

## POLITICAL PARTIES, IDEOLOGY AND THE NIGERIAN STATE

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### **Abstract**

*A political party is an organised group of people with a *sui generis* label and possibly an acronym that, primarily recruit, train and field candidates to be elected to vacant public offices by eligible electorates through the constitutional means of periodic election. As an agent of democracy, party ideology remains an essential feature. Reason being that a party's manifesto is drafted based on the adopted ideology which its candidates, if elected, would execute for the greater good of the country. In the Nigerian State, this has not always been the case from the colonial to the post-colonial era. Hence, this informative research paper examines critically the origin and proliferation of political parties in Nigeria from 1923 to 2018, studying closely the first generation political parties that began with a good ideological footing in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to most of the 21<sup>st</sup> century political parties in the country which are ideologically barren. Embedded in this study is an exposé on the incursion of the military in Nigeria's politics which curtailed the development of political parties and the consolidation of democracy in the country. A major finding of mine was that there is a protracted dearth of ideology in political parties as indicated by most parties' ideologically-unguided manifesto and the defection of their members to another party since the fourth republic began on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, 1999. For this research paper, the historical approach was adopted with the qualitative method of secondary data collection.*

**Keywords:** Political Parties, Ideology, Colonial Nigeria; Post-colonial Nigeria, Coup d'état, Republic

## Introduction

A political party is an organised group of people with a *sui generis* label and possibly an acronym that, primarily recruit, train and field candidates to be elected to vacant public offices by eligible electorates through the constitutional means of periodic election. In a democratic dispensation, political parties are indispensable and the salient roles that they play cannot be overemphasised.

Concerning their functions, political parties articulate and aggregate the interest of the people, educate the masses on electoral, political and socio-economic matters, represent the people at the national, state and local level; sustain the democracy of a country and lastly, act as a watchdog (i.e. the opposition party) to the ruling party which continuously keeps it on its toes for the greater good of the country. It is no wonder E. E. Schattschneider said “political parties created democracy, and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties” (Schattschneider, 1942:1).

Asides being registered organisations with a unique label or acronym, political parties are characterised by their ideology and manifesto. “Ideology represents a typically crucial element of political parties and their activities” (Omotola, 2009:616). As a shared political and economic belief, ideology is needed for the orientation of party members, for giving them a sense of identity and belongingness and also, for empowering them to evaluate political and socio-economic issues in the country. Above all, the adopted ideology of a party, be it home-grown or foreign, is essential for the drafting of the party’s manifesto which ideally should be a comprehensive, feasible and lucid set of programmes that is tailored towards national issues most importantly, the economic growth and development of the country.

Nigeria, the largest economy and most populous country in Africa with over 170 million people among which can be found according to Otité (1990) and Nnoli (2008) 374 ethnic groups, is a product of the British 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century capitalism and imperialism turned colonial rule. Judging based on the foregoing, it can be said that the post-colonial Nigerian State no longer have so many ideologically-driven political parties like the first generation parties during the colonial era. Since the fourth republic began with a multi-party system on May 29, 1999, most of the myriad political parties in the country have a nebulous ideology or no ideological leaning at all. What we have seen for more than three decades is the perpetration of the ideology ‘neoliberalism’ by different regimes, which was introduced to the country through the 1986 Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) by the neo-liberal agents – the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank during what Samuel Huntington (1991) called the ‘third wave’ of democratisation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The objectives of this informative research paper are to first and foremost, critically examine the origin and proliferation of political parties in Nigeria from the colonial to the post-colonial era (1923-2018). Lastly, to X-ray how most of the first batch of parties in colonial Nigeria were

rooted in ideology unlike those in the fourth republic which are ideologically deficient as indicated by their ideologically-unguided manifesto and the decamping of members to another party. In between these stated objectives is an exposé on how the intermittent incursion of the military in Nigeria's politics for a total of 28 years (1966-1979 and 1984-1999) out of the 58 years since Nigeria attained her political 'flag' independence from Britain, truncated not only the development of political parties but also the consolidation of democracy in the country.

## **1. Conceptual Clarification**

There are three salient concepts that would go a long way in the cerebral understanding of this research paper. These three concepts which must be conceptualised are – 'political party', 'ideology' and, the 'state'.

### **i) Political Party**

The etymology of the word 'party' has been traced to the Latin word '*partire*' meaning 'to divide'. This word however was not part of the vocabulary of politics until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Prior to that, the idea 'part' had already entered the French language as '*partager*' which in English means 'partaking'. By the time the word 'party' was finally formed, it replaced the word 'sect' (Sartori 1976). Having known the origin of the word 'party', what then is a political party?

According to Lawson (1976) "no definition of party is ever entirely satisfactory..." (Lawson, 1976:2). Nevertheless, scholars, especially those in the discipline, Political Science, keep composing a definition that best captures the features and functions of a political party. According to the Irish political philosopher and statesman, Edmund Burke (1770), a "[p]arty is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed" (Langford, 1981:317). To J. S. Coleman and C. G. Rosberg, political parties are associations formally organised with the explicit and declared purpose of acquiring and/or maintaining legal control, either singly or in coalition or in electoral competition with other similar associations over the personnel and policy of the government of an actual or prospective sovereign state (Coleman and Rosberg, 1964).

A political party therefore is "any political group identified by an official label that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections (free or non-free), candidates for public office (Sartori, 1976:63). It can also be seen as "any group, however loosely organized, seeking to elect government office holders under a given label" (Epstein, 1967, 1980:9). Succinctly, a political party is "an organized attempt to get control of government" (Schattschneider, 1942:35).

In Political Science, the scientific study of political parties is called 'statiology'. Notable among the many scholars that have contributed to the body of knowledge on political parties are – Moisei Ostrogorsky (1902); Sigmund Neumann (1955); Anthony Downs (1957); Maurice Duverger (1964); Samuel Eldersveld (1964); Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner (1966); Lucian W. Pye (1966); Fred Riggs (1968); Kay Lawson (1976); Kenneth Janda (1980); Richard

Gunther and Larry J. Diamond (2001); Andrew Heywood (2002) and; Williams J. Crotty (2006). Pertaining to the typology of political party, Gunther and Diamond (2001) were able to identify five types of party – i) elite-based parties; ii) mass-based parties; iii) ethnicity-based parties; iv) electoralist parties and; v) movement parties.

## **ii) Ideology**

“In the realm of political theory the term ‘ideology’ is applied in two contexts: (a) a set of ideas which are accepted to be true by a particular group, party or nation without further examination; and (b) the science of ideas which examines as to how different ideas are formed, how truth is distorted, and how we can overcome distortions to discover true knowledge” (Gauba, 2003:13), But for the purpose of this paper, ideology is used in the context of a ‘set of ideas’.

Before and after the time of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, political ideas had existed. However, the science of ideas did not begin until the Enlightenment Age in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Regarding the etymology of the concept ‘ideology’ (*ideo* – of Greek origin meaning “idea” + *logy* – of Greek origin meaning “the study of”), the French word ‘idéologie’ was coined in the year 1796 by the French political philosopher Antoine Louis Claude Destutt, Comte de Tracy (1754 – 1836) during the French Revolution (1789-1799) (Ogunnoiki, 2017a). What then is an ideology?.

“Nobody has yet come up with a single adequate definition of ideology.... This is not because workers in the field are remarkable for their low intelligence, but because the term ‘ideology’ has a whole range of useful meanings, not all of which are compatible with each other. To try to compress this wealth of meaning into a single comprehensive definition would thus be unhelpful even if it were possible” (Eagleton, 1991:1).

According to M. Seliger, an ideology is a “[s]et of ideas by which men posit, explain and justify ends and means of organized social action, and specifically political action, irrespective of whether such action aims to preserve, amend, uproot or rebuild a given social order” (Seliger, 1976:11). To M. Hamilton, it is “[a] system of collectively held normative and reputedly factual ideas and beliefs and attitudes advocating a particular pattern of social relationships and arrangements, and/or aimed at justifying a particular pattern of conduct, which its proponents seek to promote, realize, pursue or maintain” (Hamilton, 1987:39). In a nutshell, an ideology is “a fair coherent and comprehensive set of ideas that explains and evaluates social conditions, help people understand their place in the society and provide a program for social and political action” (Ball and Dagger, 2002:5).

## **iii) State**

“Today, the concept of state is so widely used in an uncoordinated way that one begins to wonder what it means because the way scholars/philosophers/theorists have been using and analyzing the concept makes it so general that it is not specifically meaningful” (Fadakinte,

2013:552). The word ‘State’ is a derivative of the Latin word *status*. It was the Father of Modern Politics, Niccolo Machiavelli that used the words *Lo Stato* which when translated to English means, ‘The State’.

According to the Greek philosopher and Father of Politics, Aristotle (384-322 BC), “the state is a union of families and villages and having for its ends a perfect and self sufficing life by which we mean a happy and honourable life”. Harold Laski on his own part defined a State as “a territorial society divided into government and subjects claiming within its allotted physical area, a supremacy over all other institutions” (cited in Kumar, 2011).

For the purpose understanding better what a State is, there are four major features to look out for. Based on Article 1 of the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States (1933), the four characteristics are – (a) a permanent population; (b) a defined territory; (c) a government and; (d) capacity to enter into relations with other states. Having adumbrated them, it is equally important to know that not all recognised States in the international community perfectly have all four attributes. For example, a country like Israel is yet to have a defined territory following the adoption of resolution 181 on November 29, 1947, by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) which partitioned Palestine into two – Israel and Palestine. Theoretically, there are a few mainstream theories on the origin of the State. These theories are none other than the i) divine theory by Bishop Jacque-Bénigne Bossuet; ii) organic/natural theory by Aristotle; iii) social contract theory by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean Jacque Rousseau; iv) force theory by E. Jenks and; v) the Marxian theory by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and, Vladimir I. Lenin.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

A theory or the triangulation of theories (depending on whether a single theory is comprehensive enough or not) in a research work is there for the purpose of analysis. In other words, it is used for explaining the causation-effect of a phenomenon, and if possible, to make predictions. In the discipline Political Science, there are several mainstream theories that can be used for analysing political parties in a polity. But considering the theme of this paper, the most appropriate theory for the study of ‘Political Parties, Ideology and the Nigerian State’, is none other than the “Group Theory”.

The group theory became widely used after critics faulted the elite theory arguments as posited by the Italian Sociologists Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca and, the German Sociologist, Roberto Michels. According to the chief proponent of the elite theory, Vilfredo Pareto, a society is divided into two broad strata – i) the stratum of the elite, where power is concentrated. This minority class is further divided into two – the governing and non-governing elite and lastly; ii) the stratum of the non-elite (the masses) which is the majority class. Contrary to this, the group theorists argue that power is not concentrated in the minority class of elites but rather diffused or dispersed among different interest groups that compete against one another (Varma, 1975; Gauba, 2003).

The group theory as a pluralist theory was developed by two notable scholars – Arthur F. Bentley who wrote the book: *The Process of Government* (1908) and David Truman, the author of the book: *The Government Process* (1964). According to Bentley, a group is to be seen as a mass of activity and not a collection of individuals. In his words, a group is “a certain portion of the men of the society, taken, however, not as a physical mass cut off from other masses of men, but as a mass (of) activity, which does not preclude the men who participate in it from participating likewise in many other group activities” (cited in Varma, 1975:163). In other words, he saw a group as a process and that the diverse groups in a society are in a state of “perpetual interaction” with each other. Left to Truman, a group is a collection of individuals which “on the basis of one or more shared attitudes, makes certain claims upon other groups in the society for the establishment, maintenance, or enhancement of forms of behaviour that are implied in the shared attitude...” (Truman 1964 cited in Varma, 1975:164). It is this shared attitudes that constitute the shared interest. This brings us to the central argument of the two group theorists which is ‘interest’.

To Bentley, “[i]nterest is a shared attitude concerning a claim or claims to be made by one group upon certain other groups in a social system. Group, thus, as a mass of activity directed by interest, and the social system which consists of a large number of groups, marks the arena for the interaction of group activity” (Varma, 1975:163).

### **3. The Origin and Growth of Political Party the World Over**

The origin of political party dates back to what is known today as representative democracy in Western Europe, precisely England. Prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, absolute monarchy was the preferred form of government in England based on the longstanding Roman Catholic belief that the king, who enjoys the ‘divine right to rule’, is the representative of God ALMIGHTY on earth. The king who wielded absolute power was answerable only to God and not man (Holy Bible (KJV), Daniel 4:17; Romans 13:1-2). After the bloodless Glorious Revolution (1688-1689) that ended the reign of King James II in England, the power of the monarch was limited by the parliament thus, constitutional monarchy replaced absolute monarchy in the country.

In the English parliament, there were two embryonic political groups that were formed in 1678 – the Whigs (the political group that supported free trade based on classical liberalism) and, the Tories (the supporters of the preservation of the absolute power of the monarch in accordance with their conservative ideology). Today, the Whigs and Tories in British politics are respectively known as the ‘Liberal Party’ and ‘Conservative Party’.

France like England, practiced prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> century absolute monarchy with absolute monarchs such as Louis XIV of the Ancien Régime on the throne. But the French Constitution of 1791 introduced constitutional monarchy which was jettisoned the following year for a republic during the French Revolution (1789-1799). While the French Revolution was on, there were two active political ‘Clubs’ that functioned more like what we know today as the ruling and opposition party. These Clubs – the centre-left ‘Girondins’ and the left-wing ‘Jacobins’ were in

various degrees radical. They had prominent leaders such as Marquis de Condorcet and Georges Danton respectively. In 1791, the Girondins dominated the French Legislative Assembly with a majority while the Jacobins were the minority. The Girondins, like the Jacobins preferred a republican government to constitutional monarchy. Hence, they (the Girondins) pushed for the declaration of war against Austria in 1792 with the hope that it would end the country's constitutional monarchy. In North America, the United States precisely, the Federalist Party with the ideology 'federalism', was formed by Alexander Hamilton in 1791. But in the year 1792, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison founded the Democratic-Republican Party. The Democratic-Republican Party, known for housing Anti-Federalists, opposed the Federalist Party that championed a strong government at the centre.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, political parties emerged in Germany following the Revolution of 1848. In 1863, the General German Workers' Association (ADAV) was formed and thereafter the Social Democratic Workers' Party (SDAP) in 1869. These political associations later merged in 1875 to form the Social Democratic Party (SPD). Historically, the SDP has been a 'workers party' with the social democracy ideology.

In North America, the Democratic Party, a party with the liberal ideology, was formed in 1828 in the United States. The party in recent past supported the rights of all citizens irrespective of sex, religion or race. They also believe in gun control and taxing the wealthy. In 1833, the conservative Whig Party was established but was later dissolved in 1854. In 1854, the Republican Party, also called the Grand Old Party (GOP) was formed. As a conservative party, it supports tax cut for the wealthy and, America's military supremacy. Recently, it has been against gay rights and gun control. The next set of 19<sup>th</sup> century political party was created in Canada. The Liberal Party of Canada (LPC), the oldest in the country was founded in 1867. In South America, the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR) otherwise called Radical Civic Union was formed in Argentina in the year 1890. This centrist and social-liberal party is the oldest party in the country. In Australia, the democratic socialist Australian Labour Party (ALP) which is the oldest party in the country was created in the year 1891.

To the Scandinavian, Venstre Liberal Party of Denmark was formed in 1870 with the ideology, conservative liberalism. In 1871, it was the turn of the Danish Social Democratic Party, a party that professes the ideology 'social democracy'. In Norway, the oldest political party, the Liberal Party (Vestre), with the ideology 'social-liberalism' was established in 1884. Same year, the Conservative Party (Høyre), with the 'liberal-conservative' ideology also surfaced. In Finland, the Social Democratic Party of Finland (SDP) was established in 1899 and its ideological leaning is on social democracy. In East Asia, the Aikōki Kōtō (Public Party of Patriots) was founded in Japan in the year 1874. This liberal party is the oldest party in the Japanese State. In South Asia, India precisely, the oldest party in the country, the Indian National Congress (INC), was founded in 1885 and its ideology is secularism and democratic socialism.

In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was an avalanche of political parties around the world. In East Asia, the Communist Party of China (CPC) was formed as a Marxist-Leninist party in 1921. In Japan, the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) was founded in 1922 with the socialist ideology which later became democratic socialism. In 1955, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), a conservative centre-right party was established in the country. In 1944, the Liberal Party of Australia with a liberal-conservative ideology was created in Australia.

Back to South America, this time around in Venezuela, the oldest political party in the country, a communist party with the label Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV) was formed in 1931. In the year 1945, the Justicialist Party (PJ) (also known as Peronist Party) was established. The PJ is both a centre-left and centre-right party, depending on which faction a member belongs to within the party.

In Europe after the Second World War (1939-1945), a number of German political parties surfaced – the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU) was founded in 1945 as a conservative party that believes in Christian democracy. In 1948, the Free Democratic Party (FDP) was established with the liberal ideology. For the Syrian and Iraqi State in the Middle East, the Ba'athist Party, founded in 1947 by Michel Aflaqi in Syria, is a party with the ideology nationalism, pan-Arabism and socialism. In Israel, the Zionist-socialist party called Labour Party was created in 1968. This party was later challenged by the centre-right Likud Party which was established in 1973.

In North America, the Communist Party of Canada which adopted the ideology Marxism-Leninism was formed in 1921. In 1961, the New Democratic Party (NDP), a social democratic party was founded. To Jamaica now in the Caribbean, the People's National Party (PNP) with the ideology 'social democracy' was created in 1938. In 1943, it was the turn of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) which is a conservative party. Among the Nordic countries, the social-liberal Centre Party was formed in 1906 in Finland. In 1918, it was the turn of the liberal-conservative National Coalition Party. In Denmark, the Danish Social Liberal Party (Radikale Venstre) was founded as a centre-left party in 1905. In 1916, the centre-right Conservative People's Party was established. The ideological leaning of this party is on none other than 'conservatism'.

Still in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but in Africa this time around, the African National Congress (ANC) was formed in 1912 with the ideology nationalism and social democracy. In the Gold Coast (now Ghana), the conservative nationalist party, the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) was founded in 1947 by Dr. J. B. Danquah with Kwame Nkrumah as the secretary. In the late 40s, Kwame Nkrumah left the UGCC and formed the Convention People's Party (CPP) in 1949. Ideologically, the CPP is a pan-African and socialist party. In Sierra Leone, the Dr. Milton Margai-led Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was founded in 1951. As a party, it adopted the ideology – nationalism and social democracy. In French West Africa, the pan-African and nationalist Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA) was established in 1946 by the Ivorian

Félix Houphouët-Biogny. To East Africa, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) was formed by Julius K. Nyerere in 1954 with the ideology ‘African socialism’ i.e. *Ujamaa* (Swahili: meaning familyhood).

In Kenya, the Jomo Kenyatta-led Kenya African National Union (KANU) was founded in 1960. On the political spectrum, KANU is a right-wing conservative party. In Algeria, the National Liberation Front (FLN) was established in 1954 with the ideology nationalism and socialism. In Mozambique, the Marxist-Leninist party, Mozambique Liberation Movement (FRELIMO) was formed in 1966. In Angola, Holden Roberto in the year 1954 founded the right-wing National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), the Marxist-Leninist party by the name People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) was formed by Agostinho A. Neto in 1956 and, the left-wing party labelled the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) by Jonas Savimbi in 1966. In Latin America (i.e. Central America plus South America) several parties were formed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century such as the social democratic party – Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) which was created in 1961. In Brazil, the centrist Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMBD) was founded in 1965 while the socialist Worker’ Party in the year 1980. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the number of political parties around the world has increased greatly that, mentioning a number of them here would be time and paper consuming.

We can draw from the foregoing on the genesis and proliferation of political parties around the world that political parties, first and foremost, began as political groups or clubs. Secondly, revolutions played a major role in creating an atmosphere where political parties can strive as the case was in Western Europe. Thirdly, all the aforementioned political parties around the world have an ideology. Fourthly, political parties were created by great men and women, most of who were among the educated elites of their time. Last but not least is that some of the political parties formed, especially those in Africa, originated either from a socio-cultural group (pointed out below) or a liberation movement during the colonial era.

#### **4. Colonial Nigeria: Political Parties and their Ideology**

According to Professor Dele Olowu, “[t]he colonial state is a state created and sustained by force of arms” (Olowu, 1994:6). Theoretically, no theory on the origin of the State best supports this assertion than the ‘Force Theory’ by E. Jenks among others. The name ‘Nigeria’ was suggested by the journalist, Miss Flora Shaw (who later became the wife of Lord Lugard), in *The Times* of London on January 08, 1897. Much as this is an indubitable historical fact, there are those such as Edokpayi who argue that “...the word Nigeria had been used between 1859 1860 by William Cole and that it was, Saunder Otley and Co of London who first gave press publication to Nigeria in 1862” (Bamgbose, 1998:53).

The Nigerian State like most, if not all the countries in Africa, is a product of the ideology of the dominant class in Great Britain – capitalism (an economic system based on the private ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange). During the 18<sup>th</sup> century Industrial

Revolution in Europe, Great Britain, going by John Hobson's assertion on imperialism, sought after foreign lands that will not only serve as a new market for their excess manufactured goods, an investment opportunity for their surplus profit and, a source of raw materials to feed their industry back home, but also to exploit and dominate the people inhabiting such lands (Ake, 1981; Onimode, 1988; Ogunnoiki, 2017b). Thus, Great Britain as well as other European powers scrambled for and eventually set the rules for the partition and occupation of African territories in the Berlin West African Conference (November 15, 1885 – February 26, 1885), which was organised by the German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck in Berlin, Germany (Fadakinte and Amolegbe, 2017; Heaton and Falola, 2018).

From December 26-27, 1851, the British naval ships *HMS Bloodhound* and *HMS Teazer*, bombarded Lagos and the Oba's palace. Oba Kosoko (who ousted Oba Akintoye) was deposed and Akintoye was reinstalled on the throne. On January 01, 1952, he (Oba Akintoye) signed a Britain-Lagos Treaty that made slave trade illegal in littoral Lagos. By the year 1861, Lagos was annexed as a Crown Colony of Britain. In 1866, Lagos, being part of the British West African Settlements was placed under the Governor of Sierra Leone. But in 1874, it was under the Gold Coast until 1886 when it became a separate colony again with its own Governor, Legislative and Executive Council (Nwabueze, 1982; Eluwa *et al.*, 1988). Few years after Lagos regained its status as a separate colony, the British sacked the Benin Kingdom in the 1897 Benin Expedition. In the Niger Delta region, the British created in 1885 the Oil Rivers Protectorate which later became the Niger Coast Protectorate in 1893.

Up North, during the era of 'legitimate commerce', the Royal Niger Company (created in 1879 as the United Africa Company (UAC) by George T. Goldie, became the National Africa Company (NAC) in 1882 and finally, the Royal Niger Company (RNC) after it received the royal charter on July 10, 1886) used its military force to invade Nupe and Ilorin in 1897. These and other territories the Company's representative signed treaties with the traditional ruler were administered by the RNC until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1899, when its royal charter was revoked by the British government (Gueye and Boahen, 1985; Eluwa *et al.*, 1988). On January 01, 1900, Britain formally began the colonial rule of Nigeria by creating the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. In the year 1903, Lord Lugard's West African Frontier Force (later Royal West African Frontier Force) conquered Kano and the Sokoto Caliphate which led to the death of Mohammadu Attahiru I at Burmi. In 1906, the Colony of Lagos and the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was merged together to form the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. (Eluwa *et al.*, 1988; Ihonvhere and Shaw, 1998). On January 01, 1914, Lord Friedrich Lugard amalgamated the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria and, the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria to form the 'Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria' for administrative convenience (Babalola, 2013; Oyedeleji, 2017).

According to Professor Adele Jinadu, "[t]he foundational "developmental circumstance" of party in Nigeria is colonial rule and the opposition to it by the country's nationalist movement, which

transmuted into political associations to contest for legislative elections..." (Jinadu, 2011:2). Confirming this assertion, the paragraph after this is an account of the event that led to the formation of political parties in colonial Nigeria.

After the First World War ended (1914-1918), the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA) which was created in the year 1913 (Falola, 2004) held its first meeting in the year 1920 in Accra, Gold Coast (now Ghana), under the leadership of Joseph Casely Ephraim Hayford from Ghana and Dr. Akinwande Savage from Nigeria. The goal of the Congress was not to demand for immediate self-determination from Britain but, to encourage political participation and the inclusion of Africans in the law-making process in British West African territories. Among its demands which were presented to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Milner, by the NCBWA's delegation sent to London was, the creation of a Legislative Council for each territory consisting of members, half of which should be elected Africans. This demand plus the others were rejected by Lord Milner (Ihonybere and Shaw, 1998).

In Colonial Nigeria, Sir Hugh Clifford, who was the Governor of Nigeria at the time, did not initially buy the idea sold by the NCBWA. But eventually, he set up a new Legislative Council in Lagos that replaced the mere consultative/advisory Nigerian Council created by Sir Frederick Lugard in 1914. Based on the Clifford Constitution of 1922 (named after him) the elective principle was introduced which limited franchise to adult males in Lagos and Calabar who had resided there for at least 12 months and earned £100 per annum. The new Legislative Council had 46 members in total – 27 official members and 19 unofficial members, 4 of the said 19 unofficial members were to be elected Nigerians (3 for Lagos and 1 for Calabar) who would occupy the seats for a 5-year period. This paved way for the formation of political parties and the adoption of a multiparty system (i.e. the relationship between three or more political parties) in colonial Nigeria.

On June 24, 1923, the first political party – the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) was formed by the Father of Nigeria's Nationalism, Herbert Macaulay, who was a Civil Engineer by profession and, the grandson of Bishop Ajayi Crowther, the first African Bishop. The motto of the party was "*salus populi suprema lex*", meaning "the safety of the people is the greatest law". The NNDP called for the establishment of a University, free universal compulsory education for Nigerians and the abolition of provincial courts. Ideologically, the party can be said to have believed in liberal nationalism, democracy and welfarism. In the first election to the Legislative Council which held on September 20, 1923, the NNDP members – Egerton Shyngle, Eric Moore and Curtis Adeniyi-Jones of the NNDP won the three seats for Lagos. For the only seat allotted to Calabar, Prince Kwamina Ata-Amonu of the Calabar Improvement League emerged the winner. Again, the NNDP won the three seats in 1928 and 1933. After being defeated by the NYM in 1938, the party bounced back and won the three seats for Lagos from 1943 to 1948. In the Lagos Town Council, it won all the seats available for election from 1923 to 1953. In 1934, the Lagos Youth Movement (LYM) was formed by Ernest Ekoli, Dr. J. C. Vaughan, Samuel

Akinsanya and, H. O. Davies. They were later joined by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe after he returned from the Gold Coast in 1938, and Chief Obafemi Awolowo (Azikiwe, 1961; Hodgkin, 1961; Sklar, 1963; Ezera, 1964; Tamuno, 1966; Falola, 2004; Bah, 2005; Jacobs, 2014; Aiyede, 2016; Ajayi, 2018).

In 1936, the LYM, which was well known for opposing the colonial government's educational policy with regard to the alleged deficiencies of the Yaba Higher College (established in 1932) especially the inferior diploma awarded by College, changed its label to the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) in order to have a national outlook. In the 1938 election for the three seats allocated to Lagos, the NYM candidates emerged as the winner, thus ending the consecutive election of the NNDP into the Legislative Council. Some years later, an intra-party crisis erupted over who among the founding members (the newly elected president of the party, Ernest Ikoli (Ijaw), or the vice president, Samuel Akinsanya (Ijebu-Yoruba)) should be selected to fill the vacant seat won by the NYM in the Legislative Council. The seat became vacant when Sir Dr. Kofo A. Abayomi, the immediate past president of the party, resigned in 1941 to study Medicine (Ophthalmology) abroad. After much disagreement and tribal sentiment in the party, Ernest Ikoli was selected. But the party did not recover afterwards, especially when Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe (who supported Samuel Akinsanya) left the party in 1941 alongside other Igbos who saw it as a party of Yoruba intellectuals (Coleman, 1960; Azikiwe, 1961; Awa, 1964; Ezera, 1964).

From the 40s to the 50s, more political parties were formed in colonial Nigeria. On August 26, 1944, the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) was created by Herbert Macaulay who was the president and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe the secretary turned president after the death of Macaulay in 1946. In 1956, there was an intra-party rift between Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and the Chief Whip of the Eastern Region House of Assembly, Mr. E. O. Eyo, who was also the chairman of the Eastern Region Development Corporation. He (not long after he resigned as the chairman of the Eastern Region Development Corporation in April, 1956), accused the Premier, Dr. Azikiwe, of abusing his office following the depositing of public funds (£2 million) in the African Continental Bank (ACB) where he and his family members were shareholders. Consequently, the Forster-Sutton Tribunal of Inquiry was set up in 1956 to look into ACB-Azikiwe affairs (Sklar, 1963; Ezera, 1964; Aneke, 2012; Akinola, 2014). The Panel found out that the Colonial Office asked the ACB to raise its liquidity from 8 to 50% and inject fresh capital to restore solvency or it would lose its license. If the bank were to collapse, Zik Group of Companies which depends on the bank's overdraft would have been ruined financially (Nnoli, 1980 cited in Aneke: 2012:129). Much later, the party changed its label to the National Council of Nigerian Citizens after the majority in Southern Cameroons voted 'YES' in a plebiscite from February 11-12, 1961, to join Northern Cameroons.

The Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) was formed in August, 1950, by Mallam Aminu Kano after its radical members were expelled from the conservative socio-cultural group *Jam'iyyar Mutanen Arewa*, which was formed in the year 1949. As a left-wing party, one of the

objectives of the NEPU was to represent the *Talawaka* i.e. ‘commoners’ in the North. In 1951, the Action Group (AG) was founded in Owo (present day Ondo State) and led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo. As a party, it originated from the pan-Yoruba cultural organisation *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* (Meaning: Society of the Descendants of Oduduwa) which was formed in 1945. Same 1951, the Northern People’s Congress (NPC) was formed and led by the Sarduna of Sokoto, Sir Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, who is the great-great grandson of Usman dan Fodio that orchestrated the jihad of 1804 in Northern Nigeria. The NPC like the AG originated from the aforementioned socio-cultural society *Jam’iyar Mutanen Arewa* that accommodated the conservative elites in the North. With the motto “One North, One People, Irrespective of Religion, Rank or Tribe”, the primary aim of the NPC was to unite the people in the North. Asides the more popular NEPU and NPC, minor political parties were formed in the 50s. To mention a few, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) was founded in 1953 by Professor Eyo Ita, the Bornu Youth Movement (BYM) in 1954 by Alhaji Ibrahim Imam, the Dynamic Party (DP) in 1955 by Dr. Chike Obi and the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) in 1955 by Joseph S. Tarka (Azikiwe, 1961, Hodgkin, 1961; Bello, 1962; Sklar, 1963; Dudley, 1968, 1982; Falola, 2004; Aiyede, 2014; Akinboye and Anifowose, 2015).

From the foregoing, there is the need to state here that the three dominant parties mentioned were ethnic and regional based parties – the NPC (Hausa-Fulani) dominated the Northern region, the AG (Yoruba) dominated the Western region, and the NCNC (Igbo) dominated the Eastern region. None of these political parties were national in the real sense of the word.

The year 1954, was a federal election year in colonial Nigeria. In the Northern region, Sir Alhaji Ahmadu Bello became the Premier of the region on the platform of the conservative party, NPC. As a conservative party, NPC was interested in the preservation of the culture and religion (Islam) of the people of the North and, the gradually attainment of self-determination for the country. In the Western region, Chief Obafemi Awolowo like Sir Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, became the Premier of the region in 1954. Ideologically, he adopted ‘Awoism’ for the region. Awoism (named after him) simply put, is ‘democratic socialism’. Personally, Chief Obafemi Awolowo did not subscribe to the socialism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century German philosopher, Karl Marx (1818-1883) which succinctly is the state ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange after the Proletariat overthrow the Bourgeoisie in a violent revolution that would terminate the Bourgeoisie class and indeed, the capitalist mode of production thus leading to the ‘dictatorship of the Proletariat’. His democratic socialism unlike Marx’s socialism was about attaining socialism through democratic means. The tenets therefore of Awoism are self-discipline, true federalism, leadership, good governance and welfarism.

In 1955, he started a free primary education programme in the region with the income generated from agriculture, precisely the cash crop – cocoa. He also introduced free health care services for children to the age 18 in the region. Furthermore, Chief Obafemi Awolowo built so many firsts in Nigeria and Africa. He built the first University Teaching Hospital in Nigeria – the University

Teaching Hospital (UCH), Ibadan, in 1957. This teaching hospital has a bed capacity of 1,000. He built the first television station in Africa – Western Nigeria Television (WNTV), Ibadan, which aired its first broadcast in 1959. The 25,000 seat capacity Liberty Stadium, Ibadan, was also built by Awolowo which was commissioned in 1960. It was later renamed Obafemi Awolowo Stadium by President Ebele Jonathan in 2010. Finally, he saw to the erection of the skyscraper Cocoa House, Ibadan, which was commissioned in 1965. This 26-storey building with a height of 105 metres was then the tallest building in tropical Africa.

Despite his accomplishment as the Premier of the Western region (1954-1959), Chief Obafemi Awolowo was not spare of corruption and the abuse of his office allegations. In June 1962, the appointed Administrator of the Western Region, Chief Dr. Moses Adekoyejo Majekodunmi set up the Coker Commission of Inquiry at the behest of the Prime Minister, Sir Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. The Commission was created to look into the activities and financial position of the six Western region statutory corporations (Awa, 1964) which are i) the Western Region Marketing Board; ii) the Western Nigeria Development Corporation; iii) the Western Region Finance Corporation; iv) the Western Region Housing Corporation; v) the Western Nigeria Government Broadcasting Corporation and; vi) the Western Nigeria Printing Corporation. The controversial Commission of Inquiry under Justice G. B. A. Coker discovered that the funds of the Western Region Marketing Board were misappropriated and mismanaged to an extent that the once thriving Board remained operational only by overdrafts from the National Bank of Nigeria. Also discovered was that the misappropriated funds of the Board were diverted to the coffers of the AG. Thus, the Commission concluded without doubt that Chief Awolowo as the Premier of the region (and not Chief Samuel L. Akintola who took over from him in 1959), “failed to adhere to standards of conduct which are required for persons holding such post” (Coker, 1962:Vol. I, Ch. 1, p. 40 cited in Diamond, 1988:104).

In the Eastern region, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe (popularly called ‘Zik of Africa’) began his activities in the region with the philosophy ‘Zikism’ (coined from his name ‘Azikiwe’ by Dr. Nwafor A. A. Orizu in his book *Without Bitterness* (1944)). According to Dr. Nwafor Orizu, “Zikism is Irredentism”. The Zikist Movement was a radical and revolutionary youth movement that started on February 16, 1946. The Movement was anti-colonial in nature. Thus, it was banned by the colonial government in April, 1950 (Coleman, 1960; Awa, 1964; Ezera, 1964). In his book: *Renascent Africa* (1937), Azikiwe stated the five tenets of Zikism which would liberate Africans from the shackles of colonialism – i) spiritual balance; ii) social regeneration; iii) economic determinism; iv) metal emancipation; v) political resurgence (cited in Kanu, 2010: 181-183). In a nutshell, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who became the Premier of the Eastern region in 1954, initially took to ‘socialism’ in the 1940s. But from the 1950s he gradually gave up socialism for liberalism/capitalism which became obvious with his ownership of the Zik Group of Companies.

In March 31, 1953, Chief Anthony Enahoro of the AG moved a motion in the House of Representatives for ‘self-government’ in Nigeria by the year 1956. But the conservative

Northerners of the NPC were not in support of the motion. Thus, the Sarduna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello saw to it that the motion was amended to ‘as soon as practicable’. Consequently, the stalwarts of the independence of Nigeria in Lagos booed and rained all manner of insults on the Northern representatives as they left the House. Adding salt to injury, Chief Obafemi Awolowo and some other AG members toured Kano city roughly two months after the incident in Lagos. Their tour precipitated the Kano riot from May 16 to 19, 1953 which not only caused a death toll of 36 persons and 277 injured, but led to the 8-point programme, a motion moved by Mallam Ibrahim in the Northern Region House of Assembly which, if it took effect, Northern region would have seceded from the Nigerian federation (Adefolarin, 1995; Bambose, 1998; Akinboye and Anifowose, 2015). On August 8, 1957, the Western and Eastern region respectively became autonomous while the Northern region on March 15, 1959.

On 12<sup>th</sup> of December, 1959, there was a federal election in colonial Nigeria which was conducted by the Electoral Commission of Nigeria (ECN). In the election, the NPC won 142 seats, the NCNC/NEPU – 89 seats, the AG – 73 seats and, the Independents 8 seats out of the total 312 seats in the House of Representatives (Sklar, 1963; Falola, 2004; Okoth, 2006; Akinola, 2014). As none of the three dominant parties had an absolute majority, a coalition government was formed between the NPC and NCNC with Sir Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as the Prime Minister (a position he has held since the office of the Prime Minister was created in 1957) as well as the first Minister of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe became the first and last indigenous Governor-General of Nigeria (which took effect on November 16, 1960) while Chief Obafemi Awolowo of the AG was the opposition leader. At the respective regions, Dr. Michael I. Okpara replaced Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe as the Premier of the Eastern region, Chief Samuel L. Akintola took over from Chief Obafemi Awolowo as the Premier of the Western region while Sir Alhaji Ahmadu Bello remained the Premier of the Northern region. On October 1, 1960, the Nigerian State gained her political ‘flag’ independence from Britain following the hand-over ceremony attended by Princess Alexandra of Kent who represented the British Queen, Queen Elizabeth II. Hence, Nigeria became a post-colonial state in the international community.

## **5. Political Parties and Ideology in Post-colonial Nigeria**

Nigeria is deliberately called a ‘post-colonial state’ by some intellectuals who want to emphasise the era after colonial rule ended in the country. Ideally, a post-colonial state is to enjoy full autonomy i.e. both political and economic independence for their departed colonial master as the case is for the United States of America from Britain. Unfortunately, this has not been the case for post-colonial States in the Third World that only got political independence while their economy is still being exploited and controlled by their former colonial master through the agents – MNCs, the IMF and the World Bank.

### **5.1 The First Republic (1963-1966)**

In the fourth quarter of 1963, the country officially became the Federal Republic of Nigeria after the 1963 Republican Constitution took effect on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1963. Based on the 1963 Republican Constitution, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe became the first constitutional President while Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa remained the Prime Minister. On August 09, 1963, the Mid-Western region was carved out of the Western region with Chief Dennis Osadebe of the NCNC as the Premier.

In the first republic, there was not so much of the proliferation of political parties. Rather, there was the merger of exiting parties. Prior to the 1964 federal election, two strong alliances emerged – the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) and the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). The NNA was a coalition of Sir Alhaji Ahmadu Bello's Northern People's Congress (NPC), Chief Samuel L. Akintola's Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), Niger Delta Congress (NDC) and, the Midwest Democratic Front (MDF). It is important to state at this juncture that the alliance between Sir Alhaji Ahmadu Bello's NPC and Chief Samuel L. Akintola's NNDP was only possible because of the AG intra-party crisis caused among other things by the desire of Chief Samuel L. Akintola to join forces with the parties of the coalition federal government. For the UPGA, Chief Obafemi Awolowo's Action Group (AG), Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe's National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC), Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), Northern Progressive Front (NPF) and, the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) merged. Again, worth mentioning here is that the alliance between Chief Obafemi Awolowo's AG and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe's NCNC was as a result of the growing distrust between the NPC and NCNC after the 1962/23 population census which the NCNC strongly believe that the population figure for the Northern region was doctored.

Owing to the 1962 AG intra-party crisis which according to J. P. Mackintosh (1966:441) originated from "Chief Awolowo's surrender of the Premiership of the West and failure to become Federal Prime Minister after the Federal election of 1959 (cited in Akinola, 2014:51-52), the rift between Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Samuel L. Akintola which originated from Akintola's desired to join the NPC-NCNC coalition government and not remain part of the AG that was a mere opposition party; the NCNC allegation that the population of the North which was put at 29,777,986 was inflated in the 1962/63 population census and lastly; the irregularities and malpractices in the 1964 federal election and 1965 Western region election organised by the Federal Electoral Commission (FEC), Nigerians experienced the first coup d'état in the country

Carried out on January 15, 1966, by 'five Majors' – Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, Emmanuel Ifeajuna, Timothy Onwuatuwegwu, Chris Anuforo, Don Okafor, Humphrey Chukwuka and, Adewale Ademoyega under the leadership of Major Chukwuma K. Nzeogwu, the maiden coup left the Prime Minister Sir Alhaji Abubaka Tafawa Balewa, the Premier of the Northern and Western region Sir Alhaji Ahmadu Bello and Chief Samuel L. Akintola and, the Minister of Finance, Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh dead which suggested to some that the coup had an ethnic

colouring – the Igbo against the Yorubas and Hausa-Fulanis because, the ceremonial President, Premier of the Eastern and Mid-Western region and, the Minister of Trade in person of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe (who in October, 1965, travelled to the United Kingdom on health ground and later toured the Caribbean), Dr. Michael I. Okpara and Chief Dennis Osadebey and, Dr. Kingsley O. Mbadiwe respectively, did not meet similar fate during the execution of the coup (Ademoyega, 1981; Akinola, 2014). Asides the aforementioned civilians who were killed, officers of the Nigerian Army were also counted among the dead – Brigadier Samuel Ademulegu, Brigadier Zakariya Maimalari, Col. Kur Mohammed, Col Sodeinde, Lt. Col. Abogo Largema and Col. Arthur Unegbe (the only Igbo military officer that was killed).

The unpopular incursion of the military in Nigeria's politics as 'patriots' and 'custodians' of State power, led to the removal of the Acting President, Dr. Nwafor Orizu, and the entry of the General Officer Commanding (GOC) the Nigerian Army, Major-General J. T. U. Aguiyi-Ironsi. Now in power, Major-General J. T. U. Aguiyi-Ironsi promulgated the Decree No. 34 on May 24, 1966, which in effect replaced the federal system of government with the unitary system of government in the country. This decree was perceived by the Northerners as a plot of the Easterners to dominate them which led to a pogrom that left hundreds of Igbo dead in the North. He (Major-General J. T. U. Aguiyi-Ironsi) was not spared as he was assassinated alongside Lt. Col. Adekunle F. Fajuyi on July 29, 1966.

Same July 29, 1966, there was a counter-coup that brought the young Chief-of-Staff of the Nigerian Army, Lt. Col. (later General) Yakubu Gowon to power as the Head of State. He was Head of State for nine years during which the Nigerian Civil War broke out between Lt. Col. Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu of the Eastern region who called for the secession of the Republic of Biafra and, the Gowon military junta at the centre. The civil war (July 06, 1967 – January 15, 1970) "...killed between 1 and 3 million people, and nearly destroyed the fragile federal bonds that held together the Nigerian state" (Falola and Heaton, 2008:158). General Yakubu Gowon was overthrown by a group of military officers led by Col. Joe N. Garba who brought in the revolutionary leader, Brigadier (later General) Murtala R. Mohammed while he (Gowon) was away in Kampala, Uganda, attending the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Summit on July 29, 1975. The unseating of General Gowon was primarily as result of him going back on his promise, which he made on October 01, 1974, to transfer power to the elected civilian president in the year 1976 (Akinboye and Anifowose, 2015).

General Murtala R. Mohammed, exactly on the 200<sup>th</sup> days after he became the Head of State, was assassinated on February 13, 1976, in an unsuccessful coup by Lt. Col. Buka Suka Dimka. Lt. Gen. (later General) Olusegun Obasanjo, as the second in command, was made the Head of State. Keeping to the transitional plan of his late boss, the drafted constitution of the Constitutional Drafting Committee (CDC), a 50-member committee created in October, 1975 with Chief Rotimi Williams (SAN) as the chairman, was looked into by the 230-member Constituent Assembly (CA) created in August, 1977, and chaired by Justice Udo Udoma. It was

after the CA had thoroughly studied the drafted constitution that it submitted it to the Supreme Military Council (SMC). On the 21<sup>st</sup> of September, 1978, the Obasanjo's military junta promulgated the constitution with Decree No. 25. Hence, the constitution took effect on October 01, 1979.

### **5.2 The Second Republic (1979-1983)**

In the 1979 Constitution, Nigeria retained the multi-party system but, replaced the British Westminster system of government with the American presidential system of government. Following the lifting of the ban on political association by Lt. Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo on September 21, 1978, five new political parties were registered by the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) in 1978: the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) – Alhaji Shehu Shagari, the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) – Chief Obafemi Awolowo; the Nigerian People's Party (NPP) – Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe; the People's Redemption Party (PRP) – Mallam Aminu Kano and; the Great Nigerian People's Party (GNPP) – Alhaji Ibrahim Waziri (Osaghae, 1998; Dode, 2010; Ogbeidi, 2010; Osiki, 2010; Akinboye and Anifowose, 2015). "Except for the PRP which leaned heavily on the left, ideological differences between the parties were minimal" (Falola, 1998:60).

Obviously, some of the aforementioned political parties were only a rebranded version of the parties that existed prior to the first republic. Chief Obafemi Awolowo's UPN was not different from the AG vis-à-vis party ideology and manifesto. Same goes for Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe's NPP which was similar to the NCNC. Though, during the Cold War, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe published a book *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism, Socialism or Welfarism?* (1980). In the book, he proposed a combination of the good elements of capitalism, socialism and welfarism to form a new ideology for Nigeria which he called 'neo-welfarism' (Igwe, 2015). According to him, neo-welfarism is an economic system which blends the essential elements of capitalism, socialism and welfarism in a social economic matrix, influenced by indigenous Nigerian mores, to enable the state and the private sector to own and control the means of production, distribution and exchange, while simultaneously enabling the state to assume responsibility for the social services, in order to benefit the citizens according to their needs and officially-specified minimum standards, without prejudice to participation in any aspect of the social services by voluntary agencies (Azikiwe, 1980).

At the end of the 1979 presidential election, Alhaji Shehu Shagari and his Vice Dr. Alex I. Ekwueme of the NPN emerged the winner of the election. Thus, Alhaji Shehu Shagari became the first Executive President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. At the state level, the NPN won in seven out of the then 19 states of the country – Sokoto, Niger, Benue, Cross River, Rivers, Kwara and Bauchi; UPN won the gubernatorial election in five states – Lagos, Ondo, Oyo, Bendel, Ogun; GNPP won two gubernatorial elections – Borno and Gongola; PRP also won two gubernatorial elections – Kano and Kaduna while, the NPP won the gubernatorial election in three states – Imo, Anambra and Plateau. For the purpose of bolstering its power in the Federal Legislature, the NPN formed an alliance with the NPP but, in July, 1981, the alliance was

dissolved. The NPP then joined forces with the UPN to form the Progressive Parties Alliance (PPA) which some PRP and GNPP members later joined (Synge, 2003). In 1982, the Nigerian Advance Party (NAP) was formed by Dr. Tunji Braithwaite Esq. which was registered as the sixth party to contest in the 1983 general election.

During Shagari/Ekwueme's administration, two outstanding programmes were initiated in 1979. The first was the low-cost housing scheme for the masses and lastly, the 'Green Revolution' which was to reduce food importation by increasing food production locally. As at that time, Nigeria's petrol-dollar economy was still booming after the 1973 oil shock which increased oil producing countries foreign exchange earnings. Again, there was another oil shock from 1979-1980 but, what followed afterwards was a prolonged global growth slowdown that lasted throughout the 1980s and well into the 1990s (Falola and Genova, 2005; Verick and Islam, 2010; Ogunnoiki, 2016).

On December 31, 1983, there was a coup d'état that brought Major-General Mohammadu Buhari to power as the military Head of State. The Major-General Mohammadu Buhari/Brigadier (later Major-General) Tunde Idiagbon military regime came to an end following a 'palace' coup that ushered the Army Chief-of-Staff, Major-General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, to power on August 27, 1985. But in December, 1985, there was a failed coup by General Mamman Vasta to oust him. Again, on April 22, 1990, there was an unsuccessful coup by Major Gideon Orkar against his regime.

Since the mid-1980s during the Babangida military junta, the Nigerian State has been under the watchful eyes of the IMF and the World Bank, and has assiduously implemented a regimen of reforms under the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which is consistent with the tenets of neoliberalism (Ichimi, 2014). Neoliberalism as an ideology is an offshoot of classical liberalism or "laissez faire" (French: meaning to 'let do'). Ideologically, neoliberalism "...denounces the welfare of state, opposes state intervention and control of economic activities" (Gauba, 2003:26).

Based on the conditionality of the 1986 Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), Nigeria like other indebted African countries had to satisfactorily carry out macroeconomic reforms before the IMF/World Bank could loan the country for economic growth and development purposes. The conditionality were – i) trade liberalisation; ii) devaluation of the national currency; iii) cut in government expenditure (e.g healthcare, education etc); iv) removal of subsidy from public goods and services and lastly; v) the privatisation and commercialisation of public-owned enterprises (Jega, 2000; Ogunnoiki, 2016). In 1986, the Babangida military junta started by devaluing the naira which the country has not recovered from till date.

### **5.3 The Aborted Third Republic (1993)**

Prior to the aborted third republic by the military in 1993, a two party system had replaced the multi-party system in the 1989 Constitution. The making of the Constitution all started with the

17-member Political Bureau that was formed on January 13, 1986. The Constitutional Review Committee (CRC), a 46-member committee headed by Justice Buba Ardo, was set up in September, 1987, to review the report of the Political Bureau and the 1979 Constitution. The reviewed constitution of the CDC was then considered by the 567-member Constituent Assembly (CA) which was inaugurated on May 11, 1988, with Justice A. N. Aniagolu as the chairman. The final reviewed constitution was presented to Major-General Ibrahim B. Babangida's 28-member Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) that promulgated it on May 03, 1989 (Fajoyomi, 1998; Osaghae, 1998).

Following the lifting of the ban on political association on May 03, 1989, 13 political parties applied for registration with the National Electoral Commission (NEC) – All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP); Liberal Convention (LC); Ideal Peoples Party (IPP); Nigerian Labour Party (NLP); People's Front of Nigeria (PFN); Peoples Solidarity Party (PSP); Nigerian National Congress (NNC); Nigerian Peoples Welfare Party (NPWP); Peoples Patriotic Party (PPP); Patriotic Nigerian's Party (PNP); National Union Party (NUP); Republican Party of Nigeria (RPN); United Nigeria Democratic Party (UNDP) (Ita, 2018). Eventually, only two parties were registered by NEC under the chairmanship of Professor Humphrey Nwosu for the June 12, 1993, presidential election which was to be conducted using the novel Option A4 voting system (i.e. the open ballot system).

The two political parties registered were the Social Democratic Party (SDP) with Chief M. K. O. Abiola as its presidential candidate and Mr. Babagana Kingibe, as his running mate. This party on the political spectrum was a centre-left i.e. ‘democratic socialism’ while the National Republican Convention (NRC) with Alhaji Usman Bashir Tofa as its presidential candidate and his running mate Dr. Sylvester Ugoh, was a centre-right party – ‘liberalism’. After what turned out to be a free and fair election, Major-General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida annulled the election which many believed Chief M. K. O Abiola won. Before stepping aside, he set up an Interim National Government (ING) under Chief Ernest Shonekan (Nwankwo, 2015; Ukiabe and Fayehun, 2018). But no sooner had the helmsman, Chief Ernest Sonekan, started steering the affairs of the State than his interim government was dislodged on November 17, 1993.

The overthrow of the Shonekan-led ING brought in General Sani Abacha as the Head of State who made known his intention to transfer power to an elected civilian president that would be sworn-in on October 01, 1998. In the process of returning the country back to the path of civilian rule, five political parties were formed: Committee for National Consensus (CNC), National Centre Party of Nigeria (NCPN), Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN), United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP) and Grassroots Democratic Movement (GDM) (Dode, 2010; Ogbeidi, 2010; Adamu and Sakariyau, 2013; Akinboye and Anifowose, 2015; Ali, 2018). These five parties adopted General Sami Abacha as their presidential candidate which made the late Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Chief Bola Ige, to describe them as the “five fingers of a leprous hand” (Ogbeidi, 2010). On April 22, 1994, Abacha called for the setting up of a National

Constitutional Conference (NCC) that would draft a new constitution which the 25-member Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) would promulgate. On June 27, 1994, the NCC was inaugurated by General Sani Abacha and upon the completion of their work, submitted the final draft of the constitution to the Abacha military junta on June 27, 1995 (Lansford, 2012; Akinboye and Anifowose, 2015). The new Constitution which was to usher Nigeria into the fourth republic with General Sani Abacha transforming himself from a military Head of State to a civilian president through an election to be conducted by the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON) did not take effect due to the unexpected death of General Sani Abacha in June, 1998.

#### **5.4 The Fourth Republic (1999 –?)**

Following the sudden death of the dictator, General Sani Abacha on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June, 1998, the Chief of Defense Staff, Major-General (later General) Abdulsalam Abubakar became the Head of State of Nigeria for a very short period, starting from June 09, 1998. During his regime, which lasted for 11 months and 19 days, General Abdulsalam Abubakar freed the political prisoners incarcerated by General Sani Abacha (one of who was Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, a retired General of the Nigerian Army and former military Head of State of Nigeria in the mid 70s). Having lifted the ban on political parties, only three political parties were created – Alliance for Democracy (AD), All People's Party (APP) (later All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) which originated from the G-34 (Kura, 2011; Odusote, 2014; Buba, 2017; Ali, 2018; cited in Ogunnoiki, 2018:57; Osaghae, 2018).

Registered by the newly formed Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the aforementioned political parties participated in the 1999 general election. The presidential election saw the AD/APP's Chief Olu Falae and his running mate Umaru Shinkafi pitched against the PDP's flag-bearer, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo and his running mate Alhaji Atiku Abubakar. The idea here of having two Yoruba presidential candidates was to placate the people of the South-West for the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election. At the end of the election, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo emerged the winner. The new constitution (the 1999 Constitution) which was drafted by the Abubakar military junta was promulgated with the Decree No. 24 on May 05, 1999. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 1999, the winner of February 27 presidential election, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo was sworn-in as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with his Vice, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar (Kura, 2011; Odusote, 2014; Buba, 2017; Ali, 2018; cited in Ogunnoiki, 2018:57; Osaghae, 2018).

Ideologically, the president-elect, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, adopted neo-liberalism/capitalism for his four years (two terms) in office. For the PDP, macroeconomic reforms and privatisation is crucial for the resuscitation of the ailing Nigerian economy. He deregulated the telecommunication industry in 2001 that used to be dominated by the state-owned Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL). This attracted foreign-service providers of Global System for Mobile communications (GSM) into the country who were issued license to operate

in the lucrative telecommunication industry (Adeola and Ogunnoiki, 2015). “For Nigeria’s power sector, he changed what used to be the National Electricity Power Authority (NEPA) to the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) on July 1, 2005. Still in the year 2005, on December 31<sup>st</sup> precisely, the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Professor Charles C. Soludo, reformed the Nigerian financial system having overseen the recapitalisation of commercial banks to 25 billion naira and their consolidation through merger and acquisition from 89 to 25 banks” (Ogunnoiki, 2018:58).

“During the 2003 general elections the number of political parties rose from the initial three in 1999 to 30 political parties. By 2007, when the next general elections were conducted, the number of political parties had risen to 50 as registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)” (Ita, 2018:114). For the April 21, 2007 presidential election, Umaru Musa Yar’Adua, the presidential candidate of the PDP, and his running mate, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan were declared the winner of the controversial election by the electoral umpire, INEC.

Following his inauguration on May 29, 2007, President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua swung into action vis-à-vis his 7-point agenda – i) *power and energy* – to generate adequate energy for the masses and the Nigerian economy; ii) *food security* – to modernise the agricultural sector for better yield; iii) *wealth creation* – to diversify the economy away from crude oil; iv) *transport sector* – to afford Nigerians with a good network of roads and also to develop other alternative means of transportation; v) *land reforms* – to reform land use and laws in the country, vi) *security* – to resolve the security challenge (Niger Delta militancy) in the country and lastly; vii) *education* – to reform the education system and facilities from primary to tertiary level (Adeola and Ogunnoiki, 2015).

Beginning with the Nigerian economy, President Yar’Adua had a ‘vision 2020’ for the country which if his administration actualised, would make Nigeria one of the 20 largest economies in the world by the year 2020. He set the ball rolling by resolving the security challenge at the hub of Nigeria’s petrol dollar economy, the oil-rich Niger Delta. This he achieved with his presidential amnesty programme which was announced on June 25, 2009, to aggrieved militant groups such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) that are willing to surrender their arms and ammunitions. Unfortunately, President Yar’Adua was unable to see his vision 2020 through to the very end due to his ill-health. On November 23, 2009, he was flown out of the country to receive treatment for his Kidney in Saudi Arabia. Sadly, he gave up the ghost on May 05, 2010. Thus, his Vice, Dr. Goodluck E. A. Jonathan was sworn-in as the Acting President on May 6, 2010. President Goodluck Jonathan, hoping to fulfill his immediate boss economic dream for Nigeria, rebranded his vision to ‘vision 20:2020’. However, he was often distracted by the terrorist group, Boko Haram, that became a national security threat to the country from the year 2009. On August 26, 2010, President Jonathan launched the *Road Map for Power Sector Reform* in Lagos with the primary aim of addressing the erratic power supply in the country (Adeola and Ogunnoiki, 2015).

“By April 2011, Nigeria’s political space witnessed an unprecedented opening as thirteen new political parties had joined the then existing 50 between 2007 and early 2011. Prominent among the new parties were: Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) and, People’s Progressive Alliance (PPA). Out of these, only twenty (20) were able to field Presidential candidates. Save the PDP, Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) and Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the rest of the political parties performed abysmally in the Presidential election” (Ita, 2018:114).

For the April 16, 2011, presidential election, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan and his Vice, Arch. Mohammed Namadi Sambo of the PDP were declared the winner of the election by INEC and accordingly, sworn-in on May 29, 2011. On January 01, 2012, the Jonathan administration without any palliative measure on ground for the masses, removed fuel subsidy and jacked up the pump price of petrol from 65 to 141 naira per litre. Though arguably, such measure would benefit Nigeria on the long-run vis-à-vis curbing the purchase of smuggled Nigeria’s subsidised petroleum in neighbouring countries, the policy however caught many Nigerians unawares some of whom had travelled down to their home town for the festive period and found it difficult returning back to the city (Adeola and Ogunnoiki, 2015).

On September 30, 2013, the Jonathan administration privatised the PHCN following a privatisation process that began with the 2005 Electric Power Sector Reform Act during the Obasanjo administration. In the year 2014, the PDP communicated nonverbally to Nigerians, informing them that the PDP was not only a neoliberal/right-wing party but, also a conservative party when President Jonathan signed into law the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Bill on January 07, 2014. Based on the Act, a gay or lesbian marriage is prohibited in Nigeria, a predominately Christian and Muslim country. Therefore, any homosexual caught violating the law would serve a jail term of 14 years. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of April, 2014, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) made known to the public the rebased GDP of Nigeria which was put at \$509.9 billion. This automatically made Nigeria the largest economy in Africa ahead of South Africa and, the 26<sup>th</sup> biggest economy in the world.

In the build up to the 2015 general election, some influential parties were determined to end the 16 years of the PDP dominance in Nigeria’s nascent democracy. Thus, the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), which is an offshoot of Alliance for Democracy (AD), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), some fractions of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and, the All Progressives Grant Alliance (APGA) merged to form the All Progressives Congress (APC) on February 06, 2013. Officially, the party was registered by the electoral umpire, INEC, on July 31, 2013. In the 2015 presidential election, General(Rtd) Muhammadu Buhari of the APC defeated the incumbent President, Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP at the polls and was sworn-in with his Vice, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, on May

29, 2015 (Jibrin and Idayat, 2014; Durotoye, 2015, 2016; Badmus, 2017; Buba, 2017; Omilusi, 2017; Ali, 2018; Sule *et al.*, 2018a. 2018b).

On economic matters, President Buhari like his predecessor, removed the subsidy on fuel in 2016 and increased the price of premium motor spirit in the country to 145 naira per litre. Same year, oil price dropped below \$30 per barrel in the volatile international oil market which not only affected the revenue generated by the federal government from the export of crude oil, but also contributed to (not caused) Nigeria's economic recession. In the Q2 of 2016, the country's GDP contracted by 2.06% but on September 05, 2017, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) announced that the country was finally out of recession as Nigeria's GDP grew by 0.55% in the Q2 of the same year.

Ideologically, the APC has displayed to Nigerians that the party's shared belief is 'democratic socialism'. Quite similar to 'awoism' in the mid 1950s, the Buhari administration has taken to welfarism. In the last two years, the incumbent government has funded a feeding programme for primary school pupils in over 20 states nationwide – Ogun State, Zamfara State, Anambra State, Osun State, Kaduna State, Enugu State to mention a few. In Imo State, the outgoing executive governor, Governor Rochas Okorocha of the APC, has for the past seven years sustained a free education policy in the state. All these are a pointer to the ideology 'democratic socialism'. Furthermore, President Buhari has been working towards making the Nigerian State better than he met it. Billions of naira for capital expenditure in the budget has been earmarked for different developmental projects e.g. the construction and rehabilitation of federal road networks nationwide. Presently, there is an ongoing reconstruction of the Lagos-Ibadan expressway, the construction of the Second Niger Bridge at Onisha, the rehabilitation of the Apapa-Oshodi expressway etc. Hence, 'progressivism' can be said to be another ideological leaning of the APC. Though, the incumbent government has not satisfactorily met up to the expectation of the masses in the past roughly four years.

## **6. Political Parties and Members Defection: An Indication of the Chronic Poverty of Party Ideology in Nigeria**

The frequent decamping of members of one political party to another whenever a general election is around the corner is not a new thing in the history of Nigeria's party-politics. History has it that the defection of party members dates back to the colonial era. In 1951 there was an election in the Western region for the Western Region House of Assembly which the NCNC under the leadership of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe won the majority seats in the yet to be inaugurated Assembly, while the AG won the minority seats. Chief Obafemi Awolowo, unhappy with how the election result favoured the NCNC, lobbied and won over 5 out of the 6 elected representatives of the Ibadan Peoples Party (IPP). The 6<sup>th</sup> person, Chief Adegoke Adelabu joined the NCNC to form the NCNC-Mabolaje Grand Alliance. Awolowo also won over most of the Independents, and those belonging to the Etu-Edo and Ondo Improvement League. Thus, most of them that initially supported the NCNC 'carpet-crossed' to the AG which made the party have

the majority seats and the NCNC the minority seats after the Assembly was inaugurated on January 07, 1952.

The second case of the defection of party members in Nigeria happened in the first republic. During the AG intra-party crisis, Chief Samuel L. Akintola's faction loyalists in the AG defected to his United People's Party (UPP) which he formed shortly after he was expelled from the AG in 1962. The UPP later metamorphosed to the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) after Chief Samuel L. Akintola joined forces with the Chief Remi-Fani-Kayode's group from the NCNC in the Western region. In the second republic, a UPN member, in person of Chief Akin M. Omoboriowo, the Deputy Governor of Ondo State, defected to the NPN to contest against his former boss, Governor Michael Ajasin, in the 1983 gubernatorial election. Fast forwarding now to the fourth republic, the defection of several politicians has made headlines on print and electronic media.

Immediately after General (Rtd) Mohammed Buhari became the President of Federal Republic of Nigeria, thousands of people if not millions, changed from the PDP to the APC (Olanrewaju, 2015). But as the set date for the 2019 general election draws near, several prominent politicians have decamped. The Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki, defected from the APC to the PDP, Senate Minority Leader, Senator Godswill Akpabio defected from the PDP to the APC, the Speaker, House of Representatives, Hon. Yakubu Dogara defected from the APC to the PDP, the Governor of Sokoto State, Hon. Aminu Waziri Tambuwal defected from the APC to the PDP and, Senator Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso defected from the APC to the PDP (Ali, 2018).

*Fig 6.1 The List of Registered Political Parties for the 2019 General Election*

S.N	NAME OF POLITICAL PARTIES	ACRONYM
1	Accord	A
2	Action Alliance	AA
3	African Action Congress	AAC
4	Advanced Allied Party	AAP
5	All Blending Party	ABP
6	advanced Congress of Democrats	ACD
7	Allied Congress Party of Nigeria	ACPN
8	Alliance for Democracy	AD
9	African Democratic Congress	ADC
10	Action Democratic Party	ADP
11	All Grassroots Alliance	AGA
12	All Grand Alliance Party	AGAP
13	Advanced Nigeria Democratic Party	ANDP
14	Alliance for New Nigeria	ANN

15	Alliance National Party	ANP
16	Abundant Nigeria Renewal Party	ANRP
17	African Peoples Alliance	APA
18	All Progressives Congress	APC
19	Advanced Peoples Democratic Alliance	APDA
20	All Progressives Grand Alliance	APGA
21	Allied Peoples Movement	APM
22	Alternative Party of Nigeria	APN
23	Action Peoples Party	APP
24	Alliance of Social Democrats	ASD
25	Alliance for a United Nigeria	AUN
26	Better Nigeria Progressive Party	BNPP
27	Coalition for Change	C4C
28	Change Advocacy Party	CAP
29	Change Nigeria Party	CNP
30	Congress of Patriots	COP
31	Democratic Alternative	DA
32	Democratic Peoples Congress	DPC
33	Democratic Peoples Party	DPP
34	Freedom and Justice Party	FJP
35	Fresh Democratic Party	FRESH
36	Grassroots Development Party of Nigeria	GDPN
37	Green Party of Nigeria	GPN
38	Hope Democratic Party	HDP
39	Independent Democrats	ID
40	Justice Must Prevail Party	JMPP
41	Kowa Party	KP
42	Liberation Movement	LM
43	Labour Party	LP
44	Legacy Party of Nigeria	LPN
45	Mass Action Joint Alliance	MAJA
46	Modern Democratic Party	MDP
47	Masses Movement of Nigeria	MMN
48	Mega Party of Nigeria	MPN
49	Movement for the Restoration and Defence of Democracy	MRDD
50	National Action Council	NAC
51	Nigeria Community Movement Party	NCMP
52	National Conscience Party	NCP
53	Nigeria Democratic Congress Party	NDCP

54	National Democratic Liberty Party	NDLP
55	Nigeria Elements Progressive Party	NEPP
56	Nigeria for Democracy	NFD
57	New Generation Party of Nigeria	NGP
58	National Interest Party	NIP
59	New Nigeria Peoples Party	NNPP
60	Nigeria Peoples Congress	NPC
61	New Progressive Movement	NPM
62	National Rescue Movement	NRM
63	National Unity Party	NUP
64	Peoples Coalition Party	PCP
65	People for Democratic Change	PDC
66	Peoples Democratic Movement	PDM
67	Peoples Democratic Party	PDP
68	Progressive Peoples Alliance	PPA
69	Providence People's Congress	PPC
70	Peoples Party of Nigeria	PPN
71	Peoples Progressive Party	PPP
72	Peoples Redemption Party	PRP
73	People's Trust	PT
74	Reform and Advancement Party	RAP
75	Re-build Nigeria Party	RBNP
76	Restoration Party of Nigeria	RP
77	Save Nigeria Congress	SNC
78	Social Democratic Party	SDP
79	Sustainable National Party	SNP
80	Socialist Party of Nigeria	SPN
81	United Peoples Congress	U.P.C
82	United Democratic Party	UDP
83	United Patriots	UP
84	Unity Party of Nigeria	UPN
85	United Progressive Party	UPP
86	We The People Nigeria	WTPN
87	Young Democratic Party	YDP
88	Yes Electorates Solidarity	YES
89	Youth Party	YP
90	Young Progressive Party	YPP
91	Zenith Labour Party	ZLP

Source: INEC (2018)

Asides the cases of defection mentioned above, there is one classic case of decamping that has caught the attention of so many scholars – Alhaji Atiku Abubakar (2006-2018). In the year 1998, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar was one of the founding fathers of the PDP. But in 2006, owing to the disagreement between him and his boss, President Olusegun Obasanjo, he decamped to the opposition, the AC. In 2009, he went back to the PDP to contest at the presidential primary for the 2011 presidential ticket but, lost to Dr. Goodluck E. Jonathan. On August 31, 2013, Atiku walked out of the PDP Convention with seven aggrieved governors and formed a faction of the party called the ‘new PDP’. He eventually left the party for the second time and joined the leading opposition party, the APC, at the close of 2013 with five out of the said seven governors – Aliyu Wamakko (Sokoto), Rotimi Amaechi (Rivers), Rabiu Kwankwanso (Kano), Murtala Nyako (Adamawa), and Abdulfatah Ahmed (Kwara) (Basiru, 2015; Aluaigba, 2016). Again, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November, 2017, he left the APC for the PDP where he emerged as the presidential flag-bearer of the party for the 2019 presidential election on October 07, 2018.

Having studied closely the major defection cases in the year 2018 alone, it is safe to say that a lot of politicians do not subscribe to any ideology for the greater good of the Nigerian State. Rather, the satisfaction of their hunger for power and the attainment of their covert ambition is all that matters to them (Basiru, 2015).

### **Concluding Remarks**

It is no longer news that most Nigerian political parties today are ideologically barren if one looks at it from the angle of their ideologically-unguided party manifesto and the frequent defection of members across party lines. Not helping matters is the continuation of the ideology ‘neoliberalism’ for the Nigerian State which was introduced to the country through the 1986 Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) by the neo-liberal financial institutions – the IMF and World Bank. To address this ideological situation most Nigerian political parties and the State are in now, certain steps must be taken which are recommended below.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the findings in this research paper, the following are strongly recommended:

- i) Political parties already formed in Nigeria but obviously lack an ideology should take out time to adopt one, be it home-grown or a foreign ideology, while those with a nebulous ideology should clearly state their ideology;
- ii) Political parties should desist from cooking-up programmes only to get the masses to vote for the candidates they field to be elected to the different public offices at the federal, state and, local level. Rather than luring the electorates with what they want to hear, political parties should come up with a comprehensive, feasible and lucid manifesto that is not only drenched in the party’s ideology but will address the national question of restructuring the Nigerian federation, ethno-religious issues,

- nation/state-building and most importantly, the economic growth and development of the Nigerian State;
- iii) The number of registered political parties in the country should be downsized from 91 to a reasonable number – 25 or 30. This can be achieved by encouraging the merger of minor political parties with the same or similar ideological leaning/programmes;
  - iv) The continuous defection of party members should be discouraged by political parties. This is possible if they henceforth have in place stringent rules and regulations on the admission of members without fear or favour;
  - v) The ideology, neoliberalism, should be replaced with the ruling party's ideology, which must have been well considered as suitable for piloting a developing country like Nigeria to greater height;
  - vi) Section 68(1) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended), states that a member of either the Senate or House of Representative can lose his/her seat. But subsection (g) that hammers on when a member of the National Assembly defects from the party he/she won his/her seat to another party, is vague. This section/subsection of the Constitution should be revisited by law-makers and explicitly amended.

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