

Party Primaries and the Quest for Accountability in Governance in Nigeria

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Abstract

Modern democracy highlights the importance of political parties both in agenda-setting and in displaying party aspirants from whom the electorates must choose. This paper examines the processes of candidate selection against the backdrop of demand for accountability from the political officeholders in Nigeria. Interestingly representative democracy builds on the theory that the citizens are in control of the process through which their representatives are elected but empirical evidence suggests diversities in the selection process. Nigeria has experienced about twenty-two years of uninterrupted democratic rule but each successive electoral period highlights a display of citizen's discontentment with their representatives. This phenomenon raises a fundamental question about how their representatives were *ab-initio* selected. There has been a paucity of research on how the conduct of party primaries set the contour for the people-oriented governance in Nigeria. This paper examines a candidate's selection within parties and its implication for accountability. It argues that the structure of party primaries in Nigeria cannot but empower party bigwigs to impose aspirants that will undermine engendering accountability in governance. It argues for strong institutional mechanisms and civil society's role to prevent elected representatives from doing the bidding of their godfathers.

Key words: Accountability; Democracy; Internal democracy; Party primaries; Party bigwigs

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INTRODUCTION

Post-cold war conflicts in most developing democracies have largely erupted as a struggle by the poor masses to hold their political officeholders to account for the resources at their disposal. This is based on the notion that democracy empowers them through participation in voting for the political officeholders. This logic can be taken but the question is whether they influence the party primaries that produced the candidates they voted for. I argue that there is a great nexus between how candidates emerge in party primaries and the ability of the ordinary electorates to demand accountability from them. The return to democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999 raised the hope that the myriad of problems ranging from instability in the polity, social ills, poor economic development, and alienated political leadership, if not eradicated could be drastically reduced. No doubt, there have been turbulent periodic elections; however, what is missing is engendering accountability, responsiveness, electoral stability, internal security, and economic development that will culminate into good governance. The disparity between the few elites including their clients and the other masses shows that the elected political office holders have not been accountable to the masses in whose trust they hold office. I locate the malady to the type of political party primary election conducted in Nigeria. The existing approach to address the problem of accountability by the political officeholders in Nigeria has been the conventional focus on institutional reform to generate positive change. However, I argue that this is near impossible in a political system where political parties that nominate candidates

for election are a “property” of few individuals who impose preferred candidates on the political system. The phenomenon as argued by Clapham (1985, p.56) is common in developing countries.

He posits thus:

Political party leaders at the national level look around for local leaders who command appreciable support within their areas. They offer the local leader (or perhaps one of his close relatives or associates) a place in the party as a candidate in his home constituency. The local leader gets the vote, essentially through contacts and authority, and delivers it to the national party. The national party in turn – assuming that it wins power – delivers benefits to its local representatives, in the form either of economic allocations from the center to the constituency, as a road or a piped water supply, or of a purely personal pay-off, or central government support in local political conflicts.

Accountability as shown by Clapham serves as compensation and not as an obligation from political officeholders. This is contrary to the normative expectation of democracy that puts political office holders under obligation to be accountable to their entire constituencies and not to compensate one or few intermediaries. Several questions emerge; what are the types of political primaries conducted in Nigeria? Do ordinary electorates influence the conduct of political party primaries? Is there nexus between political party primaries and accountability? What type of political party primary will ensure accountability in Nigeria? This paper is divided into nine sections viz: introduction, the objective of the study, research methodology, conceptual discussion, theoretical discourse, an overview of a political party as the agency in party primaries, historicizing political party primaries in Nigeria, nexus between political party primaries and accountability in Nigeria, conclusion, and recommendations.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this paper is to interrogate party primaries and the quest for accountability in governance in Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

To illustrate and examine the types of political primaries conducted in Nigeria.

To assess if ordinary electorates influence the conduct of political party primaries in Nigeria.

To interrogate the nexus between political party primaries and accountability in Nigeria

To advocate the type of political party primary that will ensure accountability in Nigeria.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study made use of Secondary data and participant observation as a methodology was drawn upon because the writer participated in a contest of political party primaries previously in Nigeria. Relevant literature and

newspaper articles on political parties, accountability, and good governance were searched.

CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION

Accountability

The notion of accountability is the underlying philosophy behind liberal democracy. This is embedded in the Greek city-state’s preference for consensus in decision-making. Whoever is chosen or elected during their gathering becomes accountable to the entire people. There are two types of accountability namely vertical and horizontal accountability. Vertical accountability enables citizens to demand accountability from their representatives in government and horizontal accountability operates on the principle of separation of powers which permits that arms of government will act as a check against the other. The legislature is largely saddled with this responsibility of keeping the executive arm of government under check. There are two points to note in the conception of accountability. The first is that public officials are accountable to the constituencies they represent for all their official responsibilities. The second is that they are to render an account of how public resources put in their custody are utilized (Animashaun 2008). In the same vein, Schedter (1999) posited that accountability has two important sides. The first requires public officials to give an account of their official actions. The second is the capacity of the people to sanction public officials who refuse to render an account of their stewardship. As will be argued later, it becomes highly problematic in Nigeria to hold political office holders accountable and to sanction them because they were abi-ini-tio imposed on them through the party primaries that did not allow them to control the process.

THEORETICAL DISCOURSE

Classical elite and conspiratorial theories were used as a theoretical framework. Central to the theories are the stratification of social space. Mosca (1939), Michel (1962), and Pareto (1968) developed classical elite theories that justify the control by a few people in any political system. Blondel and MÜller-Rommel, (2009: 818) share the view that every society consists of the rulers and the ruled. Only the rulers hold political power and dominate the masses. Though the elite theory is not used in the same way as conspiratorial theory, yet it shares some similarities. The theory reveals that there is someone, usually a small group of unseen people secretly and diabolically controlling things from behind the scene (Baradat, 2006, pp.113-114). Studies carried out by Milbrath (1965), Deutsch (1974), and Dahl (1984) support the view that people’s participation in a political party is determined by

their location within the strata of the party organization. Deutsch (1974, p.49) argued that members of the top elite are frequently identified by the so-called position method. They fill positions so strategically located in the decision-making system of a country that, unless they are unusually incompetent, they almost cannot avoid having considerable influence. Dahl (1984, p.95) points to those who belong to the political stratum that participates in politics in the form of voting and political discussion and Milbrath (1965, p.18) argues that the gladiators perform more strategic functions. In conclusion, elite theory is adopted for this study because it helps us to understand that though a political party has a semblance of mass participation, yet it is under the control of small elites who select members to represent the party at the larger level. Even though elite theory justifies the prevailing inequality in decision-making within political parties but it did not justify brazen misuse of political officeholders.

OVERVIEW OF A POLITICAL PARTY AS AN AGENCY IN PARTY PRIMARIES

There is a paucity of literature on the political party like an agency in party primaries especially as it connects with internal democracy and accountability in Nigeria. What is sparsely available is a collection of events from articles in books and newspapers. Salih's (2003) historical analysis of parties in Africa shows that activities of African political parties are festered with clientelist politics that so much undermine a sense of accountability and responsiveness when in government. Maor (1997, pp.92-134) used the exchange and development model to examine the philosophies of the 'party-machines'. The exchange model is essentially the 'rewards' activists get from the party leadership and the constraints they impose upon it in return. Intra-party powers relations are therefore conceived as an unequal exchange in which the leader gets more than the followers get, but must nonetheless give something in return. Duverger (1954) in his analysis of political party as an organization suggests that it operates on at least four levels: caucus, branch, cell, and militia. Caucus is identified with a small unit like a clique. Its size is deliberately kept as small as possible; its strength does not depend upon the number of its key members but upon the quality they possess. Keefe (1998, p.81) argues that it is a sheer pretense to contend that conventions were representative of the parties as a whole; instead, party bosses without regard ran them either without the views of the delegates or for the rules of fair play. Herrnsen (1988, p.9) summarized the activities of the party as an organization in this way:

The party machines controlled the nominations process, possessed the resources needed for organizing the electorate, and provided the symbolic cues that both inform and activate the decisions of voters on Election Day.

Though political party is defended as a necessary institution because of its representative role in a modern democracy (Budge, 2006) but if it appropriates more resources to its major financiers then, the notion of accountability becomes eroded. Political parties conduct primaries that serve as a platform for recruiting and giving individuals' active political roles (Czudnowski, 1975), thus, party leaders are always in search of prospective individuals that will help parties to achieve their goals in a pluralist democracy (Hazan and Rahat, 2010). Keefe (1998, pp.82-87) highlights such forms of political party primaries as direct, closed, open, blanket, nonpartisan, and runoff. Each of these primaries stipulates a different dimension on how parties can conduct their primaries.

Direct primary in the form of political party primary guarantees that ordinary party members have a direct influence on who emerges as party flag bearer. Two perspectives can be identified in the explanation of direct primaries. One holds that it is a device for transferring control of nominations from the party leadership to the rank-and-file members. The problem, in this case, is that the rank-and-file members have a resigned fate that the political godfathers will pay them some amount of money to vote in the party primaries. The other perspective sees it as shifting control from the party to the state. That is, its processes rest on state law. In that instance, it is an official election held at public expense on a date set by the legislature and is supervised by public officials. However, party machines are not comfortable with this. First, they argue that if a party as an organization becomes involved in a contested primary for a major office, it probably will have to raise large sums of money for the campaign of its candidate thereby limiting their influence. Secondly, if it remains neutral, it may wind up with a candidate who is either hostile to the organization or unsympathetic toward its programs and policies. As will be argued later in this paper, the direct primary cannot guarantee that ordinary members of the party can influence the process to elect a candidate of their choice and this has often generated serious conflicts within parties¹.

Closed primary stipulates that the voters (rank-and-file) can participate in the nomination of candidates only in the party to which he or she belongs and the verification is through registration as a party member. Where there is no deadline for party membership registration, it means the register will remain open. However, party machines have often used the open-end deadline to manipulate the process. For example, if party leaders are aware of any member of the community who can vote for their favored candidates, they can cause such community members to register even on the day of the party primary (Keefe, 1988, p.83).

¹ For example, Dr Andy Uba, Nicolas Ukachukwu and Tony Nwoye contesting the same gubernatorial election under PDP in Anambra State in 2013 on the basis that the party primary was inconclusive.

Open party primary does not require that the voter registers as a party member before he/she can vote in a party primary. Party leaders dread this form of primary election because there is the possibility that voters from the opposition party can vote for weak candidates in another party who can easily be defeated in the general election. The party machines are aware of the danger of open primary because it affects their ability to influence the emergence of candidates who can carry out their bidding.

Blanket political party primary is also known as 'jungle' primary (Keefe, 1998, p.85). Under its provision, the voter is given a ballot listing all candidates of all parties under each office. For example, a voter may vote for PDP for one political office and APC for another. Where more than two parties are contesting, voters may continue in the same trend. However, they cannot vote for two candidates for one office. Blanket primaries may be possible where there is consensus or political will among the elites for transparency and accountability in governance. If the elites who superintend these parties ensure that the basic tenets of national interest underpin their manifesto, such may provide a base for policy convergence (Burke, 1770. Cited by Langford, 1981, p.381).

The nonpartisan primary is used to elect public officials on a non-party label. It is defended because partisanship should not be permitted to intrude in the selection of certain officials. Eliminating the party label goes with the assumption that the issues and divisiveness that dominate party politics can be kept out of local elections.

Runoff or second primary is a by-product of a one-party political environment. The primary provides that if no candidates obtain a majority of the votes cast for an office, a runoff will be held between the two leading candidates. The runoff primary is an attempt to come to terms with a chronic problem of a one-party system-essentially all competitions are jammed into the primary of the dominant party.

Political parties in Nigeria have claimed to either run open or closed primaries. However, party bigwigs have always held sway in determining the outcome before and after elections. The next section elicits how it has manifested in Nigeria.

HISTORICIZING POLITICAL PARTY PRIMARIES IN NIGERIA

There is a paucity of literature focusing mainly on party primaries in Nigeria. This is connected with the fact that the development of the political party in Nigeria came as a form of resistance or attack against the colonial government. The democratic process in the selection of party candidates at this period did not matter as preference

could be on the individuals that can display braveness in confronting the colonial government or bridging penetration by political rivals from other parts of Nigeria as manifested in post-independence party formation in Nigeria. There was a combination of tradition and charisma in the actions of the political leaders of Action Group (AG) in Western Nigeria, National Council of Nigeria Citizens (NCNC) in Eastern Nigeria, Northern People's Congress (NPC) in Northern Nigeria, and Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) led by Aminu Kano (Osaghae, 2002). Leadership dexterity was considered above internal democracy therefore, party members were willing to trade off any form of internal conflicts because of the need to prevent internal rupture. As argued by Joseph (1999, p.31) the formerly dominant parties in the regions respectively might vigorously bemoan the repressive tactics used by the agents or their political allies in other regions. The demand for accountability became measured against 'match-able' party members *vis-a-vis* the other parties.

The Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) in 1979 exhibited that leadership control was highly entrenched. Though, the leader, Chief Obafemi Awolowo expressed democratic socialism but there were doubts over openness within the party. According to Joseph (1999, p.121):

No one is excluded based on religion, ethnic identity, and place of origin, or prior political affiliation. Yet the degree of 'openness' of this process, however much it might have been proclaimed, was found unconvincing by many invitees. Some might come and stay for some time but then drift away accusing Awolowo of playing with a stacked deck. Others could never convince themselves that those who had spent years around the table would not have an unmatched advantage over the newcomers. Even if the cards were fairly dealt, how could they ever be certain that the veterans would not use covert understanding especially of the ways of the master to keep them off balance and ineffective.

Awolowo (1947, 1958) argues that it was the height of absurdity for anyone to think that largely non-literate electorates would be capable of deciding what is in its interest and to believe otherwise was to be nothing but irresponsible. However, the rank-and-files prevailed over late chief Obafemi Awolowo against Pa Alayande his preferred candidate in the governorship primary election in Oyo State in the Second Republic (1979-1983) and voted for late Chief Bola Ige. The same scenario occurred in Kwara State in 1983 when the rank-and-files in the party voted for Senator Cornelius Adebayo in the party primary conducted three times to defeat late Joseph Sunday Olawoyin as the gubernatorial candidate preferred by late chief Obafemi Awolowo (ThisDay, 13 December 2006, p.88). The situation in Anambra was different. There, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe leader of Nigeria People's Party (NPP) imposed Jim Nwobodo who contested under the party as a gubernatorial candidate through the handwritten paper to the party in 1978 (Joseph, 1989, p.103).

There was a more subtle attempt by General Ibrahim Babangida (Rtd) who wanted a more grass-root based party during his transition to democracy 1986-1993 (Osaghae, 2002, p.217) but the hidden motive was to block party leaders that are financially strong to mobilize members and to hire party offices in each state then. Canceling the presidential primaries of 1992 and several bans placed on certain categories of politicians was a strategic step towards his single ownership of the political process in Nigeria.

Amucheazi (2008, p.63) argued that:

The government deliberately disallowed special privileges or conditions that would make for undue privileges among the party chieftains in particular. All members of the party were supposed to be 'equal founders and equal joiners' of the party. The voting system in use then "Option A4", by which voters queued behind the candidate or his picture, further strengthened the democratic tendencies of the party. Thus, a retired army general and one-time head of state who tried to come back to power were defeated at the primary election level.

However, I argue that if internal democracy were the uppermost in General Ibrahim Babangida's agenda he would not have annulled the June 12, 1993 election that the candidate emerged through a transparent party primary. Nullifying the imperative for party primaries was obvious when the five political parties that emerged under late General Abacha regime viz: United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP), Committee for National Consensus (CNC), National Centre Party of Nigeria (NCPN), Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN), and Grassroots Democratic Party (GDM) adopted Abacha as their sole candidate thereby. Though the contrary may be expected under the military rule as the pact democracy that emerged after the existence of direct military suggest its strong influence.

What produced the People's Democratic Party (PDP) before the 1999 election was Adekanye (2005, p.11) referred to it as "*a pact affair*". Money and closeness to military institutions determined the course of party primaries at that time. In the work, he argued that:

The transition involved some arrangement for power transfer negotiated by cartels of elite group interests, be they ethnic, social-class based, or both. But what is probably unique about the Nigerian case was the preponderant influence that the class of top retired military generals, acting no doubt in concert with dominant elites particularly from the "far" North and under some prodding from Western powers came to exert on the transition outcome.

Therefore, those who got party tickets in the 1998 primaries were largely handpicked. Amucheazi (2008, p.68) posits that Obasanjo was not involved in the formulation and founding of the political party, which he subsequently sought to own and to control. In the manipulation of the political process to buffer his interest, the control of the party structure fell into a few hands who bought over the party with money. They financed the activities of the party and in turn seized the party organs

and ran the party with little participation of members and consultation with party organs and units. Results of party primary elections were ignored; and the wives, girlfriends, sons, and surrogates of the wealthy got approval to run for offices at the various levels sometimes without even going through primaries.

Terminologies such as affirmation or template emerged as a method of conducting party primaries, congresses, and conventions with seldom direct or open party primaries common to all political parties in this 4th republic. Political party primary within AD was more of a concluded affair because party ticket was largely used to compensate individual commitment to the struggle against military repression. The issue applied to ANPP in which five out of the six aspirants stepped down for Muhammadu Buhari and the protest from one of the aspirants was ignored. The situation was not different in the Action Congress (AC) that adopted Atiku Abubakar the former Vice President to Olusegun Obasanjo who decamped having been frustrated from PDP and was subsequently adopted as a consensus candidate by nine other political parties (Ologbenia and Nwomeh, 2009).

A protest was made by a female contestant who refused to step down in 2014 when PDP adopted a policy of affirmation for presidential party primaries to re-elect Dr. Ebele Jonathan. The outcome pointed to a party primary whose winner had already been determined. Onabanjo (2013, p.26) shows that the party primary within All Progressive Congress (APC) in 2015 is not different. Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu leader of APC as shown by Onabanjo state thus:

The constitution of APC as far as internal democracy is concerned has taken care of how we select those who contest elections under our party and there is consensus about a particular person. The constitution still demands that there will be a 'yes' and 'no' vote just to make sure that such a position is the wish of the people

Governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu displayed a more autocratic posture in the governorship primaries within AC in Lagos State on December 8, 2006. Ologbenia and Nwomeh (2009, p.67) notes that:

He was the sole determinant of the delegate list as well as the party's candidates for all elections in the State. It was alleged that Tinubu compiled the lists for all political offices alone, all in the bid to install anointed successor Mr. Babatunde Raji Fashola, his former Chief of Staff.

The PDP governorship primary was not different in River State where Rotimi Amechi won the primary and it was subverted but he later reclaimed it through a Supreme Court ruling in October 2007. In the same vein, the PDP governorship primary in Imo State in 2006 highlights a brazen disregard for internal democracy. Senator Ifeanyi Ararume who won PDP party primaries were denied a party ticket in 2006 and were expelled (Nzeakah, 2007,

p.18). Also, the PDP primary for a senatorial seat in Delta State generated serious controversy after the wife of the National Chairman of the party was declared the winner of the primary for Delta North. The protesters called the exercise 'daylight robbery' because according to one of the protesters, Dr. (Mrs) Mariam Ali who got the ticket was not seen canvassing for a vote in the area but was imposed on the party (Okanlawon and Oyeboode, et al, 2006, p.2). In Kwara Central, the daughter of the strongman of Kwara politics, (Senator Olusola Saraki) Senator Gbemisola Saraki was adopted by consensus for the 2007 election. The situation was the same in Oyo State where the son of the strongman of Oyo politics (Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu) Kamoru Adedibu got the ticket for Oyo South. The protesters argued that Adedibu backed others who won and supporters of other aspirants were prevented from entering the venue. The situation re-occurred in Ogun State where the daughter of the incumbent President (Olusegun Obasanjo) Dr. Iyabo Obasanjo Bello picked the ticket for Ogun Central when other aspirants were intimidated out of the contest. The protesters queried why Obasanjo would attend the primary held at M.K.O Abiola Stadium Abeokuta when his daughter is contesting, (Onyeka-Ben, 2006, pp.22-23). The situation in Nasarawa state in 2019 was more reflective of the sordid nature of party primaries in Nigeria. There, the incumbent governor and members of the legislature under APC lost their positions to opponents in PDP through a court litigation because they were imposed on the people rather than through party primaries. The next section examines the nexus between party primaries and accountability in Nigeria.

NEXUS BETWEEN PARTY PRIMARIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN NIGERIA

For all practical reasons accountability in governance should be the guiding principle in a democratic system. Examples abound that accountability will be a mirage going by how candidates emerge during primaries in Nigeria. The striking point is the contrivance between the former governor of Anambra State (Senator Chris Ngige) and Chris Uba his political godfather. The conflict between them started only six weeks into Governor Chris Ngige's administration. The godfather wanted to appoint almost all the commissioners, which the godson rejected. Adebajo (2003, pp.21-23) reported that Ngige already signed a resignation letter in advance which the godfather would use against him should he renege on his promise to take instructions from his godfather. Adebajo (2003, p.21) captured an interview granted to Sunday Champion published on June 8, 2003, by Chris Uba as thus:

I am the greatest of all godfathers in Nigeria because this is the first time one single individual has single-handedly put in position every politician in a state. I also have the power to

remove any of them who does not perform up to expectation anytime I like

In another case, Chinwoke Mbadinuju was prevented by PDP from vying for a second term in office as governor of Anambra because he derailed on some agreement with Emeka Offor, a multimillionaire businessperson who sponsored him. Playing up in Ekiti State in 2006, the Federal government declared a State of Emergency because the then governor of the State had problems accommodating the interest of the political elites in the State. Analysis of the emergence of Ayodele Fayose as governor of Ekiti State in 2003 shows that the electorates (mostly common people) voted for him as a reaction against his predecessor whom they accused of showcasing affluent governance and caring largely for the elites in the State. He also won in the 2014 gubernatorial election under Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) against the candidate of APC on the accusation of insensitivity to the problems of the common people.

Nominees or appointees of political godfathers are mostly blamed for the corrupt practices in government been employed, appointed, or recruited as patronage for the political godfathers. The government of Nigeria often finds it difficult to prosecute contractors who abandoned their contracts because they were awarded as a proxy to political godfathers. A situation that finds support by Kura 2011, Ologbenia and Nwomeh (2009), Simbine (2002, 2006), and Omoruyi's (2002) who argue that intra-party wranglings lie at the core of the perennial failure of democracy in Nigeria. The work by Lonsdale (2002, p.143) shows that political godfathers do not finance political officeholders for altruistic purposes. He argues thus:

I imply that the thing they want is not the cleaner government or a more representative democracy: they want votes on specific pieces of legislation--which they, the special interest lobbyists, may even help to write--that will somehow advance their cause, which usually translates into "make them more money". In some cases, what they want is the absence of legislation; that is, they want unfavorable bill killed and not even discussed on the floor of the House or Senate.

Sorauf (1988, pp.4, 153) captured a dictum by Jesse Unruh a Democrat speaker of the California Assembly who opined that '*money is the mother's milk of politics*'. The work showed that in America, individuals complain that families and groups that contribute lavishly to parties and candidates are suspected of buying influence and gaining preferment of some kind in return for the money they channel into campaigns. Whether this is true may not be as important as the fact that the public believes it to be true. The Watergate scandal shows that huge sums of money collected and spent for political purposes can lead to corruption. Goodliffe and Magleby cited by Hazan and Rahat (2010, p.162) argued that after incumbency, which affords a dramatic advantage in the primaries, money is

probably the next most important factor...particularly when an opponent is challenging an incumbent. Although direct primaries are commonly used by political parties in Nigeria however, the process has always been marred by intimidation, vote-buying, and outright declaration of a candidate by a more powerful candidate or group. Three scenarios are evident in Nigeria's democracy. Firstly, when there is no conflict between the godfather and the godson, it shows that the godson is keeping to the promise. Secondly, when there is a conflict between them, it means that godson is not keeping to the promise. Thirdly, as derived from the second scenario, the common people do not benefit from the conflict because the godson in executing the conflict against his godfather wastes government resources. Therefore rather than engender good governance, accountability, and development political party primaries further impoverishes the common people in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Impositions of candidates on party members during primaries are a common phenomenon in Nigeria. The imposition erodes accountability in governance in the country. The Importance of political elites may not be contested but the corrupt system fostered through their operational strategy has risen concern warranting putting a strong limit on political party funding in Nigeria. The realization of good governance will remain a mirage unless civil societies mount pressure on political parties to adopt open primaries to enable common people to elect those who will contest elections on various party labels. Because money is germane in politics there should be legislation that will compel every member of political parties to make a monetary contribution but a limit of five hundred thousand naira should be set for each member to forestall single ownership of political parties. Also, any physical property to be donated by any single individual or group should not exceed five hundred thousand naira in cash value.

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