

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF ELECTORAL GOVERNANCE AND DECENTRALIZATION

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Abstract: *It has been a subject of debate among scholars and political analysis on whether election governance is a prerequisite for ensuring successful decentralization. This is not unconnected with the general notion that the extent of decentralization in any political set-up is solely dependent on the desire of higher levels of government to share its powers with the lower tiers of government. Therefore, this paper examines the roles of electoral governance in the enhancement of successful decentralization. The main thrust of the paper is to determine the implications of electoral process on decentralization. Descriptive survey was adopted for the purpose of data collection. Purposive sampling was used to sample 280 respondents out of a total population of 1,282. Out of a total of 280 questionnaire administered to the staff of Independent Electoral Commission (INEC), Abuja. 264 were completed and returned accordingly. The statistical tool used of testing the validity of hypotheses is chi-square analysis. The research findings revealed that election governance has great role to play in the enchantment of successful decentralization. This is not unconnected with the fact that pluralistic politics during elections and representative government bequeath more influence to citizens, or their representatives in the formulation and implementation of policies. Also, it was discovered that the decisions made with greater participation through favourable electoral governance will be better informed and more relevant to diverse interests in society than those made only by national political authorities. Above all, the selection of representatives from local electoral jurisdictions allows citizens to know better their political representatives and allows elected officials to know better the needs and desires of their constituents. The study therefore recommended that electoral governance should give room for popular participation in grassroots democracy thorough political education and sensitization in order to guarantee successful decentralization.*

Keywords: *Electoral Governance, Election, Electorates, Electoral Law, Constitution, Decentralization, Democracy*

Introduction

Election refers to the process of choosing leaders who will hold political offices at the central, State and local government levels. Election in Nigeria is usually held periodically based on constitutional provisions. Electoral governance on the other hand is

the procedures, rules, processes, methods, techniques and mechanism put in place for the conduct of elections by a given electoral body. In Nigeria for example, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is charged with the responsibility of managing elections at the national level while the State Independent Electoral Commission is responsible for conducting elections at the local government level.

The management of elections by any given electoral body deals with the delimitation of constituencies/polling units, registration of political parties, voter registration, issuance of voters cards, display of eligible voters in each respective polling units, voters education, fixing of election date, procurement of election materials, conducting accreditation for voters before the commencement of elections, collation/counting of votes, declaration of election results and issuance of certificate of returns to winners of elections. The nature of electoral governance to a large extent determines the level of decentralization in a political process. In the opinion of Rondinelli (1999), decentralization entails 'the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from the central government to subordinate or quasi-independent government organizations or the private sector'. The above definition views decentralization is a situation whereby the functions of government are transferred from higher to lower authorities. On the other hand, decentralization could take the form of deconcentration which involves the delegation of powers from the central to local authorities for the mere purpose of ensuring administrative convenience.

Suffice it to say that the determination of whether decentralization would take the form of transfer of delegation of authority from higher to lower levels of government in a democracy depends largely on the nature of electoral governance. For instance, if electorates are offered the opportunity to participate in determining the manifestos of political parties, determining the winners of elections and the implementation of policies and programmes, decentralization tends to take the form of transfer of authority. On the other hand, if the electorates are not offered the opportunity to elect their leaders in a transparent electoral process, determine party manifestoes or participate in policy implementation, decentralization may take the form of delegation of authority to local units. In light of the above, this study intends to determine the implications of electoral governance on decentralization in a political process.

Statement of the Problem

Scholars are in dilemma on the system of government that can guarantees the decentralization of powers through free and fair electoral governance process. This is so because the assumption that electoral governance in a federal system of government has the tendency of enhancing popular participation in governance both at the central, regional and local levels appears inapplicable in all situations. For instance, electoral governance may even guarantee higher decentralization of powers to local units than a federation if there is popular participation in the electioneering process at the grassroots level.

Electoral governance in a federal state such as Nigeria has encouraged the centralization of powers at the federal levels due to lack of popular participation in the electoral process at the grassroots level. This may not be unconnected with the rampant cases of vote buying, election rigging, electoral violence, inconclusive elections, disenfranchisement of eligible voters, poor implementation of electoral reforms, executive

recklessness, bureaucratic and political corruption, godfathersim and manipulation of electoral results. In most cases, electorates are no longer interested in participating in the electoral process since their votes no longer count. Nigeria's elections since independence have been the survival of the fittest. The electioneering campaigns of political actors over the decades have been built on hate speech, 'do or die' affair; whereby outcome of elections have been marred with so much irregularities and violence. As a matter of fact, election which is one of the fundamental elements of democracy has been a thing of war.

Another challenge of electoral governance and decentralization is the illegal pattern of transfer of political powers. Nigeria has been bedeviled with so-called political godfathers over the decades. These political 'elites' are king makers; they wield so much political powers during and after elections and the allocation of political offices are most times their exclusive rights to disburse among their political puppets (public office holders are answerable to the whims and caprices of the godfathers). The political godfathers have the power to unseat any public office holders who goes against their will or desires. Above all, state Governors in Nigeria have subjugated the constitutional powers accorded to the local government chairmen. There have been instances whereby the State Governors refused to conduct local government elections; instead, they appoint care-taker committee members or administrators who are loyal to them. In efforts towards addressing the research problems of this paper, the following research questions are raised:

- To what extent is popular participation in the electioneering process at the grassroots level determinant of the level of decentralization?
- In what way is the involvement of people at the grassroots levels in policy formulation and implementation determinant of the nature of decentralization?
- To what extent is the determinant of who wins general elections by the people at the grassroots level reflective of nature of decentralization?

Objectives

The general aim of this paper is to determine the implications of electoral governance on decentralization. However, the specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the extent to which popular participation in the electioneering process at the grassroots level determinant of the level of decentralization
- ii. Determine the ways in which the involvement of people at the grassroots level in policy formulation and implementation reflective of the extent of decentralization
- iii. Investigate the extent to which the sole determinant of who wins elections is by the people at the grassroots level reflective of the nature of decentralization

Statement of Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between popular participation in the electioneering process and the extent of decentralization

- ii. There is no significant relationship between the involvement of people at the grassroots level in policy formulation and implementation and extent of decentralization
- iii. There is no significant relationship the determinant of winners of elections by the people at the grassroots level and the extent of decentralization

Theoretical Framework

The central idea in this paper is hinged on decentralization theory which has its roots in the works of Madison and Rousseau, in the 17th and 18th Centuries. Both scholars have divergent views on decentralization. For example, in the Federalist Papers No 39 (FP39), Madison was of the opinion that leaders must derive their powers “directly from the great body of the people,” which means that powerful locals and “not inconsiderable handful of nobles are exercising their oppression by a delegation of their powers”. Madison believes that the people at local level must be given the mandate to elect their leaders as a way of “composing independent regions, to which they respectively belong” (Wolman 1990; Rossiter, 1961). Rousseau (1772) in Jacob and Ganiyu (2015), also favored small government. In his view, “rulers overburdened with business, see nothing for themselves: clerks govern”. Using the Poland political system as study, Rousseau, who advocated for a political reformation, instructed the poles to perfect and extend the authority of their provincial parliaments to avoid the dangers of larger state bureaucracies Jacob and Ganiyu (2015). By this assertion, Rousseau was insisting on the essentials of local representation (decentralization).

Furthermore, one of the contributors’ to decentralization theory known as Stigler’s, advocated for two principles; (1) the closer a representative government is to the people, the better it works; (2) people should have the right to vote for the kind and amount of public services they want (Stigler, 1957) in Jacob and Ganiyu (2015). Earlier advocates of decentralization theory paid more emphasis on political representation while the modern day decentralization advocates both democratic principles and functional performances. Decentralization is applicable to this paper since the nature of electoral governance will go a long way in determining whether decentralization would operate in form of deconcentration, devolution, delegation or privatization. An electoral system that gives room for popular participation and the recruitment of political leaders based on the will of people at the grassroots level would translate to decentralization by devolution while electoral governance that manipulate the electoral process in order to elected unpopular candidates in general elections would translate to decentralization by deconcentration.

Conceptual Analysis

In efforts towards ensuring a full grasp of the focus of this paper by interested readers, some term considered relevant to the study are conceptualized below:

(a) Electoral Governance

The concept ‘electoral governance’ is most times linked with electoral administration. Electoral governance examines the interconnectivity of political powers in relation to events surrounding elections. It has to do with the general consensus of the people to agree to a particular political power. Public officers are elected in different positions, ranging from the federal government to local governments as the case maybe in Nigeria or in a country that operates federalism. Elections remain one of the fundamental ways to ascertain the choice of the people concerning their political representatives as well as the nature of government to be adopted. Electoral governance goes beyond mere mechanisms of establishing regulatory bodies and rules concerning electioneering process in a country.

Mozaffar and Schedler (2002) define electoral governance as the wider set of activities that creates and maintains the broad institutional framework in which voting and electoral completion take place. They went further to state that electoral governance operates on three levels namely; rulemaking, rule application, and rule adjudication. The rule making deals with formulating the blueprint of rules governing electoral game. Rule application has to do with executing rules to organize the electoral game while rule adjudication deals with conflict resolutions arising from the electoral game.

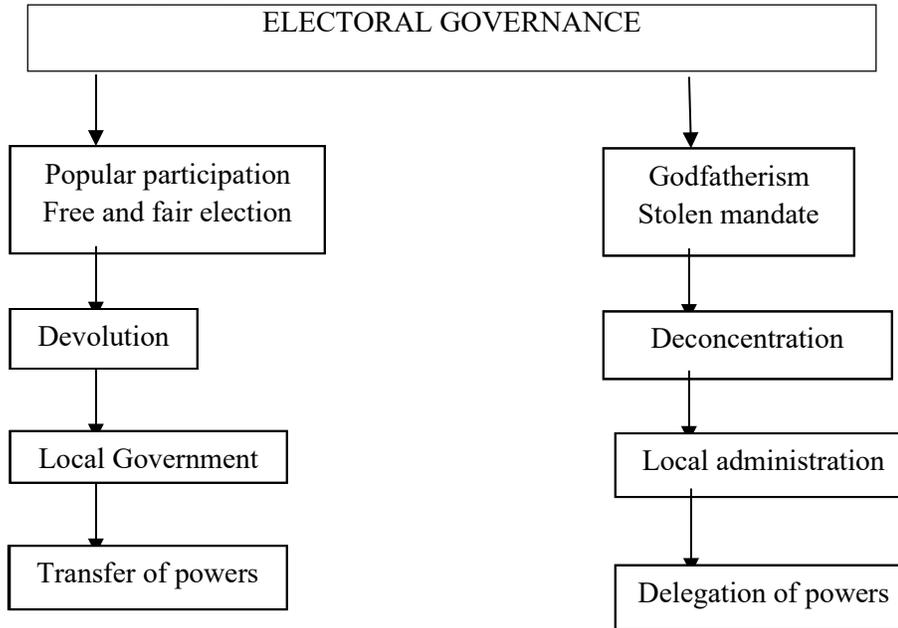
At the level of rule making, important issues such as electoral formula, electoral districts, magnitude of the elections, election dates and venues and other things ensuring that the elections is free and fair for all stakeholders. The rule application issues such as registration of political parties, candidates and voters, ballot boxes distribution, elections mechanisms to ensure there is transparency and efficiency during the elections. Rule adjudication addresses conflicts resulting from the election game. Apart from resolving election conflicts, this stage also deals with vote tallying and the announcement of final results (Mozaffar and Schedler, 2002). Luis and Edwin (2015), collaborated the study of Mozaffar and Schedler by asserting that electoral governance can be divided into three stages namely; formation of regulatory bodies and norms, implementation of these norms and dispute resolution. According to them, these three stages take electoral governance deeper than election administration.

According to Marchetti (2011), there are scholars who have argued that in recent democracies, a regime's greater or lesser stability is a function of the electoral governance model adopted in that country. Put differently, good electoral governance allocates credibility to election results and by extension enhances the quality of governance. According to Kurfi (1983) in Osita (2016), a representative democracy is representative to the extent that is 'absolutely depends upon the integrity of elections. On the whole, this paper conceive electoral governance as all the processes and procedures put in place by electoral laws for the smooth conduct of general elections through the instrumentality of electoral body set up by constituted authority or government. Electoral governance can only guarantee free and fair election when it is fully independent to discharge assigned responsibilities without under interference from government.

(b) Decentralization

The concept decentralization can be better understood from the term 'centralization'. Centralization in politics can be referred to a system whereby powers are majorly residing in one single authority (that is, the central government). Centralization does not give room for distribution of powers across tiers or arms of government. From this explanation, we could say 'decentralization' is the adverse of centralization. It refers to a system of government whereby powers are distributed across the various levels or arms of government within a state. The essence of decentralization is to promote effective governance and even development across the levels and arms of government. Several scholars have attempted to define decentralization. According to Rondinelli (1999) decentralization entails 'the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from the central government to subordinate or quasi-independent government organizations or the private sector'. The transfer can be through deconcentration, delegation, devolution or privatization/deregulation and involves (a combination of) dimensions of fiscal, administrative, political and economic powers and functions (Rondinelli, 1981, 1999; Steiner, 2005; Rondinelli & Cheema, 2007; Phillip, 2009).

Figure 1 Electoral Governance and Decentralization



Decentralization can be classified into three (3) and these are:

(a) Administrative Decentralization that involves the transfer of central government structures and bureaucracies to local level (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007). It entails the following:

i. Deconcentration, where the authorities at the sub-national level plan and deliver services while remaining fully accountable to the appointing central office. Deconcentration is the presence of central government in local areas. The federal government may decide to by-pass the state government to carry out developmental projects in local government areas and sometimes these projects may negate local felt needs of the people. However, Blunt and Turner (2007) are of the opinion that deconcentration can be of utmost benefit to the local people. Some of these benefits include: equity in resource distribution, stability and consistency of resource allocation and highly skilled manpower available to the local population.

ii. Delegation, refers to a process whereby the central government transfer responsibilities to semi-autonomous government bodies, agencies of ministries to carry out projects or provide some certain kinds of public services to the local people.

(b) Political Decentralization is a type of decentralization which is also known as democratic decentralization and it entails the transfer of administrative, fiscal and political powers and functions of public service delivery to elected local governments. This type of decentralization gives local some sort of autonomy to carry out their responsibilities without undue interference from the state of federal governments. It is similar to devolution and it is seen as one that allows local government implement their own policies and make their own decisions (Brinkerhoff, et al., 2007) posit that political decentralization is seen as the most conducive approach towards effective citizen participation in influencing local service delivery.

(c) Fiscal decentralization refers to the ways revenues are shared among the tiers of government. Revenue is an important aspect of governance because adequate funds are

required to carry out capital projects. There are four important factors affecting fiscal decentralization and these are; assigning of clear expenditure responsibilities; clear revenue responsibilities; intergovernmental fiscal transfer mechanisms from the central to local governments; and authorization for borrowing and revenue mobilization through loan guarantees from the central government (Phillip, 2009). Fiscal decentralization is rarely implemented alone but rather accompanies political and administrative decentralization. According to Wachira (2010) fiscal decentralization is also pursued to ‘facilitate and enhance citizen participation in identifying their development priorities’. This argument underscores the primary role of citizens in ensuring resources are economically, efficiently and effectively applied for their development. There are four dimension of decentralization as shown in table 1 above.

Table 1: Types and Dimension of Decentralization

Dimension	Types			
	Deconcentration	Delegation	Devolution	Privatisation
Administrative	x	x	x	x
Fiscal	x	x	x	
Political	x	x	x	
Economic/Market	x			

Source: Steiner, 2005, p.10

Methodology

This paper adopted the descriptive survey a research design. This became necessary in order to interrogate the perception of respondents on issues regarding electoral governance and decentralization. The opinions, beliefs and observations of respondents were sought through the administration of questionnaire before determining the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

Sources of Data

It became imperative to adopt both the primary and secondary sources of data collection in order to ensure in-depth analysis of results. The primary data was used in order to obtain first hand information from the respondents through the administration of structured questionnaires. The secondary method on the other hand focused on content analysis of documents and reports such as; Electoral Reform Acts, 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and official publications by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Study Area

The structure of Nigeria’s election governance system is embodied in the INEC. INEC was established by Section 153 of the 1999 Constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria as a corporate body with perpetual succession and may sue and be sued in its corporate name. According to part one (1) of the third schedule of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria, sub section 15, INEC has the power to:

Organize, undertake and supervise all elections to the offices of the President and Vice President, the Governor and Deputy Governor of a state and to the membership of the Senate, the House of Representatives and the House of Assembly of each state of the federation

Register political parties in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and act of the National Assembly.

- c. Monitor the organization and operation of the political parties, including their finances.
- d. Arrange for the annual examination and auditing of the funds and account of political parties and publish a report on such examination and audit for public information.
- e. Arrange and conduct the registration of persons qualified to vote and prepare, maintain and revise the register of voters for the purpose of any election under the constitution.
- f. Monitor political campaigns and provide rules and regulations which shall govern the political parties.
- g. Ensure that all electoral commissioners, electoral and returning officers take the oath of office prescribed by law
- h. Delegate any of its powers to any resident electoral commissioners
- i. Carryout such other functions as may be conferred upon it by an act of the National Assembly (1999 Constitution of Nigeria).

Population of Study/Sample Size

The staff of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Headquarter Office, Abuja constitute the population of this study. The target populations are junior, senior and management staff in INEC Headquarter Office, Abuja. The table below shows the population of staff in INEC from 31 departments.

Table 2: Population of the Study

S/NO	DEPARTMENT	NUMBER OF STAFF
1	Administration	52
2	ADR	16
3	Audit	36
4	Chairman's Office	12
5	Clinic	61
6	COMM. SEC.	16
7	COMMR, S.A. SOYEBI'S OFF	2
8	Commr. Amina Zakari's Office	3
9	Commr. Anthonia Simbine's Office	3
10	Commr. Baba Shettima Arfo	4
11	Commr. Moh' d M. Lecky Office	3
12	Commr. Nwurukwu's Office	4
13	CPM	3
14	Donor Agencies Liaison	3
15	Elect. Ops	85
16	EPM	55
17	EW & T	292
18	Finance and Account	81
19	HRM	83
20	IC & P	22
21	ICT	80
22	Legal	46
23	Logistic and Transport	5
24	P & M	42
25	Procurement	23
26	Secretary's Office	13
27	Security	46
28	Stores	50

29	Tel	27
30	VEP, GCSO	76
31	Voter Registry	42
	Total	1282

Source: Human Resource Department, INEC, 2020

Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling was employed to select the Departments, divisions, units and sections that have access to the required information for this paper. They include the; Administration, Chairman’s Office, Finance Account, ICT, Secretary Office and Voter Register. The above action was carried out in agreement with the opinion of Black (2010) who posits that purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher. Researchers often believe that they can obtain a representative sample by using a sound judgment, which will result in saving time and money”. The total number of staff in the selected departments, units and divisions above are tabulated below as sample size.

Table 3: Sample Size

S/NO	DEPARTMENT	NUMBER OF STAFF
1	Administration	52
2	Chairman’s Office	12
3	Finance and Account	81
4	ICT	80
5	Secretary Office	13
6	Voter’s Registry	42
	Total	280

Method of Data Analysis

The questionnaire responses were coded using 3 (High), 2 (Average) and 1 (Low) and mean result of 2.5 upward is regarded positive or high while mean result of 2.0 below is regard negative or low. The data generated through questionnaire were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The descriptive analysis was based on cumulative frequency tables, mean average, standard deviation, histogram and the hypotheses were tested using Chi-square and Pearson Correlation Co-efficient inferential tools.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This aspect of the paper focused on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data obtained from field survey out of a total of 280 structured questionnaires administered to selected staff of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Headquarters Office, Abuja, 264 were properly completed and returned accordingly. The breakdown of administered and returned questionnaire is presented in table below:

Table 4: Analysis of Administered and Returned Questionnaire

S/NO	DEPARTMENT	Administered Questionnaire	Returned Questionnaire
1	Administration	52	49

2	Chairman's Office	12	11
3	Finance and Account	81	79
4	ICT	80	78
5	Secretary Office	13	10
6	Voter's Registry	42	37
	Total	280 (100%)	264 (94.3%)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Data Presentation and Analysis

The results derived from the first section of the questionnaire, which has to do with the personal information of the respondents are hereby presented.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 20-30 years	54	20.5	20.5	20.5
31-40 years	65	24.6	24.6	45.1
41-50 years	86	32.6	32.6	77.7
51 years and above	59	22.3	22.3	100.0
Total	264	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS Version 23

Table 5 presents the age respondents. The result shows that 54 (20.5%) of target population are within the age bracket of 20-30years, 65 (24.6%) are within 31-40years, 86 (32.6%) are 41-50years while the remaining 59 (22.3%) are 51 years and above. On the whole, the respondents who are between 41-50 years of age got the largest score in the entire distribution. However, all the different age groups in the organisation are represented.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents by Sex

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	165	62.5	62.5	62.5
Female	99	37.5	37.5	100.0
Total	264	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS Version 23

On issues regarding the sex of respondents, table 6 exhibited that 165 (62.5%) are male while the remaining 99 (37.5%) are females. The final analysis indicated that the male respondents got the highest scores in the entire distribution. This is not unconnected with the fact that male respondents are more than their female counterparts in Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Abuja.

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Single	94	35.6	35.6	35.6
Married	133	50.4	50.4	86.0
Divorced	15	5.7	5.7	91.7
Separated	22	8.3	8.3	100.0

Total	264	100.0	100.0
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Source: SPSS Version 23

In table 7, the result obtained indicated that 94 (35.6%) of the respondents are single, 133 (50.4%) are married, 15 (5.7%) are divorcee while the remaining 22(8.3%) are separated couples without any valid decision. Being that as it may, the respondents who are married got the lion share in the entire distributions.

Table 8: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Background

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Primary School Certificate	36	13.6	13.6	13.6
O/Level	47	17.8	17.8	31.4
OND/NCE	39	14.8	14.8	46.2
HND/Degrees	110	41.7	41.7	87.9
M.Sc/PhD	32	12.1	12.1	100.0
Total	264	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS Version 23

The results in table 8 above shows that 36 (13.6%) of the respondents obtained primary school certificate, 47 (17.8%) possessed O/Level result, 110 (41.7%) bagged OND/NCE qualification, 110 (41.7%) acquired HND/Degree while the remaining 32 (12.1%) got M.Sc/Ph.D degrees. Meanwhile, the respondents who secured HND/ Degree obtained the highest scores in the entire distribution.

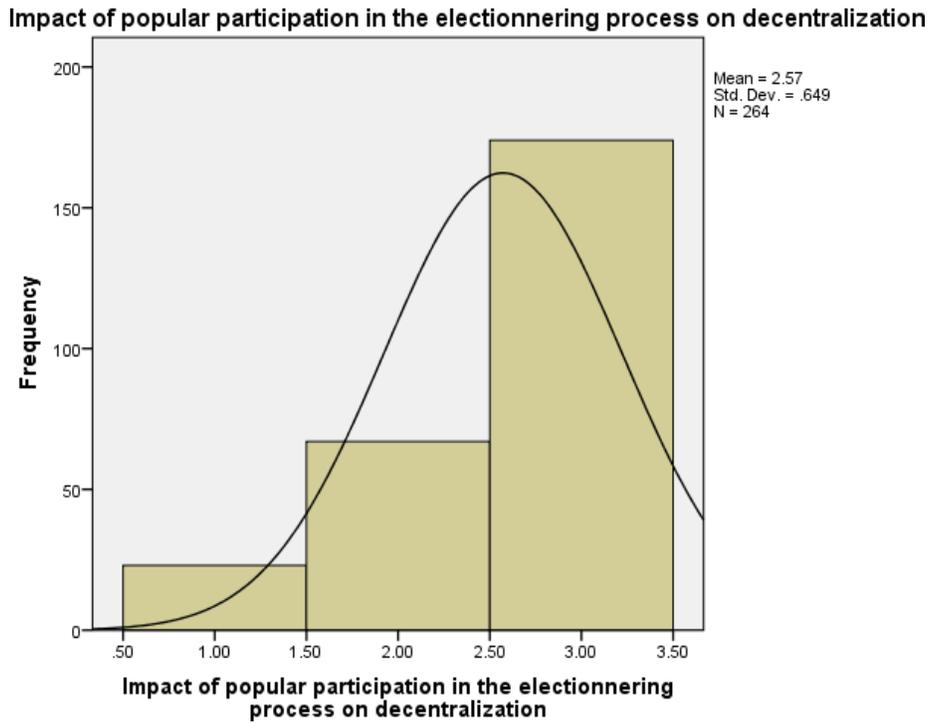
Table 9: Impact of popular participation in the Electioneering process on decentralization

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean	Std. Dev
Valid No idea	23	8.7	8.7	8.7	2.57	0.64
Insignificant	67	25.4	25.4	34.1		
Significant	174	65.9	65.9	100.0		
Total	264	100.0	100.0			

Source: SPSS Version 23

The results in table 9 and figure 1 show 174 (65.9%) of the respondents subscribed to the view that the impact of popular participation in the electioneering process on decentralization is significant, 67 (25.4%) were of the view that it is insignificant while the remaining 23 (8.7%) were on the fence. The mean result of 2.57 and Standard Deviation of 0.64 indicate that on the whole, the majority of the respondents supported the view that the impact of popular participation in the electioneering process on the extent of decentralization is high.

Figure 1: Histogram showing respondents opinion on impact of popular participation in the electioneering process on decentralization



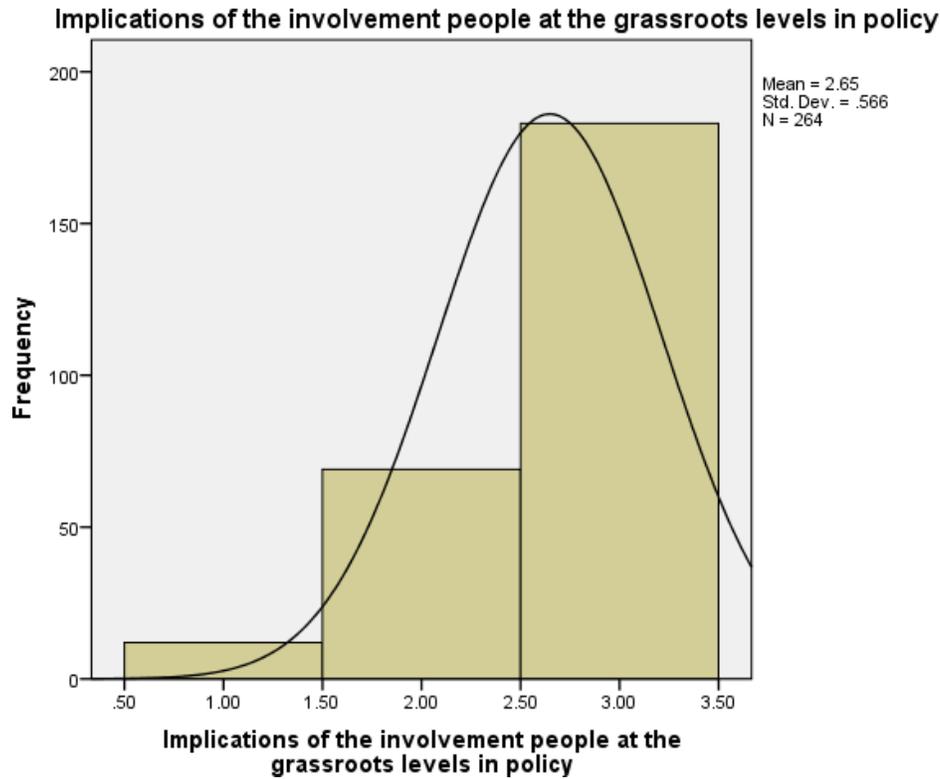
Source: SPSS Version 23.

Table 10: Implications of the peoples’ involvement at the grassroots levels in policy formulation and implementation on decentralization

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean	Std. Dev
Valid Low	12	4.5	4.5	4.5	2.64	0.56
Average	69	26.1	26.1	30.7		
High	183	69.3	69.3	100.0		
Total	264	100.0	100.0			

Source: SPSS Version 23

Figure 1: Histogram showing respondents' view on implications of the involvement



Source: SPSS Version 23

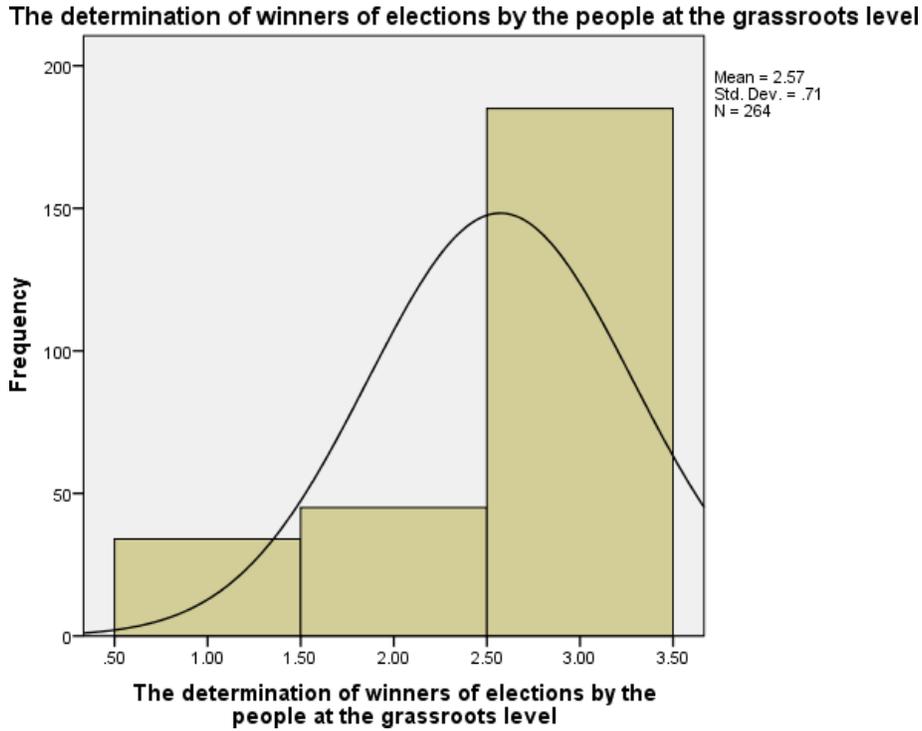
In table 10 and figure 2 above, the result obtained indicated that 183 (69.3%) of the respondents were of the opinion that the implication of the involvement of people at the grassroots level in policy formulation and implementation on decentralization is high, 69 (26.1%) considered it to be at average level while the remaining 12 (4.5%) believed it is low. The mean result shows 2.64 and Standard Deviation of 0.56 and these imply that involvement of people at the grassroots level in policy formulation and implementation on decentralization is high.

Table 11: The determination of winners of elections by the people at the grassroots level and the extent of decentralization

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean	Std. Dev
Valid No Idea	34	12.9	12.9	12.9	2.57	0.71
Low Extent	45	17.0	17.0	29.9		
Large Extent	185	70.1	70.1	100.0		
Total	264	100.0	100.0			

Source: SPSS Version 23

Figure 3: Histogram showing respondents' opinion on the determination of winners of elections by the people at the grassroots level and the extent of decentralization



Source: SPSS Version 23

In table 11 and figure 3 above show that 185 (70.1%) of the respondents were of the opinion that the determination of winners of elections by the people at the grassroots levels and the extent of decentralization is to a large extent, 45 (17.0%) considered it to be a least extent while the remaining 34 (12.9%) were on the fence. The mean result of 2.57 and Standard Deviation of 0.71 indicates that the larger percentages of the respondents were of the opinion that the determination of winners of elections by the people at the grassroots levels and the extent of decentralization is to large extent.

Test of Hypotheses

Statement of hypotheses was tested using the Chi-Square and Pearson Correlation Co-efficient as statistical tools. This is necessary in attempts to test the strength of relationship existing between the dependent and independent variables.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between popular participation in the electioneering process at the grassroots level and the extent of decentralization.

Table 12: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	356.804 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	314.856	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	219.376	1	.000

N of Valid Cases	264		
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a. 2 cells (22.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.96.

The Chi-Square Tests table above indicates that the Chi-Square calculated (356.804) is greater than the tabulated Chi-Square of (314.856). The null hypothesis is rejected since the 2 calculated is greater than the 2 table. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis is accepted. By implication, there is significant relationship between popular participation in the electioneering process at the grassroots level and the extent of decentralization.

Table 14: Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error ^a	Approximate T ^b	Approximate Significance
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.913	.018	36.298	.000c
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.919	.021	37.693	.000c
N of Valid Cases		264			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on normal approximation.

Table 14 above displays symmetric measures which describe the strength of relationship between variables. The correlation values of 0.91 and 0.919 show that there is strong relationship between popular participation in the electioneering process at the grassroots level and the extent of decentralization.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between the involvement of people at the grassroots level in policy formulation and implementation and the extent of decentralization.

Table 15: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	338.732 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	308.776	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	219.498	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	264		

a. 2 cells (22.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.05.

Table 15 above shows the Chi-Square Tests result. According to the table, calculated chi-square is (338.732) is greater than the tabulated chi-square of (308.776). The null hypothesis is rejected since the 2 calculated is greater than the 2 table. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis is accepted. By implication, there is significant relationship between the involvement of people at the grassroots level in policy formulation and implementation and the extent of decentralization.

Table 16: Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error ^a	Approximate T ^b	Approximate Significance

Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.914	.016	36.359	.000 ^c
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.931	.019	41.173	.000 ^c
N of Valid Cases		264			

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
- b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
- c. Based on normal approximation.

Table 16 above displays symmetric measures which describe the strength of relationship between variables. The correlation values of 0.914 and 0.931 show that there is strong relationship between peoples' involvement at the grassroots level in policy formulation and implementation and the extent of decentralization.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between the determinant of winners of elections by the people at the grassroots level and the extent of decentralization.

Table 17: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	356.804a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	314.856	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	219.376	1	.000
N of Valid Cases		264	

- a. 2 cells (22.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.96.

Table 17 shows the Chi-Square Tests result. According to the table, calculated chi-square is (356.804) is greater than the tabulated chi-square of (314.856). The null hypothesis is rejected since the calculated is greater than the χ^2 table. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis is accepted. By implication, there is significant relationship between the determinant of winners of elections by the people at the grassroots level and the extent of decentralization.

Table 18: Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error ^a	Approximate T ^b	Approximate Significance
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.913	.018	36.298	.000 ^c
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.919	.021	37.693	.000 ^c
N of Valid Cases		264			

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
- b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
- c. Based on normal approximation.

Table 18 above displays symmetric measures which describe the strength of relationship between variables. The correlation values of 0.913 and 0.919 show that there is strong relationship between significant relationship between the determinant of winners of elections by the people at the grassroots level and the extent of decentralization.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this paper revealed that popular participation in the electioneering process at the grassroots level to a large extent determines the level of decentralization. The above result is in congruent with the view of Litvack and Seddon (1999) who stated that “the potential of decentralization for higher popular participation through local elections and opportunities for people to get involved in public decision-making has played a key role in the drive towards decentralization’. By implication, the extent participation in the electoral process at the grassroots level would go a long way in determining whether decentralization will take the form of devolution or de-concentration.

Second, the findings demonstrated that the involvement of people at the grassroots level in policy formulation and implementation to a large extent determines the level of decentralization. The implication of this is that decentralization tends to exist in form of devolution when the people at the grassroots level are given the opportunity to be fully involved in policy formulation and implementation. On the other hand, decentralization tends to take the form of de-concentration when the people at the grassroots level are not offered the opportunity to participate in decision making process. The above findings corroborated that view of Steiner (2005) who stated that “by enhancing the voice of citizens in decision making processes, decentralization can Facilitate equitable distribution of services especially to marginalized and poor communities”.

Lastly, the findings of the paper exhibited that the determinant of winners of elections by the people at the grassroots level plays key role in the extent of decentralization. By implication, the extent of decentralization tends to be higher when the people at the grassroots level are offered the opportunity to elect their leaders through free and fair elections. On the other hand, the extent of decentralization tends to be low when the winners of elections are determined by godfathers through electoral malpractices, vote buying, manipulation of results, snatching of ballot boxes, violence and stolen mandate. In the in opinion of Kauzya (2007), vote is the means through which citizens select their representatives at the local level. Decentralization facilitates this by putting in place structures that allow citizens to exercise their voting power with limited ‘hindrance or interference from the central government’

Summary of Findings

- i. Popular participation in the electioneering process at the grassroots level to a large extent determine the level of decentralization
2. The involvement of people at the grassroots level in policy formulation and implementation to a large extent determines the level of decentralization
3. The determinant of winners of elections by the people at the grassroots level plays key role in the extent of decentralization.

Conclusion

Ideally, electoral governance ought to promote democratic principles which by extension enhance decentralization. The citizens of the country have the fundamental human right of choosing their political leaders and adopt system of government that suit their cultural values, norms or traditions as a people. Electoral governance and

Decentralization has been practiced in Nigeria but it has been greeted with numerous challenges. Some of these challenges include the following; electoral violence/ fraud; faulty constitutional power sharing among tiers of government; too much concentration of powers/functions on the federal government; bad political leadership amongst others.

Recommendations

A critical analysis of the findings of this study reveals that the following recommendations are considered fundamental towards strengthening the impact of electoral governance on decentralization:

- i. Popular participation in elections at the grassroots level should be encouraged through political education, maintenance of internal party democracy, provision of level playing field for contestants, non-interference of government in the electoral process, making and commitment of electoral umpire to free and fair elections. By so doing, decentralization will take the form of devolution.
2. The people at the grassroots level should be involved in policy formulation and implementation through town hall meetings, capacity building, skill acquisition, issue based campaign, joint determination of party manifestoes and mass participation in the electoral process. This will go a long way in widening the scope of decentralization at the grassroots level.
3. Winners in any elections should emerge through the conduct of free and fair elections. This will go a long way in ensuring that the will of the people at the grassroots level prevails in the choice of political leaders. The level of decentralization will be enhanced when the people at the grassroots level are offered the opportunity to hold their leaders accountable

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APPENDIX I

Table 1: Political Decentralization in Nigeria

Tier of Government	Legislative Lists
Only Federal	Defence; Shipping; Federal trunk roads; Aviation; Railways; Posts, Telegraphs and telephones; Police and other security agencies; Regulation of labor; interstate commerce; telecommunication; Mines and minerals; Social Security; Insurance; National statistical System; National parks; Guidelines for minimum education standards at all levels; minting of currency; Water resources affecting more than one state
Federal-State (Shared)	Antiquities and monuments; Electricity; Industrial; commercial and agricultural development; Scientific and technological research; Statistics and surveys; University; technological and post-primary education; Health and social welfare
State-Local (Shared)	Primary, adult and vocational education; Health services; Development of agriculture and non-mineral natural resources
Local	Economic planning and development; Cemeteries; burial grounds; Homes for the destitute and infirm; Markets; Sewage and refuse disposal; Roads, streets; street lighting; drains; other public facilities

Source: Adapted from the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria.

APPENDIX II

Adapted Correlation Table

Less than 0.2	No Association
0.2 – 0.6	Weak
0.6 – 0.8	Moderate
0.8 – 1	Strong



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