

# Probability Balloting and Political Stability in Developing Countries

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## Abstract

Electoral contests have become warfare and party politics a nightmare in developing countries. Citizens of such nations now approach every election with trepidation because of the assurance of casualties. Votes hardly count as many elections are ultimately decided by a tribunal or court of four to seven judges, which means effectively or technically disenfranchising the entire electorate. This paper proposed and drew the outlines of what is termed Probability Balloting, an innovative electoral model for developing countries based on drawing of lots among candidates on non-party parameters, rather than the casting-ballot. The major objective of the paper was to review contemporary electoral systems with a view to proposing a new electoral model based on probability balloting between screened and cleared candidates by the electoral commission to produce political leaders at all levels of government. It is an electoral model devoid of violence and huge financial charge and judicial determination but nonetheless participatory and accountable. The basic hypothesis was that defective and undemocratic electoral systems are responsible for the pain and anguish that the citizens experience during elections. The theory of participation was adopted as the theoretical framework. Data collection was from secondary sources and data analysis relied on textual extraction and analysis of baseline data. Conclusion was that political stability and good governance would continue to elude developing countries until a new electoral system was adopted which would render irrelevant the bloody, costly and corrupting aspects of electoral contests.

## Background to the Study

An emerging capitalist society about the 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe out of the womb of decadent feudalism urgently needed socio-political restructuring reflective of the new realities. The economic base or new arrangement of productive activity providing the foundation of the new society called for new relations of production as well as political and ideological transformation to redefine the society (Ake, 1981). Liberalism, as the new dawn, was defined by the society and politics of choice, of competition and of the market (Macpherson, 1972). Western liberalism had reconceptualised democracy to suit the exigencies of the emergent capitalist and individualistic society of open competition and choice (Ake, in Diamond and Plattner eds. 1993). The emphasis shifted to the expansive power of the state and its ability to extract compulsive obedience to its laws, policies and decisions, away from the original classical conception of citizen participation and control. As opposed to the original meaning and practice of democracy as rule by the common, poor and ordinary *demos* liberal democracy began to place high premium on the effective exercise of political power as the most prominent defining feature of the state. Macpherson(1972, 4) viewed it as:

*A double system of power. It is a system by which people can be governed, that is, made to do things they would not otherwise do, and made to refrain from doing things they otherwise might do. Democracy as a system of government is, then, a system by which power is exerted by the state over individuals and groups within it.*

Western liberalism further reduced democracy to periodic elections that essentially sustained the bourgeois class hegemony in society. Dynamically redefining society to subordinate the poor majority who should exercise political rule was a necessary component of bourgeois democracy. As Miliband (in Diamond ed. 1993: 114) correctly observed;

*“Capitalist democracy is bound to involve the limitation of democracy so that it may not seriously challenge the power, property, privileges, and position of the people at the top of the social pyramid”.*

In that condition democracy was actually stood on its head. It is significant to note the complementary evolution of liberalism with capitalism and liberal democracy, all reinforcing each other in the redefinition and decompositions of the emergent society. This economic, ideological and political complementarity in shaping and directing the evolution of human society, which was such a strong factor in the emergence of western capitalist society, appears to be the missing link in the colonized societies into which the entire system was transposed. Capitalistic development would not have been possible without the simultaneous processes of primitive accumulation as well as sustained internationalization of capital accumulation and the conversion of the entire world into a single market (Marx, 1885), a point that was explained further by Williams (1944, 209)

*Britain, far ahead of the rest of the world, and France were the countries which ushered in the modern world of industrial*

*development and parliamentary democracy with its attendant liberties. The other foreign stream which fed the accumulation of capital in Britain, the trade with India, was secondary in the period. . . It was only with the loss of the American colonies in 1783 that Britain turned to the serious exploitation of her Indian possessions.*

Parliamentary democracy, with its attendant liberties, was a necessary companion of the new liberal-plural society and all promoted and sustained by global exploitation of resources. Marx (1977: 112) had erroneously anticipated that European capitalism would be replicated in the Third World countries as they were compelled to “*adopt the capitalist mode of production, to become bourgeois themselves. In a word it creates a world after its own image*”. Rather than a bourgeois global image what emerged in the Third World, particularly Africa, was a coterie of underdeveloped states stricken with poverty, disease, illiteracy, decaying infrastructure, but whose resources were consistently being exploited and transferred to sustain the development process in the advanced capitalist countries of the west, a phenomenon characterised as dependency and underdevelopment (Sweezy, 1942; Baran, 1957; Rodney, 1972; Frank, 1976; Ake, 1981). Across the Third World this situation has remained pervasive and endemic.

Huntington's 'third wave' of global democratic transition from a condition of undemocratic-authoritarian to democratic states from the 1970s, a wave of democratic expansion and consolidation starting from Southern Europe to Latin America and then South Asia by the late 1980s, would appear to have eluded Africa. According to Huntington (1991) in 1973 there were only 30 democracies in the world, but by 1996 the number had increased to 117. From South America the democratic waves simply blew over the African continent without actually precipitating and getting deeply rooted. Huntington's rather over-enthusiastic claims about the expansion and consolidation of democracy in Asia and South America have raised the question whether the third wave of democratization was over with scholars identifying what are considered to be “*ambiguous regimes*”, that hardly fit his democratic classification such as Mexico, Malaysia and Singapore (Diamond, 1997).

Regime classification for the identification of democracies across the globe has been a major preoccupation of western scholars. One interesting criterion adopted by Przeworski (in Diamond, 1997) is the possibility of a ruling party losing election accompanied by a peaceful power transition to the opposition. In the Third World this tall order endangered democracy greatly with the incumbency factor defining election criteria and determining the outcome. Nigeria, by the 2015 General Elections would qualify to be classified as a democratic state, but one would be circumspect in doing so. In addition to political and administrative institutions African political leaders also inherited such subjective attitudes as arbitrariness in the exercise of political power from the colonizer, a tendency towards authoritarianism in deploying the apparatuses of the “*overdeveloped state*” (Alavi, *New Left Review*, 74, 1972, 59-81). In Africa the “*struggle for power became so absorbing*” that everything else mattered less (Ake, 2001: 7). African

politicians generally believed that everything would be added after gaining political power. Examples in Africa span the length and breadth of the continent including Uganda, Congo, Zimbabwe, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Tanzania, Liberia, Madagascar, etc. The situation appears to have degenerated from ambiguity to some creeping paralysis.

The result of all this is the failure of democracy to take root in Africa with the conduct of elections as the biggest impediment. Political parties are the vehicles through which elections are contested in contemporary democracies. They perform certain functions that are:

*Essential for the working of representative government . . . articulate the inarticulate desires of the masses. Out of the innumerable problems which call for solution in a State they select those which are the more urgent, study them, think out solutions and present them to the people. They act . . . as the brokers of ideas. They preserve a sense of continuity in public policy. They organize and educate the electorate, and help to carry on elections. They dramatize politics and keep the nation politically alive (Appadorai, 1968, 538).*

Other functions include “uniting, simplifying and stabilizing the political process . . . bringing together sectional interests, overcome geographical distances and providing coherence to divisive government structures” (Ball, 1977, 77). In Africa the most conspicuous function would appear to be the dramatization of politics as a means of keeping the nation alive with bare-faced lies, half-truths, propaganda and equivocations which end up further dividing, confusing, traumatizing and exposing the populace to unnecessary mutual suspicion and hate. Formed along western patterns African political parties have since assumed a unique dynamic of their own. The variations in the patterns of political party formation and operations have been effectively captured by Salih (2003: 5-6):

*Whereas the emergence of western parties was contingent on the emergence of parliamentary institutions, the result of suffrage, ideological movements, union, church as well as civil society and social movements, African political parties were in some instances created instantaneously by a small group of political elite to contest elections in preparation for independence.*

Western democracy, political parties, suffrage, elections, etc were phenomena imported along with colonialism and imposed on African social formations and for over eight decades still remain afloat, like oil on water, over the indigenous African egalitarian cultural institutions and processes (Williams, 1980, 73). An aggressive desecration of these primordial institutions rather than effective interpenetration between the two has created series of political, economic and ideological crises that have brought down several Africa states as well as their democratization efforts (Ake, 2008, 29). Consequently elections have become mere empty rituals, creating more political crises

than providing solutions to the continent's myriad socio-political and economic challenges. From the 1990s, almost every African state has held elections “*but there is more to liberty (and democracy) than voting*” (Guest, 2010, 48).

### **Statement of Research Problem**

Contemporary electoral system and practice in Nigeria is a colonial inheritance, essentially the result of the globalization of a western leadership selection culture to realms the cultural substructure of which run contrary to its essential framework, precipitating various forms of systemic distortions such as electoral corruption, violence and endless crises. Issues thrown up by one election linger till the next, giving no room for effective governance. Rather than approach elections with a sense of pride and confidence to choose a new set of political leaders, palpable trepidation looms large, hanging over the electorate like the sword of Damocles at the approach of an electoral contest. Ever since the colonial regime withdrew from direct administration in Nigeria the question in the minds of citizens is how many lives would be lost and who will fall victim in the next election, making the loss of lives part of the established rules of engagement in electoral practice. Nigeria's First Republic (from 1960–1966) collapsed under the weight of persistent electoral violence. As observed by Anifowose (1982, 31):

*Political conflict is an endemic feature of most of the world's political systems. This is particularly true of the developing countries, including Nigeria, where political conflict, crises and even violence, became essential characteristics of the political process, especially after independence.*

Though electoral violence became more pronounced after independence the seeds of discord were sown during the colonial era. Osuntokun (in Akinyemi et al, 1980, 101) has characterized the period between 1948 and 1953 as one dominated by:

*The factionalization of nationalism and the regionalization of politics. The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) ceased to enjoy nationwide support and tribal political parties, which were in fact offshoots of cultural organisations developed, in 1949, in the North and in 1950, in the West. The Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) and the Action Group (AG) from this time began to play dominant roles in constitution making. . . Even at this late hour, Nigerian unity was not on secure ground and whenever a party felt sufficiently aggrieved over issues, the natural thing for it to do was to threaten to secede from the federation.*

Dudley (1982, 127), has identified both systemic and procedural defects for the failure of political parties such as “*cut-throat political competition based on a system or rules of winner-takes all*”, absence of consensus politics and government, absence of public accountability, over concentration of power in a few hands, absence of free and fair elections, politicization of population census, absence of genuine and truly national political

parties, etc. Nigeria is presently in the Fourth Republic after a long period of military rule and many elections have been held, some conclusive and others declared inconclusive, but all accompanied by various degrees of bloodshed.

In 2015 despite the introduction of new electronic accreditation system the outcome was no less controversial as even the serving President, Jonathan could not be captured. Several candidates, supported by their political parties approached the judiciary again with various controversial verdicts. Reruns produced no less controversial results forcing candidates and their parties to bombard the courts again with petitions. Most of the rerun elections conducted by INEC under the leadership of Professor Mahmood Yakubu, appointed by President Buhari have been declared inconclusive, from Kogi, Taraba, Imo to Rivers State. In the particular case of Rivers State federal might was nakedly displayed with the DSS, police, army everywhere, arresting and detaining government officials, including the Secretary to the State Government, Mr. Kobani. At the end only a few results were released and the rest simply declared inconclusive even though the results were already known, having been declared at the various polling units. Even INEC is disenchanted with the political parties and is in serious search for means of watering down their influence on the political scene by introducing independent candidacy. This much was revealed by Mrs. Amina Zakari at the Round-Table on "Political Parties and the Future of Elections in Nigeria" organized by the Nigeria Political Science Association (NPSA) in Abuja on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016. Since the feasibility does not exist for the next election to be an improvement on the last what is urgently needed is an innovative electoral framework, a new electoral model, one that would render unnecessary most aspects of Nigeria's electoral system that generate controversies and violence. Such an electoral model is what this paper proposes.

### **Objectives of Study**

The major objective of the paper is to review Nigeria's contemporary electoral system with a view to proposing a new electoral model based on probability balloting between screened and cleared candidates by the electoral commission to produce political leaders at all levels of governance.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Review Nigeria's defective and undemocratic electoral system with a view to eliminating the violent and criminal aspects that have brought so much pain and anguish to the citizens.
2. Introduce an innovative electoral model based on probability balloting that gives all candidates an equal random chance to be selected for political offices.
3. Examine the desirability or otherwise of the formation and use of political parties as the agents for electoral contests in Nigeria.
4. Argue for the need to eliminate the material and logistical costs associated with the conduct of elections in Nigeria.
5. Determine the participatory efficiency and representativeness or otherwise of the probability ballot as an electoral model for Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Is there a need to review Nigeria's electoral system with a view to eliminating the criminal and violent aspects that have brought so much pain and anguish to the citizens?
2. Can an electoral system based on probability balloting that gives all candidates an equal random chance to be selected for political offices guarantee peaceful elections and good governance?
3. To what extent is the continued existence and use of political parties as the agents for electoral contests in Nigeria desirable?
4. Is it necessary to adopt a method that could eliminate or drastically reduce the material and logistical costs associated with the conduct of elections in Nigeria?
5. Could the probability balloting system that is being proposed ensure the effective participation and representation of the citizens in the electoral process?

### **Research Assumptions**

This study is based on the proposition that the more developing societies practice democracy guided by the principles of good governance, rule of law, transparency and accountability the more politically and economically stable they would become.

1. Nigeria's defective and undemocratic electoral system is responsible for the pain and anguish that the citizens experience during elections.
2. It is only an electoral system that guarantees equal chance to be selected for political offices to all citizens that can promote peaceful elections and good governance.
3. The more political parties violate electoral rules and standards the less peaceful are elections as vehicles for the promotion of democracy.
4. For the huge material and logistical costs associated with elections to be eliminated and free and fair elections guaranteed a new electoral system is a necessity.
5. The probability balloting system that draws lots to choose from carefully selected candidates is capable of ensuring the effective participation and representation of the citizens in the electoral process.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theory of participation is preferred to provide a solid framework for this study. Two crucial concepts associated with democracy have been stealthily manipulated by modern political thinkers to deceptively promote one over the other with a view to satisfying the capitalistic domination of the exploited majority. In Greek classical society the fundamental defining feature of democracy was participation, a phenomenon described as direct democracy (Ake, 2008, 11). However, given the large size of the modern state the principle of participation was de-emphasized in favour of representation which suited the parameters of electoral contests and democracy in the modern state. It may be necessary to state unequivocally that representation is undemocratic. Rousseau insists that sovereignty cannot be represented. He specifically warned modern liberal democrats: *"As for you, modern peoples, you do not have slaves, but you yourselves are slaves"*.

To him representation amounts to slavery, in the sense that it is abdication of one of the primary and fundamental duties of a citizen.

*Once public service ceases to be the chief business of the citizens, and they prefer to serve with their wallet rather than with their person, the state is already near its ruin. Is it necessary to march off to battle? They pay mercenary troops and stay at home. Is it necessary to go to the council? They name deputies and stay at home. By dint of laziness and money, they finally have soldiers to enslave the country and representatives to sell it (Rousseau, 1987, 197).*

A state is lost and ruined where the citizens do not have guaranteed opportunities to participate in the choice of their political leaders either by presenting themselves for election or be given a fair chance to be chosen to occupy a political position. No other person is better able to protect the interests of a citizen than the citizen himself. *“If liberty and equality are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost. And since the people are the majority, and the opinion of the majority is decisive, such a government must necessarily be a democracy”* (Aristotle, 1999 p. 87). All persons participating in government to the utmost is the hallmark of participatory democracy, participation not in the sense of voting during elections (Almond, et al 2004).

Two types of participation may be identified in a democracy (1) voting for a preferred candidate in an election and (2) the opportunity to contest an election to be voted for by the electorate. Modern liberal democracies emphasize the former. Following Aristotle again this study places greater premium on the latter. He said *“two principles are characteristic of democracy, the government of the majority and freedom. Men think that what is just is equal; and that equality is the supremacy of the popular will”* (Aristotle, 1999, 127). Linking democracy with freedom and equality is problematic for liberal democracy characterized by class distinctions. These two concepts have been baptized with peculiar liberal definitions, which are political in terms of voting rights and economic equality defined in purchasing rights in the market. To Aristotle participation defines citizenship, the two being inseparable. Questions have however been raised about the efficacy of liberal equality with wide wealth disparity by Macpherson (1972) and *“it is only a legitimizing ritual, a rite by which the populace renewed their consent to an oligarchical power structure”* (Miliband, in Diamond and Plattner, 1993, 115). *“the characteristics of democracy are as follows the election of officers by all out of all; and that all should rule over each, and each in his turn over all”* (Aristotle, 1999: 141).

### **Methodology**

The method of data collection for this study is preponderantly secondary from existing literature such as textbooks, journal papers, newspapers, magazines, official documents, internet sources, and data analysis based essentially on logical reasoning and argumentation as well as textual analysis of the secondary data.



### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

Data presentation and analysis in this paper are based on demonstration, prescriptions and an analysis the various stages of the proposed electoral model as well as its historical antecedents. It involves a logical presentation and systematic explanation of the outlines of the proposed probability balloting electoral model.

### **A Historical Survey of Probability Balloting**

Probability balloting is not particularly novel but rather has a rich pedigree right from the Holy Scriptures. The practice of casting lots is mentioned seventy (70) times in the Old Testament and seven (7) times in the New Testament, though the specific method adopted was not clearly stated (Ammer, *American Heritage Idioms Dictionary*, 2002). God specifically instructed Moses that “*ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families*”, i.e. Israel (Numbers 33, 54). In 1 Samuel 10: 20 – 22) King Saul was elected by lot:

*And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found. Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff. And they ran and fetched him thence . . .*

It should be noted that Saul's election was by staggered or phased lot in descending order until the desired result was obtained. Another particularly significant point to note is Saul's response to his being anointed as king at their first encounter. “*And Saul answered and said, am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin, wherefore then speakest thou so to me?*” (1 Samuel 9: 21). He came from a minority tribe and a minority family within the minority tribe. Put differently Saul's roots were of minority within minority, a double minority. Certainly he would go nowhere in a first-past-the-post, modern election, especially in a country so badly divided along ethnic lines like Nigeria. Probability balloting therefore draws its strength from the noble democratic principles of equality, freedom, fairness and inclusiveness. More curious perhaps is the congruence between their lot and the result of their inquiry before God. In other words, probability balloting could attract divine intervention and endorsement.

Proceeding further the distribution of the priestly offices of the temple service under King David was done by lot ((1 Chronicles 24: 5). In the New Testament Zacharias was chosen by lot to burn incense on God's altar (Luke 1: 9). Matthias' choice as replacement for Judas Iscariot was made by lot. They prayed to God to divinely direct the election “*And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered among the eleven apostles (Acts 1:24-26).* Under the Athenian Constitution in classical Greece what appeared to be a bicameral legislature existed, the Council of 500 members and the Assembly of 6000 filled by sortition or lot.

*To begin with, neither the Council nor the Assembly consisted of elected representatives. The members of the Council were selected not by election but by sortition – i.e., by lot. In other words, the 500 Councillors were selected randomly from the (male) citizen population. (And no Councillor could serve more than two terms.) The practice of selecting government officials randomly (and the Athenians developed some fairly sophisticated mechanical gadgets to ensure that the selection really was random, and to make cheating extremely difficult) is one of the most distinctive features of the Athenian constitution. We think of electoral politics as the hallmark of democracy; but elections were almost unknown at Athens, because they were considered paradigmatically anti-democratic. Proposals to replace sortition with election were always condemned as moves in the direction of oligarchy (Roderick, 1996, 8).*

Athenian definition of liberty in the public sphere placed unmitigated emphasis on the citizen ruling and being ruled in turn through the mandatory offer of opportunity to hold public office in the citizen's lifetime and that remains the true democratic appeal and conscience. *“Elections, they thought, favor those wealthy enough to bribe the voters, powerful enough to intimidate the voters, flashy enough to impress the voters, or clever enough to deceive the voters”* (Roderick, 1996, 16). The Athenians recognized the inseparability of democracy and the probability ballot. Montesquieu (1987, Bk. 2, Ch. 2), a political thinker of the Enlightenment and whose thoughts have greatly shaped modern liberal democracy affirmed that *“The suffrage by lot is natural to democracy; as that by choice is to aristocracy. The suffrage by lot is a method of electing that offends no one, but animates each citizen with the pleasing hope of serving his country”*. Elections and representation rather than participation can only institute aristocratic or oligarchic rule. Serving one's state as a defining feature of democracy can only be possible with probability balloting. The repudiation of the lot in modern liberal democracies was informed by the class structure of the capitalist-dominated social formation.

### **Probability Balloting: A Conceptual Analysis**

Voting has been defined as the process by which a selection or choice is made between alternative candidates contesting for a political office (Appadorai, 1968, 523; Ball, 1977, 128). In modern democracies, including Nigeria, voting encompasses so many processes leading to the casting of a thumb-printed ballot paper into a ballot box, counting of votes and eventual declaration of a candidate as the winner. Where the process is transparent and credible the outcome is more easily acceptable to the loser and reflects the popularity of the winner. Legitimacy crises are also less likely leading to system stability. The political stability usually associated with the advanced or developed countries stems from the transparency of the voting process.

This paper has identified two levels of participation in a democratic election which are voting for and to be voted for and places emphasis on the latter as the fundamental basis of democracy. Emphasizing this point Aristotle (1999, 141) states that “*the basis of a democratic state is liberty, which . . . can only be enjoyed in such a state. One principle of liberty is for all to rule and be ruled in turn*”. It is not enough that a certain group or class of citizens are being ruled by others but that all citizens have the opportunity to rule. Liberty and equality, which are defining elements of democracy, have no meaning without the opportunity for citizens to be voted for or exercise political rule in their own right.

### **Outlines of the Probability Ballot**

What is termed probability balloting involves voting or choosing by means of a well-structured, controlled and organised draw or chance decision, encapsulating casting of lots, drawing of lots, sorting or sortition, allotment, suffrage by lot. It offers every citizen an equal opportunity to contest election into any political office for which he/she is qualified at any level of governance. Structurally probability balloting accommodates an umpiring institution (INEC) but without broadly organised platforms for canvassing for votes (Political parties). PB is a non-partisan, zero-party model but rather encourages independent candidacy.

### **The Role of the Electoral Commission**

The introduction or proposal of an innovative electoral model would automatically generate institutional compatibility challenges. Probability balloting is firmly compatible with an electoral umpire like the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Nigeria albeit with some modifications. A large body of field staff or electoral officers such as presiding officers, assistant presiding officers, polling clerks and orderlies, supervisory presiding officers would all be irrelevant as the conduct of elections at that level would be unnecessary. Accordingly, the mobilisation of electoral materials like ballot boxes, ballot paper, voters register, tables, chairs, stationeries, canopy, etc. would no longer be INEC's headache. Even logistic requirements would be highly circumscribed. With PB only very limited number of vehicles would be required just to convey INEC officials to the election venues. For the 2019 elections alone INEC budget estimate is N242.45 billion (Zovoe, Punch, 22 August, 2018).

**Table 1:** INEC Budget Estimates for 2019 General Elections

Conduct of Election (Main INEC Budget)	N189.21 billion
Printing of Ballot Papers	N31.49 billion
Feeding of Policemen	N6.000 billion
Election Operation Cost	N134.427 billion
Election Technology Cost	N27.503 billion
Election Administrative Cost	N22.660 billion
Miscellaneous Expenses	N4.614 billion
Honoraria (for ad hoc staff)	N28.549 billion
Feeding of Security & Election Personnel	N4.869 billion
Voter Registration Exercise nationwide	N5.124 billion
Procurement of Non-Sensitive materials	N6.125 billion
Printing of Result Sheets	N4.361 billion
Prosecution of Election Offenders	N25million

**Source:** Author's compilation from ThisDay, <https://www.thisday.com>

Painfully all these allocations would be a colossal waste when elections are declared inconclusive, cancelled, suspended, cases are filed at the tribunals where only three (3) or five (5) judges sit and declare the winner, when figures are simply allocated to the political parties/candidates as allegedly was the case in Kano State in 2015 where the INEC Resident Electoral Commissioner's entire family was burnt down with his house for refusing to compromise and the Commissioner of Police in the State at the time was promoted to the position of Inspector-General of Police.

**Table 2:** Mutilated Ekiti State 2018 Governorship Election Result

NA Party A	250	NU Party DPP	181	PK Party SDP	367
NB Party AA	41	NV Party FJP	42	PM Party UDP	29
NC Party ACD	1449	NW Party GPN	20	PN Party UPN	33
ND Party AD	216	NX Party ID	212	PT Party YDP	31
NE Party ADP	1082	NY Party KOWA	23	PU Party YPP	49
NF Party AGA	107	NZ Party LP	200	PV Registered Voters	909585
NG Party ACAP	11	PA Party MMN	35	PW Rejected Ballots	18857
NH Party ANRP	125	PB Party MPN	231	PX Total Valid Votes	384594
NJ Party APA	1199	PC Party NDLP	84	PY Total Votee Cast	403451
NK Party APC	187459	PD Party NPC	353		
NP Party APDA	464	PE Party PANDEL	74		
NQ Party APGA	70	PF Party PDC	1242		
NR Party BRPP	14	PG Party PDP	178121		
NS Party DA	14	PH Party PPA	632		
NT Party DPC	147	PJ Party PPN	187		

**Table 3: Official INEC Ekiti State 2018 Governorship Election**

**OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE EKITI STATE GUBERNATORAL ELECTION OF SATURDAY, 14TH, 2018 AS ANNOUNCED BY INEC**

S/N	LGA	TOTAL VOTE CAST	APC	PDP	DIFFERENCE	WON BY
			FIGURE	FIGURE		
1	ADO		28,111	32,810	- 4,699	PDP
2	EFON	10,914	5,028	5,192	- 164	PDP
3	EKITI EAST	25,000	12,778	11,564	1,214	APC
4	EKITI SOUTHWEST	22,199	11,015	8,423	2,592	APC
5	EKITI WEST	24,410	12,648	10,137	2,511	APC
6	EMURE	14,949	7,048	7,121	- 73	PDP
7	GBONYIN	20,732	11,498	8,027	3,471	APC
8	I DO/OSI	25,210	12,342	11,145	1,197	APC
9	IJERO	27,445	14,192	11,070	3,122	APC
10	IKERE	30,551	11,515	17,183	- 5,668	PDP
11	IKOLE	31,017	14,522	13,961	561	APC
12	IJEJEMEJE	8,380	4,153	3,937	216	APC
13	IREPODUN/IFELODUN	25,849	13,869	11,456	2,413	APC
14	ISE/ORUN		11,908	6,297	5,611	APC
15	MOBA	21,241	11,837	8,520	3,317	APC
16	OYE	28,122	14,995	11,271	3,724	APC
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>316,019</b>	<b>197,459</b>	<b>178,114</b>	<b>19,345</b>	

**Source:** <https://web.facebook.com/photo.php> retrieved 23/08/2018

On table 2, above the APC was mutilated multiple times in order to give the party an advantage over other parties. Though this result is unofficial, it is corroborated by the official result on table 3 which shows a total of 316,019, APC 197,459 and PDP 178,114. Summed the APC and PDP figure would give a total of 375,573 rather than the total that appears on Table 3, which goes to confirm the alleged mutilation on Table 2. On Rivers East Senatorial election a writer lamented that: *“On that ill-fated December 10, 2016, when Fakorede and his deadly SARS operatives invaded the Rivers East Senatorial District Senatorial Collation Centre to remove result sheets and the subsequent concoction of the Rivers East Results by the police, Rivers State ceased to have representation at the Senate”* (David, The Sun newspaper, 26 August 2018, <https://www.google.com>).

For the purpose of this paper such actions render the entire electoral process, all the efforts and huge costs, useless. Such humongous waste of scarce national resources could be avoided and the resources channelled to more pressing national needs. Probability balloting is capable of achieving this purpose. Just a single polling centre is all that probability balloting requires at the various levels of electoral contest. For electoral materials, a transparent pot, name-tagged ballot papers for the number of candidates for the election at that particular level or constituency, seeds into which the tagged papers are folded, random draw lots. The electoral materials are all displayed on a large table in a large room with everybody keenly watching.

INEC's duty involves the provision of these materials, ensuring that no candidate's name is omitted and that the process is open, transparent and credible. When an elective office is declared vacant or general elections are due INEC releases an election time table, an election schedule as well as election guidelines for prospective candidates. The requisite qualifications needed for a particular office are clearly stated and whoever considers him/herself qualified has equal right and is free to approach INEC for the form,

including the payment of the prescribed fee. All necessary information is provided on the form before being submitted. Also to be submitted is the candidates manifesto, which would also be distributed publicly in course of his/her campaign.

Every single piece of information provided on the form by the candidate must be investigated and confirmed by INEC and during this investigation public petitions against the candidate can freely be presented to INEC for proper investigation. The office seeker becomes a candidate proper after being cleared by INEC and is free to campaign openly at this point. The campaign involves essentially a public presentation and defence of the candidate's manifesto. As many interested persons as possible and are able to meet INEC's requirements should be free to approach INEC and obtain the form at any level of his/her choice of office. What this exercise ensures is that all the candidates contesting an election are eminently qualified for that particular office and have the prospect of performing well if chosen to occupy that office.

### **Public Campaign and the Manifesto**

It should be noted that the emergence of political parties as the vehicle through which candidates seek and occupy political offices is a modern western innovation, which was not an integral part of the classical and original democratic practice. It is an innovation that suited the true nature, character and peculiar background of liberal democracy. After over half a century of the adoption and experimentation of western-oriented liberal democracy driven by political parties in Third World countries the result has clearly been dreadful and harmful to the polity, particularly in Africa. It is also germane to state here that even in the industrialized western liberal social formations the introduction of political parties has only conveniently modified but largely failed to promote democracy as *"rule by the common people the plebeians. It was very much a class affair; it meant the sway of the lowest and largest class"* (Macpherson, 1972). Nigerian political parties have been destructive to the Nigerian democratic experience with their intolerance, noisome pestilence, lies, internal dictatorship, godfatherism, elitism, corruption, exclusiveness, political assassinations, rigging, thuggery, etc.

Probability balloting effectively excludes all these inconveniences introduced into the Nigerian polity by political parties. They are certainly not indispensable. Indeed at this stage of development Nigeria does not need them and what probability balloting proposes is an electoral model that could conveniently render them irrelevant. In this paper I argue that individual non-party candidates can and should present their own election manifestoes containing their vision, philosophy of governance, ideological leaning, proposed solutions to specific national issues and challenges, a national and patriotic agenda, plan and programme of action, time frames for projects and programmes, developmental policy preferences, etc. for which they could be held accountable both during and after the expiration of their terms of office. A particular candidate's inability to adequately and convincingly address all of these issues could form the basis for disqualification.

The campaign period provides the public or electorate with the opportunity to take on the candidates on their promises, vision and programmes at public meetings, press conferences and presentations, a process that should be monitored closely by INEC. The presentation of frivolous and indefensible promises and programmes could attract disqualification. It should be noted that under probability balloting no candidate particularly stands to benefit directly from the disqualification of an opponent. Something needs to be said about campaign expenses, which obviously have been drastically reduced under probability balloting. Such an election is clearly affordable by any serious political aspirant. A reasonable degree of financial success should be a basic requirement for contesting elections as personal financial bankruptcy is clearly indicative of an inability for effective management of resources. Citizens who are not able to manage their personal finances cannot be trusted with state funds. At the same time it is necessary to avoid placing a heavy financial burden on elective office seekers.

### **The Probability Ballot**

Probability balloting involves voting in a serene, peaceful and tension-free environment, completely devoid of the traditional political party noise and threats of violence. All that are needed are a table, transparent pots and seeds containing the names of all the qualified and cleared candidates for the election. Everything is done openly, transparently and fairly before the full glare of the public, particularly the local and international press. When the stage is set anybody could be called upon to shuffle the seeds in the pot very vigorously before drawing just one seed, which could be opened either by the drawer him/herself or handed over to somebody else to open and with a loud voice declare the name of the winner to the entire public. Each of the candidates has an equal chance of being elected and there can be no protest that any of the candidates has been sidelined, disadvantaged or unfairly treated. There would therefore be no basis for protests or litigation at the tribunals or courts.

This process could be undertaken at the various levels and constituencies simultaneously or at specific intervals – for councillors at their respective ward centres by officers of INEC or the state independent electoral commission, for the local government chairmanship at the local government headquarters, the state House of Assembly members at their various constituencies, the state governorship at the state capital, the National Assembly members at their various constituencies, and the Presidency at the national capital, Abuja. It is a simple crisis-proof and violence-free process with sanity, decorum and credibility. When the system and processes are transparent congratulating an opponent no longer requires a heavy heart.

It might be objected that this is a selection rather than an election and that the electorate have not actually exercised their voting right, in fact it is non-participatory. My humble response is that it is an election because the electoral officers participating in the draws cannot display their personal preferences. The electorate participate by ensuring that unqualified persons, those with a dubious character as well as those with past criminal records do not find their way to political offices, by sending petitions, which must be

thoroughly investigated to establish their authenticity or frivolity. It is necessary for the Police, DSS, SSS, EFCC, ICPC, etc. to assist INEC to investigate citizen petitions. This is more important than casting votes for candidates that have largely been imposed on them by the godfathers. But let those presenting such arguments also consider the fact that money to bribe voters and induce electoral officers in desperation definitely has no place under this model. Furthermore, most of the candidates that are eventually presented by the political parties are not the best but rather those preferred by a handful of political godfathers for the purpose of self-aggrandisement. Probability balloting creates the opportunity for the best and most patriotic citizens to present themselves and qualify for election without any form of hindrance and at reasonable cost.

### **Conclusion**

From the foregoing discussion this paper is able to draw certain conclusions.

1. The liberal democratic culture of the conduct of periodic elections so prevalent in modern states does not actually constitute nor promote democracy in the original sense.
2. Liberal democratic institutions were introduced into the Third World countries during colonial rule but have largely failed to function in such a manner as to promote and entrench a democratic culture.
3. Colonialism introduced liberal democratic institutions but colonial administrators were more authoritarian than being democratic and accordingly entrenched an undemocratic culture in the post-colonial state that has caused a backlash in form of desperation for political power.
4. Sortition, lots or draws herein referred to as probability balloting is more democratic than elections.
5. Participation in form of providing an opportunity for citizens to serve in government through probability balloting is more democratic than the popular practice of modern representation.
6. Political parties have failed in the various functions associated with them such as interest articulation, aggregation, communication and public education, but rather promote anarchy in Third World countries like Nigeria.
7. Most of the costs and violence associated with elections through political parties are avoidable with the introduction of a more viable electoral model in Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions drawn above this paper proceeds to make the following recommendations:

1. The conduct of periodic elections through the casting of ballot papers by voters queuing up at polling stations during elections should be replaced with probability balloting as espoused in this paper.
2. Political parties have brought more pain and anguish to Nigeria and should therefore be replaced with independent candidacy.
3. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the State Electoral Commissions should be modified to conduct elections based on probability balloting.



4. The press should continue to play its traditional role of ensuring transparency, equality and fairness in the conduct of elections according to the prescriptions of probability balloting.

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