A Critical Appraisal of Inec Smart Card Readers in Reducing Irregelarities During 2015 General Election in Katsina State

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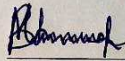
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A PROJECT SUMMITED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, FACULITY OF MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE A WARD OF BACHELOR"S DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE(B.SC.POLITICAL SCIENCE) AT FEDERAL UNIVERSITY, GUSAU.

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CERTIFICATION

This project by Ahmad Umar (1410206022) has met part of the partial requirements for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in Political science, of the Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Federal University Gusau Zamfara State and is approved for submission.

_____   _Muhammad_ 25/10/2018

Mr. Muhammad Abdullahi   Sign &Date
(project Supervisor)

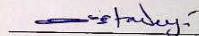_____   HEAD
                                            DEPARTMENT OF
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(Head of Department)   Sign &Date

_____   _____ 26:10:2018

Mr. Taofeq Fadeyi James   Sign &Date
(Project Coordinator)

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the Almighty God, that created me and every other living and non-living things, the provider of my means of sustenance, the giver of my wisdom and knowledge for seeing me through the completion of my studies successfully and also my beloved Father, Alh Umar Abubakar (Sarkin Kofar Arewa), and my beloved mother, Mallama Umma Rabiu.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Abstract

This research examined the critical performance of smart card reader reducing irregularities in the 2015 general elections in Katsina State. The aims of this study include: to examine the impact of the smart card readers on the outcome of the 2015 general elections , to identify how card reader promote democratization in Katsina state, to proffer solution on how to improved the inadequacy and achievement of the card reader in attainment of sustainable democracy in Nigeria. The research adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods. The research found out that the use of the card reader led to the increase and reinforcement of public confidence and trust in the electoral process, electoral fraud was reduced and election litigations were minimized. The research conclude that considering the massive electoral fraud witnessed in general elections since Nigeria's independence, the card reader should be used for future elections because the introduction of technology has resulted to incremental development in Nigerian electoral process. The research finally recommends that All Nigerians should accept the use smart card readers in the conduct of elections at all levels, Both INEC and Ad-hoc staff should be properly trained on the use of smart card readers to eliminate the challenges experienced in the 2015 general elections and Electorates should be given proper orientation on the use of smart card readers.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1.   Background to the Study

Election is the process of choosing a candidate for public office. Election is a critical component of any democratic society. As such, Nigeria's returned to democratic rule and engagement with the democratic process led to the conduct of its general elections in 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015. General elections are elections conducted in the federation at large for federal and state elective positions (The Electoral Institute, 2015).

The 2015 general election appears to be the most keenly contested in the history of elections in Nigeria because it was the first time about four major opposition parties came together to form a very strong party, All Progressive Congress (APC) in order to challenge the dominance of the ruling party, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the polity. Indeed, according to Omotola (2013: 172), the election became the only game in town, shaping and reshaping public discourse and political actions.

Prior to the 2015 general elections, a number of technologically based reforms (e.g. biometric Register of Voters, Advanced Fingerprints Identification System) were embarked upon by the new leadership (headed by Prof Attairu Jega) of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the election management body empowered by the 1999 Constitution (as amended) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to organize, undertake and supervise all elections in Nigeria.

The more general use of biometric in African elections is on the rise. No fewer than 25 sub-Saharan African countries (e.g. Sierra-Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Malawi, Rwanda, Senegal, Somaliland, Mali, Togo, Ghana etc.) have already held elections employing a biometric voter register (Piccolino, 2015). The Automated Fingerprint Identification System was used in the 2011 general elections as a digital register to eliminate doubles from the list, and was not capable or verifying the identity of voters at the polling stations (Piccolino, 2015).

These technologically based reforms by INEC were further taken to another height in the 2015 general elections with the use of the Permanent Voter"s Card (PVC) and introduction of Smart Card Reader technology, a device used to scan the PVC in order to verify the identity of a voter in a polling booth. The smart card reader was one of the greatest innovations of biometric verification technology and controversial crucial aspect of the 2015 general elections 3 in Nigeria. African countries like Ghana, Kenya, and Somaliland etc had adopted the biometric verification technology.

Concerned about the massive electoral fraud witnessed in the past general elections in Nigeria, INEC deployment of the card reader in 2015 general elections was to ensure a credible, transparent, free and fair election in order to deepen Nigeria"s electoral democracy. However, the used of the electronic device in the 2015 general elections generated debate among election stakeholders before, during and after the election0s.

Conducting elections is seen as providing legitimacy to elected leaders, as long as they are conducted fairly and with integrity. But it also seems that along with the trends toward more elections around the world there are increasing concerns about electoral irregularities

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and the potential manipulation of the electoral process. For example, recent presidential elections in Mexico have been marred by allegations of irregularities and vote buying, including claims that pre-supporters in some areas provided gift cards to voters. Concerns about electoral irregularities, manipulation and anomalous results have swirled around recent elections in Afghanistan (Worden 2010), Angola (Collier and Vicente 2012), Armenia (Hyde 2007), Iran (Mebane 2010), Georgia (Tucker 2007), Kenya (Collier and Vicente 2012), Kyrgyzstan (Tucker 2007), Mexico (Eisenstaedt 2007), Moldova (Senyuva 2010), Russia (Myagkov et al. 2009), Serbia (Tucker 2007), Ukraine (Myagkov et al. 2009; Tucker 2007), Venezuela (Levin et al. 2009), and Zimbabwe (Collier and Vicente 2012). Similar concerns have arisen about some anomalies in recent U.S. elections as well, for example a dispute over the thirteenth congr0essional districts election in 2006.(Alvarez, R. Michael and Jonathan N. Katz. 2008).

In an attempt to ensure a good research project, it will be apt to assert that electoral irregularities in Nigeria have served the ignoble purposes of weakening the people's confidence and support for democratic institution in Nigeria. Institutions of the state like school and other social institutions strengthen and stabilize democratic development since they encourage and legalize wider popular participation in the democratic and development process. As a result of the several incidences in past years of electoral irregularities perpetrated at the national, state and local levels of governance, people are beginning to lose faith in the democratic system of government in Nigeria. This has weakened the development programs, projects and prospects of Africa's most populated country-Nigeria. The huge electoral irregularities experienced during the 2007 elections made the European Union, the Commonwealth and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to

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carry out a detailed study of the pervasive problem of why Nigerians have lost interest, confidence and faith in democratic institutions.

Provoked by election controversies in the past decades, political methodologists have been at the forefront of studying both election irregularities and election integrity. This virtual issue of political analysis presents a number of those recent papers, highlighting the contributions that methodologists have made in developing new approaches to analyze elections data to try to detect anomalies that might indicate the existence of deliberate manipulation that could constitute electoral irregularities. Other methodologists have taken a different approach, and while not motivated to detect manipulation or irregularities, they have developed analytic approaches that help us better understand and predict election results, and which can be used in the future to improve evaluations of election integrity and analyses of the causes and consequences of election irregularities. It is in this light that this scholarly research seeks to beam the torch-light of inquiry on Nigeria and her introduction of the voter smart card readers as a panacea to the problem of electoral irregularities during the 2015 general elections.

In March 2015, general election was the fifth elections since Nigeria returned to democratic rule in 1999. Nigerians went into the general elections with renewed determination to exercise their voting rights and stood stoutly to monitor and protect their votes with anything and everything (Momodu, 2015). Though, the 2015 general election has come and gone. The elections was bedeviled with issues that almost denied Nigeria and Nigerians the opportunity of voting in their representatives in government for another four years. At one stage the country was facing the danger of what may be considered as a law of diminishing returns in terms of the quality of election, with every succeeding

election regarded as worse than the previous one. This state of affairs generated a constant demand and debate on electoral reform in the country, which has consistently taken place before each round of the general elections.

In recognition of the importance of free, fair, and credible elections, cum the pursuit of sustainable democratic milieu, INEC has introduced the PVCs and card authentication system that involves the use of the Permanent Voter Cards and Smart Card Readers for voter accreditation at the polling during the just concluded 2015 general elections.

The main objective of this study is predicated on the critical unraveling of the fads, fact and fallacies behind INEC's use of the PVCs and card authentication system which involves the use of the Permanent Voter Cards and Smart Card Readers for voter accreditation and how it has reduced irregularities during the 2015 general elections.

1.2. Statement of the Research Problem

Having remained virtually unchanged since the enactment of universal and secret suffrage at the end of the 19th century, voting procedures are undergoing a radical transformation in many countries through the introduction of electronic methods of voting. At least 30 countries around the world are currently in the process of testing or implementing computerized voting, and in at least 10 countries (Australia, Brazil, United States of America, Venezuela, Kazakhstan, France, Italy, United Arab Emirate, Romania, Norway) electronic voting (e-voting) is the main method used to elect national representatives .(Alvarez, R. Michael and Jonathan N. Katz. 2008).

Taking a critical look at the traditional voting method that has been in existence for years we can observe many opportunities for irregularities amongst with the inability of the

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citizens to verify the election results. This gives a strong motivation for computer scientists to design electronic mechanisms that could realize voting, and that would not only disable cheating and allow checking, but also lower the costs (Attahiru, Jega 2015).

In her quest to improve and push the limit of her development beyond the use of manual typology of voting, by adopting new vistas rooted in electro-centric electoral process The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) introduced the Smart Card Readers during the 2015 general elections. This study critically examines the INEC Smart Card Readers and how it has reduced irregularities during the 2015 general elections.

1.3. Research Question

(i)   What was the impact of the card readers on the outcome of the 2015 general elections?

(ii) Has the introduction of the card readers helped in improving electioneering process and sustainable democracy in Nigeria?

(iii) How does the use of card reader in 2015 general elections promote democratic culture in katsina state in the 2015 general elections?

(iv) How can the impact of the card reader be minimized or improved to attained sustainable democracy in kasina state and in Nigeria as a whole?

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1.4.   Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this research work are as follows:

(1) To examine the impact of the smart card readers on the outcome of the 2015 general elections

(2) To find out whether the introduction of the smart card readers has helped in improving electoral process .and the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria

(3) To identify the how card reader promote democratization in katsina state and in Nigeria as a whole during the 2015 general elections.

(4) To proffer solution on how to minimize or improved the inadequacy and achievement of the card reader in attainment of sustainable democracy in Nigeria and in katsina state in particular.

1.5.   Basic Assumptions/hypotheses

In line with the objectives of the study, we will adopt the following assumptions as guide:

(i)   The introduction, of the smart card readers has changed the political spectrum of the Nigerian electoral process.

(ii) The continual use of the smart card readers will eliminate lack of trust in the fairness and legitimacy of Nigerian elections.

(iii) A computer-based election is likely to dominate the process of election in Africa.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The 2015 General Election from all indication is one that has elicited the greatest attention. Since 1999 to the 2011, general election there has never been such great expectations from

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Nigerians as in the one being expressed for the 2015 general election. This great expectation and concern from Nigerian on the 2015 general election is understandable. It is because Nigeria's democracy is gradually being deepened while the electoral process by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is also enjoying some confidence from the electorate with the introduction of the smart card readers to curtail electoral irregularities. Probably also, the 2015 election has come on the fore because of the great challenge it possess all Nigerians especially on the issue of credibility and transparency, a much is needed to break the menace of electoral irregularities in the country's electoral life-cycle. While it is true to posit Until 1999, Nigeria's experience with democratization was in its critical stage; characterized by military interventions, The Fourth Republic since 1999 has witnessed some stability. However it is key to note that the democratization process was bedeviled by poorly conducted elections that left Nigerians frustrated and questioning the value and validity of electoral democracy. Sounding the alarm of change in the conduct of elections Nigeria, Professor Attahiru Jega (2015) opined that "our immediate objective when we came on board in June 2010 was to reverse the trend and restore credibility to the electoral process. Even though the 2011 elections were not perfect, they were adjudged locally and internationally to be, perhaps, the 2015 has been widely deemed as the best in Nigeria's history due to the use of the Smart Card Readers".

The important aspect of this research is that, it will deepen the sagacity of knowledge and information on the subject matter. It will also help tremendously in guiding the government policymakers while making decisions with respect to the electoral process in Nigeria.

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This study in addition, will not only be an addition to the existing body of knowledge but also assist the students of political science, public administration and public policy or any other disciplines related to the topic for their studies as well as provide the people and government of Nigeria and any other readers a sense of direction and understanding about the importance of electronic-centric voting process and its importance on the voting behaviour and outcome of elections.

1.7. Scope and limitations of the Study

This research work is designed to cover the study of the impact of the INEC Smart Card Readers, how it has reduced irregularities during the 2015 general elections; with more emphasis on the benefits and shortcomings of the Smart Card Readers to the Nigerian political landscape.

1.8. Operational Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this research work the following terms are defined:

- **Permanent Voter Card (PVC)**

Furthermore, the electronic accreditation was segmented into two levels; the verification and authentication of voter. The verification authentication stage involves swiping of the Permanent Voter Card against the Card Reader for the purposes of verifying if the voter is the legitimate holder of the card and that the polling unit information in the PVC corresponds with details of the polling unit. It also enables the polling officials determine if the PVC is genuinely issued by the commission. The authentication stage involves matching the fingerprint of the PVC holder with the biometrics stored in the chip.

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Impressively, the card reader records number of PVCs verified/authenticated or declined with all the details of the voters. This information can be used to audit polling unit results and also determine whether accreditation figures have been altered or falsified. According to Jega, A. (2015) the Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs)the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has produced Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs) for the 68,833,476 persons in the biometric Register of Voters during the March 28th and April 11th, 2015 general elections. The PVC replaces the Temporary Voter Card (TVC) issued on the heels of registration of voters since 2011. Quality, security, durability and cost effectiveness are underlying factors in the production of the Permanent Voter Cards by INEC. These cards have many components and specialized features (e.g. base substrate, security printing, personalization, lamination and chip embedding), and it is designed with an average life span of ten (10) years. The PVC has an embedded chip that contains all the biometrics of a legitimate holder (including fingerprints and facial image). On Election Day, it was swiped with a Smart Card Reader at the polling unit to ensure 100 per cent authentication and verification of the voter before he/she is allowed to vote. The PVC has security features that are not easily susceptible to counterfeiting. Only voters who have their PVC were allowed to vote in the 2015 general elections. For avoidance of doubt, TVCs were not allowed; thus it was important for registered persons to collect their PVC before the day of the election. PVCs are available for collection at distribution points in all the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) daily, including on weekends, until Sunday, 8th March 2015.

- **Smart Card Readers**

For the first time in Nigeria's electoral history, electronic voter authentication system (Smart Card Readers) is being deployed for the 2015 general elections. The card reader uses a highly secure and cryptographic technology that is used commonly in devices that need to perform secure transactions, such as paying terminals. It has ultralow power consumption, with a single core frequency of 1.2GHz and an Android 4.2.2 operating system. The card reader units have been broadly subjected to Quality Assurance, Integrity and Functionality testing and found reliable in ease of use, battery life and speed of processing. For instance, it takes an average of 10 seconds to authenticate a voter. The card readers were also subjected to Stress testing in the states and FCT ahead of the March 28 and April 11, 2015 elections. INEC made a card reader available at every voting point in the 36 states and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) during the 2015 elections, with a substantial number of spares available to address contingencies.

- **Electioneering**

As defined by Colorado statute, the term *"electioneering"* includes campaigning for or against any candidate and/or issue that is on the ballot. It is the practice of working actively to secure votes for a candidate in an election. In another parlance electioneering means the solicitation of support or opposition to a candidate or issue to be voted upon at the election or polling place in question, by means of :(a) Personal persuasion, electronic amplification of the human voice, or the display or distribution of campaign materials. (b)Offering or distribution of food, drink, or any other material benefit in a manner calculated to

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encourage recognition, support, or opposition to a candidate or issue. "Electioneering" does not include the display of ordinary bumper stickers on automobiles.

- **Democracy**

The concept of democracy has been defined differently by different scholars depending on the circumstance and interest of their research. Accordingly, democracy here emphasizes political freedoms and procedures, including „government by the people", political rights and elections or civil liberties. It entails „civilian politics" that provide substantive values such as peace, social and economic development, or equality and justice in every political community even within the scope of this research.

The meaning and nature of democracy is subjected to its application in different environments. In discussing the nature of Nigerian democracy, Jega (2007:15) observes that "the dominant model, historically and contemporarily, in terms of the number of the countries who have used or are using it, is *liberal democracy*. It is predicated on the following principles: individual freedom; equality before the law; universal suffrage (voting rights); election and 16 representation". Additional features include popular sovereignty; popular representation; majority government; guarantee of freedom (basic); consensus and accommodation; peaceful resolution of disputes; free market and enterprise. Liberal democracy is also variously referred to as bourgeois democracy and elite democracy.

A democratic system is said to "enable citizens to control public policy pertaining to the holding of elections under certain forms, to the central, national decision making organs

and to the maintenance of certain fundamental political liberties" (Hadenius, 1992:36 In Umar, 2007:3). However, this definition limits the scope of democratic experience to the central level of governance by excluding other important levels of analysis such as the state and local governments that played an important role in a federal system of government like Nigeria.

1.9. Organization of Chapter

The report of this research work comprises of five chapters:

Chapter one: consists; introduction, statement of the research problem, research questions, aim and objectives of the study, scope and limitation of the work, conceptual clarification and Chaptarization.

Chapter Two deals with the review of related and relevant literature and theoretical framework various literatures concerning the subject matter under study are going to be examined and reviewed. A suitable theoretical framework is going to be adopted to explain the study so as to give the work of definitive meaning.

Chapter Three covers methodology of research

Chapter Four consists of data presentation, data analysis and discussion of major findings.

Chapter Five consists of summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

To review the literature for this study, we combine both the conceptual and empirical review then we do a theoretical review.

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Smart Card Reader

According to Jurisic (2012) who alluded that recently, the interest in electronic voting has increased as more and more states start implementing such systems. At the same time, paper voting process is often being replaced by national electronic ID cards which enable citizens to securely identify and authenticate over the internet. It is no news that Electronic voting one of the most desired elements of modern democracy. It would make the voting process more convenient, less expensive, and it could also be a democracy enhancing factor. Smart cards are plastic cards with embedded integrated circuits and similar in size to today's payment cards. They can be used as an access-control device, making personal and business data available only to the appropriate users. Smart cards provide data portability and are designed from the ground up to be a secure system component. There are three different categories of smart cards: Integrated Circuit (IC) memory cards, IC optical memory cards, and IC microprocessor cards. An IC memory card simply stores data in a secure manner. IC optical memory cards are the same as IC memory cards, but provide a larger memory capacity.

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An IC microprocessor card, on the other hand, can process, i.e., add, delete and manipulate information in the memory of the card, allowing a variety of applications and dynamic Read/write capabilities. Smart cards are used in e-voting schemes for secure identification and authentication of voters, for secure storage, and for securely processing parts of the e-voting scheme, including, signing and encrypting messages and/or votes. Usually e-voting schemes use IC microprocessor cards, because they are based on cryptographic protocols and primitives. Thus, when we refer to smart cards in this paper, we are referring to IC microprocessor cards.

To Neumann (2013) a critical look at the manual voting method that we have been using for years we can observe many opportunities for irregularities along with the inability of the citizens to verify the election results. This gives a strong motivation for computer scientists to design electronic mechanisms that could realize voting, and that would not only disable cheating and allow checking, but also lower the costs. Three approaches to the problem are proposed: poll site voting, kiosk voting and Internet voting. The first one involves special voting machines placed in the voting booths. The votes are cast in interaction with the machines. In this case, contrary to kiosk voting, we can assume control of the voting environment and presence of election officials. The second approach realizes the idea of publicly available terminals (e.g., in shopping malls) that enable citizens to cast votes. Electronic cum Electronic voting using the smart card readers, by contrast, requires no dedicated machines. The voting process is performed by a client-server application, run by a voters PC, and on the server side, by trusted authority or authorities. Of course, the third approach is more convenient and economical. It also reflects the needs of the modern society. As In e-voting, voter identification and authentication plays an important role in

ensuring that only eligible voters may cast a vote, that those voters only cast a vote once, and that eligible voters are not prevented from voting. Therefore, using EIDS for voter identification and authentication in e-voting is a promising future direction.

M. Torrieri (2006) averred that unfortunately, almost all contemporary protocols for Electronic voting have an inherent law they neglect susceptibility of the voter's PC to cyber-attacks. Another issue is providing variability and disabling massive vote selling. Nonetheless it is considerably more demanding from the security perspective, as we have to take into account less control of the voter's environment and various cyber-attacks. The attacks may be launched from anywhere, and may target many voters causing major damage to the state and discrediting Electronic voting in general. Possible abuses that we can expect are automated vote selling and malicious changing of votes extinct.

2.1.2 Electoral Irregularities:

Elections are essential in a democracy, and they are at the core of citizens' democratic rights. Since the end of the Cold War, the reintroduction of multiparty democracy and the gradual reopening of the political space have ensured that holding elections is now the main acceptable means of political change in African countries. In addition, 'credible competitive elections have become a necessary, albeit sufficient, source of behavioural, if not attitudinal, legitimacy in Africa's emerging democracies' (Mozaffar 2002).

In an attempt to deepen intellectual sagacity Ani Casimir, Emma Omeh, Chinedu Ike (2013) averred that an electoral irregularity is seen as an illegal interference with the process of election that interferes with the mandate of the people. Other features of these political elite Irregularities include:

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1) Using vote counts to change an election result

2) Increasing the number of votes for the favored candidate;

3) Reducing the vote share of the opposing candidates or parties.

In Nigeria's chequered political and democratic history, special dimensions were assumed by the country's electoral irregularity experience to include:

4) Under age voting;

5) Mass voting by unregistered citizens (neither qualified to register nor even registered to vote);

6) Snatching of ballot boxes to be stuffed with thumb- printed votes for party candidates;

7) Switching of results before or after collation to favour ruling party candidates;

8) Intimidation at the polls using private militant gangs or even state security;

9) Scaring away of genuine registered voters from exercising their votes in polling booths located in an opposition favored constituency;

10) Deliberate, one-sided and improper counting of votes;

11) Media manipulation to announce or publish the wrong.

2.1.3 Electioneering and Democracy in Nigeria

Election, which represents a modern and universally accepted process through which individuals are openly chosen to represent a body or community in a larger entity or government, is one of the cardinal features of democracy (Nnadozie, 2007). Elections are properly regarded as the central institution of democratic government. This is because in democracy, the authority of the government derives solely from the consent of the governed. A democratic election would characteristically be competitive, periodic, inclusive definitive and free and fair (Chukwu, 2007). To consolidate electoral democracy in Nigeria, Jega and Ibeanu (2009) suggest the raising of public consciousness through advocacy, especially regarding ballot monitoring and protection.

Election can be likened to seasonal rituals that seek periodically to renew leadership and ensure continuity of government. Election is a constitutionally mandated process of selecting, voting and mandating the people who will hold either legislative or executive position and steer the affairs of a state for a period of time. It is a process of bestowing power on candidates who have sought people's mandate to rule them. Thus, election helps in enthroning legitimacy on a government for a period of time in the political life of a state through popular participation. It is equally a system of renewing contract between the government and the governed by eliciting commitment of the people to the political system. Slann (1998) notes that election in democracies provide the most important and widespread manifestation of political participation. Election contests are regularly scheduled events between peoples or groups, and they are governed by a set of rules. In Nigeria, the rules are set out in the 1999 constitution as amended and Electoral Act passed by the National Assembly. Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is the

umpire while Electoral tribunals and the law courts are the interpreters of the rules in cases of dispute. Election contests are full of drama much of which stem from the spontaneity of the action and uncertainty of the outcome (Nimmo & Combs, 1990). The dramatic elements are stretched by both the traditional and the new media through hyping and virtualization.

Borrowing from the games theory analogy originally developed by Emil Borel in the 1920s and espoused in political science by R. Duncan Luce and Howard Raffia, Martin S Verima, S. (2006), an election is a game, well defined with an explicit and efficient set of rules; the information of which is available to the players as specified at every point, and the scoring system is complete. Each player in the game of election is a rational entity with well-defined objectives and has at his disposal sets of resources, with the help of which he combats the forces against which he is in competition or conflict. Electioneering is the process of asking for people's votes prior an election. It involves managing political parties, electoral umpires, the electorates and the candidates. It is a process of communicating, responding and determining political future of states. Political Campaign forms part of the electioneering process. It is an opportunity for candidates to sell themselves to the electorate using both interpersonal and mediated communication systems. Electoral campaigns offer platforms for political policy articulation and debates that enable the electorate to decide (it is hoped) objective information, which economic and political policies they want the government to adopt (Slann, 1998).

Former INEC Chairman, Professor Maurice Iwu notes that the important issues of curbing irregularities in elections, the need to control the influence of money in elections, addressing mind-sets of Nigerians on elections, enhancing women participation in the

electoral process and the role of the media in the making or unmaking of elections, all constitute vital aspects of the environment of election.

Wahba, (2011) cited in Odoemelam and Adibe (2011) asserted that democracy is widely acknowledged as the best form of government. One of its major characteristics is periodic elections. Events that culminate in elections are generally referred to as electioneering.

The world of technology is inseparable from any functional and effective electoral process, and it is in this sense that INEC should ordinarily not be left out of the various technologies of managing elections. Ucholla, a National Commissioner in INEC, shows appreciation for this rapidly developing character of technological applications in the electoral process when he argues that even with the modest achievements made by INEC since 1999, the question has been how to choose between competing technologies what would best suit the needs of the Commission (Ucholla 2006). Although he admits that "excellent technological applications alone do not necessarily guarantee perfection or good electoral outcomes", yet they are largely "dependent on our collective will to let the various technologies succeed", in a sense that makes election outcomes reflective of the general wish of the electorate.

After a review of the 1998/99 transitional elections, INEC produced a *Strategic Plan 2000-2003* with the overall aim of improving the electoral process and election management in Nigeria. The plan targeted such critical areas as computerization and information technology for planning and management. Even though the plan had set June 30, 2001 as the deadline for attaining Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) scanning equipment for the compilation of a computerised Voters' Register and January 1, 2002 as deadline for

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achieving the installation and operationalization of elections management databases, as well as for attaining improved communication, transportation and 75% of physical infrastructure, the late release of funds either delayed or completely denied the delivery on the plan. It took up to December 2002 before INEC received funds for the installation of most of the equipment it eventually acquired (INEC 2004).

Thus, the first major attempt to revolutionize Nigeria's electoral process through technological applications started in the run up to the 2003 elections with the efforts to build an Electronic Voters Register through the associated Optical Mark Recognition (OMR), Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR), and Data Processing and Analysis technologies. OMR is a technology that enables the electronic extraction of intended data from marked fields – i.e. checked boxes and filled-in fields – on printed forms for purposes of quick and accurate processing of surveys, reply cards, questionnaires and ballots. The ICR technology converts handwritten transcripts to texts processed via gradual merger with Optical Character Recognition to form Intelligent Recognition. Data Processing technology, adopted by INEC in 2002 in preparation for the 2003 general elections, was intended to process OMR forms through the use of scanners and specialized software with file server, while Data Analysis was all about analyzing the captured data in the 2002/2003 compiled electronic voters register, with the target centered on Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS).

Beyond the foregoing was the introduction of the Results Collation/Transmission technologies, which had facilities for High Frequency Radio Network (HF), Inmarsat Terminals and G3 Fax Transmission. While the Frequency Radio Network had long been in use by several electoral commissions in Nigeria, the new ground gained superseded the

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earlier limited capacity for data transmission by batch transfer data terminals that are interfaced with data transmission modems via radio communication (Ucholla 2006). INEC's venture into the Inmarsat Terminals technology in 2003 was complimented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supply of additional terminals on loan. The facilities which are still valuable, especially in difficult terrains where GSM network providers are not available, enabled INEC to transmit results via Thuraya, Bgan Iridium and NERA (Ibid). G3 Fax Transmission was about the most useful of INEC's utilised technologies during the 2003 elections in that up to 90% of the results transmission to the Commission's headquarters from the various states were done through it.

While the technologies recounted above would have marked a major revolution in Nigeria's electoral process, they were nevertheless affected by late release of funds by the government, "and in some cases poor choice of technology applications." Also of grave concern was the fact that the applications could not satisfactorily prevent the massive rigging that characterized the 2003 elections and the negative perception that was thus invoked in the minds of many Nigerians. It was no wonder, therefore, that a popular Bini musician, Joseph Osayamore, asked in one of his albums: *"Guobadia wey your computer?"* in an apparent referral to the failure of INEC's computerization exercise in the 2003 elections.

It was also not surprising that the mere mention of the Electronic Voting System (EVS) as the technology to be adopted by INEC in the build up to the 2007 elections attracted widespread national criticisms. Anchored on a strategic plan to provide functional communication systems in all INEC offices to allow for effective information flow, the consolidation of the already started process of Electronic Voters Register and the plan for

the effective use of Geographic Information System (GIS) technology in polling unit location and identification, the EVS was, according to Professor Iwu (2006), designed by INEC to incorporate the following major components:

- Electronic Voters Register,

- Voter Accreditation and Authentication,

- Electronic Balloting, and

- Electronic Transmission of Results

Nigerians across political divides (except perhaps those in the ruling PDP) were completely opposed to the Commission's new found technology, and this was not without reasons, although the reasons were largely influenced by the general problem of election mind-sets in the country, which Iyayi (2006) argues, with concrete academic have a powerful effect on actions and behaviors much more than structures and systems.

In terms of the reasons for which people, political parties and interest groups were opposed to INEC's proposal: first, was the point that the people were yet to forget the flawed 2003 elections. Their argument was that the country was not mature for the system, adding that even the most developed democracies, including the United States, are yet to adopt it. Second, was the Editorial on "INEC and Democracy", Vanguard (Lagos), Monday, April 23, 2007, p.18.

Among the transport technologies used by INEC are: trucks, jeeps, cars, motorcycles, boats and bicycles. The recent crash of a helicopter belonging to Nigeria Air force in the South East during the 2007 elections also drew the Nigerian public attention to the

emerging trend of transforming transportations logistics of the Commission. The fear that rather than curb rigging, the system will further exacerbate the vices of election rigging and results manipulation. Third, was that whatever its merits are, the EVS should have been tried in some bye-elections in the country before being adopted, adding there was insufficient time to make the necessary legal and constitutional amendments required to legalize its use. Four, was the well-known epileptic power supply in the country which triggered a lot of hiccups for many of the laptops imported for the voters' registration exercise. There was nothing more disturbing than revelations during the field interview that most of the electronic transmitting devises ordered from abroad got to the country at the eleventh hour before the elections. It thus resulted in a scenario in which "the much-hyped electronic voting machines and the billions of Naira that it consumed turned in voters' lists that were in the most forbidden state".

Besides ICT, INEC also adopts transport technologies33 for its personnel, election materials and equipment deployment for pre-election, election-day and post-election activities across Nigeria. These also have their enormous challenges.

Many people have argued that INEC does not need to purchase all the equipment it requires to conduct elections. A Coordinator of the Electoral Reform Network (ERN) has specifically advocated for intergovernmental collaboration and synergy that would enable the Air force and Navy to assist with planes and boats to distribute election materials to difficult terrains, while the National Identity Card office assists with electronic voter's registration equipment, as a possible way of addressing the Commission's infrastructural needs. Her argument for this is against the backdrop of the fact that all the equipment mentioned are only required once in every four years, and therefore need not be left to rot

away only to be replaced in another four years. Such collaboration, as complemented by other sources, should also mandate the National Population Commission (NPC) to handle constituency delineation issues, get the anti-corruption commissions to monitor political party and campaign finance, while the National Orientation Agency (NOA) takes on the important assignment of voter education. This, it was claimed, would lighten the portfolio of INEC and strengthen its ability to deliver on professionalism.

It appears that technology, in addition to being a concrete problem, was also used as a ruse to produce failed elections by Professor Iwu and his cohorts. Very clearly, most of the essential signposts on the road map to free and fair elections in 2007 were not being addressed in a timely manner by INEC. A close analysis reveals that there was an unfolding design to produce failed or no elections in 2007. For his first year in office, Professor Maurice Iwu held the electoral preparation process to ransom, arguing that INEC must use electronic voting machines for the 2007 elections. People were perplexed because whatever the merits of the voting machine, there was simply insufficient time to carry out the required legal and constitutional amendments, harmonize views on the type of voting machine that can work in the Nigerian context, and carry out the procurement process in time for the elections. By concentrating all the

The mission and vision statements of INEC are found in virtually all the publications and website of the Commission. Commission's energy on the voting machine, the basic preparations for the elections was neglected in spite of the fact that INEC had developed a strategic plan with clear timelines for the various elements on the road map to the 2007 elections.

In a bid to demonstrate its awareness of the responsibility entrusted on it, INEC has crafted its mission statement to read:

> "to provide credible and efficient electoral services consistent with the principles of equity, justice and fair flay for the building of a strong and viable democracy in Nigeria." The Commission has also gone ahead to match this with a vision statement that projects it as a "dynamic, formidable and independent organization, committed to the institutionalization of an enduring democracy, which allows for effective and smooth political change".

These are great principles, but there is little to show that they are taken seriously. The challenge is the ability to adapt the modalities – financially, technically, technologically and innovatively – to accomplish the tasks that would enable INEC to fulfill its vision and mission. At a conference organized by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) to review the 2007 elections, INEC Commissioner,(Dr. I Ishmael 2007) said that "INEC did all it could to hold successful elections. However, we underestimated certain issues". He pointed to the attitude of Nigerian politicians as the major challenge the Commission had contended with. INEC officials have persisted in blaming Nigerian politicians for their failure in organizing free and fair elections. The Electoral Act 2006 however gives INEC the power to prosecute politicians involved in electoral Irregularities but the Commission has not deemed it necessary to use this power.

On the eve of the Governorship and Houses of Assembly elections in April 2007, a scene was created at the Central Bank premises in Enugu when opposition parties discovered that sensitive election materials, such as appropriate results sheets, were not delivered for onward transmission to polling stations. It took the intervention of the General Officer Commanding (GOC) the 42 Army Brigade in the city to ensure the release of the materials. The general suspicion was that the materials were to be delivered to the houses of party barons where they would be filled with fake figures.

Not surprisingly, doubts have been expressed in terms of the capacity of INEC to adapt to the modalities of integrity that can produce free and fair elections. From Kaduna to Benin, Bauchi to Jos and Abuja, Enugu to Lagos, the research team's consultations revealed that the people rate the Commission low on its adaptability capacity, stressing the nature and interests of the political setting in which the Commission operates as the cause of this. They pointed as example the technological innovation that the EVS was supposed to bring to election administration in Nigeria. And, they argued that INEC should not only have gradually introduced the system, but should have operated it side-by-side with the old manual registration system or piloted it in bye elections to ensure a smooth transition of the process. People also added that the total mix-up witnessed in the belatedly displayed voters' registers by the Commission across the country was a pointer to the poor sense of discretion at INEC.

Far beyond the moderate position above is the view by another category of respondents who stated that INEC has not demonstrated any adaptability capacity. To some of these people, the Commission does not even recognize its incapacitation in this regard; talk less of acting to improve its capacity. While some people have generously appreciated that

INEC foresees problems, except that it does not act to redress them, given that the problems are meant to favour certain categories of people, 35 others such as Sabina Idowu-Osehobo, Felix Oriakhi and James-Wisdom Abhulimen simply identified the partisan mind-set of INEC's leadership as the major obstacle to its adaptability capacity. The latter category of citizens cited the initial exclusion of the former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar from the 2007 presidential race as a premeditated one, arguing that for adaptability-capacity sake the Commission could have saved itself of the national and international embarrassment that the shoddy and non-serialized ballot papers caused it, if it had heeded the popular advise that it included the former Vice-President's name in the register in anticipation of his judicial victory.

INEC's inability to anticipate that the Supreme Court judgment could have gone against the Commission, and have a 'Plan B' for the elections, resulted in the violation of Section 45(2) of the Electoral Act which reads: "The ballot papers shall be bound in booklets and numbered serially with differentiating colors for each office being contested". What this portends, especially in terms of the Commission's poor capacity to adapt, is the sheer impossibility of tracing "the votes for the presidential elections back to a polling station, thus creating ample room for ballot manipulation" ...and hampering the Commission from providing "any credible breakdown of the votes cast at each polling station, or in each ward, local government area or state" (International Alert 2007). It is in this context that one understands the view expressed at a forum that "if INEC is not serious nobody will ordinarily feel any obligation" towards it, citing the myriad of petitions currently in election tribunals across Nigeria as an indication of huge waste of the money expended on the Commission. It is in this sense that one appreciates Festus Okoye's position that INEC

would only be able to build its institutional adaptability capacity when it is fully independent. The leadership question, all over the world, is often hinged on the interface of structure and behaviour, the dialectic of persons in relation to institutions (Seteol; 2004).

To this end I shall be making an in-depth analysis as to what extents the use of IT/Smart Cards reduces irregularities in the 2015 elections.

2.1.4 Importance of Card Reader in the Nigerian Electoral System

The chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) Professor Attahiru Jega (2015) said he had no regrets insisting on deploying card readers for the conduct of the general election, adding that he knew that the decision would attract attacks on his integrity as a person.

He said that INEC had perfected all its strategies and put every apparatus in place with a view to ensuring a hitch free poll that will reflect the choice of Nigerians.

It has made rigging almost impossible for them as there is no how the total number of votes cast at the polling unit could exceed the number of accredited persons. Such discrepancy in figures will be immediately spotted. This technology will further make it impossible for any corrupt electoral officer to connive with any politician to pad-up results, he added. Besides, Jega noted that in the past, dubious INEC officials usually delayed the entry of number of accredited voters until the end of voting so as to have the leeway to tamper with results, a problem he said would be obviated by the smart card readers. European Union chief election observer in Nigeria, Mr Santiago Fisa, said that despite the hiccups in the use of card readers, it was still the best form of accrediting voters.

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Fisa, who monitored the presidential elections in Maitama district of Abuja, commended the courage of Nigerians to exercise their right to vote. He said that the accreditation of voters was slow but that the card readers ensured the integrity of the election processes The machine is a little complicated, obviously to prevent fraud. But sometimes it fails, sometimes, you put a finger, it fails, you put the next, it says 'okay'. Even if the machine is failing, it is good for the accreditation Adamu S (2015).

2.1.5 Drawbacks of the use of Card Readers

One of the key differences between this year's elections and past ones was the introduction and widely publicized use of the card reader by the INEC. This device was part of the registration and authentication of duly registered voters – those who had Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs) – and who ultimately participated in Election Day. The card reader had been promoted by INEC as an anti-electoral fraud device and was introduced to enhance the integrity of the voting process and dissuade multiple voting (as only duly accredited and verified PVC holders could vote). The card readers were also programmed to work for specific polling units. This meant that PVCs could not be used in multiple polling units. Despite the pockets of challenges concerning its use, which included possible battery failures to power the device and timeliness issues in verifying PVC holders and how many voters could be covered within the accreditation process, Nigerians were generally optimistic that the readers would positively impact the voting process. Sadly, technical hitches were still recorded. These complications ranged from simple issues, such as the lack (or poor) understanding among INEC's .ad-hoc staff on the need to remove film covering from the screen of the device which facilitates better fingerprint decoding, to the outright malfunction or failure of the card readers themselves. Of particular note was the

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failure of some card readers to recognize President Goodluck Jonathan's card, which was quite embarrassing for the incumbent leader. After four repeated trials and failures, Goodluck was accredited to vote manually in line with stipulated INEC procedure – i.e. filling the incidence form. But the media soon caught wind, and there were a range of reports circulating about similar card reader and finger recognition challenges nationwide. This prompted the INEC to instruct those polling units that were experiencing card reading challenges to immediately revert to the old system of manual accreditation. The announcement seemed to have eased accreditation in these places, however the extent to which this announcement may have inadvertently opened the flood gates for electoral fraud is yet to be fully analyzed. More comprehensive reports from electoral observer groups are expected in the coming weeks.

There were further allegations of voter list mark-up's (manipulation) and ghost voting (electoral fraud), even though, according to the INEC, the card readers functioned in 99% of polling units nationwide. While this is a very high reliability factor, a number of aggrieved candidates and their parties were still contesting procedures. The card reader challenges, as well as incidences of late arrival of INEC staff and commencement of accreditation, dragged the voting process well into the night (and even the next day in some polling units across the country). Three hundred polling units had their voting postponed to that following Sunday (Premium Times April 24, 2015).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Different scholars have postulated several theories on the power of the new technology and credible elections. Although most of them are relevant, however this study is anchored on Technological Determinism Theory.

2.2.1 The Technological Determinism Theory

Technological determinism is a reductionist theory that presumes that a society's technology drives the development of its social structure and cultural values. This theory is propounded by Thorsten Veblen an American sociologist around 1857–1929. The most radical technological determinist in America in the twentieth century was most likely Clarence Ayres who was a follower of Thorsten Veblen and John Dewey. William Ogburn was also known for his radical technological determinism. Most interpretations of technological determinism share two general ideas which Sparks G. (2002:2) noted that:

> The development of technology itself follows a predictable, traceable
>
> path largely beyond cultural or political influence, and that technology
>
> in turn has "effects" on societies that are inherent, rather than socially
>
> Conditioned or produced because that society organizes itself to support
>
> and further develop a technology once it has been introduced.

Strict adherents to technological determinism do not believe the influence of technology differs based on how much a technology is or can be used. Instead of considering

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technology as part of a larger spectrum of human activity, technological determinism sees technology as the basis for all human activity. Marshall (1982) posited that "societies have always been shaped more by nature of elections with which people choose their representatives". By so doing electronic technology has a way of influencing people, as they engage in various use of electronics and technology, they consciously or unconsciously participate in the political process. This informs our reason for anchoring the study on the technology determinism theory.

2.2.2. Major Argument of the Theory

The society's technology drives the development of its social structure and cultural values.

2.2.3 Indices of the Theory

The theory has Explanatory Power; as it explains when new systems of technology are developed, the culture or society is immediately changed to reflect the senses needed to use the new technology. The theory predicts that with every new system of media technology, society will change and adapt to that technology. In the area of Parsimony, the theory alludes that there is a simple cause and effect analysis between the introduction of new technology and the changes in society's way of thinking, feeling, acting, or believing. In relations falsifiability, the theory could be proved false if a new technology is invented and nothing changes. On the premise of Internal Consistency the theory possess a logical flow of proof evidenced over time. It is heuristic and possesses organizing power. The theory argues that technology alone shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, act, and how society are operates as we move from one technological age to another. The theory argues that "The relationship between technology and society cannot be reduced to a

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simplistic cause-and-effect formula. Mackenzie and Wajman (1999) argues that the path of innovation and its social consequences are strongly, if not entirely shaped by society itself through the influence of culture, politics, economic arrangements, regulatory mechanisms and the like.

2.2.4 Justification for using the Theory

This theory is adopted by the researcher because it is the diver of the development of a society's social structure of the society, as such because elections are vital part of the social structure of the society, it stands appropriate for the analysis of the subject under study.

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Whatever kind of research undertaken, it is important to specify the type of method to be used n the collection and analysis of data. This chapter includes the research methodology, source of data, area of study, population size, sample size, sampling techniques, method of data collection, method of data analysis and presentation.

3.2 Research Methodology

This study adopts the qualitative research method. The qualitative techniques used in the study include the descriptive and analytical perspective and the Table Study Techniques.

In using this method of inquiry, the researcher analyzed the strength and weakness of electronic Smart Card Readers on the premise of how it has reduced electoral irregularities in the 2015 general elections in katsina state. This method is adopted to analyze and address the many questions that have been raised following the emergence of INEC electronic Smart Card Readers especially as it concerns its use within the copious of 2015 general elections and the possible effects it could have on the fledgling democracy in Nigeria.

3.3 Source of Data

The primary sources and secondary sources of data is adopted by the researcher. The primary sources will be drawn from the distribution of questionnaires to the targeted

population of kasina staste, the use of interview will be adopted and the use of tape recording is also utilized by the researcher.

On the other hand, the secondary sources of Data were collected from both electronic and printed materials. Information from news and political discussions were also recorded and used. As well, data from national dailies, journals, conference proceedings and other publications relevant to the study were collected and used.

3.4 Area of Study

The area of study is katsina state which has a total population of 6,483,429 according to the 2006 census figure. Katsina state is located in the Northwest of Nigeria. It has the total landmark of 24,192 km 'The area of study is one of the ancient Hausa cities with its administrative capital in Daura. But currently, the main stay of her economy is agriculture. Katsina share border with Zamfara state, Kaduna state, Kano state and Niger republic. The current president of Nigeria hails from katsina state. It has 34 local government areas.

3.5 Population

The study population is the total population of katsina state which stood at M6, 483,429 as recorded by 2006 population census in Nigeria.

3.6 Sample size

The targeted population of this study is Katsina State. The total population size is 6,483,429 while the targeted Sample Size is 20% of the entire population. This sample size is drawn from the random selection in kasina state to represent the entire Katsina State.

Therefore ,the Taro Yamane Formular (1967) was used to calculate and arrive at our targeted respondents;

Where:

n= Sample Size

N= Population Size

e= error of significance

I= Constant (1)

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

$$n = \frac{6483429}{6483429 +1\,(0.5)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{6483429}{6483430 \times (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{6483429}{16209}$$

$$n = 399.98$$

$$n = 400$$

Therefore, our sample size is 399.98, which is approximately 400. However, this number of respondents in this case is too large for this research to be carried out. As such, the researcher has resorted to using 20% of 400 which is 80.

3.7 Sampling Technique

The researcher employs the probability sampling technique particularly, the random sampling method. This is in an attempt to making sure that the whole targeting population stand an equal chance of being selected during the distribution of the questionnaire.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

3.8.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire method of collecting data is adopted by the researcher. The questionnaire has been divided into three possible sections (that is, section A, B & C). Section A is the socio-demographic data of the respondent, section B address questions on democracy, election and electoral process. While section C also asks questions on General election and INEC card reader. A total of 400 (four hundred) questionnaire will be administered. It will cut across all adult who are 18 (eighteen years) and above.

3.8.2 Interview

The research adopts an in-depth interview. The face to face interview was conducted on few individuals. This includes INEC electoral officers and voters. In the conduct of the interview the tool use was the recording gadget (phone recorder). In situation where the researcher is not allowed to record, the researcher jotted important point in form of note taking.

Other relevant method of data collection includes publications, public opinion, newspaper, articles and journals.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis and Presentation

One of the widely accepted methods of data analysis in qualitative research is descriptive method of analysis. This research agrees to the adoption of the descriptive method of data analysis and also the use of simple percentage. The table will be use to analyze and categorize the responses from the different respondents to the research question on the questionnaire.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the data gathered using primary source. Primary data were collected using questionnaires. The questions were both open and close ended to enable respondents express themselves and give the most accurate information. Interviews and observations were also used to obtain primary data from the field. A descriptive analysis of the result based on the findings of the study is also done in this section with a table presented after each response.

Table 4.1 Response Rate

RETURNED/NOT RETURNED	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Number of Questionnaires returned	80	100%
Number of Questionnaires not returned	0	0
Total Number of Questionnaire Distributed	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.1 reveals the response rate to be 100%. A response rate of 100% was achieved by replacing questionnaire not properly filled with new ones in order to maintain an effective sample size of 80. Hence an effective sample size of 80 was maintained to control the sampling variability. Also during the data collection process, non-response was minimized by adequate follow-up as much as possible, and where this fails it was overcome by

extending the sample size sequentially until the desired number of respondents was covered.

4.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study sought to establish the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics of people in Katsina state and the role of INEC smart card readers in reducing electoral malpractices in the 2015 general election in Katsina State.

Table 4.2.1 Sex of Respondents

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Male	54	67.5%
Female	26	32.5%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.2 shows that, Men and women usually participate in election processes in any society differently because of the different roles they occupy, different responsibilities given to them in life and because of the differences in their capacities as well as their needs and responsibilities. Of the eighty respondents sampled in the survey, 66.25% of the total respondents were male while 33.75% were female.

Table 4.2.2 Age of Respondents

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
18-20	13	16.3%
20-25	26	32.4%
25-30	25	31.3%
30 and above	16	20.0%
Total	80	100%

Table 4.2 shows that, 16% of the total respondents lie between the age of 18-20 years followed by ages 20-25 years with a percentage of 32. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the respondents lies between 25-30 years and finally 20% of the total respondents indicated that they were 30 years of age and above. From the result of this research most of the respondents are still young, vibrant and full of energy hence they were actively involved in the electoral process.

4.3 Democracy, Election and Electoral Process

An election is a formal decision-making process by which a population chooses an individual to hold public office. Elections have been the usual mechanism by which modern representative democracy has operated since the 17th century. Through elections, governments obtain their democratic mandate and are held accountable for their performance in office. Flawed elections deprive people of their voice in governance and undermine sustainable democratic development.

Table 4.3.1 Nature of Electoral Process katsina stste.

NATURE OF ELECTORAL PROCESS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Individual Vote	52	65.2%
Democracy	15	18.6%
Voter Roster	13	16.2%
Total	80	100%

Table 4.3.1 shows that, There are various ways in which the population is involved in electoral process. From the interview conducted individual vote ranked highest with a percentage of 65. Followed by democracy 19% and lastly voter roster

Table 4.3.2 Practice of Democratic System in katsina state

DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	61	76.3%
No	19	23.7%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018 .

Table 4.3.2 shows that, the study went further to investigate how efficient is the practice of democracy in katsina state. From the result of the survey conducted, a whopping 76% agreed to the fact that democratic system is being practiced in Nigeria while the remaining 24% were of the opinion that democratic system of governance is not being practiced in Nigeria as it ought to be.

Table 4.3.3 Awareness of Roles of Nigerian Citizens in Democratic Governance

LEVEL OF AWARENESS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
No	46	57.5%
Yes	34	42.5%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.3.3 Democratic governance requires the electorates to be actively involved in governance meaning there are certain roles they are expected to play in the governance.

However, 58% of the respondents do not know these roles while 42% revealed that they are aware.

Table 4.3.4 Opinion of Respondents about the Efficiency of Democratic System of Government

OPINION OF RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	56	70.0%
No	24	30.0%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.3.4 shows that, 70% agreed that the democratic system of governance is efficient while 30% divulged that democratic system of governance in katsina state far from being efficient because the electorates are usually not carried along in decision making process and also most of the leaders only go there to serve their own selfish interest and not the electorates.

Table 4.3.5 opinion of Respondents about the conduct of the 2015 General Election

OPINION OF RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	64	80%
No	18	20%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.3.5 shows that, the conduct of elections in Nigeria over the years has always been marred by electoral violence and malpractice of with katsina state is not an exception. The researcher then asked the respondents what their view was about the 2015 general election.

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Eighty percent (80%) of the respondents agreed that the 2015 general election was credible to a very large extent as the usual electoral violence and malpractices such as ballot paper snatching, voter's impersonation and so on which have become the 'norm' of electoral processes in Nigeria was nipped to the bud. However 20% of the respondents revealed that the 2015 general election wasn't free and fair as where still some element of ringing and other electoral vices.

Table 4.3.6 Opinion of the Respondents about the Distribution of Free Gifts to Electorate

OPINION OF RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	69	86.3%
No	11	13.7%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.3.6 shows that, most political position seekers in Katsina State are usually of the habit of distributing food items like bag of rice, vegetable oil, provisions and so on to electorates. Eighty-six percent (86%) of the respondents agreed that this act usually influences the outcomes of election in Nigeria while 14% revealed that it does not in any way affect the result 0f election outcomes.

Table 4.3.7 Influence of Distribution of Free Gifts on Electorates

INFLUENCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Negatively	47	58.8%
Positively	33	41.2%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.3.7 shows that, Since a large chunk of the respondents agrees to the fact that distribution of free gifts affects electoral outcomes, the researcher went further to investigate if this act has either a positive or negative effect on election outcomes. And from the result of the election, 59% make known that it has negative effect on election outcomes as has a prior influence on the choice of candidates while 41% revealed that it has a positive influence on electoral outcomes.

Table 4.3.8 Reasons why Politicians Distribute Free Gifts to Electorates

REASONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
To Help Canvass Votes	30	37.5%
To Encourage voters	19	23.8%
All of the Above	17	21.2%
To Help Ring Election Results	14	17.5%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.3.8 show that, the politicians in Katsina State a distribute gifts to electorates for many reasons. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of the respondents divulged that most of the politicians give out these gifts to canvass for votes, 24% revealed they dish out gifts to encourage massive turnout of voters, 18% said that gifts are doled out to help ring election results.

Table 4.3.9 Effect of Election and Electoral Processes on the 2015 General Election among Electorates

OPINION OF RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	71	88.8%
No	9	11.2%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.3.9 show that, election and electoral processes affects the conduct of election. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the total respondents agreed to this fact while 11% rejected the fact that election and electoral processes affected the conduct and outcomes of the 2015 general election.

4.4 The 2015 General Election and I.N.E.C. Card Reader

In order to curb the usual incidence of election malpractices such as voter's impersonation, ballot paper snatching, under aged voting and so on, the Independent National Electoral Commission (I.N.E.C) Chairman introduced an electronic device called the card reader into the Nigerian electoral landscape to help accredit voters on the one hand and also curb most of the electoral vices that has bedeviled electoral processes in Nigeria.

Table 4.4.1 Conduct of the 2015 General Election in katsina state

OPINION OF RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
	28	35.0%
Satisfactory	26	32.5%
Fair	19	23.9%
Encouraging	7	8.6%
Excellent		100%
	80	
Total		

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.4.1 show that, 35% of the respondents said it was satisfactory, another 33% revealed that it was fair, 29% disclosed that it was encouraging while only a mere 9% agreed that it was excellent

Table 4.4.2 Factors Responsible for the Outcome of the 2015 General Election

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Card Reader	42	52.5%
Political Awareness	16	20.0%
Personal Interest by the Electorates	12	15.0%
The Citizens	8	10.0%
Merge/ Coalition	2	2.5%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.4.2 show that, Fifty-three percent (53%) of the respondents revealed that the use of card reader by I.N.E.C. dictated the result of the election to a very large extent. Another 20% revealed that political awareness inform of electoral education through the mass media (electronic and print) help to shape the outcome of the 2015 general election

Table 4.4.3 Effect of Card Reader and Voter's Accreditation on the 2015 General Election

EFFECT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE(%)
Positive Effect	63	78.8%
Negative Effect	17	21.2%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.4.3 shows that, Seventy-nine percent (79%) of the respondents said it has a positive effect on the outcome of the election as it reduced the incidence of voter's impersonation while 21% revealed that it had a negative effect on the general election due to some issues that came up such as poor network connectivity, inadequate technical-know-how and also the issue of misplaced smart cards

Table 4.4.4 Factors that made the 2015 General Election Free and Fair

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
The Use of Card Reader	45	56.3%
Accreditation of Voters	20	25.0%
Because A.P.C. Won	10	12.4%
All of the Above	5	6.3%
Total	80	100%

Source: field word 2018

Table 4.4.5 show that, 56% use of card reader helped to achieved this feat, 25% revealed that accreditation of voters processes were conducted in the right manner, 12% believed that it was because A.P.C. won that the election was termed free and fair while 6% affirmed that all the factors explained above all joined to make the 2015 general election a free and fair one.

Table 4.4.5 Factors why the 2015 Election was free and fair

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE(%)
New Approach Introduced	39	48.8%
The Election was Free and Fair	25	31.3%
No Bloodshed or Violence	14	17.7%
A.P.C. Won the Election	2	2.5%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.4.6 shows that, many of the respondents believed that the 2015 was free and fair because of the new approach involved in the conduct of the election. While 31% of the respondents believed that the election could be said to be free because the electoral process was transparent to a very large extent, 18% said it was fair due to the absence of violence

and bloodshed. While the remaining 35 revealed that it was said to be free and fair because A.P.C. won the election.

Table 4.4.6 Reduction of Political Corruption using Card Reader

OPINION OF RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	72	90.0%
No	8	10.0%
Total	80	100%

Source: field work 2018

This table show that, the use of card reader help to curb political corruption as attested to by 90% of the respondents while only a mere 10% rejected the fact the use of card reader reduced political corruption.

Table 4.4.7 Opinion of Respondents on the Continuous use of Card Reader

OPINION OF RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	77	90.0%
No	8	10.0%
Total	100	100%

Source: field work 2018

Table 4.4.7 shows that, the researcher then went ahead to seek opinions from the respondents on whether the use of card readers should be sustained in Nigeria and a total of 90% agreed that the use of card reader should be continued while 10% of the respondents said the use of card reader in the accreditation of voters should be discouraged in Nigeria.

Most of the respondents want the continued use of card reader because reduced the incidence of voters impersonation, cases of underage voting, and reduced the incidence of ballot paper snatching during the conduct of election.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will summarize the critical revaluation of literature, draw conclusion and recommend extensively, especially on how the Smart Card Readers have helped in reducing electoral irregularities in the bud. The *raison deter* of this chapter is evolve a lucid synopsis of the position of the researcher and his/her major findings. The study concludes with potent recommendations that will improve the use of card reader in subsequent elections.

5.1   SUMMARY

From the forgoing, it has been established that smart card reader was the game changer during the 2015 elections as it was the much needed elixir to the age long jinx of electoral irregularities. The study, also revealed that despite the challenges that confronted the operation of some of the smart card readers during the 2015 general election, a significant impact of the device usage was observed after the elections. First, the use of the card reader led to the increase and reinforcement of public confidence and trust in the electoral process. This public confidence is dependent on the integrity of an election which the 2015 general election appears to possess.

Majority of Nigerians after the elections believed that their votes could count and as such their will could be respected in future elections; and this has reinforced the legitimacy of Nigerians in the democratic process. Secondly, electoral fraud was reduced. Inflation of the number of voters present and multiple voting at polling stations were reduced. The device checked the undemocratic attitude of politicians in polling booth electoral malpractices.

thirdly, election litigations were minimized. There was a departure from the past where every election outcome is being contested at the election tribunal. Most of the candidates that lost in the 2015 general election did not challenge the outcome. In fact, some of the major contenders that did not win in the election embraced and congratulated the winners. For instance, the PDP presidential candidate immediately congratulated the APC presidential candidate, the winner of the presidential election. This attitude also happened across many states of the federation in the governorship and house of assembly elections and national assembly elections.

In addition, electoral conflicts and violence was very minimal as the election was seen to be transparent and credible due to the use of the card reader. The usually excessive and pointless attacking and degrading between the election winners and losers in past electoral contest was significantly reduced. In view of the minimal level of electoral fraud due to the use of the card reader, tensions were reduced among the political gladiators, and as such, electoral conflict and violence was grossly diminished in the 2015 general elections outcome compare to past elections in Nigeria.

The study further stressed that Nigeria's democratic capacity has increased and its democratic institutions strengthened. Nigerians and Nigeria's democratic institutions now understood the knowledge needed to have a free and fair election in order to deepen the democratic process. Consequently, subsequent general elections in Nigeria should gradually continue to be technologically driven.

CONCLUSION

But despite its many success, the card reader wasn't without its own drawbacks as during the election, card readers had possible battery failures to power the device, timeliness issues in verifying PVC holders, many voters could be covered within the accreditation process, the card readers could not access names of voters beginning from alphabets A to E, which eventually deprived them from voting, inability to capture the biometrics from finger tips and irregular capturing. This means there problems associated with the use card readers in elections. In spite of the assurances given by INEC to address the issues that aroused with the card readers after its test-run in twelve states of the federation, the 2015 general elections witnessed the inability of the device to deliver effectively in a large number of polling units especially in the Presidential and National Assembly Elections.

The level of awareness among the electorates about the card reader was poor. A large number of Nigerians especially the electorates in rural communities are completely unaware of the device. Many of these categories of people have neither seen nor heard about the card reader until the Election Day. These categories of people have no information on the role of the card reader in the elections. There was a lot misconception about the device. To some of the electorates, the card reader was a voting device. This inadequate information dissemination and poor sensitization of the electorates on the card reader led to some poor human relations and uncooperative attitudes between some of the illiterate electorates and election officials.

The training given to the ad hoc and INEC staff on the use of the card reader was inadequate. Majority of the Presiding Officers and Assistant President Officers 1 in the

polling units were not effectively trained on the proper use and handling of the card reader. In most cases the venues provided by INEC for their training were crowded and not conducive such that most of the trainees did not properly receive the instructions on the use of the card reader. There were imperfect practical demonstrations of how the card reader would properly be effective. In some cases two card readers were provided for a class of hundred trainees.

A large number of the trainees did not have the opportunities of operating the device. In some few cases, those that received training were replaced with those that have no proper idea of the effective use of the device. All of these led to the poor handling of the card reader during the elections to the extent that the protective film of some the card readers were not removed thereby leading to the impossibility of the device to detect thumbprints in some cases.

Card reader breakdown was also witnessed during the elections. Some of devices malfunctioned on the day of election. Though, INEC had provided back-up in case of any card reader breakdown. However, some of the back-up failed to also function. For instance, five 17 card readers were deployed for use at the polling unit of the Presidential Candidate for PDP in Bayelsa State yet none of them functioned. Similarly, the card reader at the polling unit of the Vice-Presidential Candidate of APC was non-functional.

A number of the smart card readers were not smart to function effectively. A few of the card readers were unable to function due to blank screen, non activation of the Subscriber Identification Module (SIM) card in the device and low battery. Some INEC officials according to Ekumen (2015) attributed the failure of the card readers to INEC engineers

who could not decode the inbuilt security installation in the card reader. INEC

in the card reader is reportedly designed to update the time and date and this is

claimed that the cards were initially programmed for February 14. INEC

postponement to March 28, some of the cards readers had not been configured

many shortcomings the smart card reader has credibility on the conduct of the 2015 general

elections in Nigeria. This study concludes that considering the many shortcomings

witnessed in general elections since Nigeria's independence, the card reader needs to

used for future elections because the introduction of technology has resulted to improvement

development in Nigerian electoral process. An example of incremental development of the

gradual replacement of manual voter register with smart card reader. The evolution of

smart card reader technology marks the significant development of electoral systems in

many counties like USA. The use of technologies by INEC is as a result of electoral

malpractices experienced in past elections which lead to poor governance in the country.

5.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1.   All Nigerians should accept the use smart card readers in the conduct of elections at all levels.

2.   Both INEC and Ad-hoc staff should be properly trained on the use of smart card readers to eliminate the challenges experienced in the 2015 general elections.

3.   INEC should insist on the use trained personnel in smart card reader. There should be no substitution of electoral personnel by politicians during elections.

4.   Proper electricity to power smart card battery be put in place in all polling units across the country

5.   Electorates should be given proper orientation on the use of smart card readers

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APPENDIX

<div align="center">

Department of Political Science,

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Federal University Gusau,

P.M.B 1001, Gusau,

Zamfara State,

Nigeria.

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Dear Respondent(s)

I am conducting a research survey on the topic **"A critical appraisal of INEC smart card readers, in reducing 2015 general election in katsina Nigeria"**. The result of this study will be used purposely for research exercise. You have been selected by means of a random or chance selection in this exercise. Your views are strictly confidential. Please provide answers to the best of your knowledge.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please tick where necessary and provide answers where required.

SECTION A: Socio-demographic data of respondents

1. Sex
   (a) Male (   ) (b) Female (   )
2. Age
   (a) 18-20 (   ) (b) 21-25 (   ) (c) 26-30 (   ) (d) 31 and above (   )
3. Marital status
   (a) Married (   ) (b) Single (   ) (c) Separated (   ) (d) Divorced (   ) (e) Widowed ()

4. Religion

(a) Islam (   ) (b) Christianity (   ) (c) Others (   )

SECTION B: Democracy, Election and Electoral Process

1. What is the nature of electoral process in Nigeria?

(a)Individual vote (   )   (b) voter roster (   )   (c) on the basis of democracy

(d) others specify...

2. In your opinion, is Nigeria practicing a democratic system of government?

(a) Yes (   )   (b) No (   )

3. Does the Nigerian citizen know their roles in the democratic government?

(a)Yes (   )   (b) No (   )

4. Is democracy the best system of government for Nigeria?

(a)Yes (   )   (b) No (   )

5. Was the last election (2015) conducted in Nigeria free and fair?

(a)Yes (   )   (b) No (   )

6. In the 2015 election, do you think there was share of free gift to gain vote?

(a) Yes (   )   (b) No (   )

7. If yes, how?(a) Positively (   )   (b) Negatively (   )

8. If no, why do politicians give gifts to electorates during election?

(a) To help in canvassing voters (   ) (b) To help in rigging election

(c)To encourage electorates   (   ) (d) All of the above(   )9. Do you think election and electoral processes in Nigeria affects the 2015 Election?

(a) Yes (   )   (b) No (   )

SECTION C: 2015 General Election and INEC Card Reader

1. How was the 2015 general election in Nigeria
   (a) Satisfactory (   )   (b) Fair (   )   (C) Excellent (   )   (d) Encouraging (   )
2. What influence the outcome of the 2015 general election?
   (a) Card reader (   )   (b) political awareness (   )   (c) the citizens (   )
   (b) Personal interest by the electorates (   )   (e) Merge/coalition
3. How did card reader and the accreditation of voting affects the 2015 general

   election?   (a) Positively (   )   (b) Negatively (   )

4. Why was the 2015 election free and fair?
   (a) Because APC won (   )   (b) the use of card reader (   )   (c) accreditation
       approach (   )   (d) All of the above
5. If yes, why? (a)Because APC won (   ) (b) Because it is free and fair (   ) (c)
   Because of the new approach introduced (   )   (d) No bloodshed and
   violence in the after math of the election
6. Did the carder reader reduce political corruption?
   Yes (   )   No (   )
7. In your own opinion, should Nigeria continue to use card reader and why?

   ....

   ....

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