contested mainly between the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC) and the main opposition political party, the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP).

Just like in 2015, the 2019 presidential election in Nigeria was faced with many challenges that compelled the electoral body (INEC) to embark on last minute rescheduling of the election from February 16, to 23<sup>rd</sup> February for what the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) attributed to logistics and operational challenges.

**Presidential Election Results held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2019**

STATES	APC	PDP
Abia	85,058	219,698
Adamawa	378,078	410,266
Akwa Ibom	175,429	395,832
Anambra	33,298	524,738
Bauchi	798,428	209,313
Bayelsa	118,821	197,933
Benue	347,668	356,817
Borno	836,496	71,788
Cross River	117,302	295,737
Delta	221,292	594,068
Ebonyi	90,726	258,573
Edo	267,842	275,691
Ekiti	219,231	154,032
Enugu	54,423	355,553
Gombe	402,961	138,484
Imo	140,463	334,923
Jigawa	794,738	289,895
Kaduna	993,445	649,612
Kano	1,464,768	391,593
Katsina	1,232,133	308,056
Kebbi	581,552	154,282
Kogi	285,894	218,207
Kwara	308,984	138,184
Lagos	580,825	448,015
Nasarawa	289,903	283,847
Niger	612,371	218,052
Ogun	281,762	194,655
Ondo	241,769	275,901
Osun	347,634	337,377
Oyo	365,229	366,690
Plateau	468,555	548,665
Rivers	150,710	473,971
Sokoto	490,333	361,604
Taraba	324,906	374,743
Yobe	497,914	50,763
Zamfara	438,682	125,423
FCT	152,224	259,997
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,191,847</b>	<b>11,262,978</b>

Source: INEC

From the election figures the number of Nigeria electorate that participated in the 2019 Presidential election just as that of 2015 was less than fifty percent (50%)

#### **Findings**

There were reports that the nomination of candidates by the Political Parties both in 2015 and 2019 Presidential Elections were hazy. Due to the facts that those nominations were hazy, the issues arising from them were contested in courts. The courts judgments, orders and

pronouncements delayed the procurement and printing of ballot papers and result sheets.

Further, removing the names and logos of political parties and changing the names of parties' candidates very close to the date of elections on account of court orders and pronouncements were very problematic and misleading to the electorate. It implies that the electoral body (INEC) could not resolve many logistics problems before the day of the

election. INEC could not adequately address the logistics challenges, issues, orders and pronouncements arising from such late directives from courts and they contributed to the logistics challenges that delay the conclusion of the planning of the election programmes. Late release of the courts directives do delayed the actions of the Electoral Management Body, and therefore lead to postponement of election date. Both 2015 and 2019 presidential elections were postponed. That of 2019 was postponed few hours before the time of the election.

Information from respondents shows that both 2015 and 2019 Presidential elections produced very many petitions. The 2019 elections produced more electoral petitions than that of 2015. The 2019 elections produced seven hundred and thirty six (736) petitions at the Federal and State levels (Court of Appeal). There were four petitions against the re-election of Alhaji Mohammadu Buhari. The Senatorial elections held in 109 senatorial districts attracted two hundred and seven (207) election petitions. The House of Representatives conducted in three hundred and sixty (360) Federal Constituencies attracted One hundred and one (101) petitions. The States' Houses of Assembly elections yielded three hundred and eighty one (381) petitions. The high numbers of petitions that still follow most elections in Nigeria, still agree with the views of Justice George Oguntade of the Supreme Court of Nigeria who in 2009 at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of uninterrupted democracy in Nigeria stated thus:

*The barrage of litigations which followed the conducts of the election so far conducted in the last ten years was enough sign that all was not well with the democracy in the country [1]*

The respondents views in respect of significant improvement in the processing and credibility of 2019 Presidential Election over that of the 2015, show that

The Pre-elections matters should be disposed of at least sixty (60) days before the commencement of the elections. This would allow the Election Management body, the required time to conclude the

there was no significant improvement in the processing and credibility of the 2019 election over that of the 2015 election.

That implies that we have learnt little or nothing in terms of our election processes.

There are other issues most of which were in the proposed amendment of the 2010 Electoral Act, that was not assented before the 2019 Presidential Election.

Election observers namely Centre for Credible Leadership and Citizen Awareness, Pan African Women Project, Republic of South Africa, International Leadership Initiative and Stafford Bisong of the Leadership Initiative expressed sadness at the level of sharp practices and killings during the 2019 elections. They stated that killings took place in Cross River, Imo, Akwa-ibom, Delta, Kogi and Rivers States.

They stated:

We therefore, say without any sense of contradiction or equivocation that the outcome of that election did not justify the assurances that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) gave, either before the costly postponement of the election or days before the exercise proper (Tell Magazine March 11, 2019)

It was further reported that over one million votes were cancelled in 2019 presidential election against eight hundred and forty four thousand, five hundred and nineteen (844,519) votes that were rejected in 2015 presidential election.

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#### CONCLUSION

procurement, printing and distribution of election materials (both non-sensitive and sensitive ones). If the elections are conducted on the proposed date, the resources of the nation will be saved.



Further, the proposed amendments to the Electoral Act before the 2019 elections which the ruling APC government did not approve should be reconsidered by the Ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) Legislators and assented to before the next general elections. Those political parties that failed to win even one State governorship position should be de-registered by the Electoral

Management Commission. This is because they lack the requisite ingredients and should not be consuming the resources of the nation.

It is hoped that when the above findings and recommendations are implemented, elections in Nigeria will be less problematic and more acceptable.

#### REFERENCES

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