ELECTIONS AND LETTING THE VOTES COUNT IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR DEMOCRATIC STABILITY IN AN EMERGING THIRD WORLD SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the primacy of electoral votes in an emerging democracy and its implications of democratic consolidation and good governance in Nigeria. It takes on the important question of understanding the validity of elections in Nigeria, with implications for democracy in Africa. The paper noted that credible election is yet to be enthroned in the process of choosing election officials in Nigeria and blames this electoral malfeasance on the adoption of faulty, atavistic and moribund balloting system by the electoral umpire (Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Drawing from the 2007 and 2011 elections, the paper submits that the electorate votes never count for who emerges as a winner and accounts for the high level of bad governance and democratic fragility in Nigeria. Factors responsible for this were identified by the paper and suggest as a panacea that, the state should de-invest in politics and also digitize its electoral process.

Keywords: Election, Democracy, Vote Count, Electoral Fraud