

**Independent national electoral commission and the
conduct of credible elections in Nigeria:
A study of Osun state gubernatorial election in 2018**

Eze-Michael, Ezedikachi. N

Department of Political Science and
Public Administration
Babcock University
Ogun State Nigeria

Oluwamodede Oluwaseyi

Department of Political Science and
Public Administration,
Babcock University
Ogun State Nigeria

Abstract

The irregularities and defects in the conduct of gubernatorial election in Osun state undermined Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to conduct credible elections in Nigeria. It is in light of this, that the study investigated the activities of INEC during the election in Osun state, Nigeria in 2018. The study adopted quantitative method and employed survey research design. Data was generated through the administering of questionnaire. Data from journals, articles, books (published & unpublished), internet and documentaries complemented the major sources of data. Findings showed that the managerial abilities of the INEC in the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state were satisfactory. However, there were irregularities and defects in the process. The paper recommended that, INEC should utilise early planning, to avoid a repetition of the previous lapses in the election.

Keywords: Gubernatorial election, Electoral process, Democracy, Political party

Introduction

Election is a process of getting people to choose a leader or representative to head a state, or particular group of population. Elections are held, such that electorates would come out to vote for their preferred candidates, and the aspirant with the majority votes eventually emerges as the winner amongst other aspirants. It requires a free and fair election to endorse peaceful transfer of power and determine political decisions of a true representative government.

Ekundayo acknowledges that, election is the heart of democracy in any given state and in democratization process.¹Election is important in democratization

¹Ekundayo, Woleola J. "A critical evaluation of electoral management bodies in Nigeria and the perennial problem of electoral management since independence in 1960."



process because it is only through election that people can choose their preferred representatives. One important thing with election is that it can hold without democracy, but democracy cannot operate without elections, with this it is clearly understood that election is the heart of any democracy. Election process is very significant in democratic governance because it is the procedure for choosing those that will represent and lead; election helps the electorates decide who would rule them at all levels of governance.²

Electoral politics in Nigeria has become a perplexing phenomenon, entailing the application of the most desperate and despicable tactics to clinch and maintain power.³In this context, lawlessness, violence and impunity have become indispensable elements of elections in Nigeria. Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the electoral body, saddled with the responsibility to handle elections in Nigeria is faced with numerous challenges in their bid to conduct satisfactory elections as a result of the above mentioned elements. The security attached to the safety of election often times is usually compromised and this has led to favoritism, fear and injustice. It is in line with the foregoing therefore, that the study sought to investigate the activities of INEC in the gubernatorial election in Osun state in 2018.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to critically look at the activities of INEC and the conduct of credible elections in Nigeria using the Osun state gubernatorial election in 2018. The specific ones are to:

1. assess the conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state
2. determine the managerial abilities of INEC in the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state
3. examine the role INEC played during the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state
4. find out if INEC can conduct credible elections in Nigeria
- 5.

Research Questions

1. What are the issues arising from the conduct of the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state?
2. What are the managerial abilities of INEC in the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state?

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²Luqman, Saka. "Electoral institution and the management of the democratization process: The Nigeria experience." *Journal of social sciences* 21, no. 1 (2009): 59-65.

³Awuudu, D. "The challenges of democratic consolidation in Nigeria." *KUBANNI Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, Federal College of Education Zaria, Nigeria* (2012).

3. What role did INEC play during the conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state?
4. How can INEC conduct credible elections in Nigeria?

Review of literature

Election as a Concept

Election is the mechanism by which public questions are resolved and public contests determined. Heywood pointed out that, although controversy continues to rage about the nature of representation, there is one point of universal agreement: the representation process is linked to elections and voting.⁴Just as Schumpeter regarded democracy as an institutional arrangement, it serves as a means of filling public offices through competitive struggle for people's vote.⁵

The process of election is important for democratization as it aids in the recruitment of leaders, helps in the making of governments, provides room for representation, creates opportunity in educating voters, and also builds legitimacy to mention a few. According to Ozor, he pointed that: elections are the hallmark of true representative democracy, allowing the people's regular input in choices about their leaders and policy.⁶ Yet election entails competitive processes that can unleash conflicts and tensions that, if not constructively managed, can destabilize the fabric of states and societies.

Similarly, Nwaenegbo and Alumona made us understand that in democratic societies, violence in connection to elections attracts attention because they seem extraordinary and scandalous; an instance related to the Nigerian system that is supposed to be, by definition, non-violent in nature.⁷The point here is that, many advocates of democracy have emphasized on democracy being the main system of government capable of ensuring peaceful political co-existence both nationally and internationally. It therefore appears contradictory to see institutions and activities of democratic dispensation engaging violence.

Electoral Violence

Otiyelgbuzor sees electoral violence as any act of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities, including pre, during and post-election periods.⁸This may include the use of force to disrupt political meetings and

⁴Heywood, Paul M., Erik Jones, and Martin Rhodes. *Introduction: West European states confront the challenge of a new millennium*. 2002.

⁵Heywood, Paul M., Erik Jones, and Martin Rhodes.

⁶Ozor, Frederick Ugwu. "Electoral process, democracy and governance in Africa: Search for an alternative democratic model." *Politikon* 36, no. 2 (2009): 315-336.

⁷Nwanegbo, C. Jaja, and Ikenna Mike Alumona. "Incumbency factor and democratic consolidation in Nigeria's Fourth Republic." *The Social Sciences* 6, no. 2 (2011): 125-130.

⁸Igbuzor, Otiye. "Strengthening and defending democracy: options for cso engagement and capacity needs for effectiveness." *A Paper Presented at the Centre for Democracy and*

voting at polling stations, use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters and other electoral processes to cause harm and injury to any person or persons connected with election. Violence during any stage of the electoral cycle that arises from differences in political views, opinions, and practices could be termed as electoral violence. Electoral conflicts and political violence also occur in the aftermath of contested elections where groups and parties use violent act to contest the legitimacy of outcomes or alter it completely.⁹

Animashaun pointed that defining electoral violence becomes a matter of characterizing the actors, activities, timing, and motives.¹⁰ While the type of activity or the target is the defining feature of, for instance, terrorist violence, it is particularly the timing and motive that distinguishes electoral violence from other types of violence. The overall objective of electoral violence is to influence the electoral process.¹¹ Equally, on a broader note, electoral violence might not be to influence election results alone but sometimes some actors might object to elections and find elections as an illegitimate method for the transfer of political power. Electoral violence can also be associated with activities such as harassing of candidates, assaulting electoral workers and intimidating voters.¹² Others may include rioting, destruction of properties and political assassinations.

Electoral Institutions in Nigeria

Electoral governance involves generally the interaction of constitutional, legal, institutional rules and organizational practices that determine the basic rules for election procedures and electoral competitions.¹³ It organizes campaigns, voter registration, Election Day tallies; resolve disputes and certify results. During these processes, the interplay of power structures and processes is central to electoral outcomes. As such, Election Management Bodies (EMBs) are part of institutions that determine the probity of electoral processes. Whether electoral governance will contribute to democratic consolidation or regression depends on the independence and professionalism of the electoral institutions, particularly the Election Management Bodies (EMBs).

In Nigeria, the primary responsibility of electoral administration rests with Electoral Management Bodies (EMB). These bodies have undergone several changes in nomenclature under different administrations, except for the

Development (Cdd)-Open Society Initiative for West Africa (Osisa) Joint Forum on Resolving The Political Impasse in Nigeria. 2010.

⁹Obakhedo, Neville O. "Curbing electoral violence in Nigeria: The imperative of political education." *African Research Review* 5, no. 5 (2011): 99-110.

¹⁰Animashaun, Kunle. "Regime character, electoral crisis and prospects of electoral reform in Nigeria." *Journal of Nigeria Studies*. Volume 1 (2010).

¹¹Oyekanmi, B. The politics of Electoral Reform, in Nigeria Dept of political science, University of Ibadan, Oyo state Nigeria, Covenant University Journals of politics and international affairs (CUJPIA) Vol 1, No 2(2013).

¹²Odo, Linus Ugwu. "Free, Fair and Credible Election 2015 in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges." *Humanities and Social Science Invention* 4, no. 6 (2015): 1-6.

¹³Alabi, MojeedOlujinmi A. "Electoral reforms and democratic consolidation in Nigeria: The Electoral Act 2006." *CEU Political Science Journal* 02 (2009): 278-304.

structure. To be sure, between 1959 and 1999 the Electoral Management Bodies (EMB) was renamed six times. Before the civil war it was the Electoral Commission of Nigeria (ECN, 1959–63); then the Federal Electoral Commission (FEC, 1963–6). In the latter part of the 1970s, it was the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO, 1976–9). During the Babangida regime (1986–93), it was renamed the National Electoral Commission (NEC). General Sani Abacha (1993–8) replaced the NEC with the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON), while General Abdusallami Abukakar, Abacha's successor (1998–9), rechristened it the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Despite these changes, the Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) has not been able to administer elections effectively, and its autonomy and capacity over the years has been a suspect.

Three major indicators of lack of autonomy are identifiable. The first is its composition, which is the prerogative of the President. Since 1999, INEC has been composed of a Chairman, twelve National Commissioners, and 37 Resident Electoral Commissioners, one each for the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory, all of whom are appointed by the federal government. This makes the INEC susceptible to manipulation by the President and other federal authorities. The oversight role expected of the legislature in the screening of presidential nominees for INEC positions is rendered impotent by the fact that the President's party has a legislative majority to secure its wishes. The second indicator relates to the insecure tenure of the INEC chairman and commissioners. Job security generally increases the stakes officials have in the electoral process: if they mess up the process, they may lose their positions. The third relates to the funding of the electoral body. Ordinarily, an independent body such as Electoral Management Bodies will require a consolidated account, where a specified proportion of federal revenue is allocated and under the direct control of INEC. In this way, they can enjoy independent funding, thereby limiting the financial control the executive may want to exert. In Nigeria, this is not yet the case as INEC does not have an independent budget or sources of funding; rather it depends almost entirely on the presidency. This significant financial control contributes to the inability of the agency to make adequate, timely planning and preparations for successful elections.

Liberal Theory of Democracy

This study adopts "liberal theory of democracy" in examining the INEC in the conduct of credible elections in Osun state gubernatorial election in Nigeria in 2018. The liberal theory of democracy is common among capitalist and peripheral capitalist nations. This notion of democracy emerged when capitalism became the dominant mode of production in Europe and North America supported philosophical writing of John Locke, J.J. Rousseau, John Stuart Mill, Montesquieu and other Liberal writers whose theories advocate private liberty, natural rights, social justice, majority rule and private property.¹⁴Based on this premise, basic features of liberal democratic theory

¹⁴Omotola, J. Shola. "Elections and democratic transition in Nigeria under the Fourth Republic." *African Affairs* 109, no. 437 (2010): 535-553.

are: acceptance of capitalism, free, fair and periodic elections based on universal franchise, emphasis on civil liberties or individual rights such as freedom of speech, assembly, press and religion, competitive party system as oppose to one party system, pressure groups, rule of law, separation of powers and checks and balances and, abhorrence of revolutionary approach to change the government.

The central idea of the liberal theory of democracy is to design a political system that will encourage individual participation and enhance moral development of citizens. Liberal democracies usually have universal suffrage, granting all adult citizens the right to vote regardless of race, gender or property ownership. Liberal democracy can take various constitutional forms such as federal republic, constitutional monarchy, presidential or parliamentary system.

This theory is relevant in analyzing the challenges of democratic consolidation in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, exposes and explains the expectation of her political system, especially as it emphasizes on the conduct of credible elections which is one of the factors responsible for consolidating democracy.

Methodology

The study is on INEC and the conduct of credible election in Nigeria using the Osun state gubernatorial election in 2018 as a case study. The study adopted quantitative method and employed survey research design. Data was generated through the administering of questionnaire. Data from journals, articles, books (published & unpublished), internet and documentaries complemented the major sources of data. The population is the general public in Oshogbo local government area, the capital of Osun state which is estimated at 155,500.¹⁵ The Taro Yamane method for sample size calculation was used to determine sample size from the population. Below is the mathematical illustration for the Taro Yamane method:¹⁶

$$n = \frac{N}{(1 + N(e)^2)}$$

Where:

n signifies the population under study

e signifies the margin error (it could be 0.10, 0.05 or 0.01)

$$n = \frac{155,500}{(1 + 155,500 (0.05)^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{155,500}{(1 + 155,500 (0.0025))}$$

$$n = \frac{155,500}{1 + 388.75}$$

¹⁵National Population Commission, 2016

¹⁶Yamane, Taro. Statistics: An Introductory Analysis, 2nd Edition, New York: Harper and Row.(1967)

$$n = \frac{155,500}{398.97}$$

= 399

400 respondents therefore, is the sample size for this study. Apart from the general public which forms the population of the study, some of the respondents are Senior Staff of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the state, while others are ad hoc staff. These sources are included because of their reliability. The statistical techniques of percentages and chi-square would be used for the analysis of the questionnaire. The data generated through the questionnaire would be analyzed with the use of tables and percentages to enhance representation, classification and interpretation of collected data of the study.

Data presentation and analysis

Table 1: Issues in the conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state

ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	UN (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	MEAN	S.D
The 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state was marred by fraud and irregularities	173 (44.8)	181 (46.9)	32 (8.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.37	1.42
The conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state by INEC is below expectations	122 (31.6)	137 (35.5)	17 (4.4)	51 (13.2)	59 (15.3)	3.55	1.39
The 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state can be considered to be an improvement on previous elections in the state	155 (40.2)	170 (44.0)	13 (3.4)	29 (7.5)	21 (5.4)	4.08	1.35

One of the aftermaths of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state in the future could be voters' apathy.	160 (41.5)	193 (50.0)	19 (4.9)	9 (2.3)	6 (1.6)	4.28	1.34
Average Weighted Mean						4.07	1.38

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Key: [SA] = Strongly Agree, [A] = Agree, [UN] = Undecided, [D] = Disagree, [SD] Strongly Disagree

***** Decision Rule:** If mean is less or equal to 1.49 = Strongly Disagree, 1.5 to 2.49 = Disagree, 2.5 to 3.49 = Undecided, 3.5 to 4.49 = Agree, 4.5 to 5 = Strongly Agree

Analysis from Table 1 above showed the variety and trends of Independent national electoral commission and the conduct of credible election in Nigeria: a study of Osun gubernatorial election 2018. It was observed that with a mean of 4.37 it indicates that most of the respondents believed that Independent national electoral commission and the conduct of credible election in Nigeria are mostly based and marred by political bias. Also with a mean of 3.55, it indicates that most of the respondents believed Independent national electoral commission and the conduct of credible election in Nigeria are as a result of weak electoral regulatory framework. Similarly, with a mean of 4.08, it indicates that most of the respondents believed that Independent national electoral commission and the conduct of credible election in Nigeria are mostly as a result of political corruption. In the same vein, with a mean of 4.28, it indicates that most of the respondents believed that Independent national electoral commission and the conduct of credible election in Nigeria thrives in the region partly because of the unfavorable government policies to the opposition.

Table 2 Managerial abilities of INEC in the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state

ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	UN (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	MEAN	S.D
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Independent national electoral commission (INEC) were very professional in the conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state	161 (41.7)	148 (38.3)	12 (3.1)	34 (8.8)	31 (8.0)	3.97	1.13
Some electoral officials were complicit in the irregularities of the election.	154 (39.9)	158 (40.9)	35 (9.1)	19 (4.9)	20 (5.2)	4.08	1.03
Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as a body were well prepared for the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state	121 (31.3)	144 (37.3)	56 (14.5)	37 (9.6)	28 (7.3)	3.76	1.30
Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) efforts in the election was frustrated by lack of logistical	126 (32.6)	152 (39.4)	67 (17.4)	25 (6.5)	16 (4.1)	3.90	1.22

supports from other relevant agencies							
Average Weighted Mean						3.93	1.17

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Key: [SA] = Strongly Agree, [A] = Agree, [UN] = Undecided, [D] = Disagree, [SD] Strongly Disagree

***** Decision Rule: If mean is less or equal to 1.49 = Strongly Disagree, 1.5 to 2.49 = Disagree, 2.5 to 3.49 = Undecided, 3.5 to 4.49 = Agree, 4.5 to 5 = Strongly Disagree**

Analysis from Table 2 above showed the managerial abilities of INEC in the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state. It can be seen that a mean of 3.97 it indicates that most of the respondents believed that Independent National Electoral Commission was very professional in the conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state. Also with a mean of 4.08, it indicates that most of the respondents believed that Some INEC officials were complicit in the irregularities of the election. Also, with a mean of 3.76, it indicates that most of the respondents believed Independent National Electoral Commission as a body were well prepared for the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state. Similarly, with a mean of 3.90, it indicates that most of the respondents believed that INEC's efforts in the election were frustrated by lack of logistical supports from other relevant agencies. However, with an average weighted mean of 3.93, it can be generally conclude that INEC and the conduct of credible election in Nigeria have an impact on peace and stability of Osun state politics and Nigeria at large.

Table 3 The role of INEC and its achievements and lapses in the conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state

ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	UN (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	MEAN	S.D
To the best of my abilities, the electoral committee conducted a	89 (23.1)	103 (26.7)	88 (22.8)	56 (14.5)	50 (13.0)	3.32	1.23

very good election in Osun state 2018 gubernatorial election							
The inconclusiveness of the election cannot be blamed on INEC as a body	123 (31.9)	134 (34.7)	46 (11.9)	44 (11.4)	39 (10.1)	3.67	1.11
The Electoral officials do not react well to some of the challenges of the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state	92 (23.8)	108 (28.0)	75 (19.4)	55 (14.2)	56 (14.5)	3.32	1.05
The gubernatorial election results was heavily influenced by the politicians	138 (35.8)	160 (41.5)	35 (9.1)	23 (6.0)	30 (7.8)	3.91	1.14
Average Weighted Mean						3.56	1.13

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Key: [SA] = Strongly Agree, [A] = Agree, [UN] = Undecided, [D] = Disagree, [SD] Strongly Disagree

*** Decision Rule: If mean is less or equal to 1.49 = Strongly Disagree, 1.5 to 2.49 = Disagree, 2.5 to 3.49 = Undecided, 3.5 to 4.49 = Agree, 4.5 to 5 = Strongly Disagree

Analysis from Table 3 above showed the roles of INEC and its achievements and lapses in the conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state. It can be seen

that with a mean of 3.32 it indicates that the respondents were largely undecided on the belief that Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) conducted a very good election in Osun state 2018 gubernatorial election. Also a mean of 3.67 indicates that most of the respondents believed that the inconclusiveness of the election cannot be blamed on the electoral board as a body. However, with a mean of 3.32, it indicates that the respondents were largely undecided about INEC not reacting well to some of the challenges of the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state. However, with a mean of 3.91, it indicates that most of the respondents believed that the gubernatorial election results were heavily influenced by the politicians. However, with an average weighted mean of 3.56, it can be generally conclude that roles of INEC and its achievements and lapses in the conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state was influenced by politician.

Table 4 The conduct of credible electioneering process in Nigeria

ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	UN (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	MEAN	S.D
Independent National Electoral Commission(INEC) should be given the free rein of all the security apparatus during the election	130 (33.7)	151 (39.1)	34 (8.8)	39 (10.1)	32 (8.3)	3.81	1.29
Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) need to focus more on the logistics as this will ensure good electioneering process	114 (29.5)	120 (31.1)	78 (20.2)	42 (10.9)	32 (8.3)	3.63	1.39

Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should ensure they start preparing as early as possible in order to cover all bases in the conduct of elections in Nigeria	108 (28.0)	114 (29.5)	64 (16.6)	56 (14.5)	44 (11.4)	3.48	1.08
Independent National Electoral Commission(INEC) should prosecute erring staffs who engage in electoral malpractices in order to serve as examples to others	125 (32.4)	141 (36.5)	87 (22.5)	16 (4.1)	17 (4.4)	3.88	1.44
Average Weighted Mean						3.70	1.30

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Key: [SA] = Strongly Agree, [A] = Agree, [UN] = Undecided, [D] = Disagree, [SD] Strongly Disagree

*** Decision Rule: If mean is less or equal to 1.49 = Strongly Disagree, 1.5 to 2.49 = Disagree, 2.5 to 3.49 = Undecided, 3.5 to 4.49 = Agree, 4.5 to 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 4 above shows the respondents' views on the possible solution on the conduct of electioneering process in Nigeria. It can be seen that with a mean of 3.81, it indicates that the respondents believed that Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should be given the free rein of all the security apparatus during the election. Also a mean of 3.63 indicates that most of the respondents believed that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) need to focus more on the logistics as this will ensure good electioneering process. However, with a mean of 3.48, it indicates that the

respondents were largely undecided about Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should ensure they start preparing as early as possible in order to cover all bases in the conduct of elections in Nigeria. However, with a mean of 3.88, it indicates that most of the respondents believed that Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should prosecute erring staffs who engage in electoral malpractices in order to serve as examples to others. However, with an average weighted mean of 3.70, it can be generally concluded that there is possible solution on the conduct of electoral process in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings:

Findings showed that the conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state 2018 was marred by irregularities and defects and that had a devastating impact and undermined the ability of INEC to conduct credible election in the state. This echoed the findings of Ihemeje Godwin where it was observed that the electoral irregularities had undeniably and significant showed the weakness of INEC to conduct a credible election in Nigeria.¹⁷ Findings revealed that INEC was professional in managing of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state. This conformed with the findings of Felbab-Brown where it was asserted that there is an evidence of professionalism in the side of INEC when it comes to conducting election in Nigeria.¹⁸ Again, findings showed that not only INEC but the entire populace should take responsibilities of the lapses experienced in the conduct of 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state. This has buttressed the findings of Obi Cyril where it was observed that the inconclusiveness of election is as result of the weak state institutions which if not properly handled may result in the emergence of failed electoral process.¹⁹

Conclusion

The managerial ability of the INEC in the 2018 gubernatorial election in Osun state was satisfactory. However, there were irregularities and defects in the process. Based on this, the following recommendations are made:

1. INEC should start planning early, in order to forestall a repeat of the previous lapses in the election.
2. INEC should learn to listen to the complaints of the masses if it wants to be respected. After all, there are only a handful of politicians who are going to rule the majority. If the majority is complaining, then INEC owes the masses the duty to listen and see what they can do to address the issues raised.
3. Since INEC will still be held responsible for the activities of its ad-hoc staff. It is therefore INEC's duty to see that it trains these categories of

¹⁷Ihemeje, Godwin. "Election, International Election Monitoring Groups and Nigeria's Fourth Republic." *Journal of Arts and Humanities* 8, no. 11 (2019): 54-62.

¹⁸Felbab-Brown, Vanda. "Bringing the State to the Slum: Confronting organized crime and urban violence in Latin America." *Brookings Institution*, December (2011).

¹⁹Obi, Cyril I. "International election observer missions and the promotion of democracy: Some lessons from Nigeria's 2007 elections." *Politikon* 35, no. 1 (2008): 69-86.

staff well, as they would be held responsible for what they do or do not do.

4. INEC has to be more committed to voter education. This has to be done at the grassroots level where there are many uneducated people. The local language should be used, so that the people can understand what their rights are and how valuable their votes are.
5. Continuous amendment of the Electoral Act should be embarked on till there is a template that is generally conducive for the conduct of credible election in Nigeria.
6. With the vast terrain of the country, which is complex in nature, INEC should be allowed to stagger the elections in some places. There are places like the creeks of the Niger-Delta, which might not be so easy to get to. Logistics has always been one of the main problems INEC has encountered. Staggering elections over a period of one month could help INEC's logistics problems.

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