INTRAPARTY CONFLICT AND FACTORS THAT MADE IT A PROTRACTED ISSUE IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
Political parties are vital institutions of democracy and democratic sustainability, as it brings about people who come together to control the government apparatus to develop policies favourable to their interests, organize and persuade voters to elect their candidates to office. This is what is found in Nigeria's political system and mostly in Edo State since the advent of the second republic like others states, though, the political system exemplifies a sorry state of political parties in Nigeria as such system epitomized intra-party conflicts, despite the internal party mechanism and the alarming rate ratio of litigation intervention in this party conflict. Study adopted phenomenology design. The population of the study consist of three main political parties in Edo state APC that controls government, as well as PDP and APGA being the first and second runner-up in the last governorship election of 2016 were understudied. Purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting participants for this study, while data were collected by in-depth interview. Realist conflict theory was adopted, study reveals that the frequent occurrence of intra-party conflict is the highjack of party structures, by every successive governments. And money bags or put differently 'big men' as the more money and influence you have the more party structure you control and lack of knowledge or understanding of the party constitution. Study suggested people's participation in the affairs of the party and government should be encouraged and Political parties should be superior to individual or group of individuals.

Keywords: Alternative Disputes Resolution, Democratization, godfatherism, Intra-party conflict, Litigation

INTRODUCTION
Nigeria having been faced with consequences of party politics that promotes political cultures and principles as it has consciousness accepted political party as an important factor of understanding changing aspects of political life in every democratic society; the root of which pre-date the first republic of Nigerian democratic development as the election that navigated the country out of colonialism to independence in 1960, was conducted on the platform of political parties. Political party being an amalgamation of a dedicated group of people, who have same ideology, similar positions, and goals, which basically are to present candidates for elections, get them elected in order to form a government and implement its agenda. Political parties always provides platform for politicians to contest for elective political offices. By this understanding, political parties upon registration by the regulatory body are predisposed to conflicts.

Democracy has globally become the norm for societal growth and development, as it needs to rotate around inclusive involvement on the part of the electorate and accountability on the part of the leadership. Fundamentally, there are some basic platforms which would enhance the actual operation of democracy in a given state, and political party is the most critical in this process. Okonkwo and Unaji (2016, p. 91) opine

that "a political party is a group of people who share a common conception of how and why state power should be organized and used." Emphasizing further Okonkwo maintained that political parties are not only organized in such a way to differ from every other organization but relate their activities to the people's interest, because it reserves the responsibility as a political party to on behalf of the people, influence government policies as well as to assume the obligation for articulating and implementing government policies. These are what makes them distinct from professional associations and trade unions.

Though in attaining this standard, a political party needs to possess the quality and characteristics of intra-party democracy, which is at variance with intra-party conflict. Intra-party democracy is a democratic cultural practice within and among party members, which is the level and methods of including party members in the decision making and deliberations within the party structure. Intra-party democracy is usually known to cultivate voter's political competencies and producing more capable representatives which in turn ensures that the party initiates better policies and political programs. In the same vein Okhaide (2012, p. 58) asserts that "Political parties are indispensable institutions of democracy and democratic societies; it has been argued that democratic sustainability is not achievable without a viable political party system." It has also been observed that socio-political restriction and constraint within and among political parties in Nigeria have increasingly resulted in party wrangling, a war of attrition, recrimination, acrimony, coordination dilemmas, and cross-carpeting in many Nigerian political parties. These challenges thrown up by lack of proper internal democracy across political parties as well as cost and delay arising from litigation process, this is why Obi (2018) emphasized that part of the reason why political parties in Nigeria are lacking in their capacity for facilitating voluntariness and reconciliation, healing of wounds, ensuring direct participation of disputants in resolving their disputes, reducing time and cost of resolving dispute and fostering internal party cohesion which is obviously a clear recipe for conflicts as Wolff (2006) stated, that conflict occurs whenever two or more persons seek to possess the same object or occupy the same position which is only available to one person at a time and play incompatible means of achieving their purposes. This scenario has been attributed to the seemly unending intraparty conflicts within and among the political parties in Nigeria.

The growing level of conflict within and among political parties in Nigeria is highly disturbing, as it is undermining their political leadership recruitment function. Though the general traditional disputes resolution mechanism of the court system otherwise referred to as litigation process, which parties to conflict always resort to in settling their disputes, has shown some efficacy in resolving party disputes for internal democracy to reign. However, there is a growing agreement that, litigation process limits and delays in delivering justice, facilitating voluntariness and reconciliation, healing wounds, ensuring direct participation of disputants in resolving their disputes, reducing time and cost of resolving dispute and fostering internal party cohesion Obi (2018) observed this to be a huge challenge to intra-party democracy, as evidently shown in every approaching general elections.

As it is observed in the Nigeria's political space, intra-party conflict in Edo State APC as a political party, has continued to make headline news in Nigeria, especially now that the 2020 governorship election, in the State is fast approaching, and considering the fact that, the party currently form government in the State, the general governance processes have been reduced as more focus seems to be on the conflict within the party, which is attributable to a lack of internal democracy in the parties, as also epitomized in PDP and APGA. With the preponderance of scholarly works on ADR as a global striving procedure of quick justice delivery system, that its final outcomes or rulings always end in a win/win for both parties with a flexible approach and tendency for a continuous harmonious relationship. Unlike litigation process with a winner and loser as its final outcomes, which have the tendency of snowballing into a fresh circle of conflict. The consensus is that intra-party conflict is as a result of lack of internal democracy within political parties and is a limiting factor in Nigeria's attempt to deepen, sustain or consolidate democracy. Hence this paper to unraveled, the challenges obvious in the management of intra-party conflict in Nigeria, that has made it a protracted issue.

Literatures:

Concept of Democracy

Democracy is traceable, as posited by Kamp (2011) to the traditional Greeks, precisely the city-state of Athens within the fifth century B.C. were the precursors of democracy. The word democracy comes from the Greek words 'demos', which means individuals, and 'Kratos' that means power or rule. Directly translated, democracy, therefore, suggests that 'rule by the people', though originally the Greeks used it to mean the poor or the lots. Pericles, an Ancient Greek statesman Pericles was born c. 495 B.C. in Athens, Greece. His father, Xanthippus, was a famous general and statesman who came from a wealthy family of Aristocrats; he had galvanized generations of later political theorists, statesmen, and customary individuals alike. However, several aspects of Athenian democracy seem strange and unknown to contemporary societies. The central political establishment in Athens throughout the fifth and sixth centuries B.C. was the Assembly, typically composed of five, to six thousand members and all were hospitable adult voters with the exception of ladies, slaves, and foreigners. By straightforward majority vote, the Assembly might settle on just about any domestic issue with none legal restrictions. Most exceptional, perhaps, was the very fact that the leaders of the Athenian Assembly weren't elective, however, chosen by the heap, because the Athenians believed that any persons were capable of holding office (Kamp (2011).

Fleck and Hanssen (2002) observed democratic form of government as captivated philosophers since the first democracies appeared in ancient Greece about 2500 years ago. Undeniably, "democracy" is a Greek word, meaning rule by the demos, or "people". However, Okeke (2014) argued that in democratic method, variety of researchers have established that though the term democracy, comes from Greek demokratia, virtually talking about the power of the people, nowadays democracy has nothing to do with power of the people, as well as the ability of all the people and if it still retains any content on the matter of democracy, it's just that of free elections and different varieties of occasional voting, for what is becoming an ever-smaller proportion of the potential electorate. The point being emphasized here is that in today's democracy the world over, no matter the population of the electorate it is the number of those that came out to vote that determine election results. As shown from INEC 2019 presidential election result were only 35% of eligible voters voted, while 65% did not vote, yet the result was announce based on just the 35% that voted Ted-Odogwu (2019).

The principal functions that the individuals establish a democratic government are the protection and promotion of their rights, interests, and welfare. Legal frameworks need to be reviewed to ensure that: there is a genuine opportunity for political contestants to compete fairly; effective remedies can be applied by administrative bodies and the courts; political competitors can turn to legal redress, rather than violence or other extra-legal measures; and citizens have the confidence that they can overcome any legal frameworks need to be reviewed to ensure that: there is a genuine opportunity for political contestants to compete fairly. The effort to protect and promote the integrity of elections has to be an ongoing commitment. The effort to protect and promote the integrity of elections, effective remedies may be applied by organizational bodies and also the courts; political competitors would communicate legal redress, instead of violence or alternative extra-legal measures; and voters trust that they'll overcome obstacles to their political enfranchisement. Civil society organizations would monitor and report on the functioning of state institutions in these respects (GCEGS, 2012). Democracy needs every individual to be liberated to participate within the political community's liberty. Therefore, political freedom lies at the center of the conception of democracy. The conception of contemporary democracy to Goodin and Hardin (2001) and Vanberg (2017) has three principal parts: popular participation, constitutionalism, and liberalism, every inch of these principles should exist in every form of government that is instituted for it to be a real democracy.

Political Parties

Political parties in their modern form originated in the 19th century from Europe and the United States, along with the electoral and parliamentary systems, whose growth mirrors the development of parties. The term party has since come to be applied to all organized groups seeking political power, whether by democratic elections or by revolution (Duverger, 2019). Political parties play a crucial role in supporting a democratic

establishment. Even in authoritarian countries, dictators would like political parties to consolidate power and maintain governance. Outside of political parties, it is somehow difficult for a country to operate healthily. On the functions of political parties these scholars Fagbadebo, Agunyai and Odeyemi (2014), Flanders (2007) Jinadu (2011) are of the opinion that among other functions the political parties ought to perform the following functions:

(a) Support the parliament: Parliament in any country consists of representatives of the citizenry. The voters choose the representatives of the parties to be their voice within the parliament. The party that gets the bulk of the votes gets the ruling positions while the opposition has the responsibility to makes sure that the party in power is devoted to the national and international activities of the government. (b) Development of public policies: Every political party within a given environment fights for the adoption of its political principles. Therefore, every individual party member ought to portray the party`s principles as the watchword in parliament and the principles turned policies ought to be aimed toward the social well-being and condition of the citizenry. (c) Educative function or awareness creation: Political parties ought to educate individuals as it is very necessary that voters should understand the ideas and ideals of the party and also the government. Such party(s) ought to additionally give impetus for the political consciousness of the individuals as this is one of the most vital functions of political parties in a democracy. (d) Stability function: Political parties unite individuals within the country. They promote the principles of loyalty and unity at intervals in the country. Individuals often divided by faith, regional or national matters. Hence, the duty of a political party to accommodate the differences among individuals and to foster unity among the citizenry. (e) Leadership recruitment: It is the function of a political party is that of the recruitment of leaders. This is an essential function political party to find good leaders who will give them an active voice as well as inclusiveness. The political parties in Nigeria ought to perform these functions for the overall interest of Nigerians. It is not practicable to divulge these functions of the political party as opined by those scholars from that of Gabriel Almond's Functioning Political System Approach as according to Momodu, and Matudi (2013) Almond (2000) argues that political parties have two major functions in any democracy, these are anchored on Input-Output practical variables and therefore the historical technique that has a perspective background for discerning party politics vis-a-vis the issues related to political instability within the Nigerian State. Almond's Input-Output functions which are in line with David Easton's input and output model as postulated in the system theory.

Multiparty System and Political Parties in Nigeria's Fourth Republic
Multipartyism and the existence of political alternatives which enable voters to choose is a dominant canon of neoliberal democracy that gives 'free and fair elections' and 'individual choice' the meaning they deserve in the context of electoral democracy. However, emphasis on multipartyism and the dynamics of interparty relations is not to suggest that intra-party dynamics are not a significant issue in the 2015 elections considering9 that intra-party tension and even violence have been a key element that shapes electoral democracy in Nigeria (Hamalai, Egwu and Omotala (2017:58). Expatiating further Hamalai et al. (2017) maintains that in a multiparty system and Federalism is a system of government predicated upon power-sharing and segmented autonomy, which has often been prescribed as a viable instrument for the management of pluralism, especially ethnic diversity in such a way that political stability is guaranteed. In such political systems, there is need for a form of democracy that seeks to regulate how power should be shared among society that is diverse like Nigeria democracy, multiparty system ought to provide the basis for such an arrangement, since government representation, as well as an emphasis on proportionality that shapes how the electoral system determines political representation, distribution of resources, the appointment of civil service positions and the dissemination of political positions through quotas or other means are all democratic ideals.

The first and second Republic in Nigeria had multiple political parties, with the exception of the aborted third Republic, where there were only two parties. Omotola (2010) opined that Multi-party systems in Nigeria pre-date independence as the political parties at that time used it to agitate for representations of Nigerians in politics and also as an instrument of nationalism to attain independence, which came for Nigeria

in 1960. And open a new stage for a multi-party system to flourish in Nigeria, but political elites and ethnicity served as interference for the system, which eventually culminates into political violence especially in the south-west and a well-rigged election. The twists and turns of party activities eventually led to the end of the first republic. Similarly, the second republic was almost like the first in nature which led to its bane as well. The third republic brought about a new dimension to the Governance and Public Service Delivery in Nigeria: political party system in Nigeria, with the Babangida led administration opted to practice a two-party system, SDP and NRC, this new experiment was marred by the annulment of the June 12th elections which saw M.K.O Abiola emerge as the winner. And then the fourth republic, as at the date of the general election of 23rd February 2019, Nigeria has 91 registered political parties as twenty-three new parties registered by INEC in 2018 were added to the 68 existing before then. Therefore, the ballot papers will have about ninety-one parties listed on it, this suggests that there may be more challenges for voters in the next coming general election in identifying the candidate of their choice in the ballot paper that may be larger than that of 2019 general election if its experience, which has been observed as being responsible for the higher numbers of voided votes in that election, is anything to go bye.

Also, Badejo and Obah-Akpowoghaha (2015), assert that the emergence of the multiparty system in the Nigerian Fourth Republic can be seen as the most important breakthrough in the democratic process. The return to democracy in 1999 has ushered unprecedented hope on the democratic process in Nigeria and, thus, heralded another opportunity for the country to launch a new strategy towards democracy, after many years of lost opportunities under a prolonged period of authoritarian rule. The journey so far since 1999 raises a lot of concern and apprehension. Chief among them is the multiplicity of political parties. It's been argued that the multiplicity of parties typically encourages additional fragmentation and it discourages alternation of power whereby the ruling party gets more strength and public appeals Kuenzi and Lambright (2001). It a state of affairs wherever there are quite many political parties that contest for elections, resulting in multiple decisions before the electorates and that continuously encourage a coalition of state and defections of members.

Since 1999 according to Okhaide (2012), the numbers of formed political parties in Nigeria have been outrageous. At a point, it was as if any Dick and Harry could wake one morning and registers a dozen people for a political party. Thus, the political parties became too numerous for citizens to keep count, and the Nigerian political system which were already bad footed. As a result of selfish and regional interest became crippled and bastardized. Following the successful inauguration of the transition program by the then Military Head of State, General Abdulsalm Abubakar in 1999. Okhaide (2012) emphasized that three political parties were initially registered; these were the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the All People's Party (APP), and All Nigeria People Party (ANPP). The Alliance for Democracy (AD) was later registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and by December 2002 there was a significant increase in the number of political parties in Nigeria. Furthermore, an additional three political parties were registered between January and February 2006. Currently, under the present political dispensation, the number of registered political parties in Nigeria that are participating in the 2019 general election is about ninety-one. Although of these number two are the major dominant, PDP that was among the once form in 1999 and APC, formed in February 2013, as a result of an alliance of Nigeria's three biggest opposition parties the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and a faction of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), (Ajulo, 2018).

Party Membership and Intra-Party Conflict
Intra-party conflict entails a situation of disagreement between members of a political party. The situation often arises when party members try to influence the decision-making process of the party to their own advantage Momodu and Matudi (2013). This shows that intra-party conflict occurs during the process of chosen delegates (congresses), candidates (primaries) and appointive positions. Democracy as a global norm for governance seek effective ways through which society should be governed born out of contest internally or externally. In democracies, conflict is unavoidable; the issue here, however, is not in the conflict but on

how these conflicts are managed. Some of these conflicts have led to the factionalization of some major political parties which have resulted to the decamping from one political party to the other by party members. Incessant intra-party conflicts that come in varying magnitudes and intensities have become the hallmark of party politics in Nigeria. Intraparty democracy as Sandri and Amjahad (2015) asserts that it is what party members adopt for numerous reasons, which includes, internal group action measures like direct internal elections of the party leader, one-member-one-vote procedures for choosing delegates to national congress and for nominating candidates for elections. The argument that members' perception of intraparty democracy and their degree of previous internal policy within the party are associated with their individual level of involvement in intraparty democracy activities is not sustainable. Reichert (2016) believed "It is commonly understood that people who are more knowledgeable in political realm and who feel more efficacious to influence political decisions are more politically active" the opinion that membership length also contribute in predicting the extent to those members participation in party politics for internal democracy procedures is not sustainable either, as the length or membership strength of political parties does not determine the overbearing influence of godfatherism or immune from intraparty conflicts which literature have revealed as hindrance to internal democracy.

The lack of or none existence of ideology, absence of internal democracy, incumbency factor, goal mismatch, godfatherism or neo-patrimonialism, politics of self-interest and winners takes all mentality in Nigeria politics, are some of the reason why political parties especially the major ones (PDP and APC) lack of intra-party democracy, and are engrossed in spending their time and resources in litigation as a result of the reoccurring conflict within than as earlier emphasized, Aleyomi (2013), Akindele (2011), Chukwuma & Ali (2014), Yahaya & Ibrahim (2015). As Olaniyan (2009: p. 51) observed, "party politics has adorned the toga of notoriety in Nigeria to the extent that its defining characteristics have been intrigues, bickering, backbiting, schisms, and violence". It is in this context that scholars are really interested in understanding the dynamics of intraparty conflicts, particularly in developing commonwealth where the process of nurturing democratic ethics is very much overdue. The intraparty conflicts are a recurrent phenomenon hindering the growth of democracy in different forms and at different stages in the process of democratization. However, the characteristics and impact of intraparty conflicts in Nigeria as a worrisome phenomenon have continued to be a stumbling block to intraparty democracy thereby dwarfing the growth of democracy.

The concept of intra-party conflict, is a phrase coined to as much as possible embrace all of the issues centred around tussles and wrangling within a political party, that are inimical to normal nomination process of chosen party leaders and flag bearers for election as against intra-party democracy, which is inclusive and devoid of hostility (Okonkwo & Unaji, 2016). Political parties themselves must develop the culture of intra-party democracy for any democratisation process to succeed. And two ways of entrenching the culture of intraparty democracy are (a) democratic selection of the leadership on a regular basis and (b) the holding of credible and genuine primary elections within parties. The most important rules for the regular and democratic process of leadership selection include but not limited to the following: The generality of party members from time to time must be given an opportunity to influence and determine who leads the party at all times, party leadership should be and seen to be accountable directly to party structures all the way from wards up to the national level.

Political parties in Nigeria are characterized by top to bottom organizational structure and power and an important decision was taken is extremely centralized. This method leaves a very little area for thoughtful decision-making processes involving party membership. The rigid organizational structure is partially inherited from the era inheritance, where colonial directors and political elites determined issues and take decisions, on behalf of the native populations despite the fact that no consultation was made. Political parties, therefore, tend to be autocratic or oligarchical in their organizational structures wherever conformity is desirable to the crucial discussion of problems and is enforced through covert and expressed pressure, and illegal sanctions as well as suspension and even expulsion from the party. Against the background of the

foregoing intra-party conflict would suggest a clash of interests among members of a political party who are struggling over the control of the decision-making machinery of the party and other resources that could confer certain benefits on themselves. In a similar vein, according to Basiru, (2019), Muhammad describes it as the conflict between members of a party whereby some members employ certain strategies to hijack the party machinery with the ultimate aim of serving their personal interests. Specifically, conflicts among members often arise over issues of internal leadership recruitment, the selection of candidates for general elections, the sharing of appointive posts, among others. To be sure, conflict of interests among members of a political party, if not well managed within the context of the legal and institutional framework of the party, could escalate into an intense competition and eventually, into violence (Basiru, 2019). These practices cause severe limitations on processes of inclusiveness and transparency, thereby breeding neo-patrimonialism or godfatherism and thus compromising intra-party democracy Awofeso, Obah-Akpowoghaha and Ogunmilade (2017).

The party primaries and congresses of political parties is always conflictual and often lingers on in the courts, even after the main election have been conducted and winner announced the case between PDP and Rotimi Amaechi who at the end of the intraparty dispute became the Governor-elect for River State without contesting in the main election, is a clear example. Intraparty conflict is, however, a common phenomenon among the major political parties in Nigeria, which is PDP and APC (Bolodeoku & Adejuyigbe, 2007). Meanwhile, Okhaide (2012, p. 1) argued that "The conduct of a credible election has been hinged on many factors. One of them is a well-developed internal party democracy. This assertion underscores the quest for internal democracy among the various political parties in Nigeria." Political parties are one of the institutions that carry out and actualize the democratic principles in any organized democratic society. The second structure is that the performance and implementation of government policy should not be biased so as to favour certain groups or persons, as this is capable of generating conflict (Aleyomi, 2013). Alluding to the sacrosanct nature of internal democracy in the polity of every civilized society, Ochayi (2017) of Vanguard newspaper, quoted Atiku Abubakar, at the second Inter-Party informatory Council of Nigeria, IPAC, Annual Conference 2017 on Internal Party Democracy in Nigerian capital, significantly scolded his party, the ruling All Progressives Congress , APC, over failure to organise statutory conferences for the organs of the party. He argued that a lack of internal democracy had turned APC and other political parties within the country into bullying and authoritarian.

The problem of internal democracy in our political parties are with the United States of America for an extended time, so since the restoration of civilian rule 1999. In long-established democracies, those statements would appear commonplace, he, however, acknowledges that our democracy is young and our parties also are rather young. And Atiku emphasized that "As a result, they are still wrestling with issues of party building, party structures, internal democracy and the nature of the relationship between parties and members, parties and legislatures and parties and government as well as among parties themselves" (Ochayi, 2017, p. 1).

Causes of Intraparty Conflicts in Nigeria

The historicity of political party disputes or conflicts in Nigeria is not a subject of debate. This is because incidences of party disputes date back to the colonial era. Scholars like Chukwuma and Ali, 2014; Jinadu, 2001; Nwanegbo, Odigbo and Nnorom, 2014; are of the opinion that the major causes of internal crisis in the party include the internal division within the party. They viewed some of the major cases of internal crisis includes internal division within the party which led to the party having two camps, one led by Chief Sunday Bolorunduro Awoniyi and the other headed by Chief Ume Ezeoke; also Anambra State internal tussle between former Governor Chris Ngige and his godfather, Chief Chris Uba; the Imo State crisis that led to the defection of Senator Ifeanyi Araraume to Action Group of Nigeria. The PDP's governorship primary was won by Ifeanyi Araraume, a former senator. But soon after the vote the PDP leadership replaced Araraume with another politician, Charles Ugwu, who had not stood in the primaries and so on.

The Ogun State crisis that led to the defection of Senator Ibikunle Amosun to ANPP later to ACN; the Ekiti State case that led to the defection of former Governor Segun Oni to ACN later to PDP; the crisis in Ondo State that led to the defection of Governor Segun Mimiko to Labour Party, and back to PDP; the crisis in Abia State PDP that led to the defection of former Governor Orji Uzor Kalu to the Progressive People's Alliance, then back to PDP and now APC and the Bayelsa State crisis that led to the defection of former Governor Timipre Silva to the All Progressive Congress, are all examples of intra-party conflicts. Basiru, (2019) emphasized that "no party, in recent times in Nigeria, illustrates the crisis dimension that intra-party conflicts and their poor management have assumed better than the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC)". Meanwhile, the National Chairman of APC Adams Oshiomhole opined that "conflict is inevitable at intervals in a political party. Every now and then whenever individuals move to pursue a typical goal, there's the tendency that some members of that same group would pursue their personal interests rather than the group interest. All the same, a party ought to attempt to mixture the varied interests of its members and articulate a unified front for achieving its goals (Abubakar & Ibrahim, 2015). The factors which accounts for political party conflict is as a result of distrust amongst party members, has created on its own, conditions for defection and in a few cases, resulted in the creation or formation of a 'political party within a political party.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework adopted in this study, is **the Realistic Conflict Theory (RCT)** The central thesis of **Realistic Conflict Theory** is that conflict occur as a result of personal desire and goals, cessation of conflict occur due to cooperation in pursuit of collective desire and goals. This theory (RCT) is a socio-psychological model of intergroup conflict that was coined by Campbell (1965), Cited in Mutezo (2015). This theory was first developed by Muzafer (1954), an American psychologist who carried out the famous "Robbers Cave" study into group conflict. The theory is a "Realist" theory because it proposes that conflict between groups is not based on something irrational but on an actual need for resources or position, The realistic conflict theory states that whenever there are two or more groups that are seeking the same limited resources, this will lead to conflict, negative stereotypes and beliefs, and discrimination between the groups. Political party as rightly observed from the literature reviewed, is a platform for contestation by members and every position contested for can only be available for one person, hence the frequent conflict within and among party members aptly buttress by the realistic conflict theory.

It is the dexterity with which Nigeria politicians struggle for power in most cases for their selfish interest, that is the causative factor for the obvious tension within the parties across board. According to the theory (RCT), intra-group hostility can arise as a result of conflicting goals and competition over limited resources, and it also offers an explanation for the feelings of prejudice and discrimination toward the out-group that accompany the intergroup hostility. Groups may be in competition for a real or perceived scarcity of resources such as money, political power, military protection, or social status. As it is with every theory, this theory has also been criticized, the value of this idea, which undermines the whole realistic conflict theory, is doubtful, namely, in terms of relations between groups in a large social context. Several weaknesses of RCT and of inter-group behavior should also be noted (Taylor and Moghaddam, 1994), namely, the tendency to assume that conflict is always negative. This undermining idea as discussed here is based not only on the perspective of disadvantaged groups, but also on positive evidence from the benefits of socio-cognitive conflict provided by two fields of European social psychological studies.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for this study is qualitative, and focused was on phenomenology research design as it enables the researcher raise awareness and help increases an insight into the phenomenon being study. Data were collected by the researcher, through examining of documents, observing behavour and the use of in-depth interview which helped in the explanation of the concepts being studied. These data collected were analyzed to extract points made by different authors on the topic of study, while the audio taped in-depth interview was each transcribed and thematically analyzed, to make sense out of data collected.

Findings
The factors responsible for the frequent intraparty conflict in the party, from the respondents overview is the highjack of party structure by the executive arm of government, who automatically become the owner of the party, once the same party structure has been used to bring the individual to power, coupled with the craze for power by desperate big men who suddenly became politician just to grasp power. It is the combination of these factors that systematically weakens the party structure as members of the party are completely taken away from the decision-making process of the party. This is what Ojukwu and Olaifa (2011) assert as responsible for the weak party structure in Nigeria. A weak political structure is a threat to democratic sustainability. The majority opinion of respondents in responding to the factors responsible for the frequent intraparty conflict in the party as captured in their various responses, clearly reveals why the political parties in Nigeria are weak, as the party structure is in the hands of few members the party will remain weak and therefore not viable, hence Okhaide, (2012) posited that, "Political parties are indispensable institutions of democracy and democratic societies; it has been argued that democratic sustainability is not achievable without a viable political party system" (p. 58). Political parties needed greater internal democracy in the election/selection of party leaders, which is not possible in the face of a hijack of party structures, that often culminates in intra-party conflict with its resultant effect of power struggles between leaders, which leads to party splits. This has not only crippled parties but is threatening the country as a whole, as it relates to the issue of democracy and sustaining same. As alluded to by Chukwuma and Ali (2014) who argued that: The persistence of internal crisis within the PDP and the subsequent defections of the aggrieved members, who call themselves 'new PDP' and subsequently moved to the APC in 2013, is a culmination of the perennial subterranean wrangling's in the party; which stemmed from desperate ambitions, lack of ideological attachment to the party system, and insensitive partisan opportunism.

Other scholars like; Jinadu, (2001); Nwanegbo, Odigbo and Nnorom, (2014) are in agreement with Chukwuma and Ali (2014). Although, some respondents see factors responsible for the frequent intraparty conflict as normal phenomenon in politics, for them the party believes that the conflict is a family affair. It is pertinent to state clearly that party conflict, will truly be a family affair if the party structures are in the hands of these "family members". The position of R12 that the party in power is prone more to conflict based on their size, strength and popularity, as true it may seem, the reality on ground, as revealed from this study is that all political parties are suspectable to conflict as long as they conduct congresses and primary election.

There is a consensus that member's direct participation and intervention in party affairs is sacrosanct for political parties to be truly democratic. The high jacking of party structure has made it impossible for member's direct participation and intervention in party affairs, thereby, positioning the party to lack internal democracy as posited by Yakubu and Akubo (2014) and Sandri and Amjahad (2015) that these principles eluded political parties in Nigeria instead what's gettable is that the total opposite of what ought to be obtained; the absence of internal party democracy which nowadays stands mutually as a major obstacles to nurturing, useful and participatory democracy in Nigeria. According to the Global Commission on Elections Democracy and Security (GCEGS), (2012) Democracy needs every individual to be liberated politically in order to participate in the political community's liberty. Therefore, political freedom lies at the center of the conception of democracy. The conception of contemporary democracy to Goodin and Hardin (2001) and Vanberg (2017) has three principal parts: popular participation, constitutionalism, and liberalism, every inch of these principles should exist in every form of government that is instituted for it to be a real democracy. This should be the grand norm for every political party in Nigeria as literature reviewed have posited political parties as a very vital institution in democracy, especially when the Nigeria constitution in session 221 emphasized it as the only platform upon which any candidate in Nigeria can seek for any elective position, therefore political parties must be and be seen to be ideologically based and have clear characteristics of intra-party democracy, where majority of members will always have a say in the workings and management of the party.

The respondents that belief the party APC has ideology equally agree with the submission that, the practical high jacking of party structure by those members that shoulders the cost of running and maintain the party, has made it impossible for member's direct participation and intervention in party affairs, thereby making the party to lack internal democracy Sandri and Amjahad (2015) assert that:

> "Internal group action measures like direct internal elections of the party leader, one-member-one-vote procedures for choosing delegates to national congress and for nominating candidates for elections, however, since grass-roots members understand these measures in democracy they ought to be freely allowed to participate in the process through these procedures as this will impact the overall mobilization and participation among the party members as their full direct participate in every aspect or organ of the party is what is regarded as internal democracy" (p. 192).

The level of participation of the people in the total control of their polity, within the standard of natural justice, determines the degree of the democratic substance of a political system. The emphasis being made is that in a democratic setting, political parties are so important to the extent that neither democracy non-democratic society can exist without them. Democracy depends on parties to survive, since the structure of elections, from citizen participation to candidate selection and presentation of political programs, are done by political parties. The role of political parties become viable when there is an orderly political succession in society. Parties provide order to the political processes. As observed by Ahovi (2016) while quoting Jonathan Juma The NIPSS boss, he declared that:

> political parties bridge the gap between the electorate and the electoral process and serve as a link between the state and the people. He insisted that for the role to be beneficiary to the people within the democratic method, they need to be contending inside the dictates and atmosphere of the principles of internal party democracy. As on the one hand, internal party democracy reflects the degree of institutionalization, inclusiveness, and decentralization in party structures and politics (p. 1).

Party member's direct participation and intervention in party affairs of the party will not only lead to democratic outcomes, but it is also sacrosanct for democratic sustainability, this literature reviewed, has revealed as the bedrock for good governance and good governance is the basis upon which peace and development are sustained. The characteristics of this are that things are being done in an orderly and predictable manner, and for the sustainability of democracy, political parties, particularly the ruling party must have respect for democratic governance and democratic institutions. Democracy is deepened and sustainable when there is good governance and this must be the central goal of the party in power. This is consistent with Annan (1998) who observed, "Good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development" (p. 1). It is therefore saved to say that the pitiable state of Nigeria political parties is responsible for the resent report by World Poverty Clock, that tags Nigeria as the "poverty capital of the world".

Conclusion and Recommendations
The study concludes that, due to Intra-party conflict, Nigeria political parties are fast becoming an endangered species. As the conflict is purely a clash of interest, among members struggling over the control of the decision-making machinery of the party, and other resources that could confer certain benefits on themselves. The disastrous implication of this is that, it leads to the development of a Democratic system of government that serves the interests of powerful elite's godfathers. And negatively influence the character of democracy as a whole. This is the dilemmas of political parties, vis-à-vis democratization process in Nigeria. And therefore, recommends as follows:
1.   An Act of the National Assembly that makes it mandatory for Government and governance to be completely be separated from the political parties, should be enacted, in order to halt the struggle by elected officials at all level of governance to highjack political party structures. This will help to drastically reduce to the barest level the frequent intra-party conflict.

2.   Citizens participation in the management of party affairs and in government should be encouraged, in addition Political parties should be absolutely superior to individual or group of   individuals. In fact, there should be proper subordination of individuals' interest to party's interest.
3.   The political parties should make it mandatory for its members to be abreast with the rules and regulations of the party, by constantly conducting seminars and workshops, with special focus on the party constitution, as this will help them to know and comply with party mechanism of resolving conflict.

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