

The Implications of Party Leadership Crises on Nigerian Democracy: A Comparative Analysis of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressives Congress (APC)

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ABSTRACT

Political parties are the engine wheel and the machinery on which the vehicle of democracy thrives. Democracies require sound parties with focused leadership and a clear ideology for national development on the assumption of power. In Nigeria, the two dominant ruling parties of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) which ruled for sixteen years and the All Progressives Congress (APC) which is currently in its fifth year of ruling are pre-occupied with internal leadership crises which collapsed the former and are threatening to tear the latter today. The inability of the country's political leaders to establish parties with a dedicated and pragmatic party leadership is affecting the democratic governance in the country despite having the experience of the longest experiment in the history of the country. The research utilised both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources of data consist of an in-depth personal interview with some selected stakeholders in the subject matter of study and direct participant observation. The secondary sources are documented materials such as books, journals, internet sources and other related documents. A suitable framework; Game Theory was adopted to support the views presented in the work. The data obtained were discussed, analysed and interpreted using thematic content analysis and statistical modules. The work discovered that the leadership crises in the two dominant parties in Nigeria are affecting democratic delivery and good governance because of the power tussle. The work recommends among others that the parties must develop a culture of internal democracy and ideological focus with a frame for national interest and development.

KEYWORDS

All progressives congress; democracy; leadership crisis; Nigeria; parties; Peoples Democratic Party

INTRODUCTION

Political parties sustain democracy and embellish good governance in many countries. They serve as the engine wheel in which the machinery of democratic government moves its train of governance for the progress and development of any state (Agbaje, 2008). Political parties play the role of political awareness, leadership recruitment, opposition, policy agenda setting and execution, when in power, and community development services (Norris, 2005). For political parties to undertake such a giant task, it must be organised, coordinated, sustained and designed with some uncompromising values and ethics that will foster cooperation and unity of the members even in the time of conflict of interest

(Duverger, 1963). Ideology and principles are two fundamentals that will guarantee the organisation, coordination and sustainability of parties in democracies (Duverger, 1966).

There are different views on what parties are and what their aim should be. Many scholars (Diamond & Gunther, 2001; Gunther, Montero & Linz, 2002; Biezen, 2003; Scarrow, 2005; Luther & Deschouwer, 2005; Deonandan, Close & Prevost; Karz, 2007; Gauja, 2010; Dalton, Farrell & MacAllister, 2011; Speijcken, 2011 and Cross, Kenig, Pruyssers & Rahat, 2016) argue that parties should represent the will and ideology of the like-minds in the pursuance of power for initiating policies and implementing them if power is successfully captured. Besides, parties should play the role of harmonisation of conflictual interests of the members while at the same time serving as torchbearers to the public in terms of mobilisation, recruitment, provision of a platform for representation and support base for civic voter education and participation in the process of government especially decision-making.

There are sharp arguments (Salih, 2000; Salih, 2003; Lindberg, 2006; Salih & Nordlund, 2007; Sagar, 2009; Yadav, 2011; Elischer, 2013; Michalik, 2013 and Schofield & Callabero, 2015; Tyulkina, 2015 and Wulff, 2017) on the nature, origin, role and structure of African political parties. This is anchored on the threshold of whether parties in Africa are possessing a sound ideology and principle, and whether they are performing a role of parties that are obtained in other parts of the world. Most of the strong arguments from the above scholars perceived that parties in Africa are disjointed, disorganised, uncoordinated and unable to situate themselves towards genuine democratisation and good governance due to the legacies of colonialism and the hijack of the states by the authoritarian leadership after political independence. Since democracy cannot flourish successfully without the support of active parties, then there is a problem that must be addressed in African democracies.

Nigerian political parties are a reflection of a narrower version of African parties as observed above (Adejumobi, 2010). The vicissitudes of historical antecedents of Nigeria revealed a fragmented political structure and a party system that failed to institutionalise the process of government accordingly even under democratic practices (Diamond, 1988). The pre-colonial states in Nigerian territory that were hurriedly and arbitrarily enforced under a forceful marriage by the British colonialist turned out to be a mixed reaction of a blessing and a curse for the country because the hitherto pre-colonial entities did not harmonise themselves under the British colonialism neither in self-government after political independence (Coleman, 1960 and Campbell, 2011). Parties were set along ethnic, regional, religious and inter-tribal backgrounds instead of national interests (Nnoli, 1988). As such, Nigerian political parties continue to remain fragmented, conflictual and prone to political shocks and volatility on any minor upheaval.

Internal democracy as necessary as it is is eluding the Nigerian parties for many decades even after the successful installation of the longest democratic experimentation of over twenty years in the Fourth Republic (1999-2020). Duverger (1963), Duverger (1966), Barber (1984), Bowland & Allandheld (1985), Gunther, Diamandurous & Puhle (1995), Hallberg (2008), Gauja (2009), Ojukwu & Olaifa (2011), Okhaide (2012) and Sule & Yahaya (2019) stress that internal democracy and promotion of democracy in party politics are necessary for the success of parties and their sustainability in national politics. Internal democracy as observed by the scholars above entails allowing for a free contest, avoiding the imposition of candidates on party members and holding onto and maintenance of ideology and principles of staying and supporting the party irrespective of individual ambition.

However, despite the benefits and necessity of internal democracy, Nigerian parties especially in the Fourth Republic have turned into the arena for internal battle and an

endless struggle for power due to the insatiable lust for power by the Nigerian elites. Numerous studies (Salih, 2003; Aleyomi, 2013; Jude & Ika, 2013; Liebowitz & Ibrahim, 2013; Ibrahim & Abubakar, 2015; Mohammed, 2015; Paden, 2015; Toyin, 2014; Awofeso & Irabor, 2016; Omilusi, 2016; Sule & Yahaya, 2018 and Sule & Yahaya, 2019) highlighted the genesis, nature and dimension of intra-party conflicts in Nigeria ranging from party primaries, internal states issues, crises of national conventions, imposition of candidates and authoritarian nature of the party members in power but none of the above studies pays adequate attention to leadership crises in Nigerian parties which is a recurring issue, especially with the ruling party. On many occasions, the party leadership enmeshed in various crises affected the party's chance of winning the election or even surviving as a party. This has been the major reason why the former ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) which ruled Nigeria for sixteen (16) years rocked the boat in 2015 and lose the election to the opposition All Progressives Congress (APC). But the APC too has found itself in the same leadership crisis shortly after its assumption of power. This study, therefore, carefully identified the looming research gap in the area of investigation of internal party crises in Nigeria. While the above studies focused on the internal crises within the party from various perspectives, this study differentiates itself by presenting the aspect of the crises from the leadership angle only and on a comparative basis. None of the studies pays attention to comparing the crises in the two (2) major parties of PDP and APC so far. This is what this work aspires to achieve.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Political Parties and Democracy

Political parties are the major pillar of democracy and any genuine democratic building should lay the foundation of its blocks on the layout of sound and healthy competitive parties that are ideological and focused in nature. One of the determining factors for the sound operation of parties is party organisation. In America and most European States, parties are organised ideologically with competing for permanent interests through movements and associations of long-term partners that have a common interest (Aarts, Blaise & Smith, 2011). In developing states, the level of party organisation is fragile, fragmented, vulnerable and tender (Biezen, 2003). Political parties promote democratic governance through leadership recruitment, the offer of platform for representation, competition for power control and a watchdog or opposition in which without these activities, democracy will have no meaning or value in modern times (Maisel, 2007). Parties organise democracy and the level of democratic governance in terms of its accountability, transparency and the guarantee of public liberty and freedom are all pursued and initiated by parties (Dalton et al. 2011).

Internal Democracy and Intra-Party Conflict

Internal democracy postulates that all party members are carried along in party activities, especially in the process of decision-making and party primaries where the zenith of the struggles usually reaches its peak in the election period (Duverger, 1963). The logic of party competition and an all-encompassing process of carrying members along in running the affairs of a party is what directs the affairs of internal democracy towards a coordinated party (Sartori, 1977). In the process of internal decision-making and deliberations, all active members are curious to participate and have their voices heard out in the process. In this regard, internal democracy or party cohesion and unity are vital (Scarow, 2004). Internal democracy denotes an all-inclusive process of top to bottom and bottom-to-top approach in terms of party activities such as party primaries, campaign process, critical decision-making and policymaking and implementation (Okhaide, 2012). Internal

democracy further suggests that all party members agree to certain regulations and principles whether constitutionally or based on gentleman agreement that there would be mutual decision-making devoid of personal interest, selfishness, conflict and violation of the laid-down procedures. In the case of the eventual occurrence of a conflict, the members have accepted that it would be settled amicably without holding rancour that will collapse the party or even affect its opportunities in an election time (Sule et al. 2019). Internal democracy consists of a mutual consultation during the party's candidate selection for the general election, promotion of the party's ideology by all members, party discipline and promotion and accountability as well as transparency of the process (Awofeso et al. 2016). Hallberg (2008) suggested that two fundamental ways can be used to achieve internal democracy; advocacy and legal/regulatory rules.

Nigerian Parties, Democracy and Party Conflict

Political parties are the conveyor belt of democratic governance and to which their presence leads to an ornamental sprinkle of good governance and democratic sustainability (Johari, 2012). Classical scholars (Lowell 1913, Schumpeter 1942, Michel 1965, Duverger 1966 and Sartori 1977) see political parties as the segment of the society and a section of the state institutions which established the foundation of democratic governance. Modern scholars (Appadorai 2004, Kapur 2009 and Johari 2012) identified parties as the brainchild of individuals with a similar ideology and principles for the advancement of their interest and ideology beyond their fence to the stage of policy making and implementation through the capture of power and control. The liberals view parties as the machinery for the search and control of power to make and implement policies. The Marxists rejected that position and push forward their position that parties are the tools of the bourgeoisies' control, oppression, domination and continuous exploitation of the masses (Johari, 2011). Parties played significant responsibilities in democratic promotion among which are representation, opposition, recruitment and training of leaders, harmonising different interests and providing alternative choice framework and social services to the society (Norris 2005 and Speijcken 2011). African parties are mostly fragmented and ethnic parties that lack ideology in their operation except for scramble for power control by the national elites or ethnic champions (Salih, 2003). Democracy failed to gain root in Africa because of the essential mainstay of its survival; parties are not functioning (Lindberg, 2006). Despite the renewed democratisation which intensified the liberal approach in Africa, institutions such as parties and strong opposition are malfunctioning and weaker (Adejumobi, 2015).

People's Democratic Party (PDP)

Nigeria was prepared for a transition to democratic rule in 1999 and in the efforts toward that, three (3) parties were registered in 1998 including the PDP which was established and registered in August 1998. The people from a diverse backgrounds ranging from veteran politicians, retired army generals, domestic and international business moguls, experienced bureaucrats and technocrats participated fully in the process of its formation. A committee of elders called the G-14 and G-34 who exhibited their staunch opposition against the former military President Abacha to succeed himself as a civilian ruler coalesced into a conglomeration of the hegemony of leaders that formed the PDP. Alex Ekwueme became the first party chairman while Professor Jerry Gana emerged as the pioneer secretary of the party (Udeze, 2017). The PDP went ahead to secure a landslide victory in the 1999 General Election at all levels. In 2003, the PDP became stronger and geographically expanded its area of influence by winning more governorship seats and National Assembly members. Although the 2003 General Election was reported to have been enshrouded in a

characterised rigging and violence (Human Rights Watch, 2007), the Party succeeded in dominating the political affairs of the country for more years ahead.

The Party continued its expansion and domination in the 2007 and 2011 General Elections until it threatened to turn Nigeria into an officially one-party system in practice despite the constitutional provision for a multi-party system. The PDP became notorious for corruption, violation of laws, abuse of power and most especially internal crises at all levels from Local Government, State and Federal levels involving politicians, party leaders and office holders. The PDP was credited with several achievements in terms of infrastructure and some significant levels of development in the country amidst sharp public criticisms that the level of development did not commensurate with the huge oil money earned under its watch (Sule, 2019). The Party found itself in a crisis of party leadership which saw a rampant change of party leadership in its sixteen (16) years of ruling over ten (10) times. The protracted conflicts which reached their zenith in 2013 due to national party leadership and the issue of zoning of Presidential tickets between the North and the South created a faction in the Party that eventually scattered it and diminished its chance of winning the 2015 General Election (Ibrahim et al. 2015). Abdullahi (2017) and Adeniyi (2017) opined that PDP lost the 2015 General Election because it desired so since it has, but itself to beat, until when its members tore the party apart and jeopardised its opportunity for the continued ruling of the country. The decision by President Jonathan to contest the 2015 General Election against the gentleman agreement entered into with Northern stalwarts infuriated the North which prompted five (5) State Governors, ten (10) Senators and twenty-two (22) Members of the House of Representatives to decamp to the newly formed opposition APC. By the eve of the Election, the PDP was aware that it was pursuing a lost battle (Abdullahi, 2017).

All Progressives Congress (APC)

The ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) was formed on 6th February 2013 two (2) years before the 2015 General Election. The four (4) opposition parties of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), a faction of All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) and Muhammadu Buhari's Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) came together and agreed to form a merger after a failed attempt in 2011 to challenge the domination of the then, ruling PDP. The Party was boosted by the emergence of newPDP, a faction that emerged after the leadership crisis in the PDP's national convention. The former Vice President Alhaji Atiku Abubakar and the Abubakar Kawu Baraje led-faction together with the decamped Governors, Senators and Members House of Representatives including the Speaker of the House himself and other top national leaders finally joined the APC coalition in 2014 (Sule, Azizuddin & Mat, 2018). The PDP having perceived the danger in the strength of the opposition APC which was waxing stronger attempted to thwart its registration by fielding a pseudo application for another acronym of African Progressive Party (APC) which was thrown out by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) due to lack of credibility. The emergence of newPDP in the APC camp strengthened the party financially and politically to reposition itself towards challenging the PDP squarely.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research design is the use of a qualitative approach to research. The work is fits within the mainstream of a qualitative case study approach because it is the study of a specific case or two (2) related events that are cases of making a significant example (Creswell, 2014). In essence, it is a particularistic case study research design because it identified a particular case of analysis which is a party leadership crisis from a comparative perspective

taking two (2) particular ruling parties of PDP and APC in Nigeria (Lune & Berg, 2017). A qualitative approach to research design involves the use of strategies and techniques of data collection and analysis from multiple sources of rich data that can be gathered and coded for interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

For this research, two (2) sources of data were used. The primary source and secondary source. The primary source is the use of a qualitative interview with some selected informants among the stakeholders in the subject matter of study. The study found this interview method more feasible and reliable because it is a matter that affects some specific category resulting from the high level of political apathy in the country. The citizens do not care much about the conflicts among parties and are apathetic to them. They may not offer useful information like the stakeholders who are much interested and practically affected by the scene. Thus, informants were selected from four (4) major categories. The first is the party national executive members of the PDP and APC where four (4) of them were selected for the interview. The second category is the politicians where some political office holders from the PDP and APC were consulted for an in-depth interview based on accessibility through a chain of connections from the researchers' home towns. In this category, six (6) of them were identified and interviewed. The third category is the academicians. Three (3) senior academics (Professors of Political Science) from Universities in the North specifically in Maiduguri, Zaria and Abuja were contacted for an interview based on their expertise on the subject matter of study. The fourth category is the INEC senior officials whom three (3) of them were interviewed. The table below shows the number of selected interviewers.

Table 1. List of Informants and their Category

S/No.	Informants	Sample Selected	Population
1.	Party Executives	4	4
2.	Politicians	6	10
3.	Academicians	3	13
4.	INEC Officials	3	16
Total		16	16

Source: Field Survey 2020.

The above is relied upon based on the position of Sharan (2009) on the number of informants that is enough for qualitative research in which she suggested a minimum of four (4) and a maximum of thirty (30) depending on the need and availability of the informants for consultation. The questions were separately designed for each of the four (4) groups in a form of semi-structured questions to enable flexibility of responses. Some questions are, however, open-ended and apply to all the groups such as for instance, the knowledge of intra-party conflict and its causes. The secondary sources involved documented sources such as books, journals, reports and internet sources.

The data obtained especially from the field were coded into alphabetical numbers to enable easy identification of the information and its sources among the informants. In this regard, category A is party executives, category B politicians, category C academicians and category D INEC senior officials. Each of the informants from a particular category is given a code number. This has been presented below in a table for an easy illustration.

Table 2. The Code Number and Category of Informants

S/No.	Category	Frequency	Code Number
1.	A-Party Executives	4	A1-A4
2.	B-Politicians	6	B1-B6
3.	C-Academicians	3	C1-C3
4.	D-INEC Senior Officials	3	D1-D3
Total		16	A-D=16 Informants

Source: Field Survey 2020.

The data obtained from the field were analysed, discussed and interpreted using content analysis where some themes were extracted from the informants’ responses and discussed under sub-headings. The research used statistical techniques in presenting and analysing the data such as bar charts, pie charts, tables and a model. The data were also discussed using the previous literature on the subject of study and the practical application of the adopted theoretical framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As earlier presented above, the data obtained from the field were discussed and analysed using some themes and some statistical techniques such as tables and charts. The sub-themes identified based on the informants’ responses are PDP and APC, the process of formation, the timeline of PDP and APC leadership crises and the implications of PDP and APC crises on Nigerian democracy.

PDP and APC, the Process of Formation

The process of the formation of PDP and APC was examined briefly in the literature section. This theme aims to compare the processes and ascertain whether there are closer similarities or distinguishing features and establish the link between the crises of leadership that the parties faced. The PDP was formed in the preparation for a transition to civilian rule in 1998. There was a cynical perception (Sule, Azizuddin & Mat, 2017) that the PDP was purposely established by the conglomeration of the national elites across all divides including army generals, retired and veteran politicians, bureaucrats of a high repute, international business tycoons, godfathers, domestic business holders and other categories of power brokers in the country. The party formation was not done based on the principles of democracy and party ideology. There was no any or specific ideology that heralded the formation of the Party except the slogan of ‘Power’. In the same dimension, the APC was formed in 2013 purposely to wrestle power from the ruling PDP. It was discovered that (Sule, 2019) over 90% of the APC members were former PDP stalwarts. It was simply a transfer of aggression from the aggrieved PDP members to the APC. This scenario characterised the pattern and nature of conflicts in both the PDP and APC looking synonymous. The informants that were consulted in the research for data gathering expressed diverse views which were coded and interpreted in a summary form. The following table indicates the perception of the informants on the process of the formation of PDP and APC.

Table 3. A Summary of the Informants’ Views on the Process of the Formation of PDP and APC

S/No.	Process	PDP	APC
1.	Founders	G-13 and G-34 some members are the same as APC	The merger of ACN, ANPP, Faction of APGA, CPC and newPDP some members are the same with PDP
2.	Purpose	Capture power from military rulers	Capture power from PDP
3.	Party Leadership	Underwent several changes and crises	Is undergoing several changes and crises
4.	Party Ideology	Non-existent	Non-existent
5.	Internal Democracy	Not observed in most cases	Not observed in most cases
6.	National outlook	Adequately represented in all States of the Federation	Adequately represented in all the states of the Federation

7.	Experience of Decamping	Mass defection in 2014 to APC	Mass defection to PDP in 2018
8.	Performance evaluation from the citizens	Not satisfactory	Not satisfactory

Source: Field Survey Work 2020

If the above informants’ views are taken into cognisance, particularly since some of them are active national executives of the two (2) parties and top-ranking politicians, then, it can be deduced that the process and purpose of the formation of two parties are the same and the parties share similarities in almost all ramifications. This perhaps could be the major reason why the pattern of leadership crises in APC currently is reflecting that of the PDP in the prelude to the 2015 General Election. That of the APC is perceived towards the 2023 General Election ambition. Additionally, the informants were asked whether there is a difference between the PDP and APC in their structure and operation, they revealed the following information as presented in the figure below.

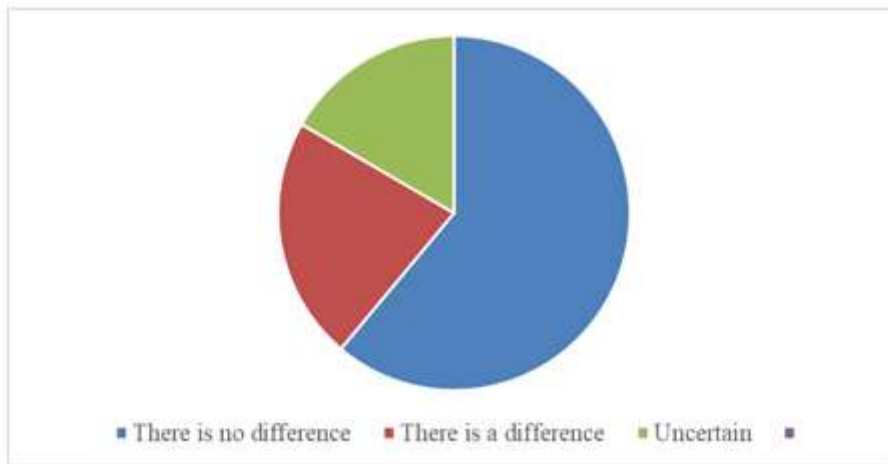


Figure 1. Showing the Informants’ Responses on the Similarities or Differences of the Nature of the Structure and Operation of PDP and APC

Source: Field Survey Work 2020

In addition to the above, the Game Theory is applicable in this context because a mere glance at the views extracted from the informants above disclosed that the elites in Nigeria are constantly struggling to capture and control power in a political competition through whatever means possible including the establishment of a party that comprised of all Nigerians of various professions assembled without a reconciling ideology or principle but for the sake of power only in 1998 under PDP. In the second instance, the process of merging the five (5) parties with their different manifesto to form the APC without any ideology except to capture power from the ruling PDP is another example of the Game of Zero-Sum Game because the elites in the APC felt they were sidelined by the ruling PDP from having access to power privilege.

Timeline of PDP and APC Leadership Crises

It is believed that the party leadership crisis in Nigerian two (2) major parties PDP and APC was the main reason behind the democratic setback in the country. A timeline of the leadership conflict indicates that most of the party leadership vacated unceremoniously as a result of conflict of interest and internal schisms among members. The undemocratic nature of the parties and the poverty of ideology contributed to the events. The following table indicates the timeline of PDP’s leadership crisis including the causes and the pattern of the crisis.

Table 4. Timeline of PDP Leadership Crisis

S/No	Leadership	Period	Crisis	Consequences
1.	Dr. Alex Ekwueme	1998	Left to contest for Presidential primaries	Vacuum for replacement
2.	Chief Solomon Lar	1998-1999	Ejected out by President Obasanjo for personal motive	Internal leadership tussle in the Party
3.	Barnabas Gemade	1999-2001	Kicked out by President Obasanjo for 2003 ambition	Internal leadership crisis
4.	Chief Audu Ogbeh	2001-2005	Resigned in controversy or forced to resign by President Obasanjo due to his stand for internal justice	Internal leadership crises and struggles for replacement
5.	Dr. Ahmadu Ali	2005-2008	Edged out of leadership due to political machinations of zoning of power and political offices	Internal leadership crisis and the struggles for replacement
6.	Vincent Ogbulafor	2008-2010	Personal hostility with his State Governor Theodore Orji on allegations of stealing of State funds worth N100 million	Vacuum for deepening leadership crisis and intensified struggles for replacement
7.	Okwesiliezi Nwodo	2010	Left controversially after a face-off with his State Governor Sullivan Chime of Enugu	Continuous leadership crisis and battles for supremacy by party members
8.	Dr. Bello Halliru Mohammed	2010	Interim leadership not confirmed after a year	A continuous search for an elusive Party leadership
9.	Alhaji Abubakar Kawu Baraje	2011-2012	Interim leadership ousted by some forces in the Presidency	Leadership struggle continuous
10.	Alhaji Bamanga Tukur	2012-2014	Resigned after the Party is torn into two due to incessant crisis and hostilities from some State Governors	Leadership crisis leading the Party towards collapse on the eve of the 2015 General Election
11.	Ahmad Adamu Muazu	2014-2015	Forced to resign on allegations of anti-party activities in the 2015 General Election	Leadership crisis continuous even in defeat without learning any lesson
12.	Senator Ali Modu Sheriff	2015-2016	Disputed Party leader with a faction of leadership leading to resignation after a court order	Parallel Party leadership putting the Party in a disarray of opposition and inter-nal leadership crisis
13.	Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi	2015-2017	Disputed Party leader with a faction of leadership leading to confirmation after a court order but was forced out by the forces within the party	Parallel Party leadership putting the Party in disarray of opposition and internal leadership crisis
14.	Uche Secondus	2017-2020	Have his leadership too challenged by some party members and the crisis is still lingering	An opposition without a sound leadership for challenging the ruling party

Sources: Ekoh 2014 and Ikenwa 2019 (the tabulations and analysis were made by the researchers 2020 based on the views of the informants).

The above scenario indicated that the PDP was intoxicated by power for sixteen (16) years which motivated them to carelessly allow their interest to override the Party's interest until they finally lost out. The ruling APC too had its share of the crisis as indicated in the table below.

Table 5. Timeline of APC National Leadership Crisis

S/No.	Leadership	Period	Crisis	Consequences
1.	John Odigie Oyegun	2014-2018	Pressurised to leave his ambition for a second term by the Party leader, Bola Ahmed Tinubu due to his alleged ambition for the 2023 Presidency	Set the foundation for the internal leadership crisis
2.	Adams Aliyu Oshiomhole	2018-2020	His leadership was opposed from inception leading to an internal crisis ahead of the 2019 General Election	The internal leadership crisis led the Party to lose many States including Zamfara, Bauchi, Oyo and Adamawa.
3.	APC splits into two: Adam Oshiomhole led the faction and R-APC under Buba Galadima	2018	The split of the party into APC and Reformed-APC or R-APC threatened to scatter the Party and has affected its chances in the 2019 General Election	Many APC stalwarts decamped to PDP and the Party lost many seats and States from the crisis
4.	Oshiomhole was suspended and reinstated	2020	The crisis with his State Governor in Edo Godwin Obaseki which led to his suspension all perceived along the line of Tinubu's ambition of 2023 Presidency who is behind the embattled Party leader.	The crisis will linger and may lead to the repeat of what happened to PDP in 2015 in the 2023 General Election where the Party may lose the Election to an opposition
5.	Abdullahi Adamu	2022 and present	Imposed by alleged cabals in the Presidency together with most of his executive members in a convention that is bereft of internal democracy but forceful imposition and arm-twisting.	The attempt by the leadership to impose Ahmed Lawan, the Senate President as the APC flagbearer for the 2023 Presidential Election caused a rebellion by state Governors and a sour relationship between the party leadership and many members.

This Day Editorial March 9 2020 (Compiled, tabulated and analysed by the researchers 2020 and the inclusion of the 2022 event is based on observation of the researchers).

The above timeline of the PDP and APC crisis is supported by the informants' views of what are the major lead causes of the leadership crisis. The views were summarised and presented in the chart below.

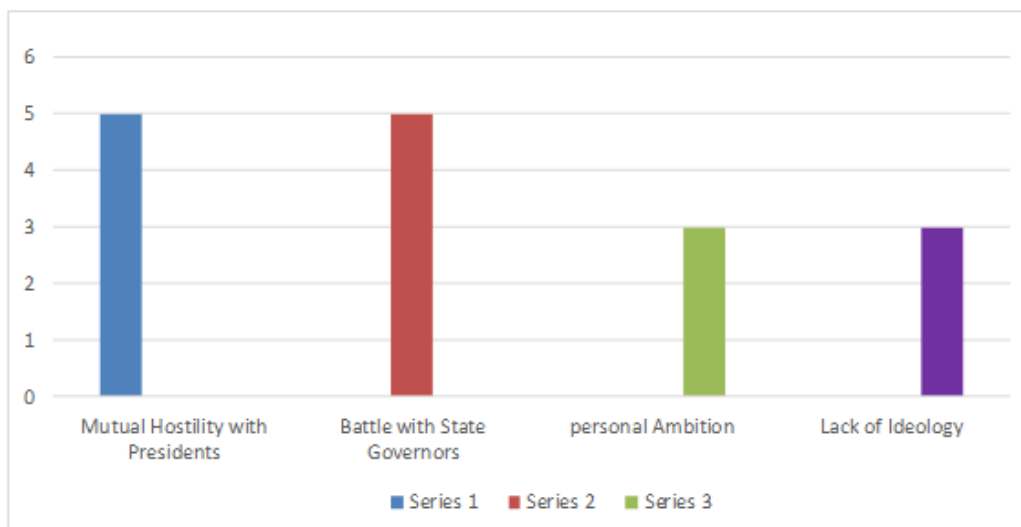


Figure 2. Summary of Informants’ Views on the Major Causes of Party Leadership Crisis in PDP and APC

Source: Field Survey Work 2020.

The above views are also supported by the Game Theory in its assumption that political actors are players that compete for power in an environment without sometimes being logical and rational. The scramble and competition for power control in Nigerian politics led the politicians in the two (2) ruling parties of PDP and APC to battle themselves to the level of removing the Party leadership severally without regard to the implications. It was the nature of Nigerian politics; the Zero-Sum Game that compelled the politicians on perceiving the eventual inevitable collapse of the PDP in 2014 to decamped en masse to APC. These decamped from PDP to APC were the same actors that are continuously engaged in the crisis without learning any history lesson. It is simply revealing the fact that Nigerian politicians are still after power for personal benefits than party ideology for national interest and development. Existing studies too on the subject matter (Aleyomi, 2013; Ibrahim et al, 2015; Sule et al. 2019) support the above notion of the informants’ views except that there was no attempt at a comparative basis before this study at hand.

Implications of Leadership Crisis in PDP and APC on Nigerian Democracy

There are many ways in which the PDP and APC leadership crises affect Nigerian democracy and democratisation. These ways were extracted from the informants’ views and presented in the model below.



Figure 3. How the PDP and APC Leadership Crisis Affected Democracy in Nigeria According to Informants

Source: Field Survey Work 2020.

The above model presented the major views that were summarised from the responses of the informants on the implications of the party leadership crisis of PDP and APC in Nigeria. It can also be drawn from the sub-themes above that in any country where these factors are obtainable, democracy will face a serious obstacle that will hinder its success. Many scholars (Diamond et al. 2001; Gunther et al. 2002; Biezen, 2003; Lindberg, 2006; Karz, 2007; Heller & Mershon, 2009; Aarts et al. 2011; Dalton et al. 2011 and Michalik, 2013) argued that the lack of sound parties with an ideological leadership and a principled membership will affect the process of democracy and good governance in a state. The issues from the Nigerian leadership crisis can be seen in line with the views of these scholars. Thus, it can be established that the party leadership crisis in Nigeria is symptomatic of democratic sickness.

In addition, the Game Theory can help immensely in explaining the context of the effects of the party leadership crisis in Nigeria because the Theory in one of its assumptions postulates that actors or players in competition go to any extent of outsmarting their competitors even if they know that the outcome is harmful to the competitors or the environment of the competition provided their goal would be achieved at all cost. This is why the level of their struggles to secure power dragged them into a party leadership crisis that has a lasting implication on the Nigerian democracy.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the leadership crisis in Nigerian ruling parties is the major bane of democracy in the country. The parties which were hurriedly packaged for power control missed the most important link between ideology and principles. As a result, the party members of PDP and APC reneged from the goals of forming parties towards self-serving interests and a battle for power supremacy. Thus, the study identified that the party leadership crisis in Nigerian ruling parties is the reason for the slow pace of democratisation because the nature and pattern of the crisis lead to serious issues that affect the performance of the parties in power and the entire process of democratisation. The study also concludes that the ruling APC is also tilting towards the same path followed by the former ruling PDP that led to its collapse from power control in the 2015 General Election. The same fate awaits the ruling APC if they are not able to avoid the scenario that influenced the battle in PDP. Unfortunately, it seems the APC is not learning any lessons or listening to pieces of advice from pundits. The study also observed that the leadership crisis in PDP and APC are synonymous and correlated comparatively. The two (2) parties seem to be the same in many ramifications including the composition of party membership and activities.

The study finally indicates that the crisis should be addressed squarely to avoid a situation where Nigeria will continue to have temporary parties that will continue to capture power without a purpose or focus and then collapse themselves for other opportunists' parties to take over. This will be unhealthy for Nigerian democracy. One of the ways to avoid the crisis is for the PDP and APC to reorganise themselves instantly and establish authentic party structures that will restore the confidence of the citizens to belief in them in future so that they may continue to steer the affairs of Nigerian politics progressively and interchangeably in future. Another way to avoid conflict is to safeguard the sanctity of internal democracy, collective bargaining and a reconciliatory approach in handling conflicts among the party members. Also, the parties' constitutions should weaken the influence of Presidents and State Governors and empower the executives more to protect the parties' leadership from the authoritarian decisions of the political office holders that are also party members.

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