

Logistics and Election Management in Nigeria: A Comparative Study

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Abstract: Election management is an important aspect of a country's political and electoral developmental processes. Inadequate planning and management of the electoral process can hamper the success of any election. It is against this backdrop that the paper examines the issue of electoral management focusing on logistics arrangements in the Nigerian electoral process. It made a comparative analysis of the 2012 and 2016 governorship election in Edo State as it relates to logistics management and electoral efficiency. The descriptive and historical methods as well as case study were adopted for the study which was based primarily on secondary sources of data. The data were analyzed systematically and critically to ensure an adequate understanding of the phenomenon under study. From the analysis of both the 2012 and 2016 Edo State governorship elections, in terms of Election Day logistics management, it was discovered that the dismal performance of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the 2012 election was greatly improved upon in the 2016 election though, some lapses were still noticeable. Consequently, the following recommendation amongst others is made. INEC should improve on logistics planning and communication processes during elections. It should ensure effective distribution of electoral materials, undertake a before- election inspection of transportation routes and test-running these routes to ensure efficiency in the delivery.

Keywords: Edo State elections; Election day activities; Election management; Logistics management; INEC 2012 and 2016

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1. Introduction

Election administration is a vital aspect of the electoral process and has relevant contributions towards the consolidation of democratic tenets and liberal democracy. Efficient and impartial management of elections determines to a great extent, the credibility, success, and wide acceptance of election results and the legitimacy enjoyed by the respective government. According to Jinadu (1997), the probability nature of fair electoral contest whereby those who won in the first instance may become losers and losers may become winners, which is an essential aspect of liberal democracy, is made possible to a great degree by an unbiased Electoral Management Body (EMB). The electoral process of any given country is the overall responsibility of EMBs. The functions performed by INEC include the registration of voters, maintenance of voter database, and the registration of candidates. It monitors political parties activities, party campaign and finance regulation. It also conducts the delimitation of constituencies, planning and management of elections, logistics, and the announcement of results. The responsibility and challenge of conducting a credible and generally acceptable election thus lie on the EMB; such success would boost the electorates' confidence level in the process and of course give credit to the EMBs. The achievement of democratic consolidation requires popular confidence in the conduct of elections; hence, citizens' perceptions of elections as free and fair would give the ruling administration legitimacy and the likelihood for the electorates to accept elections results as credible even when a popular candidate loses (Kerr, 2012). The INEC is the umpire body in charge of election administration in Nigeria. Although it has passed through various stages of metamorphosis, this change has mainly been in its labeling while the major functions remain unchanged.

The main focus of this paper is on logistics management which is an essential part of election management. The paper is, thus, limited to the study of electoral logistics arrangement especially, 'Election Day' logistics. The term electoral logistics management entails all aspects of planning for and executing election material/equipment production, quality control, and distribution, ensuring the adequacy of trained personnel and conveying personnel and materials to and from election venues. This also includes every other factor that is necessary for effective logistics planning and execution (Smartmatic International, n. d). From the above conception, logistics planning is, thus, vital to the success of any election. It ensures that the staff, materials, equipment, and methods of communications are well organized before the commencement of an election. The timely conveyance and distribution of electoral officials and materials/equipment or otherwise can impact any election to determine its credibility and acceptability.

1.1. Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives of Election Administration

1.1.1. Election

An election as a concept refers to the method by which persons are selected or chosen for specific positions (Ojo, 2008). Elections in the political system refer to a conceived formal expression of preferences given by the electorates, transformed collectively into political action in the determination of who should occupy a political office (Jinadu, 2005; Ojo, 2008). Electioneering in the political sphere is majorly dependent on the notion of liberal democracy (Nohlen, 1996) and elections serve as a vital aspect of democratic practice. Lindberg (2004) is of the view that modern representative democracy necessitates the idea of elections as the main instrument for choosing political officers. That is not to say that democracy has to be equated only to the concept or process of elections although, it is at the centre of the democratic practice (Bratton, 1998; Laakso, 2007). Electoral arrangement and procedures should, thus, be strengthened by ideas and principles of democracy. This includes the ideals of an unbiased and independent EMB to administer elections, the existence of an independent and impartial judiciary to adjudicate electoral issues, and unbridled, viable, and bias-free press to monitor and report on electoral activities equitably (Laakso, 2007). From the various submissions above, we can infer that an election is a political participation tool that enables the electorates express their preferences in making choices to political offices. Thus, an election is a

viable tool for entrenching the idea of modern representative democracy that requires the administration of an independent and impartial electoral umpire and a free press to consolidate.

1.1.2. Electoral management

Electoral management is seen as the organization and control of election at the various phases of the election process. It involves planning, organizing, and overseeing the election of political officers into public offices by an electoral body (Jinadu, 1997; Election Administration Research Centre [EARC], 2005).

The African Centre of Excellence (ACE) Electoral Knowledge Network (online source, n. d) states that:

Electoral management encompasses both the entity responsible for governing elections and the various mechanisms, roles and functions this entity may have. While all democracies have an election administration of some kind (often referred to as Electoral Management Bodies, or EMBs for short), the responsibilities of this entity may vary substantially. From only being responsible for the polling, conducting and tabulating of votes, EMB responsibilities can extend to also include registration of political parties, oversight of campaign finance, design of the ballot papers, drawing of electoral boundaries, resolution of electoral disputes, civic and voter education and media monitoring.

Electoral management has been categorized into three phases viz: activities before the election, activities on the day of the election, and activities after the day of the election. Pre-Election Day activities comprise registration of eligible voters, constituency delimitation, and political parties registration. Additionally, it involves the screening and authentication of candidates seeking elective positions (Ajayi, 2007). Election Day activities include casting of votes by registered and eligible voters, votes counting, collation, and declaration of results. Post-Election Day activities comprises of looking into complaints of election issues and legal actions by aggrieved parties and candidates (Ajayi, 2007). These activities are executed by a country's electoral body such as the INEC in Nigeria and comprise of other phases of the election process such as the implementation of the electoral act and polices (Massicotte, André and Antoine, 2004; Wall *et al.*, 2006).

Election management entails both structural and procedural organization. Structurally, it refers to the bureaucratic body established to administer elections. Procedurally, it refers to the regulations and processes that borders on the institutionalization of EMBs, the appointment of the personnel, voters registration, candidates nomination, voting, vote counting, and results declaration. Others include the selection and training of personnel, delimitation of constituency, educating voters, political parties registration (Iwara, 2010). In addition to the above submissions regarding the structural and procedural aspects of election management, Beckett (2011) contends that other issues critical to managing elections include amongst others, funding of the EMB, logistics arrangements, the role of government, the tenure of office and independence of the electoral body.

A consideration of the analysis above shows that the definitions have features analogous to them all which include the processes of voting, and the electoral system. Thus, the administration of election can be construed as the organization of the entire electoral process of a country at all levels by an autonomous and impartial EMB. These comprise of electoral agencies organization, the composition, distinctiveness of local and state electoral personnel, the electioneering processes, and electoral policy implementation (United States Election Assistance Commission [USEAC], 2008).

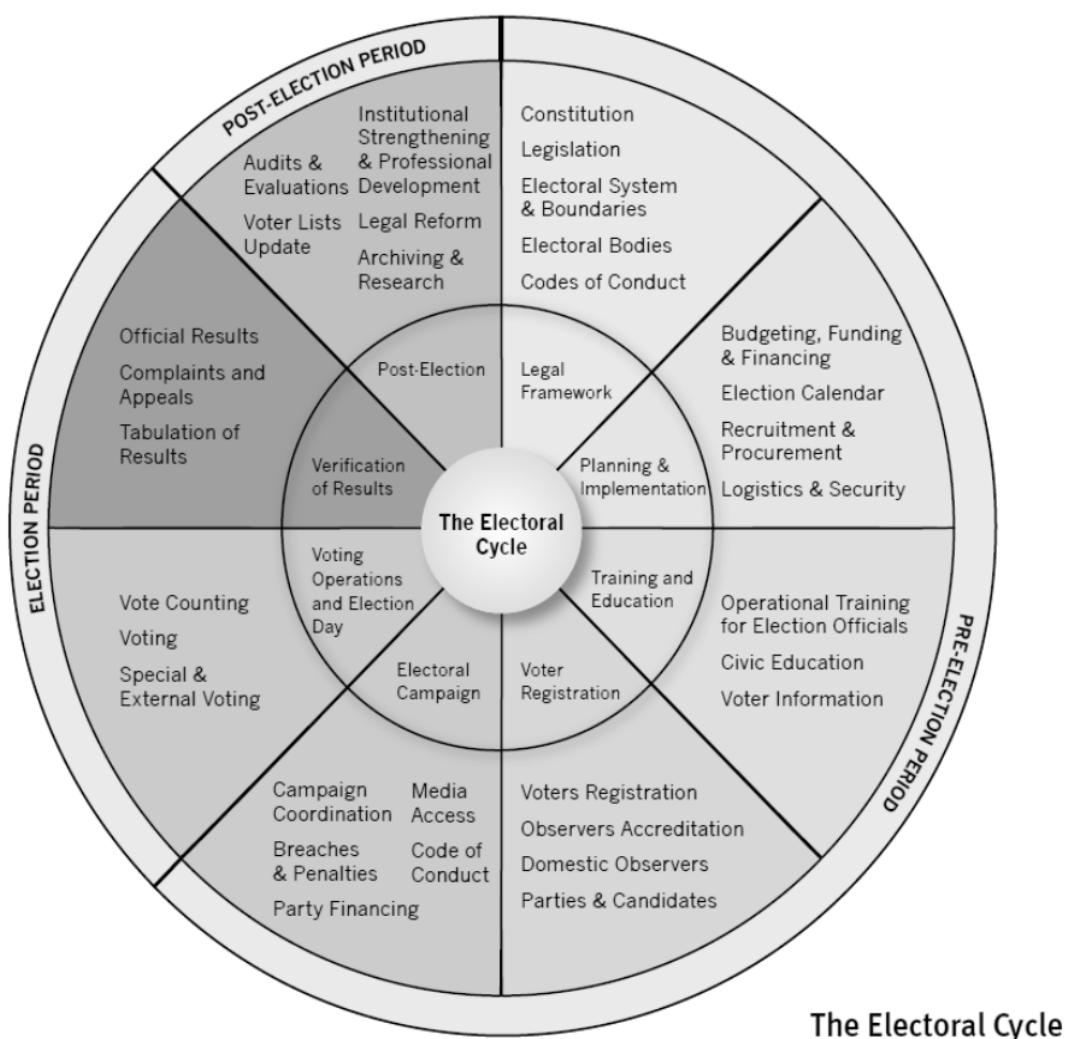


Figure 1: Showing the electoral circle

Source: Independent National Electoral Commission, 2015

Figure 1 above depicts the overall electoral circle of the Nigerian electoral process. The circle consists of activities before, on and after election days. The components of Election Day include Legal structure, planning and execution, education and training, and registration of voters. The Election Day period components include voting activities and the announcement of results while after Election Day period components include, voter lists update, legal reform, audits, and evaluations, etc. From figure 1 above, it is obvious that logistics planning and implementation cut across the entire electoral circle. Logistics planning and procurement of electoral materials take place within the pre-election period; logistics arrangement and implementation take place on Election Day while the returning of electoral materials and unused ballot papers, accounting, and verification of the same takes place on Election Day and post-election period. The circle of electoral activity clearly shows that logistics planning and implementation is vital to the success of an election. From the pre-election period to post-election period especially Election Day activities, adequate and timely logistics arrangement can ensure the overall effectiveness, credibility and success of an election.

1.1.3. Logistics as a vital aspect of election management

In the general perspective, Logistics entails the processes of planning, implementing, and controlling procedures to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the storage of goods and transportation, as well as maintaining communication, from the production point to the destination point. With regards to electioneering, logistics thus denotes the process of planning, implementing control procedures to

ensure effectiveness and efficiency in procurement, storage, distribution, transportation, and delivering of election materials and conveying electoral officers to their polling centre. Electoral materials have been classified into sensitive and non-sensitive materials. The sensitive materials comprise of the ballot paper, result sheets, presiding officers stamps, and other materials directly connected to conducting elections. The non-sensitive materials comprise of calculators, biro, ruler, gum, bags, envelopes, pencil, posters, cubicles, and twine ropes (Smartmatic International, n. d).

The distribution of election materials takes various phases in Nigeria. The sensitive materials are distributed from the headquarters of INEC to the states about two weeks before the election. The state headquarters of INEC taking directives from INEC national Headquarters then commences distribution of electoral materials to the various Local Government Headquarters across the states. It has been observed however, that the problem of the late arrival of election materials and personnel is not always from the State headquarters of INEC but occasioned by the logistics challenges of moving personnel and materials from the Local Government Headquarters to Wards and polling units (Smartmatic International, n. d). From available reports, the conveyance of electoral materials and staff to the camping areas usually takes place at night with the attendance of men of the Nigerian armed forces as security escorts (Nigeria Governance Project, 2012). In situations where the distance to be covered is much, the journey might take several hours taking into cognizance the physical infrastructure of road constraints. The late arrival to the wards would result in the late distribution of electoral materials to the presiding officers and assistant presiding officers (APOs) which would lead to the late arrival of men and materials to the polling units. This would in effect, affect the efficiency of the election process.

Ogunade (2014) states that logistics planning is essential to the electioneering process to ensure that personnel, equipment, and communications processes are made ready for the operation. These arrangements must be strategically and systematically provided for, to ensure a hitch-free voting process. To guarantee effectiveness in the movement of electoral materials, Ogunade (2014) proposed the following:

1.1.3.1. Recruiting and training personnel

The recruitment and training of the personnel and ad-hoc staff should start on time; and they should be trained on how to use gadgets of communication and the materials.

1.1.3.2. Logistics arrangements

Logistics arrangement in the form of lodging and transport for election personnel must be ready at least 48 hours before the commencement of the election. Because there is limited movement on Election Day, these issues should be resolved beforehand.

1.1.3.3. Distribution of election materials

The achievement of effective electoral materials and equipment distribution requires the following: A comprehensive planning procedure to ensure the provision of adequate transportation, effective methods of transportation, delivery schedules, retrieval, and routes to be used. The transportation methods will depend on the topography, weather conditions, and available time for the supply of materials and equipment, including the distances to be covered. It also requires the efficient splitting of bulk delivery supplies into separate parts to avoid wastages, and to ensure that the voting units are sufficiently serviced with voting materials. Also required, is the provision of adequate security personnel for the voting locations.

Furthermore, there is need for the provision of appropriate storage facilities to ensure that electoral materials and equipment are in a good state. Also required in this stead, is the effective monitoring of movements of electoral materials and equipment throughout the election period. This exercise

requires the institutionalization of proper procedures and methods to ensure the successful retrieval and accountability of election materials.

1.1.3.4. Communications

This is the process whereby the INEC provides communication facilities for political parties, security personnel, voters, other government organizations as well as electoral officers to ensure the effectiveness of operations.

1.1.3.5. Controls

Strict controls should be applied to ensure that voting materials are accounted for from the distribution centre to the voting units and back to the storage of unused materials deposited in the EMBs stores.

1.4. Theory/Concept of Election Administration

1.4.1. Democratic concept

Democracy, as a theoretical concept, has been subjected to a series of deliberations. This is so because democracy denotes the fundamental nature of civilization, freedom of choice, and government. The democratic notion has developed through many manifestations which have been utilized as the foundation for a utopian society. It is visualized as an instrument to prevent the government from oppressing the people, a means for ensuring human freedom, and a method of ensuring stability in a pluralist society (Russell, 2002). Representative democracy as a mechanism is strictly seen as a governmental system whereby people are allowed to exercise their franchise to choose people who will represent their interest in government. The exercises of voting provide an opportunity for everyone to have an interest and actively participate in the actions of their government. The outcome of the election confers legitimacy on those elected and the power to make political decisions on behalf of their constituencies. Voting, then, becomes the main contact linkage between the representatives and the citizenry and provides the foundation for discussions, deliberations, and citizens involvement in the operation of the political system. Consequently, a decline in turnout would weaken the primary linkage between the citizen and the political system; that might threaten the legitimacy of the democratic system. Moreover, government policies and programs may less likely reflect the aspirations of the people (Franklin, 2004). Thus, Election Day logistic activities, if not well managed could affect participation and impede the overall voting process. This speaks of the relevance of election administration body and effective logistics planning, management and implementation to ensure that eligible voters' are not discouraged or impeded from freely and enthusiastically taking part in the electoral process. Effective citizens' participation in the process of governance is necessary to accomplish an equitable and civilized society.

1.4.2. Systems analysis

The first system framework for political analysis was developed by David Easton in 1965 (Offiong, 1996). He extrapolated the systems analysis from the system approach developed by Von Bertalanffy in the biological sciences, which denotes a system as a set of inter-dependent variables or interrelated elements; while from the political science point of view a system connotes inherent interactions within a given society that ensures the making of authoritative allocation (Epelle, 2003). Accordingly the political systems theory denotes an activity where inputs from the environment are transformed into outputs through the authoritative allocation of values. Easton outlined four (4) procedures involved in a political system. These include the input, output, conversion, and feedback processes. Easton (1965) posits that the inputs of the political system are made up of demand, support and output. The demand represents the raw materials that are processed by the political system. The support represents favorable disposition and action of the people towards the political system while output refers to the allocation of values authoritatively, for the society. Thus, other components of the political system include the process of conversion which shows how the conversions into outputs of

the diverse demands are made. These are articulated in the mode of public policies and programs; including the process of feedback which enables policymakers to evaluate the effect of their policies on the environment.

Another salient feature outlined by Easton (1965) is that of maintaining homeostatic equilibrium which is essential in a political system. This equilibrium enables the political system to respond to the demands of its surroundings. While it is obvious that too many demands can cause problems for the system, it is also noteworthy that unfulfilled demands, especially when genuine, can destabilize the political system. This could result from the withdrawal of support by those whose genuine aspirations have been side-tracked. Liberal democratic concept requires unrestrained participation of the greatest number of citizens in the determination of public affairs. When this opportunity is denied the masses by an oligarchy or advertently or inadvertently denied by the inadequacies of an electoral body through poor logistics implementation during the election processes, the political system is bound to experience instability and disaffection (Kerevel, 2009). Election activities are interconnected having consequences for the system and its operational environment.

The electoral circle depicted in Figure 1 above shows the interconnectivity of electoral activities divided into the pre-election, Election Day and post-election activities and logistics cutting across the entire circle. The implication of Easton's input-output system theory for electoral logistics is that when electoral policy outputs are not well implemented and managed, it could affect the maintenance of homeostatic equilibrium of the system. This effect could discourage the support and active participation of the citizens in electoral/political activities. An ineffectively managed logistics could affect the security and timely conduct of an election capable of undermining its credibility. This situation could result in the disaffection of the people that can lead to the destabilization of the political system.

Achieving credibility in elections would, therefore, require strict adherence to regulating laws and effective management of the electoral process. This should be the duties of EMBs and other agencies saddled with the responsibility of election administration since the output of credible election rests on the level of citizens' acceptance. Thus, ineffectiveness on the part of these agencies should be avoided to ensure that the environment is not repugnant of the political process and that the system holds together to maintain a balance.

The paper examines the impact of logistics management on electoral efficiency by INEC in a comparative perspective of the 2012 and 2016 gubernatorial elections, in Edo State. The paper will however, focus on Election Day logistics challenges faced from time to time by the INEC in the Nigerian political system. The central point of the paper would lend understanding and appreciation to the necessity of the study, since currently there are limited knowledge and research in the area of election logistics in Nigeria, especially Election Day logistics and chain of delivery. It is an attempt to develop the literature which is sparse and uncoordinated as regards the phenomenon under scrutiny. The study is expected to yield useful suggestions to proper planning and practical procedures that would enhance electoral performance.

2. Research Methods

The descriptive and historical approach as well as case study was utilized in analyzing the subject matter which is presented in a narrative form. Secondary data were mainly employed in the methodical and systematic analysis of the phenomenon under examination. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) note that in a qualitative research, data analysis connotes classifying things, persons, events and the properties characterizing them. Consequently, the organization of data analysis was done categorically and chronologically. The idea was to find out the various strands of interactions and opinions accounting for the issues underlying election logistics management in Nigeria. This procedure helps to present a practical way for understanding the phenomenon of study. Hence, data were majorly sourced from government publications, periodicals, newspapers, internet, among others.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Analysis of the 2012 Edo State Governorship Election

The 2012 governorship election in Edo State was conducted on July 14. The analysis of the 2012 electoral activities is thus, centered on Election Day Logistics Management. Edo State is made up of eighteen (18) Local Government Areas (LGAs); a population of three million, two hundred and eighteen thousand, three hundred and thirty-two (3,218,332) (Nigeria Data Portal, 2006); one hundred and ninety-two (192) Registration Areas (RAs); two thousand six-hundred and twenty-seven (2,627) Polling Units (Pus), and four thousand and eleven (4,011) Voting Points (VPs). The total voter registration for the election was one million, six-hundred twenty-one thousand, nine hundred ninety-nine (1, 621,999). The accredited voters were six hundred sixty-seven thousand, nine hundred ninety-three (667,993). Out of this figure six hundred sixty-seven thousand, nine hundred thirty-six (667,936) were the actual total number of vote cast; representing 41% of the total registered voter (Nigeria Governance Project, 2012).

A total of seven political parties fielded candidates for the governorship election. The main contestants were the incumbent governor, Adams Oshiomhole of the Action Congress Party of Nigeria (AC), Major General Charles Airhiavbere, of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), Solomon Edebiri of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and Izevbuwa Roland of the Congress for Political Change (CPC). Before the election, the INEC chairman, Prof. Attahiru Jega, and the Edo State Resident Commissioner for INEC, Kassim Gaidam had on separate occasions declared the readiness of the election body for the election. Prof. Jega stated that: "We're expecting a credible and peaceful election. I am here to make sure that everything has been done as planned before the election on Saturday" (Nigeria Governance Project, 2012; Centre for Law Enforcement Education [CLEEN Foundation], 2012).

On his part, Kassim Gaidam stated that the commission procured over sixty (60) Hilux vehicles to ensure the effective distribution of electoral materials. Gaidam stated:

The non-sensitive materials are in the local governments. They have been distributed to all the councils. The sensitive materials are also ready. ...All the vehicles that will transport materials to various local governments are here. The challenge of the late arrival of men and materials will be reduced (Nigeria Governance Project, 2012).

This was the setting before the commencement of the July 14, 2012 governorship election in Edo state.

On Election Day, however, live observations and reports from credible media institutions (such as the Punch and Guardian Newspapers, and Channels Television) and post-election observation reports from independent election monitors, revealed that the Election Day logistics arrangement by INEC was poorly managed. These monitoring institutions unanimously but separately reported that both officials and materials for the election arrived late in most of the venues leading to late accreditation of voters and voting.

An observational and monitoring study conducted in 2012 by Project Swift Count (PSC) (a Nigeria Civil Society Partnership for Election Observation) on the Edo State 2012 governorship election reported that the INEC logistic arrangement continues to dwindle as evidenced by the delayed distribution of election materials and deployment of polling officials to some polling units. By 7:30 am, only 26% of the polling units across Edo State had polling officials and electoral materials at the polling units. Across all polling units, there were on average three (3) polling officials and four (4) political party polling agents present at polling units. From the eight hundred and thirty - four (834) observers, only forty (40) critical incident reports were received. The most frequently reported incidents were: late arrival of election materials and the late opening of the polling units - only about 26% were opened on time (PSC, 2012).

Similarly, the Africa Network for Environment & Economic Justice (ANEEJ) monitoring report on the Edo State governorship election noted that the late arrival of materials almost marred the process in some areas, principally in Oredo, Ovia North East and Ovia South West. The election materials

arrived between 10.30 am and 12 noon in some of the polling units. For example, at Oluku and Iguosa, materials were yet to get to the polling units by 11 am despite their proximity to the INEC office in the area. The problem of the late arrival of electoral materials and delays in accreditation and voting, which has been a regular feature in Nigeria's past elections, was observed in many polling units (Nigerian Civil Society Election Situation Room, 2012). This development affected participation in voting activities as most people became fatigued. However, the distribution of materials in some areas was reportedly timely and accreditation and voting progressed in a peaceful manner (ANEEJ, 2012; Nigerian Civil Society Election Situation Room, 2012).

Reports from various media institutions (such as the Punch and Guardian Newspapers, and Channels Television) indicated that the poll was characterized by the late arrival of electoral materials. Edo South Senatorial District, with seven local government areas witnessed late commencement of accreditation and voting due to late arrival of voting materials and personnel to the polling units, despite the impressive turnout of voters'. Accreditation did not commence until about 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. particularly in Egor, Oredo, and Ikpoba Okhai Local Government Council areas, all in the heart of Benin City. However, the situation was better in rural areas such as Orhionmwon, Uhumwonde, Ovia North East, and Ovia southwest as priority was given by INEC to distant areas in the distribution of materials. For instance, accreditation commenced at about 8:30 a.m. and was peaceful in Orhionmwon Local Government Council because of the early arrival of materials (Tonero Photo Agency, 2012).

Furthermore, the late arrival of voting materials was evident in many areas in Edo North Senatorial District. The late arrival of voting materials was attributed to the action by the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members recruited for the election who demanded to be paid their allowances beforehand. Some parts of Akoko-Edo local government areas, like Egbigere, Enwan, Ikpeshi, and Atte in ward eight (8) got their materials very late. For instance, electoral materials arrived at Ikpeshi at 12.45, resulting in simultaneous accreditation and voting to cover up lost hours. However the situation was different in Igarra where accreditation started as early as 8.30 am. Electoral materials also arrived late at Ibillo, Ikiran Ole, Ikiran Oke, Lampese, Ugboshi-fe, and Ugboshi-ele (Village Square Forum, 2012). This development made the incumbent governor, comrade Adams Oshiomhole to state on July 14, 2012 (Election Day) that a winner cannot emerge where people are not allowed to vote.

According to Oshiomhole:

If accreditation is to stop by noon and by 11 am, there are no materials in some polling booths, it then means Prof. Atahiru Jega and INEC have no plans to conduct the election. The whole idea is to frustrate the people so that they will not be able to vote, and they will declare a fake result (Ebegbulem, 2012).

The 2012 governorship election claimed some casualties due to poor logistic planning and implementation. A boat conveying security personnel, INEC staff, and electoral materials to Ologbo, a riverine area in Ikpoba Okhai Local Government Area of the state, capsized. Four persons on board on the boat were reportedly killed; including two inspectors, one constable and one ad-hoc INEC staff (Ebegbulem, 2012).

To justify the above assertions, the Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Edo State, Kassim Gaidam, admitted the commission's failure to meet its deadline for the commencement of the 2012 governorship election attributing it to traffic problems. According to Maku (2012), Gaidam stated that the late arrival of materials was due to traffic problems. That as a result of the delay, INEC re-strategized to ensure that such affected areas would vote between one and two hours beyond voting time which is supposed to be 4 pm.

However, when the conduct of the INEC is critically examined, the election under review (as per the late arrival of electoral materials at polling units) clearly shows that Nigerian elections are still largely bedeviled by organizational challenges and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Just like in all previous elections, there were significant cases where electoral materials did not arrive on time despite the tens

of billions of Naira spent on the exercise (Sango, 2012). It should be noted that the election under review only took place in just one out of the 36 states of the country and that INEC could not avoid the usual organizational lapses that characterized the exercise. It can thus be contended, that subsequent elections holds no promise of effectiveness and efficiency.

3.2. Analysis of the 2016 Edo State Governorship Election

The 2016 governorship election in Edo State was conducted on the 28th of September 2016. The analysis of the 2016 election is centered on the Management of Logistics on Election Day. The election was formerly scheduled for the 10th of September, 2016 but was postponed for security reasons. The total registered voter for the election was one million, nine hundred thousand two hundred and thirty-three (1,900, 233). The accredited voters were six hundred and twenty-two thousand, thirty-nine (622,039). Out of this figure six hundred and thirteen thousand, two hundred and forty- four (613, 244) were the actual total number of vote cast; representing 32% of the total registered voter. Nineteen (19) candidates vied for the ticket to the Government House. The main contestants for the election were the candidate of the incumbent party, Godwin Obaseki of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Osagie Ize-Iyamu of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), Cosmos Irabor Allied Congress Party of Nigeria (ACPN), and Akhalamhe Amienmenoghena of People for Democratic Change (PDC), etc. (Sahara Reporters, 2016). A total of twenty- five thousand (25,000) police officers were deployed across the state to maintain peace and security during the election, while forty- four (44) observer groups were accredited by the INEC to monitor the election (Channels TV Live, 2016; International Centre for Investigative Reporting [ICIR], 2016; Sahara Reporters, 2016).

In the lead up to the election INEC had assured all stakeholders and the public of its commitment to ensuring a free, fair, and credible poll. INEC reiterated its preparedness for the elections at various stakeholder engagements. The Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) in Edo State, Sam Olumekun provided a detailed plan of INEC's activities leading up to the election and its commitment to sticking to the scheduled timeline. He stated that transportation (including a special arrangement for difficult terrain), the accreditation of observers and the delivery of sensitive and non-sensitive materials have been effectively taken care of. He also stated that 18,511 electoral officials had been recruited and trained to ensure smooth electioneering. For the first time, voters in Edo State were to be accredited and to vote simultaneously (Young, 2016; Nigerian Civil Society Election Situation Room, 2016).

The Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), a coalition of human rights, non-governmental and civil society organizations (were deployed across the 18 local government areas (LGAs) of Edo State for the 2016 Governorship election. They witnessed the entire Election Day process from the setup of the polling units through the announcement and posting of the official results. TMG observation report from all the 18 LGAs reveals that the Election Day process commenced early in most of the polling units visited. There was the prompt deployment of materials and personnel by INEC except in a few places, and proper conduct by security personnel in all the polling units visited. Largely, the polling process was generally peaceful despite few reported incidents of violence, intimidation, harassment, and delay in the opening of polling units, accreditation and voting (Okorie, 2016; Nigeria News Now, 2016).

TMG observers arrived as early as 7:30 am across all the polling units they were deployed to observe. TMG observers reported an average deployment of at least four (4) INEC officials in most of the observed polling units and a good proportion of them were women. Security personnel was also seen in all of the observed polling units and proper conduct by the security personnel was largely observed (Okorie, 2016).

Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC) and Nigerian Civil Society Election Situation Room, which also monitored the election, reported that election officials and materials arrived at 80% of the polling stations early, thus commencing accreditation and voting (simultaneously) on time in those polling units across the state. It was reported that by 8:30 am officials had started setting up and

providing instructions to voters in the queue. However, there were some reports of a delay in the opening of polls with several polling units not opening polls even up till about 9 am and 10 am in some units across the state leading to late accreditation of voters (PLAC, 2016; Nigerian Civil Society Election Situation Room, 2016; Sahara Reporters, 2016).

In addition, reports from various media institutions (Nigeria News Now, Sahara Reporters, Channels TV, etc.) indicated that the 2016 governorship election was characterized (to a great extent) by the early arrival of security officials, INEC personnel, and voting materials. Officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), security operatives and voters got to the polling center as early as 07:00 am. Early arrival, distribution, and deployment of personnel and materials for the election made the process hitch-free and devoid of electoral violence that characterized previous elections. INEC was commended for its timely distribution of materials and personnel for the exercise, which commenced at exactly 8 am (Channels TV, 2016; Nigeria News Now, 2016).

The 2016 Edo state governorship election could be termed a better achievement than the 2012 election when viewed from the Election Day logistics management perspective. Compared to the Edo state 2012 election, the election under review clearly shows that INEC has improved tremendously in its organizational and bureaucratic structures which are reflective in the Election Day logistics management. Although lapses were still discovered in the logistics arrangement resulting in late arrival of INEC personnel and materials, the gaps as evident in past elections have been effectively reduced. However, considering the importance of logistics planning and implementation to the credibility of the electoral process, sustained and improved performance is required especially, in general elections.

3.3.A Comparative Analysis of Salient Characteristics of both the 2012 and 2016 Edo State Governorship Elections

Table 1. Comparative features

Issues	2012	2016
National chairmanship	Prof. Attahiru Jega	Professor Mahmood Yakubu
Resident electoral commission, Edo State	Kassim Gaidam	Sam Olumekun
Registered voters	1, 621, 999	1,900, 233
Accredited voters	667,993	622,039
Actual voters' statistics	667,936 (41% of reg. voter)	613, 244 (32% of reg. voter)
Number of INEC personnel	Over 9,000	18,511
Number of political parties	7	19
Number of security personnel	9,000	25,000
Accredited observers statistics	8	44
Vehicles for logistics	over 60 Hilux vehicles	No figures stated but adequate number procured
Arrival time for electoral materials and INEC Officials at polling units (total percentage)	26%	80%

Source: Compiled by the Author from the Analysis above

Comparatively, the 2012 and 2016 governorship elections in Edo State can be demonstrated to possess distinctive characteristics that made one election different from the other almost in all ramifications. Although the two elections took place in the same State, it was definitely under different terrains. From the documented data in table 1 above, it is obvious that the two elections took place under different electoral umpires. Professor Attahiru Jega serves as INEC chairman for the 2012

elections while Professor Mahmood Yakubu was in charge of the 2016 election. Furthermore, the INEC resident electoral commissioners were different; Kassim Gaidam for 2012 and Sam Olumekun for 2016.

Furthermore, the total number of voters' for the respective years differs. While a total of one million, six hundred twenty-one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine (1, 621, 999) eligible voters registered for the 2012 election, one million, nine hundred thousand, two hundred and thirty- three (1,900, 233) were registered in 2016 signifying an increase of 278, 234 in the number of registered voters. Accredited voters for the 2012 election were six hundred and sixty-seven thousand, nine hundred and ninety- three (667,993) while the actual voter were six hundred and sixty-seven thousand, nine hundred and thirty- six (667,936) representing 41% of the total registered voter. For 2016 the accredited voter was six hundred and twenty-two thousand and thirty-nine (622,039) while the actual voter figures stood at six hundred and thirteen thousand, two hundred and forty- four (613, 244) representing 32% of the total registered voter. It is interesting to note that although the total registered voter for 2016 was higher than that of 2012 yet, the number of accredited voters in 2012 was higher than that of 2016. Similarly, the number of actual voters in 2012 was higher than that of 2016; resulting in 41% of the registered voter voting in 2012 while only 32% of registered voters voted in 2016. Several factors could be accountable for the low turnout of eligible voters in 2016, and it may not be unconnected to poor logistics management by INEC judging from the dismal performance of the 2012 Edo State governorship election.

Other distinctive features of both elections include the deployment of over nine thousand (9,000) INEC personnel for the 2012 election in contrast to the over eighteen thousand (18, 511) deployed for the 2016 election. Concerning political parties, seven (7) of them took part in the 2012 election while nineteen (19) took part in the 2016 election. Furthermore, the number of security personnel deployed in 2012 was nine thousand (9,000) while for 2016; it was twenty-five thousand (25,000). In addition, the number of accredited election observers for the 2012 governorship election was eight (8) while that of 2016 was forty-four (44). To ensure prompt and easy carriage and delivery of personnel and materials for the governorship election, over sixty (60) Hilux buses were purchased in 2012 while for 2016 though no figure was stated, assurance was given by INEC of the adequacy of moving vans. However, as can be observed from Table 4 above, aggregation of the arrival time of electoral materials and INEC Officials at polling units across the state recorded a dismal 26% in 2012 and an appreciable 80% in 2016.

3.4. Implication of Logistics on Electoral Efficiency

A close observation of data for the 2012 and 2016 governorship elections in Edo State reveal that INEC under Professor Mahmood Yakubu has improved in its logistics operations especially-during Election Day activities. Though this achievement needs to be improved upon, it has however, given credibility to the electoral process. The timely arrival of election personnel, materials, and security operatives to most polling units across the state, ensured or facilitated accreditation and voting processes. Lapses in logistics arrangement can hamper electioneering and cause apathy amongst eligible voters. Consider a situation where accreditation is supposed to commence at 8 am and voting concluded by 2 pm; but at 11 pm election materials and INEC personnel are yet to arrive at such polling units. The obvious implications, of course, are, apathy on the part of the electorates who may leave the voting center thus discouraging a number of registered voters from voting. Likewise, it could result in late accreditation and voting signifying late collation, counting, and declaration of results far into the night, which could be susceptible to all forms of electoral vices. Thus, the relevance of adequately planning of electoral logistics management especially on Election Day cannot be overemphasized. There is therefore, a need for timely and proper planning and implementation of logistics by INEC to aid the credibility and efficiency of the electoral process.

4. Conclusions and Recommendation

Election administration is a vital organ in a country's electoral process. Its effectiveness and efficiency determine to a great extent the success and credibility of elections, and the legitimacy question. Well-managed electioneering throughout the electoral circle would undoubtedly result in a free and fair election which would not only build the confidence of the electorate in the system but also increase participation. Logistics management which is an aspect of election administration is also a vital aspect of election activity. If it is neglected or ineffectively handled, it would not only mar the efficiency of the Election Day voting activities but the entire electoral process. For instance, if both the sensitive and non-sensitive election materials procured are not adequate or not securely and properly stored and preserved, this could affect the conduct of the election. Also, if these election materials are not adequately and timely distributed on Election Day, the efficiency of the voting process could be hampered. Lack of proper storage could affect the quality of the materials like the ballot papers and cast doubts on its originality-the materials could be stolen and used for fraudulent activities. The late arrival of INEC personnel, security operatives, and voting material on Election Day-which is the main focus of this paper-could lead to late accreditation, voting, collation, and counting. This could translate to all forms of election vices and the problem of credibility in the declared election results. Thus, election logistics management especially on Election Day should be accorded maximum attention by INEC and relevant stakeholders; including the government, to ensure a successful electoral process. However, the analysis of the Edo State governorship election showed that the INEC improved greatly in the 2016 election as against the dismal performance recorded in 2012. It is hoped that the respective governments and relevant stakeholders would play their roles effectively to support the electoral body and that INEC would not only replicate but improve on the success recorded so far in subsequent elections. Some suggestions towards achieving this objective are giving below.

The INEC should plan and execute effectively, planned methods of distribution and delivery of electoral materials and equipment schedules including, methods of transportation to be employed. This would ensure the timely arrival of men and materials to election venues. Also comprehensive monitoring of the movements of the distribution of all electoral materials and equipment should be maintained/in place through an effective communication network. In addition to this, the transportation of electoral personnel, security operatives, and voting materials should be effectively provided for before the election to avoid any form of hiccups or mishaps.

Furthermore, the INEC should ensure that arrangements for accommodation and payment for the ad hoc personnel are effectively made beforehand to ensure that they are well settled and prepared for the election.

Finally, the transportation routes and terrains for the conveyance of election materials should be assessed before the election to ascertain the possible timeframe for the delivery to take place. Cognizance should also be taken of the environmental factors such as bad aspects of the roads and volume of traffic. Considering the importance of logistics arrangement to successful and credible elections, the effective planning, procurement, and execution of related activities including, test running delivery of election materials to the respective polling units beforehand, should be carried out.

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